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Contents

THE CRISIS GOES ON: HOW TO RESPOND?

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Abstract. *The world seems to suffer the first crisis of the globalization. Prior to this, individual country or regional experience has been accumulated on financial crisis, which taught policymakers how to design remedial policies, but there has not been a World financial crisis in most people living memory. The most developed economies have witnessed less ambitious economic cycles while financial cycles have not calmed down, but had even grew. The impact of this financial instability with the economic growth is a potential risk which will never be underestimated in the future. Current national or G-20 responses to the crisis have started to reshape the global economy and to shift the balance between the political and economic forces at play in the process of globalization. We should look equally to the imbalance of the dynamism of financial leverage versus poor regulation, as to the disequilibria issued from financial globalized markets politically addressed with a constellation of conflicting national regulations. The major quest now is the need for a reconciliation of the democracy with the market. People has been largely disappointed by the freedom that some financial instruments played only to the aim of raising profits, while elected politicians were lately asking for more taxes to protect deposits. Hence, no further political debate will leave aside those matters. Both at home and international.*

Keywords: financial crisis, ECB, risk, credit, National Bank, credibility

After the first interventions of the ECB and the FED to pump liquidity into the money market[1], in August 2007, everyone thought it was just a hiccup in the everlasting upward trend. Almost two years after, how does it feel to have real estate bubble burst, growth suppressed and equity markets dragging their feet in a gloomy economy?

This question rests on a few points that I intend to address. We should all start from the mere reality that the world suffers the first crisis of the globalization. Prior to this, individual country or regional experience has been accumulated on financial crisis, which taught policymakers how to design remedial policies, but there has not been a World financial crisis in most people living memory. According to the theory, a financial cycle exists involving both the credit growth and the prices of financial assets. However, this cycle does not necessary reflect the cycle of the real economy. Over the last quarter, the most developed economies have witnessed less ambitious economic cycles while financial cycles have not calmed down, but had even grew. The impact of this financial instability with the economic growth is a potential risk which will never be underestimated in the future.

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[1] On August 9, 2007 ECB has intervened with Euro 95 bn and FED with USD 24 bn.

Current national or G-20 responses to the crisis have started to reshape the global economy and to shift the balance between the political and economic forces at play in the process of globalization. From prominent political leaders, such as Nicolas Sarkozy of France, to ECB bankers, all recognize that something went wrong, and we should look equally to the imbalance of the dynamism of financial leverage versus poor regulation, as to the disequilibria issued from financial globalized markets politically addressed with a constellation[2] of conflicting national regulations.

Firstly, there is a question of how deep is the present financial crisis. Secondly, there is a problem of how long the crisis will last, noting that it spills over the real economy with virulence and tendency of engulfing it all. Thirdly, there is a concern related to how hard the landing will be in the European emerging markets. We should not forget that until autumn 2008 it was hoped that economies immune from the direct fallout of the subprime crisis would be able to stay unaffected and even to prove enough strength to pull along the entire world economy. But it only did not go that way. Finally, there is an issue of how able are monetary and supervision authorities to deal with these events.

In Romania, almost all along 2008, most of the voices were hoping that „their crisis will not hit us". But the risk aversion mounted and a sudden stop of capital inflow threatened the emerging markets immediately after the collapse of Lehman Brothers which pushed to the surface the fact that while US banks suffered 57 percent of the financial sector losses on US-originated securitized debt, the European banks were liable for 39 percent and the Asian institutions for the rest[3]. Indeed, the crisis has not been originated in the emerging markets, but they are equally hit in the absence of buffer funds for intervention. And this is not only the consequence of the pure financial crisis, but also the result of the fact that this crisis challenges globally integrated companies. Hence, dependence on foreign markets cannot be avoided if measured by contribution to domestic growth of net exports, FDI flows and jobs created by FDIs. It is exactly because of this that responses to the crisis cannot rely simply on national measures that lead to economic and financial fragmentation, but on the contrary we need stimulus programs and aid packages that support globalization rather than undermine it.

Nobody should fool around: in a deep recession, the temptation to export unemployment through beggar thy neighbour exchange rate policies inevitably arises. When I said that in January 2008 in a Vienna conference, most of the domestic media and some analysts rushed to criticize my position as a direct attack on "professionals". Several months later when more fierce attack on the RON has repeated, the word „speculators" was on everybody's lips.

On the gravity of today's financial crisis I would like to quote Jean-Claude Trichet who acknowledged that "The world is undergoing an abrupt downturn, as the adverse impact of the financial turmoil on real economic activity has

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[2] Helmut Schmidt, *The Future of Europe: Views from the Founding Fathers*, Frankfurt, 2 April 2009.
[3] Jean Pisani-Ferry and Indhira Santos, "Reshaping the Global Economy", *Finance and Development*, March 2009

been aggravated by a strong contraction in international trade"[4]. Indeed, he touched one of the core issues of pulling out of the recession, i.e. to preserve the trade integration, a key issue also for G-20. But on the condition that solution is sought in deeper multilateralism, rather than nationalism!

There are some factors that single out this crisis from all previous, but it was not entirely an unpredicted event. The current crisis exhibits all negative traits of the previous ones (except maybe for unemployment) but none of them at the levels that have determined the former crisis. Also, the crisis has a lag, not affecting every single economy at the same time and with the same intensity. However, although fiscal and monetary stimulus announced to date has been sizeable at the global level, its impact on spending has not yet become visible. With policy rates in several economies already closed to zero, a major debate has started about using unconventional tools to ease conditions in the financial markets.

The fundamental forces acting on global spending have proved, so far, to remain negative on balance. One such force is the continued tightening of bank lending, with the borrowing remaining difficult for most firms and households. The latest lending surveys suggest that banks have significantly reduced existing credit lines to their borrowers, with most of the lending being short-termed. A strong negative element against global spending spree is the rapid spread of the recession to emerging market economies. The coincidence of a major real shock from declining exports and a financial system shock is leading to a highly synchronized downturn. In the words of the Governor of the Hungarian National Bank: "*Central Europe has been heavily hit by the current crisis, despite the fact that banking systems in the region are generally free from toxic assets. Due to our financial systems' high level of integration with the Euro-zone, the liquidity tensions quickly spread to the CEE markets, which have already been suffering from the global decline in the appetite for risk and the resulting high levels of risk premia. These negative developments mainly reflect a perceived increase in the risk of financing external debt*"[5].

According to BIS, although comprehensive data on trade credit are not readily available, existing information suggests that international finance has been curtailed: syndicated loans for trade finance, in particular, have fallen sharply since mid-2008.[6] In return, the fall in exports has raised questions about the creditworthiness of exporters, who are finding it more difficult to raise credit. Difficult external financing conditions, combined with the deteriorating growth outlook, have accentuated the vulnerability of those economies that have sizeable current account deficits and large currency mismatches from private sector foreign currency indebtedness. As a corollary, exchange rates have depreciated significantly and

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[4] Fondation Robert Schuman, European Interview no. 31, "*Exclusive Interview with Jean-Claude Trichet, President of the European Central Bank*", 18 March 2009
[5] Address by Mr Andras Simor, Governor of the Magyar Nemzeti Bank, to the 19th Meeting of the Macro-economic Dialogue at Political Level, Brussels, 3 November 2008
[6] BIS - Recent economic and financial market developments, Basle, 3 March 2009

sovereign credit default swaps spreads have jumped to new high levels.

Bank lending to the region has been cut back since mid-2008 and the reluctance of international banks to roll over some credit lines is likely to aggravate funding difficulties, forcing thus an even more rapid adjustment of domestic demand and external balances than previously envisaged. The IMF found in its April 2009 Global Financial Stability Report that net private capital flows to emerging markets will be negative in 2009 and that inflows are not likely to return to their pre-crisis level in the future[7]. As in the advanced economies, emerging market central banks will need to assure adequate liquidity in their banking systems. However, in many cases the domestic interbank market is not a major source of funding, as much bank funding has been sourced externally in recent years. Thus, central banks may well need to provide currency though swaps or outright sales. Alternatively, central banks with large foreign exchange reserves can draw on this buffer, but other means, such as swap lines with advanced country central banks or the use of IMF facilities, should also be a line of defence.

Because the vast majority of the rollover risk in emerging market external debt is concentrated in the corporate sector, direct government support for corporate borrowing may be warranted. Some countries have already extended their guarantees of bank debt to corporate, focusing on those associated with export markets. Within Europe, the strong cross-border dependencies make it essential that authorities in both advanced and emerging economies work together for mutually beneficial solutions. Restoring credit growth is necessary to maintain the economic activity. Fiscal stimulus to support it and limit the degradation of asset values should improve the creditworthiness of borrowers and the collateral underpinning loans, and combined with the financial policies to bolster banks' balance sheets would enable sound credit growth.

Within the range of stimulative policies that are needed now, a number of countries have rapidly lowered nominal policy rate, while unconventional central bank policies to reopen credit and funding markets are used and should remain expand.

Despite large infusions of public funds into financial sectors in affected countries, market confidence has yet to be restored. Strategies need to improve transparency, risk control and incentive structures. This implies that financial sector require actions that keep sight of long-term goals, including an effective balance between prudential risk control and competition. These objectives will need to be pursued in a manner that does not exacerbate deleveraging or inhibit lending. While everybody understood that priority should be given to immediate short measures, which include positive stimulus effect from fiscal packages, these measures must be reconciled with sustainable, long- term growth. OECD outlines a number of broad fiscal measures and structural reforms that could yield the double dividend:[8]

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[7] IMF, *Global Financial Stability Report – Responding to the Financial Crisis and Measuring Systemic Risk*, April 2009
[8] OECD, *The Road to Recovery – Update on the OECD's Strategies Response to the Financial and Economic Crisis*, 27 March 2009

- Introducing infrastructure projects
- Boosting spending on active labour market policies
- Cutting taxes on labour income, particularly for those with low wages
- Reforming anti-competitive regulations in product markets.

This crisis is similar in the widespread panic and growth deceleration to the 1929 - 1933 depression. What we can infer from the above is that the present crisis could have been predicted but some have treated it as a "*black swan*" because models used by financial markets do not apply counterfactual reasoning when computing risk.

Originally, we expected a short lived crisis costing no more than USD 400 billion in sub-prime market (an estimation of the delinquencies' effect on financial institutions in USA of the sub-prime market). Now we speak that further disclosures of world-wide losses may raise the figure to some USD 4 trillion. Why? Because the initial belief - that we face only a credit crisis –, has turned into a global financial crisis which is just a component of a much larger phenomenon, along with the current crisis of the real economy.

Few years ago, the common understanding of the world economy was that the free movement of capital enables productivity gains in emerging economies. This in turn, allows prices to stay low, hence increasing profits and generating new capital. In a nutshell, developing economies were specialised in commodities and were piling up reserves from trade, while developed economies were specialised in capital and were incurring debt from credit.

The cycle was renewed as long as capital was available in developed economies – that is interest rates were low and appetite for risk was high for a great number of investors. During the six year period of 2001-2007 this type of financial reasoning had trebled the banks' international assets, according to BIS data[9]. But in late 2006 something changed and there were increasingly more delinquencies in the sub prime market.

The element that changed was risk appetite. Once there was a run on risky assets there was less and less capital available and this has slowly fed into the money market as higher interest rates. The capital did not become scarce immediately and equally all around the world because investors fled towards higher return asset classes, like FX in emerging markets.

This move is depicted by BIS data which shows that in the fourth quarter of 2007 (when the crisis was consuming developed markets) the increase of total banks' foreign claims was 92% due to emerging economies[10]. One year later, BIS reporting banks' cross-border claims on all four emerging market regions decreased by a combined $282 billion.[11] Certainly, Romania has not been spared from those developments, a visible trend in the fall of both short-term debt and the daily forex trade.

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[9] McGuire P. and Goetz P. von, "International banking activity amidst the turmoil", *BIS Quarterly Review*, June 2008.

[10] Baba N., McGuire P., Goetz P. von, "Highlights of international banking and financial market activity", *BIS Quarterly Review*, June 2008

[11] Gyntelberg J., McGuire P., Goetz P. von, "Highlights of international banking and financial market activity", *BIS Quarterly Review*, June 2009

However, emerging markets do not have too deep financial markets and various instruments to provide for profit margins but they can rely on their reserves. If one agrees that the crisis was determined by risk assessment and high interest rates on money market then the emerging markets are not the cure.

The end of the crisis will come when investors will perceive risk assessment as proper. After the crisis started to bite into the economic growth of several economies with high returns – usually emerging markets (like emerging Europe) everybody thought there will be a hard landing.

Early in 2007, global capital expanded trade of US assets for the high returns of the financial markets in emerging markets, also. The immediate effect was sharp appreciation of currencies, assets' prices hike and credit expansion, mirrored by widening current account balances. When it was evident that those economies were not able to keep the pace for too long the first effect was currency depreciation. However, the present exchange rate levels may well be in line with the long term equilibrium level.

The Romanian currency has not been spared from the contagion in the region and, consequently, has appreciated sharply in the first half of 2007 only to depreciate in the second part of the year and nowadays is at levels of fall 2004. Almost all of those countries have also faced a certain amount of asset price decrease. The stock exchange seems to have suffered the worst in the whole region. This has happened in Romania too. The main index of the Bucharest Stock Exchange has reached its all time peak in August 2007 and has lost some 70% in the span of two years[12]. However, as with other stock exchanges around the world, the present value is close to those in late 2003, long before the turmoil.

Real estate is by far less affected than stock exchange and this has to do with the liquidity. In Romania, there has been a clear slowing down of the activity on the real estate market from the frantic levels of the past years, this being a response of both credit squeeze induced by more severe prudential measures, but also of reduced propensity of household to borrow under weakness of job market. Accordingly, the bubble of the real estate market formed in areas nearing major cities is dispersing.

Credit expansion has been a major worry for emerging European countries long before the crisis debut. Credit was encouraged by economic prospects and by interest differential, but also by the soundness of the foreign banks that own most of the banking system in these countries. This holds true for Romania also. Another important fact was that banks in our region have had no exposure to the sub-prime mortgage market in the US.

In Romania, to the extent to which macroeconomic management requires an interest rate higher than in Euro land, there will be an incentive for financing through FX credit. However, the exchange rate risk must be highlighted.

On the same line, building higher than theory would suggest sustainable current account deficits is a problem older than the

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[12] I remember being nailed by a reporter of the Romanian I&P magazine for warning against euphoria of the bubble stock exchange technology for customs purposes. COM/2007/0211 final –CNS 2007/0079.

financial crisis. In Romania, the financing of the current account balance suggests that the external resources are borrowed by local branches and subsidiaries of foreign banks and companies from their mothers abroad. The risk of finance stop is lessened because the mother companies would not shrink from financing their subsidiaries which have higher rate of returns than the headquarters. Therefore, the landing of the emerging economies and particularly of European emerging countries will be as soft as exchange rate/inflation risk will allow it.

Despite negative outlooks issued by the rating agencies (assuming a sudden stop of replenishment of short term borrowing), at least in Romania we have noted that such a development has not occurred. Moreover, capital increases were done by some Greek and Austrian parents well before the cooperative arrangement reached in Vienna between the major banks, IMF and the Romanian central bank.

Everybody expected supervisors and monetary authorities around the world to be able to cope with credit and inflation issues. How able are they in reality?

Late in 2007 and early 2008, investors moved into commodities because the risk associated with high current account deficits in emerging markets was too high. This move pushed up the price of oil, gold and other commodities to unprecedented levels. Both ECB and FED had repeatedly warned against risk being underestimated back in 2006. But financial investors chose not to listen.

After the start of the turmoil, the two central banks went along different paths in dealing with tight money markets and inflation. The FED decided to aggressively cut the monetary policy interest rate, while the ECB opted for slower pace.

However, the solution to this crisis does not fall within the realm of monetary policy. If one agrees that today's problems are the result of risk measurement, than interest rate, which has to do with time preferences, is not the right tool to solve it.

In the same way, it is unlikely that supervisors could have prevented the crisis from occurring because rules were observed and the scale of the problem exceeds the power of national supervisors.

From the point of view of capital movement between US and Europe, BIS data suggests that there has been a reinforcing cycle from US towards EU and vice versa. Thus, US banks borrowed dollars from non-banks and used these funds on the inter-bank market, while European banks have borrowed dollars from the inter-bank market to fund non-banks[13].

At this juncture, the problems that financial markets still face are the scarcity of liquidity, the high cost of funding and the availability of credit. The downside is that the lack of capital hinders the activity of the corporate sector and this threatens to provoke a hard landing for more economies. Various reactions have been noted, from direct injection of liquidity to corporate to guarantees issued by governments to lenders of funds to the real economy. If something is really big, than this is the lack of confidence, the mistrust among

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[13] McGuire P. and Goetz P. von "International banking activity amidst the turmoil", *BIS Quarterly Review*, June 2008.

the banks, among the banks and their clients in both ways. Hence, stress tests have become a common denominator for defence against a request for credit. A kind of supremacy dispute has surfaced when the financial economy, where the root of leverage stood, claimed that real economy is unsafe for lending to.

I would rather quote here a research published in 2001 by the Banque de France: "*This financial instability characterized mainly by a succession of bubbles into the stock or mortgage markets is not without risk for the economy, as the Japanese example tells for more than 10 years*"[14]. Indeed the capital markets witness a more prominent distortion of the market prices from their equilibrium level, or which can no longer be correlated to the real cycles of the economy. But, as Avouyi-Dovi and Jacquinot have proved, because the contagion and/or interdependence grew amongst the capital markets, the turbulent times are coinciding with an increase in the value of correlation coefficients between the European Exchanges, on one side, and between US and European markets on the other.[15]

Although policy makers were not able to prevent the crisis from occurring, this does not mean that they are not able to deal with the consequences. Resolute measures have been affirmed by G-20, but at the same time complaints were heard on both shores of the Atlantic that despite the liquidity injected (sometimes in excess?) outlook for growth has worsened. That brings us to the fact that any policy option has to be judged

against the cause of the crisis – risk measurement.

The National Bank of Romania (NBR) is responsible both for the monetary policy and supervision of the banking system. In terms of handling the monetary policy during the financial turmoil, the NBR has used the policy rate in order to communicate to markets the real cost of holding the currency. Thus, when foreign capital was flooding in the policy, the interest rate was lowered. Since October 2007, when capital has started to move out, the policy rate was increased, to view it only lately gradually reduced, in line with a deceleration of the inflation rate, but also following trends in Europe and other emerging economies. It has also played an active role in encouraging local banks to underwrite treasury bonds issued to compensate for an excessive fiscal deficit of 2008 and lack of budget revenues derived from lower VAT incomes, profit and income tax generated by the economic slowdown.

As banking sector supervisor, NBR has decided in 2008 to increase the safeguards that the banks have to provide for when considering households' loans. Provisions regarding households' forex denominated loans were altered in order to minimize mismatches and adjust households' revenues for certainty and continuity and to increase provisions banks have to make for these loans. Also, a new matrix for computing the risks associated with exchange rate movement, interest rate change and income variation has been discussed with the banks in order to increase their

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[14] Le cycle financier: facteurs amplificateurs et réponses envisageables par les autorités monétaires et financières, *Bulletin de la Banque de France*, no.95, 2001

[15] S. Avouyi-Dovi, P. Jaquinot: *Où en sont les corrections sur les marchés d'actions?* Centre de recherche de la Banque de France, septembre 2001

own capacity of stress testing. Romanian supervisors have conducted several crisis simulation exercises involving all of the financial system, with the conclusion that the system is able to cope with a liquidity problem in a systemic bank.

In the spring of 2009, Romanian authorities searched for a pre-emptive financial package from international financial institutions, including the IMF, the European Commission and World Bank, EBRD and European Investment Bank for an amount next to Euro 20 bn, accompanied by a voluntary commitment of foreign banks to replenish short term credit lines opened for the 24 month duration of the arrangement. This is the outcome of a pure case of contagion of risk aversion supported by the pro-cyclicality policies of election years. Indeed, major rating agencies were either downgrading Romania, or affirming a negative outlook, even and despite of a 7.1 p.c. GDP growth in 2008, which was well above the potential level. Hence, against the fear of hard lending, due to a sharp and uncontrolled adjustment, the choice made seeks to provide a soft lending under unpredicted environment in Europe and around the World. Very likely, without the risk aversion amplified by the crisis for the emerging markets, it is hard to say if an arrangement would be sought just because the current account deficit was still high but with clear downward trend or the fiscal deficit derailed in an election year. Otherwise, the Letter of Intent stated that "The Romanian banking system entered the period of global turbulence with a strong solvency position".

For some analysts, the preoccupation for soft lending policies has clearly emerged since the 4th quarter of 2008, concurrently with the spill over of the combined effect of the fall of Lehman Brothers on financial markets and the emergence of the crisis in the real economy of Western Europe which has dramatically curtailed new orders to Romanian companies. Since then, all structural imbalances of the local economy have emerged as aggravating factor of slowdown. Undoubtedly, the IFI's cushion is not enough to generate growth along the other European economies, but as one of the carriage attached to the long train of the 27 member states. Responsible policies require Government to sideline with the economy, in a very clever approach of combining short-term interventionism with mid and long term policies, aimed to restore market confidence, including via its active role of guarantor. But, since the crisis has thoroughly affected the credibility of the financial sector, it left to the Central banks to assume the task of last resort credibility "dispenser".

However, credibility, at large, can be restored only once consumers will be confident about their future purchasing power, thus implying the quasi stability of the cost of money. Hence, the Central banks short-term measures, while responding to this demand should be consistent with the mid term targets of financial stability. Hence, providing liquidity in volumes needed and at due time require resolute measures against abnormal hikes of passive interests which indicate directly the liquidity available in the banks' safe for new credits.

The way the crisis has been handled internationally, including by the Euro zone, remembers of double standard: with strict market rules to be applied by the emerging markets and "temporary" interventionist measures applied by major players, more or less co-author of

the crisis. I remember a talk with Hans Tietmeyer[16] who was very explicit about the pro-cyclicality of "marked to market" accounting system which is profit making biased and an incentive to leverage. The huge volume of losses posted worldwide from one quarter to another speaks clearly about the dimension of leverage and the gap existing between global markets, global instruments and lax regulation which let derivatives and hedge funds to dominate over the classic financial deals. The price paid and to be still paid for a long time is incredible high and this leads to a thorough revaluation of principles of the new economy. This is going to take time, probably much time and it is too early to believe that only supervisory amendments to the financial framework will deliver lasting effects of stability.

Indeed, the major quest now is the need for a reconciliation of the democracy with the market. People has been largely disappointed by the freedom that some financial instruments played only to the aim of raising profits, while elected politicians were lately asking for more taxes to protect deposits. Hence, no further political debate will leave aside those matters. Both at home and international.

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AFGHANISTAN: POST-MODERNIZING A PRE-MODERN SOCIETY?

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Abstract. The defined purpose of this paper is to analyse the phenomenon of post-modernizing pre-modern societies, having as example the case of Afghanistan. Assuming that political modernity implies the existence of a centralized state, we will show that there never was a modern period in the history of Afghanistan. The last part of this paper focuses on presenting the impact that the phenomenon of post-modernization has had on Afghanistan, by analysing four characteristics of the contemporary world - the world after the collapse of the Soviet Union: the critique of the fungible character of power; the privatisation of security; the new types of wars; the regionalization and fragmentation of the world. The dilemma that needs to be solved is that of surpassing the risks brought about by the co-existence of three levels of evolution: the pre-modern level (the segmented Afghan society), the modern level (the attempt to found a centralized state), the post-modern level (the attempt to anchor the new-founded state in the global system, from a political, economic and cultural point of view).

Keywords: *geopolitics, International Relations, modernism, postmodernism, politics*

Seven years have passed since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, when Afghanistan was dragged out from the penumbra cone and appeared as a place of interest on the world map. In spite of the progress acquired in understanding the real situation in Afghanistan, there are still lots of simplifications, stereotypes, black-and-white dichotomies that only manage to harden the identification of viable solutions for the stabilization and democratization of Afghanistan.

The profound cause of the problems Afghanistan faces nowadays is structural, which explains the difficulties the international community encounters when trying to normalize things. The Afghan society is a pre-modern society that lives its daily life and acts in full political post-modernity.

A relevant analysis of post-modern Afghanistan can only be made after a careful time-framing of what we understand by modernity/modernization and post-modernity/post-modernization. From a political point of view, modernity began with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and ended with the collapse of the communist regimes and the disintegration of the Soviet Union (1989-1991). The

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fundamental feature of this period is the modern, centralized national state as the only actor of the international system. Unlike modernity, post-modernity erodes the force of the national state, by focusing on two opposite developments - regionalization and fragmentation – that co-operate for achieving the same goal. Although the national state continues to maintain its leading role, it loses ground against non-state actors (international intergovernmental/nongovernmental organizations, transnational companies, terrorist and Mafia networks). In light of the recent developments in international relations, the following questions appear more and more often: *Can a viable Afghan state be built in the new international context? Can the pre-modern Afghan society be framed within the structures of a modern state, that in its turn be integrated within the international system in an accelerated process of post-modernization?* The passing of time and the subsequent evolution of international relations will most likely answer these two questions.

1. Pre-modernity. Modernity. Post-modernity

From a political point of view, pre-modernity, modernity and post-modernity can be circumscribed by taking into consideration two fundamental criteria:

- The way in which power is understood and used;
- The international players.

Different geographic areas pass through these stages of political evolution successively, although development may be realized either at a slow pace or in a more alert rhythm, according to Ernst Gellner' s modernization "time zones" model. The concept of "power", considered an umbrella term[1], which is fundamental in the theory of international relations, can be a useful tool for the theoretic delimitation of pre-modernity, modernity and post-modernity, and for explaining the changes that the concept of power suffers from authority to sovereignty and to the dissolution of power.

During the pre-modern period the power is on the one hand brute force and on the other hand authority, being in close connection with the importance that religion and divinity play in the social system: power firstly as deontic authority, and only secondly as epistemic authority. The monarch is God's representative on earth and the Church (especially the Pope) has an enormous influence over the laic power. Modernity has a close connection with the contestation of the papal authority by the European princes and kings that launch the process of political centralization. The modern political system, whose single player will be the centralized modern national state, appears after the Thirty Years' War[2] and the Peace of Westphalia[3].

[1] Graham Evans & Newnham Jeffrey - *Dicţionar de relaţii internaţionale englez-român*. Trad. Anca Irina Ionescu, Bucureşti, Ed. Universal Dalsi, 2001, p. 458.

[2] The Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) was fought under a religious excuse, but its real cause was the fight for supremacy in Europe, especially the ambition of the French, led by Cardinal Richelieu, to gain pre-eminence at European level in prejudice of the Holy Roman Empire of German Nation.

[3] The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 put an end to the Thirty Years' War. The Treaty comprises of two documents: The Peace Treaty of Münster (between the Holy Roman Empire and France) and the Peace Treaty of Osnabrück (between the Holy Roman Empire and Sweden). The following decisions were taken: Sweden received the town of Stettin and the surrounding regions, the town of Wismar and the Prince-Bishoprics of Bremen and Werden; Denmark does not obtain any satisfaction of its territorial requirements; Austria gives Sundgau to France; France becomes the biggest and most influent country in Western Europe; the landlocked German states are excluded from sea trade.

The disappearance of the old pre-modern system takes place slowly, *à la longue durée*: the political vassalage links and the arborescent structure of power become less functional and more incompatible with the institutions of the new centralized states; traditional authority relations are replaced by impersonal relations of submission to the legal and legitimate authority of the national state; the local community, the ethnic group becomes consistent and powerful by means of the creation of the national state.

The distinctive element of political modernity is the centralized national state based on the guiding principle of national sovereignty. A long time since the French king Louis XIV stated "L'etat c'est moi!", the Western nations begin to follow their national destiny by creating national states that fight over international power. This fight represents the main point around which the international relations develop in the modern period. And the modernists see these international relations through the looking glass of a polarized world where nations head, on the one hand, towards a series of "clash of civilizations" (Samuel P. Huntington[4]) and, on the other hand, towards a democratic uniform world (Francis Fukuyama[5]). The secularization of social life, the minimization of the authority and interference of the Church in the political life, the standardization and systematization of society by creating impersonal relations between people instead of links based on kinship are the effects of the new conditions. The national sovereignty has two aspects: the internal affairs – the state's capacity to assure the observance of the law and the security of its citizens (the Weberian principal of legitimate violence) and the foreign affairs – the state's capacity to assure the territorial integrity, to guarantee the existence of a national territory.

By contrast, the political post-modernity represents the erosion of the power of the national state, under the impact of globalization[6] forces and also under the theoretical attack launched against the modern concept of power. The post-modern paradigm of international relations is constituted as a critique to realism, which dominated the academic courses in the Cold War period and imposed concepts that influenced the evolution of relations between the two superpowers/military blocs/ zones of domination, interest or influence. Given the new international conditions, the way in which realist theorists understand the concept of "power" as "balance of power" in the first place is out-of-date. And if the confrontation between the USA and the Soviet Union was seen as a zero sum game, in which the power lost by one of the players was inevitably found on the other scale of the balance, the new conditions bring a new concept of power. From this point of view, the post-modern critique on the fungible[7] character of

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[4] The classical work for this vision is Samuel Huntington's book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*, Editura Antet, Bucureşti, 1997.

[5] The classical work for this vision is Francis Fukuyama's book *The End of History and the Last Man*, Editura Paideia, Bucureşti, 1992.

[6] Globalization implies "the opening of the national space for the free movement of goods, capitals and ideas. Globalization removes the obstacles for this movements and creates the conditions in which international trade with goods and services can develop" (Brian Blouet, *Globalization and Geopolitics*, Reaktion Books, London, 2001, p. 1).

[7] Martin Griffiths - *Relaţii internaţionale: şcoli, curente, gânditori*. Trad. Darie Cristea ş.a., Bucureşti, Editura Ziua, 2003, p. 336-337.

power is well grounded. *Can the military power really be converted in economic power or vice-versa? Is the power lost by an international player transferred to other players?* In the realist view, where national states are actors of an anarchic international system, the answer may be positive. But when the national states are no longer the sole actors, although they undoubtedly remain the main players, the paradigm and our conception of the world change. The power can be lost, without it being won by other players, much like a black hole that absorbs everything around it. The result: a no man's land that Afghanistan has become after the withdrawal of the Soviet army.

In practice, the post-modern state facing new challenges to its security and being in the impossibility of dealing with them gives up some of its prerogatives to some supra-state and sub-state entities. Regionalization and fragmentation, the two facets of globalization, co-operate towards the same purpose: eroding the sovereignty of the national state. The threats multiply and diversify, so that the privatization of internal and external security becomes a trend. Professional armies, even those that are parts of international collective defence/security organizations, replace national armies of citizens-soldiers. The post-modern warfare is fundamentally different from the modern wars (wars of conquest of territories/national wars): economic warfare, which has reached the post-

modern stage of the opposition between legal economy vs. illegal economy, asymmetric wars, including the war on terrorism.

2. Afghanistan

> Afghanistan – landlocked country situated in Central Asia, with a surface of 647.500 sq Km and a population of 28.717.213 inhabitants. Founded as state in the 19th century, after gaining its independence from Great Britain.

Afghanistan has never had a modern period in its history. The Afghan society in the third millennium is organized on the same principles as those functioning in the times of its founder, Shah Ahmad Durrani, who in 1747 begins to conquer the Pushtun tribes' territories around Kandahar and then conquers the territories inhabited by the Ghilzai Pushtun, Tajik, Uzbek, Hazarahi and Turkmen tribes. The development level reflected in the geo-demographic data[8] is undoubtedly pre-modern. Having as starting point the pre-modern/pre-national conceptual overlap, tribalism and fragmentation on ethnic and religious criteria appear as the most important elements of our analysis. They are fundamental characteristics of the nowadays Afghan society and they determine us to consider it a pre-modern society by definition.

The dominant characteristic of all ethnic groups in Afghanistan, Tajiks

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[8] The 25 years of war have left deep marks in the economy: mined arable terrains, destroyed irrigation systems, power plants, dams, transports infrastructure, a collapsed banking system. Over 80% of the labour force works in the subsistence agriculture. The illegal economy thrives, poppy cultivation reached record levels in 2007 and Afghanistan became a narco-state. The living standard of the population is very poor: in 2004 the World Bank estimated that 20% of the families cannot assure their daily food, and 50-60% live at the limit of extreme poverty. During the Soviet occupation and the civil war, most intellectuals fled the country and during the Taliban regime the number of madrassa schools rose exponentially; the girls were denied access to education; all those mentioned above determine a literacy rate of 36% in 1999; only 51% of men and 21% of women knew how to write and read.

excepted, is the tribal organization, defined by the Afghan term *qwam*[9]. Each tribe comprises clans, in their turn comprising many families. The members of tribe claim their origin from a common forefather, male, that often gives the name of the tribe. The tribe's chief is chosen for his qualities, charisma and origin. *Jirga*[10] and *Shura*[11] are the decision bodies of the tribe. These institutions were very affected during the civil war, when the decisions were imposed to the tribe by local warlords, as opposed to being taken by consensual agreement within the *Shura*, and most of all in the Taliban period, when the moral code guiding the tribe was replaced with a fundamentalist interpretation of *Sharia*, promoted by the mullahs. Today, we can observe an expansion of the importance tribes have at the local level, what the think-tank International Crisis Group refers to as "government tribalization"[12].

For an external observer, the ethnic fragmentation is more likely to be noticed than the tribal fragmentation. From an ethno-linguistic point of view, Afghanistan is a mosaic (see Appendix 2), comprising more than 55 ethnic groups[13]. There is no main ethnic group, as the 2008 CIA reports show. Yet there are main ethic groups in certain regions, causing inter-ethnic tensions and problems for the regional minority groups.

The Pushtuns, dominating the Southern and Eastern parts of the country in the so-called "Pushtun belt" and accounting for 42% of the population, speak Pushtu (Afghani) and they are divided in many patriarchal conservative tribes. The Durrani and Ghilzai tribes have the biggest demographic and historical importance. They have often contested for political power. A problematic division are the kuchi, the nomadic Pushtuns that represent 80% of the nomadic population. Mainly farmers and shepherds, guiding themselves by the Pushtunwali, the moral code based on values like: honour, solidarity, hospitality, mutual aid and revenge, the Pushtuns have been the leading ethnic group since the 18th century, a fact illustrated by two personalities: Ahmad Shah Durrani, the founder of Afghanistan, and Zahir Shah, the former king. Over ten million Pushtuns live in Pakistan, mainly in the North of Baluchistan, beyond the Durand Line[14]. The number of the Pakistani Pushtun is bigger than that of the Afghan Pushtun, although the former represent a smaller percent of the Pakistani population.

The Tajiks, 27% of the population, are concentrated in the North-Eastern part of the country and in the Herat province; they speak Dari (Persian) and represent the only ethnic group that is not organised in tribes, that is why they introduce themselves especially by their region of origin. Having a better economic situation than the rest of the population, the Tajiks are the founders

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[9] Qwam refers to the traditional system of relations in the Afghan society, based on ethnicity, tribe, and family. The term designated the village, the family, the clan, the tribe, the ethnic group.

[10] Peace mission

[11] Council

[12] International Crisis Group -„Afghanistan: The Problem of Pushtun Alienation" p. 17

[13] International Crisis Group - „Afghanistan: The Problem of Pushtun Alienation" p. 1

[14] The Durand Line, dividing the Pushtun tribes and named after Sir Mortimer Durand, the governor of the British India province, was established in 1893 to separate Afghanistan and British India.

of Kabul and they represent the majority in towns, where they dominate the army and the police. Two Tajik personalities from the recent past of Afghanistan are the general Ahmad Shah Massoud[15] from the Panjshir Valley and Burhanuddin Rabbani[16] from Badakshan, president of Afghanistan between the years 1992-1996.

The Hazarahi population, estimated at 9%, lives in the poorest region of Afghanistan, the mountainous region in the centre of the country, the Hazarajat, and speaks Hazarahi, a language derived from Persian, with many Mongolian words. Because they are Shi'a, the members of the Hazarahi minority have been persecuted and oppressed throughout the 19th century while the Shi'a Islamic parties were excluded from the mujahedeen alliances.

The Uzbeks, 9% of the population, are concentrated in the North-West of Afghanistan and they speak Uzbek, a Turkic language, are organized in patriarchal tribes, based on endogamous marriages and manifest an open aversion towards Pushtuns. The Uzbeks were one of the most important ethnic groups in the Northern Coalition opposing the Taliban. General Abdul Rashid Dostum is one of the most prominent Uzbek figures.

Beside the four major groups, in Afghanistan there also live other ethic groups: Aimak (4% of the population, concentrated in the West of the country, organised in tribes of farmers and shepherds; they are Sunni Muslims and speak Dari related dialects), Turkmen (3%, concentrated in the region neighbouring Turkmenistan, they speak Turkmen, a Turkic language and are Sunni Muslims), Balochi (2% of the population, organised in very conservative patriarchal tribes, they dominate the South-West of Helmand province and also form the majority in Iranian and Pakistani Baluchistan; they speak Balochi, a language from the Iranian branch and are Sunni Muslims), Kirghiz (they live in the region neighbouring Kirghizstan, speak Kirghiz, a Turkic language and are Sunni Muslims; many Kirghiz emigrated in Turkey or Pakistan after 1978), Nuristani (a different population in Afghanistan, obligated to embrace the Islamic religion, they live in the Nuristan province, a bosky and difficult to access region), Brahui (they live in the South-West of Afghanistan and speak the Brahui language, of the Dravidian branch with influences from Balochi), Wakhi (they live in North-East, in the Wakhan Corridor and the Badakshan province; most of them are Shi'a Mulslims and speakers of Wakhi language), Farsiwan (most of them are Shi'a Muslims, they live along the Iranian border in the Herat, the Kandahar and the Ghazni provinces, they speak Farsi, a variant of Persian), Arabs (nomadic tribes, that do not speak Arabic, but Dari and Uzbek, they live in Kunduz, Takhar, Baghlan and Faryab) etc.

Ethnic tensions and crises marked the entire history of Afghanistan. They did not appear as a consequence of the Soviet invasion, although it aggravated them as open conflicts. Prior to the

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[15] General Ahmad Shah Massoud (1953-2001) is a symbol of the Afghan resistance against the Soviet invasion and also against theTaliban, with which he fought until the end of 1994.

[16] Burhanuddin Rabbani (born in 1940) is the founder of the Anti-communist Islamic Movement, initially the only personality recognized as Afghanistan's leader by the international community.

Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, the most frequent conflicts were inter-ethnic, between different tribes, villages. There were inter-ethnic conflicts, but they were rarely a consequence of the mere desire of ethnic purification; often, they were provoked by personal hatred, the rehabilitation of diminished honour, access to resources, the control over a region. After 1979, the war was fought in the name of ethnicity, the fighting determined ethnic-based alliances and the important ethnic groups wanted to conquer the power. During the process of gaining central power, crimes and genocides were committed and they amplified the already existent tensions. This makes the reconciliation process very difficult and intricate.

The so-called "Pushtun problem" appeared after the establishment of the Durand Line by the British administration and it haunts the history of Afghanistan to this day. Afghanistan has never recognised the international boundary separating the Pushtun tribes and this enabled the Pakistani "Trojan horse" to enter the fortress each time it felt its interests were threatened. Ethnically speaking, today, the main problem is the Pushtun representation in the central administration, which they dominated since the foundation of the state, with just few interruptions. The Bonn conference[17] in December 2001 did not offer a solution to the Pushtuns' dissatisfaction regarding the Tajik dominance of the security structures. The Pushtuns' disappointment is amplified by the results of the Emergency Loya Jirga in June 2004 that elected the Transitional Administration.

The Pushtuns saw that the Tajiks imposed their requirements by means of pressure, although the international community was overseeing the process. The discretionary generalizations such as "All Pushtuns are Taliban", the severe violations of the Pushtun minority rights in the North of the country, the lack of interest of the international Coalition forces towards the civil Pushtun victims of the attacks against Taliban amplify the dissatisfaction and de-legitimate the central power that is inefficient in assuring the security and stability in the Pushtun regions from the East and South of Afghanistan.

Islamic religion is one of the linking factors of the Afghan society, but there are major differences between the Islamic branches and denominations. 80% of the population are Sunni Muslims, of the Hanafite School that is also predominant in Pakistan, the Middle East and among the Indian Muslims. The Shi'a Muslims represent 19% of the population and they are a majority in the Hazarahi ethnic group. Although major changes occurred, Muslim religion dominates the political life in post-Taliban Afghanistan: the Constitution lays the foundations of an Islamic Afghan state, and the observance of the Islamic values is a pre-condition for creating political parties.

Afghanistan has never been a centralized state let alone a national state. The "Kabul island" phenomenon dominated Afghanistan's history. The monarchic authority could only be extended beyond the region of the capital-city with difficulty, seldom and partially, even during the reign of Abdur

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[17] The Bonn conference, organized under UN auspices, was intended to draw the line of a political regime in Afghanistan by the agreement of the different Afghan ethnic groups' representatives.

Rahman[18], the Iron Emir, or during the 40-year reign of king Zahir. With or without intention and under the impact of the Taliban barbarity, the Western media idealized a false image of a modern, pro-Western Afghanistan that had an important middle class of rich tradesmen. Without mentioning the gap between the richer region of the capital and the rural, isolated region of the Hazarajat, a comparison between different districts of king Zahir's Kabul shows that richness and extreme poverty co-existed in Afghanistan. The Soviet invasion, the civil war that followed the retreat of the Red Army and the Taliban regime increased divisions and destroyed the institutions of the modern state, which were anyhow at an early stage of their development.

The central authority, weak or falling apart, was not capable of assuring the security of the citizens and the observance of the laws. The tribe exercised the legislative function by means of the moral authority of the tribe's chiefs, the only persons sanctioned to make justice. In spite of legislative reforms, the basic structure of the Afghan society remained untouched, immobilism being, in fact, a feature of pre-modern societies. With the promulgation of the 1964 Constitution[19], the king wanted to lay the foundations of a constitutional monarchy, but the failure was obvious. The Afghan state was even less capable of assuring the security of its citizens. This function was initially performed by the tribes and by the mujahedeen parties during the Soviet invasion. During the civil war, the warlords imposed themselves. They maintained the state of insecurity and were also the only persons able, by means of an intricate relation with their origin tribes, to maintain the illusion that they were the suppliers of security. Co-opted in the war against terrorism, the warlords remain one of the greatest challenges for the establishment of an Afghan centralized state. The term "lords" used for their description literary demonstrates that the reality we are analysing is a pre-modern one.

The incapacity of Afghan leaders to build a state is the result of the convergence of the internal factors, previously analysed, and of the external factors, of which the buffer-state statute is fundamental. The modern state implies the creation of administrative structures, by means of which central authority can be exercised. What is the difference between Afghanistan and other states nowadays considered pre-modern and tribal? As in the case of the African states, the borders of Afghanistan's were also set without taking into consideration ethnic lines, as a consequence of the agreements

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[18] Abdur Rahman (1880-1901), Durrani Pushtun, tried to lay the foundations of the modern Afghan state. He created a system of provincial governments that overlap the old tribal borders, gave legislative powers to the provincial governors in local issues, created the Afghan army in order to counterbalance the tribal armies, laid the foundations of the first institutionalized Afghan bureaucracy, created a unified tax collecting system. The emir tried to erode the traditional power of the tribes and those which did not obey were transplanted. The Ghilzai Pushtuns were thus moved from their origin regions to the North of Afghanistan and the Hazarahi ethnic group was harshly oppressed.

[19] The Constitution settled the following: the creation of an independent Afghan Parliament that would meet regularly, not only at the request of the king; the use of the Afghan term for all the citizens; Islam is the state religion, but the secular law is more important then the Sharia. The 1964 Constitution lays the foundations for the current Afghan Constitution.

between the two great powers taking part in the Great Game[20], in accordance with their own interests and without consulting the Afghan leaders. But unlike the case of Afghanistan, in the African states the Great Powers tried to impose a series of administrative structures with the intention of controlling and economically exploiting those territories. The former African colonies, which were better integrated in the colonial system, thus have an easier transition to post-modernity, while those less integrated find their way with difficulty. Afghanistan was not seen as an interesting resource region, but as a strategic territory. The goal of the Tsarist and British empires was to control the foreign policy[21] of Afghanistan and not to impose certain internal political-administrative structures that could subsequently be the embryo of the state's centralization process.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the rise of Germany in Central Europe leads to the improvement of Russian-British relations in Central Asia. Afghanistan becomes a buffer-state between the two empires. The Russian-British agreement in 1907 settles the zones of influence in the region for the two Great Powers and lays the foundations for the neutrality of Afghanistan: Russia accepts that Afghanistan remains outside its sphere of influence, and Great Britain commits itself not to conquer or to annex Afghanistan and not to interfere in Afghanistan's internal politics; the two empires shall consult each other on every issue concerning the Russian-Afghan relations. The buffer-state statute, the acknowledgement of the Afghan politics of the British Empire, clearly shows that the Great Powers had neither the interest, nor the intention to impose their administrative structures in Afghanistan. Lacking a powerful monarchy and external pressure, the traditional tribal organization of the Afghan society was maintained during the 19th and 20th centuries.

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[20] In 1885 the Russians defeated the Afghans in a short battle and occupied the Merv oasis, thus neighbouring Afghanistan. The two great powers reached an agreement that stipulated that a joint Russian-British commission was to establish the Afghan-Russian border on the Amu Daria River. In 1895 and 1896 another joint Russian-British commission established the North-Eastern border of Afghanistan with the territories inhabited by the Chinese, officially recognised by China in 1964. In 1893, the emir Abdur Rahman accepts a mission led by Sir Mortimer Durrand, the secretary for foreign affairs of British India, to define the limits of the British and Afghan control over the Pushtun territories. The Durrand LIne did not take into consideration the demographic and topographic realities and was the cause of the continuous problems between the British India and Afghanistan, and later between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

[21] The attempt of the British to protect their interests by controlling Afghanistan's foreign policy led to 3 Anglo-Afghan wars, the last being the independence war in 1919. The first war took place between the years 1838-1842 and was caused by the rising irritation of the British triggered by the presence of a Russian envoy to Kabul. It was a military and political failure for the British that did not manage to crown Shuja, whom they supported. This led to the tribes' mutiny and to the massacre of the withdrawing British army. The second Anglo-Afghan war was caused by the rising Russian threat in the North of Afghanistan. The excuse of the war was the acceptance of a tsarist diplomatic mission in Kabul. The British asked the Afghan leader to accept a British diplomatic mission in the capital, but the Afghan leader refused, as he was afraid of the Anglo-Russian rivalry. Wanting to preserve their control over the region, the British attacked Afghanistan and occupied the biggest part of the country. In 1879 the Gandamak Treaty was signed. It recognised British control over Afghanistan' foreign affairs, in exchange of a very a vague promise of assistance in case of foreign intervention in Afghanistan. British missions were established in Kabul and the big cities, the British took control over the Kyber and Michni passes, and Afghanistan ceded border territories to the British.

3. Post-modern theories

The post-modern theories do not consider power a fungible resource, "the power resides in micro-relations that form networks"[22]. Afghanistan's case shows in practice the solidity of the post-modern critique regarding the concept of power. In terms of power, who are the winners after the retreat of the Soviet army? The United States of America or China? Iran, Pakistan, the Central Asian states, India, Saudi Arabia? The warlords or the drug lords? The Mafia? The organized crime? The Pakistani or the Saudi secret services? The terrorists? Al-Qaeda? The Taliban? Many actors can be counted, each having their relative benefit. If power were to be calculated on mathematic formulas and a comparison were made between the relative stability before the Soviet invasion and the extreme anarchy that followed the retreat of the Red Army, we could easily see that the power has scattered until evanescence in a place that threatens to destabilize the entire region.

The Soviet invasion and the civil war that followed the retreat of the Red Army destroyed the Afghan institutions, which were anyhow in an incipient phase. The state, the economy and the internal market were completely fragmented. Even before the Soviet invasion, certain groups started to set up checking points along the main commercial routes to survey the transport or to confiscate the goods – a sign that the central authority was falling apart. The Kabul-Jalalabad railway was the most profitable, mainly because of the heavy traffic between Kabul and Peshawar. At the end of the 1980s, the mujahedeen levied taxes in every free region, and the traders paid up to 10-20% of the value of the goods and also additional taxes for wood, meat, and jewels transportation[23]. The situation worsened after the retreat of the Soviet army, when the state was divided into many private domains where the local leaders exercised their power and imposed transit taxes. The rise of the Taliban is also connected to the support of the transportation Mafia, which considered that the existence of centralized structures was in its benefit. As a consequence, after 1996, the year the Taliban conquered Kabul, the smuggling of wood, stolen cars and electronic devices flourishes, especially along the Afghan-Pakistani commercial routes (Quetta and Peshawar).

After the implosion of the Soviet Union, the challenges for security diversify and multiply worldwide, and the nation state is not able to handle them. The inexistence of a national state in a power vacuum – the case of Central Asia at the beginning of the 1990s – complicates the situation beyond any previously imagined pattern. The warlord, a typical product of the Afghan civil war, was co-opted by the international Coalition forces in order to assure the security in the Afghan state after 2001. Soon after that, the signs of this wrong option became visible: the long-term security was sacrificed to the prejudice of short-term security using a wrong approach.

The effort of the international community involved in Afghanistan to

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[22] Martin Griffiths - *Relaţii internaţionale: şcoli, curente, gânditori.* Trad. Darie Cristea ş.a., Bucureşti, Editura Ziua, 2003, p. 337.
[23] Edward D. Girardet - *Afghanistan: the Soviet War.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985, pag. 185-186

create the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police – fundamental institutions of every viable modern state – advances slowly, in spite of what the official figures state. One of the most important goals in the reconstruction of the Afghan state is the disarmament, the demobilization and the reintegration (the DDR process[24]) of the former fighters. Without this compulsory stage one can not conceive a long-term stable and functional state. The existence of different militia impacts on the already precarious security. Assuring security in the post-Taliban Afghanistan must be seen from a comprehensive point view, which makes it necessary to co-ordinate different courses of action: the disarmament of official and unofficial armed groups, building a stronger Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police, including the Border Police, justice reform and the full implementation of the DDR programme. Launched on April 6th, 2003 under the co-ordination of the UNDP, the DDR programme failed to disarm the Tajik dominated militias in Kabul and Panjshir Valley, to resolve the issue of the unofficial militias that were not of DDR competence, to watch the evolution of the Afghan militias that were integrated in the police forces or in the security forces of the local governors[25]. A series of aspects render the process difficult: the changes in the strategy of the local military leaders that do not want to possess heavy weapons and concentrate on small weapons, which are more difficult to find and confiscate by the DDR teams; the appointment of

former fighters from the Afghan Military Forces in public positions (governors, police chiefs, road patrol chiefs) from where they control the drug trafficking between the Afghan towns and Pakistan; the proliferation of unofficial militias financed with money coming from drug trafficking. It is estimated that in Afghanistan there are 853 illegal armed groups, comprising of 65.000-80.000 fighters; the dominant characteristic of the militias to have few active members but also a great capacity to mobilize them; the transformation of some militias in political parties just by changing their names (Ittihad-i Islami became Dawat-i Islami, the Uzbek militia Jowjsan became Junbish-i Islami); the weak co-ordination between the strategy of the fight against terrorism and the political process initiated in Bonn.

Political post-modernity is characterized by the changing of the warfare types. In close-up we find the economic warfare (with its chronic stage of legal economy vs. illicit economy) and the asymmetric wars.

At the beginning of the 1990s, Afghanistan once again becomes "the pivot of the first battle in the new Great Game"[26], the state from where the economic domination of Asia could start. This first battle was initially fought between Bridas, an Argentinean oil company, and Unocal, an American company, which, in 1994 and 1995, launch two rival projects of dis-enclavisation of the Turkmen oil to Pakistan and India via Afghanistan. Although the economic relation between

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[24] Officially called Afghanistan's New Beginning Programme, it was launched in 2003 with the goal to achieve the disarmament of 100.000 fighters from the Afghan Military Forces

[25] International Crisis Group - „Getting Disarmament Back on Tracks" p.1

[26] Ahmed Rashid - *L'ombre des taliban*. Traduit de l'anglais par Geneviève Brzustowski et Laurent Bury, postface

the Argentinean giant Bridas and the Turkmen state dated since the beginning of the 1990s, president Niazov showed more interest for the offer of the American company Unocal, especially because this also triggered the involvement of the Clinton administration in Turkmenistan's development. As an obvious consequence, in 1995 Turkmenistan signed an agreement with Unocal and its Saudi partner, Delta Oil Company. Soon after the "battle of the pipelines" started and worsened the surrounding context, the regional powers, whose interests were in close connection with the gas and oil pipelines projects, became active parts of this game. The states involved themselves in the pipelines issue up to the secret services level, or maybe the secret service chose to involve the states in the pipelines issue, up to the point that the relationship between Unocal, the American administration and the Saudi monarchy seems to be part of espionage movies. Although a 30-year agreement between Bridas and the international recognised government of Burhanuddin Rabbani was in place, in 1996, the oil giant Unocal takes its place. The American company approaches the Taliban, believing they will bring stability in Afghanistan. Delta Oil Company, Unocal's Saudi partner, exerts pressure for supporting the Taliban, in spite of the support received from Pakistani authorities. The substantial support given in 1996 to the Taliban by the Pakistani government of Nawaz Sharif, by the army and by ISI should be analysed in relation with the evolution of the Bridas-Unocal economic battle. In 1996 Pakistan panicked and substantially supported the rise of the Taliban, who conquered Kabul that same

year. The United States accepted this result that served the interests of Unocal, as part of American regional interests. Given the appearance of a more viable project (the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline) than the Unocal project and under the pressure of the American feminist groups (whose support for Hillary Clinton's future presidency was very important) the Clinton administration policy towards the Taliban suffered a profound change. In 1997, it culminated with the declaration of Madeleine Albright, the American Secretary of State, a declaration in which she blamed the Taliban regime for their behaviour toward women.

Illicit economy thrived in Afghanistan, the production and drug trafficking reached huge figures thus transforming Afghanistan into a narco-state. The drug production boom in Afghanistan is directly linked to the war against the Soviet Union: the mujahedeen used the funds obtained from the drug trafficking to support the military actions, even though they constantly denied it. The transfer of the drug production from Pakistan (which was one of the most important opium producers in the world in the 1980s) to Afghanistan took place under the excuse and legitimacy of the resistance against the Soviet Union by using the clandestine supply network build by ISI with the tacit agreement of CIA. A series of scandals exposed the connections between some ISI officers, mujahedeen, Afghan Army representatives and Pakistani drug dealers. "The heroine unions", a term used by Lawrence Lifstchultz for the drug Mafia[27] represent an enormous risk to the stability of every state. The Pakistani example is revealing: in the beginning of the 1990s, the black market absorbed

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[27] Apud Ahmed Rashid - *L'ombre des taliban*. Traduit de l'anglais par Geneviève Brzustowski et Laurent Bury, postface et relecture scientifique d'Olivier Roy. Paris: Editions AutrementFrontièrs, 2001, pag. 159.

30-50% of the Pakistani economy[28]. The strict control of the Taliban over the Afghan state brought a certain stability which assured favourable conditions for drug transportation towards the Pakistani Balochistan (heading towards the Indian Ocean), Northern Iran (heading towards Turkey and Europe) or Central Asia (mainly Turkmenistan, having the Russian market as final destination). The Russian Mafia took full advantage of these circumstances, especially because the illegal activities multiplied at an alarming speed: shortly after important drug trafficking routes heading towards Russia were established in Tajikistan and Kirghizstan, these countries became important opium producers.

Compared to 2007, 2008 brought a 19% reduction of the number of opium-cultivated hectares[29]. However, the situation still remains very dangerous. The opium production diminished with only 6%, and the eradication of poppy cultures proved inefficient, especially since there were also casualties among the UNDOC inspectors during the process. Moreover, although poppy is no longer cultivated in more than 50% of the Afghan provinces, there are still some Eastern and Southern regions where the situation remains critical. The Helmand province, a Taliban stronghold, is responsible for 2/3 of the Afghan opium production. Furthermore, in the Northern provinces where the eradication of poppy succeeded, the farmers started to grow cannabis. This demonstrates that the illicit economy wins more and more battles against the legal economy. Corruption, insecurity

and drug trafficking form a complex dependence network which undermines any attempts at building an Afghan state.

Afghanistan faces one of the most intricate asymmetric post-modern wars. The diversity of the non-state actors involved, opposing national interests (regionally and internationally), different approaches of the causes of insecurity amplify the crises and conflicts. In the case of Afghanistan, we speak about simultaneous wars: the war against terrorism (opposing the international coalition and Al-Qaeda), the war against insecurity (ISAF initially supported by the warlords vs. the Taliban), the war against the drug-lords, the war for the reinforcement of the institutional capacity of the Afghan state, interethnic tensions.

The last feature of the political post-modernity we will analyse is the contradictory tendency of regionalization/fragmentation. Afghanistan's integration in supra-state regional structures can be achieved only with the agreement and impetus of the great powers and regional powers. But when the national interests fight for different goals, the result is from the very beginning a failure. Afghanistan is a pawn on the Euro-Asian chessboard, its evolution on whichever side triggers different evolutions of the regional balance of power. But the Great Powers have no coherent strategy concerning Afghanistan. The United States dealt with the Afghan problem in the far too wide context of the international war against terrorism, subsequently turning its attention towards Iraq. The increase of Afghanistan's importance in the foreign

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[28] Ahmed Rashid - *L'ombre des taliban*. Traduit de l'anglais par Geneviève Brzustowski et Laurent Bury, postface et relecture scientifique d'Olivier Roy. Paris: Editions AutrementFrontièrs, 2001, pag. 160.
[29] UNODC - „Afghanistan Opium Survey 2008. Executive Summary" p.v

policy of the Obama administration could bring hope again. Caught in the games for dominating the "near abroad" region, Russia has neglected Afghanistan. Even though the drug problem affects it, Russia did not formulate a clear strategy for dealing with this issue. China is more attracted by other rich-energy resource regions. Its strategy is centred more on "maritimization" than on turning its attention towards continental Asia. The European Union has formulated its strategy for Central Asia, in which Afghanistan was not taken into consideration. Iran and Pakistan, two essential elements in the evolution of the Afghan conflict, are caught in the middle of their own internal and international problems.

Fragmentation is a characteristic of Afghanistan. Based on this assumption, the international community decided to expand the role of the local government in order to legitimise the central government. The decentralization functions normally in states in which democracy is well rooted. Otherwise, there is a big risk of power being taken over by some local leaders that mainly control the economy and the security. Afghanistan deals with this syndrome. A self-speaking example is represented by the elections of electors for the Emergency Loya Jirga, in 10-21st June 2002, the main purpose being to appoint the Transitional Administration. The elections had two stages (local level and regional centres) and were characterized by the pressure exerted by local warlords who thus gained great influence within the Loya Jirga. The lack of resources

and the incapacity of the international community to formulate a single global vision regarding the election process added to the insecurity climate[30]. The lack of honesty that characterized the elections could be seen at the formal level (the process in itself) and also in the negotiations of the Loya Jirga, the results of which displeased the Pushtuns. During the elections, a lot of irregularities conflicting with the provisions of the Bonn Agreement took place: the number of the electors suffered a last minute change and 100 more candidates, among which 32 provincial governors, were accepted at the negotiations; the police, dominated by the Tajiks from Shura-i Nazar party had free access to the Polytechnic College in Kabul, where the negotiations took place, and exercised pressure on the electors; the important negotiations took place behind closed doors, so that the opinions of most electors were overlooked, which led to their disappointment; international pressure and the requests of certain ethnic groups forced Rabbani and king Zahir to withdraw their candidature in favour of Hamid Karzai, supported by the United States of America; the approval of the key-positions, a competence established in Bonn for the Loya Jirga, did not occur; all important warlords, excepting mullah Omar and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, did not only participate in the negotiations, but they also imposed their opinion concerning the election of the Transitional Administration[31]. On the other hand, a powerful executive (like the Karzai administration) which is unable to deal with the problems affecting the state does not seem the appropriate solution.

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[30] International Crisis Group - „The Loya Jirga: One Small Step Forward?" p. 1
[31] International Crisis Group - „The Afghan Transitional Administration: Prospects and Perils" p. 3-7

Instead of conclusions

The power that dissipated with the withdrawal of the Soviet army must be recreated out of anarchy, by creating an Afghan state. The new state cannot be left alone and unsupervised, because there is a real risk for it to become once again a stronghold for international terrorists; the Afghan state should be internationally anchored. As long as there is no coherent strategy for Afghanistan, post-modernity in the form of regionalization only manages to amplify the connection of terrorist, mafia and drug trafficking networks with the global economy. Up to this point, the isolated attempts of regional networking do not take into consideration the realities of the pre-modern Afghan society and cannot have spectacular results[32]. On the other hand, refusing to act, even in this clumsy way by skipping the stages, could prove a negligence one cannot afford.

Building the local governance may be a problematic action. On the one hand, its necessity is proven by its capacity to legitimize the central government, by involving the latter in improving the Afghans' daily life. On the other hand, it determines the increase of the regional, ethnic and tribal fragmentation and the rise of certain very influent local chiefs that base their power on complex networks that include warlords, drug and arms trafficking.

The post-modern global system appeared after the collapse of the Soviet Union and it is the legacy of the Western political modernity, based in its turn on the national modern state and the structures it imposed at the international level. Afghanistan was never a part of the formal domination system, the buffer-state statute gave it a "splendid isolation" from the modernization process, which could not have been achieved by other means either. Can the pre-modern Afghan society be caught in the structures of a modern state, that in its turn be integrated in the international system facing an accelerated process of post-modernization? The way out of this dilemma is the fact that, nowadays, the international system is still dominated by sovereign states. And as the post-modern theorist Robert B.J. Walker states, as long as the concept of sovereignty cannot be contested by other concepts offering better explanations[33], building a sovereign state remains the solution. The dilemma appears when one tries to implement the theory. The sovereignty of the state resides in the nation (either civil nation or ethnic nation). Afghanistan does not offer the conditions for building none of the two types of nations mentioned above. Ethnicity has always been a fragmentation element; the recent civil war was fought under the shield of ethnicity, the Taliban rise to power is seen as the regaining of power by the

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[32] An example is the Virtual Silk Highway NATO project, launched in 2003 with the aim to assure the Internet access for the academic community in the Central Asia and the Caucasus. Although Afghanistan was not initially included, in 2004, NATO officials decided to include Afghanistan in the project in order to: connect the University of Kabul to Internet via satellite; organize videoconferences between the University of Kabul and the universities from the NATO member states and the neighboring countries; connect the campus of the University of Kabul to the Internet via fiber optic; train specialists, inclusively in the counter terrorism reaction field, by using e-learning methods.

[33] Martin Griffiths - *Relaţii internaţionale: şcoli, curente, gânditori*. Trad. Darie Cristea ş.a., Bucureşti, Editura Ziua, 2003, pag. 345.

dominant ethnic group. On the other hand, the civil nation is built around the concept of citizen, which is incompatible with the Afghan realities. Citizen means democracy, law, civil rights. Citizen means identification with a state, and not with a tribe, an ethnic group or with the larger religious community of Muslims, the ummah.

B. Anderson states that nations are "imagined societies" and E. Gellner proposes a model of nations built as a result of the modernization process of the society as a whole. Solutions can be found for the Afghan case. The dilemma that needs to be solved is that of surpassing the risks brought on by the co-existence of the three levels: pre-modern (the segmented Afghan society), modern (the attempt to build a centralized state), post-modern (the attempt to anchor the new-founded state in the global system, from a political, economic and cultural point of view). A shorter period of coexistence of the three levels is compulsory, which is why the modernization process of the Afghan society has to be forced. The change in Afghanistan implies the change of mentality. But the history of mentalities is a history of long duration.

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Appendix 1:
The Provinces of the Afghan state

Source: Afghanistan Online http://www.afghan-web.com/geography/provincial_divisions.html

Appendix 2:
The Afghan ethnic mosaic

Source: National Geographic http://www.nationalgeographic.com/landincrisis/ethnic.html

TURKEY AND THE EUROPEAN UNION: DIVERGENT DISCOURSES?

Edward Moxon-Browne, Cigdem Ustun*

Abstract. *It has become almost axiomatic to argue that the prospect of Turkish accession to the European Union (EU) poses unprecedented challenges to its cohesion, its institutional structure, and to its identity.[1] No country has waited longer to open negotiations with the EU, and no country has embarked on negotiations with such a distant prospect for those negotiations being concluded. Our purpose here is not to consider the wide range of problems faced by Turkey in these negotiations, or even to make a judgement on whether these negotiations will, or ought to be, successful. Our objective is to consider public opinion in the EU, and in Turkey with a view to isolating perceptions on both sides that may be complicating factors in an already intricate relationship.*

Keywords: *Turkey, accession, public opinion, Cyprus, Kurdish minority*

Introduction

In many ways, the question of Turkish membership of the EU provokes in a more profound sense a number of issues that have become salient since the enlargement of 2004. The first of these is the extent of the divergence between public opinion and elite opinion in the EU member states. The saga of the European Constitution highlighted ways in which EU elites seemed to have lost touch with their constituencies. This was most painfully illustrated by the fact that the Constitution which was intended to "re-connect" the people with elites actually resulted in a rejection by referendum in two of the "original Six" member states. The reaction to that rejection, leaving aside several unconnected causes behind it, has led to considerable soul-searching in the Commission on how to cement public support for the EU in a number of domains. The second and third issues made more prominent by the prospect of Turkish membership of the EU are the still unanswered questions of what actually drives support for EU integration and, by extension, enlargement. On the one hand it is often argued that integration is driven by rational calculations of mainly economic advantage. Thus, legacies of past hatreds can be overcome if the price is right. Such an argument lies at the heart of Franco-German reconciliation which was based on the belief that the hatchet ought to be buried because it was beneficial to both parties (in a security and economic sense) for that to happen. On the other

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[1] See M. Emerson et al. 'Just what is this 'absorption capacity' of the European Union?' *CEPS Policy Brief* No.113, 6 October 2006, where it is argued that Turkish accession poses a particular challenge to the EU's absorption capacity, the latter concept being usefully deconstructed in the article.

hand, this view is often opposed by those who argue that integration is based on a sense of common identity; and that rational calculations of advantage always must be mediated through the underlying tensions or linkages that characterise two or more national communities. Clearly also, the two views merge and can be seen as interdependent when it is suggested either that rational calculations of benefit, once they materialise, will create a common sense of purpose and eventually an identity, or *vice versa*. On the other hand, a common identity already in existence for other reasons, may delay, divert or hasten integration as for example in the case of Britain whose integration with Europe (although obviously beneficial) was diverted and delayed by misplaced attachments to the USA and the Commonwealth.

In the case of EU-Turkish relations these two "engines" of support for integration are being tested in a more robust environment. Rational calculations of benefit, mutual or otherwise, are not clear cut; and arguments around identity which might and, in other cases have, successfully, overcome the shortcomings of rational explanations for integration, are much more shaky here. Indeed, it is often argued that a lack of common cultural identity between Turkey and the EU is precisely the reason why this step in the enlargement process is a "step too far".

Public opinion in the EU and Turkey, respectively, is obviously far from homogeneous across space, or static across time. It varies along at least three dimensions: chronological, geographical, and political. Over time, we have seen marked changes in support for Turkish entry with opinion in Turkey and the EU declining generally in the years since the 2004 enlargement. Secondly, geography plays a part in the sense that there are significant variations between different regions in Turkey and, even more so, between different member states of the EU; and finally there are clear-cut differences in support for Turkish entry between political parties in both the EU and in Turkey; and by extension between different groups in society such as farmers, industrialists, or (in Turkey) the military.

Our simultaneous analysis of public opinion in the EU and Turkey has important policy implications. If opinion varies strongly between EU member states, it will be necessary to address issues that are important to publics in different national settings, and there are issues which may vary quite markedly. Within Turkey also, the increasing hardening of opinion towards membership needs to be addressed in terms relevant to the frustrations felt there. This may require an approach quite different from that needed in the EU to address negative sentiments. The EU 'absorption capacity' argument, which is used partly to justify resistance to Turkish entry, needs also to be explained since opposition to the entry of countries like Croatia or Montenegro is much less uttered. Is this simply a function of their size, or are there deeper cultural and historical pressures at work?

In this paper, our argument proceeds in three stages: firstly we outline the principal trends in public opinion in the EU towards the prospect of Turkish accession and we emphasise the contrasts between member states and therefore the difficulty in adopting an EU-wide approach to overcoming these variations. We also draw attention to the fact that Turkish accession has become a

kind of 'scapegoat' issue around which problems endemic to European society are being debated. Secondly, we aim to analyse the opinion towards the EU within Turkey, emphasising variations between groups in society. Here again, the difficulty of persuading Turkish opinion is seen specifically in the context of principally external factors that mould public attitudes: the Cyprus question, and the progress of the accession negotiations themselves, issues whose impact on Turkish opinion tends to be quite direct. Thirdly, we make a comparison between motivations behind support in the EU, and support in Turkey, for Turkish accession, with a view to assessing whether there is sufficient popular support to underpin this major step forward in European integration. Even leaving aside the need to hold referendums in some countries on the question of Turkish accession, it would be unwise for a major step of this kind to be undertaken without broad popular support in the EU. It is not, however, possible to predict what public opinion will look like in ten or fifteen years time, but our contention is that any steps taken by member-state governments should be rooted in popular acquiescence, if not outright enthusiasm, and that our task today is to identify fears and failings that need to be overcome in the meantime.

Opinion in the European Union

It has been established beyond reasonable doubt that popular support in the EU for Turkish accession has declined steadily over the past three years. This has placed some pressure on governments, and especially on those which publicly welcomed the opening of accession negotiations in October 2005. While governments may feel constrained by path dependency considerations – commitments once entered into cannot easily be set aside – it is difficult for them to ignore the negative implications of public opinion that has for several reasons become less enamoured of Turkish entry.[2] This is not to say that public opinion has ever been very enthusiastic. What we have seen, since 2005, is an attempt by the EU, acting as a kind of proxy for EU governments, to slow down the pace of negotiations even though these have hardly had a chance to gather any momentum. There are several convenient pretexts that the EU negotiators can rely on to delay the progress of negotiations; but the Cyprus question has probably been the most prominent recently. Public opinion is less constrained than governments and, moreover, it can feed on less rational arguments, on prejudice, and on putative linkages between the specific issue of Turkish accession and more generic ills facing the EU such as unemployment, inflation, housing shortages, and racial tension. These latter problems would almost certainly exist, and have existed, irrespective of any prospect of Turkish accession, but they provide, however irrationally, scapegoating possibilities: it is always easier to assert that problem X or problem Y will be aggravated by Turkish membership of the EU, than to prove the contrary.

Variations between member states

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[2] In the summer of 2005 a Eurobarometer poll found that 52% of Europeans were against Turkish accession, and 35% in favour. This was seen to be embarrassing for Britain which, while lecturing its partners on the need to 're-connect' with public opinion, was apparently itself out of touch with the hostility to Turkey in countries like France, Germany and Austria. Britain was due to take over the Presidency in the summer of 2005, and chair the opening of negotiations with Turkey in October. See *The Times* 19 July 2005.

regarding public opinion and Turkish accession are quite marked; and this makes it difficult to generalise about 'EU public opinion' towards Turkey. For example, in September 2005, over 50 percent of Hungarians were reportedly in favour of Turkish accession, while barely 10 percent of their Austrian neighbours were of the same opinion[3]. What complicates the picture further is that motivations behind support for Turkish membership of the EU vary among EU member states. If we take even a brief snapshot of public opinion (in late 2005) we see how diverse is the nature of support for, and opposition to, Turkish membership. In Germany, for example, public opinion tends to be predominantly opposed to Turkish membership and this antipathy stems primarily from high unemployment coupled, at least in the public mind, with the existence of a well-established Turkish minority to whom many economic ills can be attributed, however unjustly. An idea of 'privileged partnership' emerged from Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats but, as Chancellor in a 'grand coalition', and President of the EU in the first part of 2007, she adopted the more statesmanlike role of pursuing the accession negotiations as honouring an EU commitment, but also insisting that Turkey satisfy all the accession criteria before any deal is done. Germany is Turkey's most important economic partner in the EU with a volume of trade amounting to 14 billion euro annually. Fourteen percent of Turkey's exports go to Germany, and 17 percent of German exports to Turkey. Three million Germans visit Turkey annually, and 2.5 million Turks live in Germany. France has the highest percentage of Muslims (7 percent) of any country in the EU and this also contributes to an aversion among the public to contemplate early accession by Turkey to the EU. French and German public opinion is almost equally opposed (75 percent in each case) to Turkish entry, and the motive is very similar: high unemployment. There is a difference in that whereas the Turkish minority in France is often said to be "invisible" and is subsumed into a more general fear of Muslim immigration, the Turkish minority in Germany is very visible; and tends to overshadow any wider concerns about the Moslem community. In France, these apprehensions have been exacerbated by the still-fresh memories of urban rioting in many French cities. In the Netherlands, public opinion is also divided over the question of Turkish accession and again the opposition to Turkey stems from antipathy towards Muslim minorities which in this case was exacerbated after the murder of the film-maker Theo van Gogh. In Greece, there is a wide disparity between public opinion and government policy. The latter is keen to 'mend fences' with Turkey although Ankara's attitude towards the Cyprus issue remains a stumbling block to this official policy of reconciliation. Public opinion is less enlightened and the Ottoman rule over Greece for 400 years leaves behind a legacy of anti-Turkish sentiment: only a quarter of Greeks believe that Turkey should have a place in the EU. The country that is most opposed to Turkish accession is Austria. Here we see both historical and cultural factors and currently rational assessments relating in

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[3] *Eurobarometer 63* (2005).

particular to Austria's contribution to the EU budget. Opinion polls suggest that Austrians are in any case more aware of the disadvantages than advantages of membership. In 2005, 'enlargement fatigue' had taken hold in the EU and was alive and well in Austria: only 21 percent supported the accession of Bulgaria, 17 percent the accession of Romania, and only 10 percent the accession of Turkey (the lowest support for Turkey in the EU). Austrian opposition to Turkish entry to the EU is age-related: younger people tend to be more in favour than their parents' generation. This is however only relative. Three out of four young Austrians oppose Turkish entry; while 82 percent of these over 55 feel the same way.[4] These highly negative attitudes may be linked to fears about the domestic economy. Unemployment is the single biggest concern to Austrian voters, two-thirds of whom cite this as their foremost preoccupation.

Among countries that are supportive of Turkish entry, it is worth mentioning Hungary, Britain, Italy, Spain and Poland. Although Hungary was under Ottoman rule for 150 years there is little anti-Turkish sentiment in the country and over half the population is in favour of Turkish accession, making Hungarians the staunchest supporters of Turkey in the EU. In Britain, there is support by the government and to a lesser extent from the population for Turkish entry. This support (the second highest in the EU) is linked to foreign policy visions that look upon Turkish secular democracy as a potentially stabilising force in the volatility of the Middle East. Some observers, somewhat cynically perhaps, attribute British support for Turkish

membership to a belief that it will ensure that the more federalist ambitions of the EU never come to fruition. Moreover, there are commercial links between Turkey and the UK that will benefit from membership. Italy also sees Turkey as a key actor in the Middle East and does not underestimate commercial opportunities that might flourish from closer contacts within the framework of EU membership. Spanish citizens, and their government, favour Turkish membership of the EU for both economic and geopolitical reasons. Spain is a major recipient of Muslims from North Africa (legal and otherwise) and therefore has a broader concern to create conditions around the Mediterranean basin in order to reduce flows of south-north migration. Polish support for Turkish membership is based on the belief that the Atlanticist tendencies of the EU would be strengthened and, in particular, that the membership of Turkey in NATO, and the pro-American line (more tenuous recently) followed by Ankara would resonate well with Poland's foreign policy orientations within the EU which occasionally come under pressure from other member-states.

As we have already seen, there is considerable diversity among EU member-states as regards the topic of Turkish accession. It has been argued that these divergences are linked to national preferences for various outcomes to the European integration process itself. Thus, national reactions to Turkey's efforts to satisfy a wide range of demands being made on it have been met with distinctly different degrees of approbation among EU governments. This can be attributed to the fact that the debate is not really about various 'hoops' through which Turkey is

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[4] *Eurobarometer 63* (2005).

compelled to jump, but whether Turkish accession would help or hinder the vision of Europe's future that is endemic in the national psyche.

A comparison[5] between France and Germany, on the one side, with Britain on the other, makes clear that their respective attitudes towards Turkish membership are expressed in a different conceptual language, and based on divergent, even contrasting assumptions. In Germany, we have a country whose own statehood and evolution has been identified, almost symbiotically, with the progress of European integration. Support for EMS, EMU, the euro and a European Constitution, have all reflected and reinforced Germany's belief that a Europe based on its own federal political model will be best for Germany, and for Europe. Economically, the EU has served Germany well and the Single Market project can also be seen as creating exactly the conditions in which Germany's export-oriented economy can thrive. Reactions to the prospect of Turkish accession are couched therefore in terms of the EU's future destiny. Turkish entry is resisted strongly on the grounds that it will damage the future political integration of the EU, and that it would be incompatible with the deepening and strengthening of the EU institutional architecture. Moreover, Turkey is rejected on cultural grounds because it is assumed that social integration of a European demos is precondition for the political *approfondissement* of the EU.

In France, similar but not identical preoccupations predominate. There are objections to Turkish accession on grounds slightly different from those that prevail in Germany. Again, however, the over-riding concern is the *finalite politique* of the EU. In the French view, France's own influence can be best maintained within a Europe that is itself compact, coherent and coordinated. The Eastern enlargement of 2004 is already seen as a contentious issue and France's position in the EU since 2004 is already seen as much diminished. French fears about Turkish entry revolve around prospects of a weaker institutional framework and the dilution of a 'Christian Europe' on which a future European identity, and therefore deeper political integration, are seen to depend.

In Britain, there are significant contrasts with both France and Germany. Indeed, one could argue that the starting point of the debates is quite different in the two respective cases. For example, in contrast to the French assertion that eastern enlargement in 2004 made a further enlargement both impossible and undesirable, the British view is that as 2004 has already loosened the cohesion of the EU it will be easier, and more desirable, to absorb Turkey in ten or fifteen years time. This is a challenge that the EU institutions can easily manage. On the cultural argument, the British view is that to perceive the EU as a 'Christian club' is mischievous nostalgia and that the *de facto* multicultural character of many EU countries (not least Germany and France) makes easier, and possibly more desirable, the addition of a predominantly Muslim country. To Giscard's remark that Turkish entry would signify the 'end of Europe', a leading British newspaper replied that these were the 'ugly prejudices of the ancient regime.

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[5] See, for example, A Wimmel, *Beyond the Bosphorus? Comparing German, French and British Discourses on Turkey's Application to Join the European Union*, Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna, 2006.

They are also profoundly stupid'.[6] While French and German opinion tends to see Turkey's size and geopolitical location as rather problematic for the EU, British opinion acknowledges them as assets: the border with Iraq; a young population; and substantial military forces within NATO, are all seen as potentially valuable to the future of the EU as a global player. In general terms, British opinion sees the 'federalist dream' as already obsolete, and therefore the German or French argument that Turkish accession would put this 'dream' at risk, cuts little ice in Britain where currents of Euroscepticism run strong in both major parties.

Although France is not the country most opposed to Turkish entry, its significance in the EU debate has become significant for several reasons. Among these are the residual backwash effects of the referendum on the Constitutional Treaty. At the time, it was widely claimed that the no vote was a vote against Turkish EU membership. The French Government had already promised a referendum on Turkish accession and this tended to reinforce the same belief. However, opinion poll analysis after the referendum demonstrated that Turkey was not a major explanatory factor in voting trends. Secondly, Sarkozy's election has made more 'official' the French view that Turkey should not be admitted to the EU. Instead, Sarkozy has suggested a 'Mediterranean Union'[7] where Turkey would play a leading role. This is in accord with his belief that the EU does not represent simply a set of values, but also a geographical entity. The extent to which Sarkozy can, or will, obstruct accession negotiations remains open to question. Even Germany has committed itself to pursuing the negotiations while floating the idea of a 'privileged partnership'; the Commission is determined that the EU mandate to negotiate in good faith should be honoured; and France's partners will remind Sarkozy that a Turkey anchored firmly within the EU orbit, is more likely to be politically stable, and economically prosperous, to the advantage of all EU countries. Sarkozy's appointment of Bernard Couchner (an advocate of Turkish accession) as Foreign Minister may seem like a ray of hope, but it is not certain that Couchner will remain for ever in his new role. Thirdly, it appears on reflection that the debate about the EU in France uses Turkey as a type of proxy scapegoat for many unresolved or problematic issues inside France. It has recently been suggested[8] that almost all the arguments used to challenge Turkey's eligibility for EU membership were connected to internal French concerns. These arguments reflect France's bewilderment at needing to readjust its own integration policies in an enlarged European Union. Already, since 2004, France has seen its pre-eminent position within the EU eroded by East and Central European countries some of whose governments were surprisingly assertive, and failed to kowtow (as Paris evidently assumed they would) to what Rumsfeld later famously called "Old Europe". Within the EU institutions, and in the face of increasingly liberalised economic policies emanating from Brussels, French

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[6] See *Financial Times* 6 December 2002.

[7] K.Barysch, 'Sarkozy, secularism and Turkey's European future', *CER Bulletin* No.54, July 2007.

[8] '*The Franco-Turkish Relationship in Turmoil*' Ankara: EDAM January 2007, v.

attitudes towards enlargement were riddled with anxieties for which Turkish accession became a convenient whipping boy. French perceptions of inadequacies of their social organisational model, their institutions, and their political culture, have led to a mood of self-searching. In this context, Turkey may have been used as a convenient 'counter-model' to stimulate the debate on the French performance.[9] 'Our impression remains that the French are debating essentially with themselves, and about themselves, and using Turkey only as a vehicle for self-centred reflection' [10].

Public opinion in Turkey

There have been significant changes in Turkish political life, especially after the Helsinki Summit which elevated Turkey's bid to candidacy status. The Justice and Development Party (JDP) government which came to power in November 2002, worked on the harmonisation packages, as they were called in Turkey, aimed at balancing the Turkish legislation with the *acquis communautaire*. However, in 2007, starting from March, Turkish political life experienced an extraordinary phase which has been observed by the international actors closely. Starting on 16 April 2007, masses of people in the streets of several cities i.e. Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, Manisa and so on demonstrated against the government and the EU showing concerns and deep mistrust. The rallying cry in these demonstrations focused on protection of secularism and the discontent with the EU. People showed their discontent

towards the government's candidate for the presidency, whose wife is wearing a headscarf, but also showed their discontent towards the EU. The crowds chanted "No to the EU, No to the USA, Independent Turkey".

In the last five years JDP succeed in changing the Cyprus policy, opening accession negotiations with the EU, stabilising the economic growth with a strong fiscal policy. However, growing debate in the EU on the open-endedness of the EU transformation of Turkey, disappointment at the EU process, and over the emphasis on the conditional nature of the negotiations brought a considerable decrease in the public support towards the reform processes and the EU. It is expected to see a decrease in the enthusiasm towards the EU as the reforms take place in a country on the way to the membership. However, it is observed in the Turkish case that the support for the membership decreased very rapidly over a short time, from around 75 percent to around 50 percent. Although in all the candidate countries it has been observed that the public support for the membership decreases as the process speeds up and starts to affect people's lives, the Turkish case cannot only be explained in relation to the realisation of the reforms, the process of change and difficulties brought together with this process. The effect of the exclusion of the civil society from the process and the reforms enforced by the state did not satisfy the public, the negative comments on Turkey's reform process, the "incapacitated" policy making process of the EU in the Cyprus issue,

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[9] *'The Franco-Turkish Relationship in Turmoil'* Ankara: EDAM January 2007, ix.
[10] *'The Franco-Turkish Relationship in Turmoil'* Ankara: EDAM January 2007, x.

the fluctuations in the relations between the EU and Turkey, EU's decision on freezing eight of the negotiation chapters, and the effect of domestic politics on EU issues as experienced in other countries influences the drop in public support. Another element in this support drop has been the attitude of the army in this process. Although the Turkish Armed Forces did not reject the EU membership, the demands of the EU is seen as against the Turkey's national interests. Besides, Turkish Armed Forces being one of the most trusted institutions in the country, their influence is considerable on the public. Increase in nationalism, not only in Turkey but also in Europe and increase in the anti-American attitude also have effect in this support decrease.

In this paper, in accordance with public opinion studies in Turkey, the decrease in the enthusiasm of the Turkish people towards the EU and the support for the membership are examined especially after the realisation of the candidacy status, while the age, gender and political party affiliation of the respondents, as well as the time periods during which support for EU accession is higher, are all considered influencing factors.

The mass demonstrations in Turkey

The JDP, who came in power in November 2002, worked for a number of legislative reform packages/ harmonisation packages starting from February 2002, introducing changes to the country's political system. In 2003, several more reforms were introduced, including two democratisation packages on political parties, the fight against

torture, freedom of press, procedures for setting up associations, and the property rights of non-Muslims.[11] Other reforms related to non-Muslim communities include addressing specific conditions pertaining to legal problems regarding real estate held by community foundations, recognition of non-Muslim groups which were not listed in the Treaty of Lausanne, and allowing places of worship to be built by all religions and faiths in the country. The reform package, which entered into force in July 2003, lifted Article 8 of the anti-terror law, thus expanding the freedom of speech and of broadcasting in Kurdish. Reforms undertaken on the Kurdish issue also include amendments to laws dealing with teaching of foreign languages, paving the way to the opening of Kurdish language courses. This reform package also includes changes in laws to permit parents to give their children Kurdish names, and a partial amnesty and reduction in sentences for persons involved in the activities of an illegal organisation. Furthermore, implementation of a project to return those displaced by the conflict to their villages has continued. Other reforms include the expansion of the freedom of expression including prohibition of closure of printing houses. Also, the procedure for the dissolution of political parties has been made more difficult, and the official definition of propaganda in connection with the terrorist organisations was amended.

Similarly, there have been changes in the freedom of peaceful assembly and association such as reducing the age limit for organising demonstrations, allowing civil society organisations to organise

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[11] K. Dervis, M.Emerson, D.Gros, S.Ulgen, *The European Transformation of Modern Turkey*, Brussels: CEPS 2004, p.19.

meetings and demonstrations that fall outside their scope, bringing restrictions on governors to postpone meetings, reducing restrictions on membership in civil society organisations; reducing restrictions on making announcements, allowing usage of foreign languages in their international contacts and unofficial correspondence, and so on. In May 2004, the Constitution was amended to bring it into harmony with the previous democratisation packages. The democratisation package in 2004 repealed a provision that had allowed the Secretary General of the National Security Council to nominate a member of the High Audio Visual Board[12]. There have been other reforms to decrease the role of the military in the political sphere, such as: relegation of the advisory function of the National Security Council, removal of the representative of the National Security Council from the Board of Cinema, Video and Music, appointment of a civilian to the post of Secretary General of National Security Council and removal of the military representative from the Higher Education Board. In 2005, Turkey passed two essential legislations, the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedures Law. These developments were welcomed by the European Commission as well. Until the issue of Cyprus came into the picture, once again, the relations between Turkey and the EU seemed on track and support for the membership in Turkey has not been an issue in domestic politics.

In addition to the fluctuations in relations with the EU, the presidential elections became an issue in the domestic affairs in 2007. Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul's candidacy to the presidency is seen as a symbol of political Islam and thus incompatible with the country's secular character. The organised demonstrations were a reflection of widespread concerns about secularism, which is the foremost defining characteristic of the Turkish regime. However, some rallying cries in these demonstrations are more of a concern for this paper. The rallying cries focused on opposition to Turkey's EU membership for sovereignty reasons, and to privatisation and foreign investments. The huge demonstrations seemed to be merely secularist in character, yet a strongly nationalist, pro-military and anti-EU discourse was also equally existent.

Decline in support for EU membership

Turkey's EU membership has been seen as an important gain for Turkey especially in terms of economic benefits in 2002, as observed in the public opinion polls conducted by the Istanbul University Communications Faculty Academic Media and Public Opinion Research Group in Istanbul. 21.1 percent of the respondents believed that economic development would derive as an important gain from EU membership.

This research also showed that 59.7 percent of the people were in favour of EU membership in the province of Istanbul and 39.1 percent were not. In the years before 2002, the support was around 56 percent. In the same year, the public support for EU membership was 76.35 percent in the whole country. However, there has been a very rapid decrease in the enthusiasm towards the EU in a very short time span. From 2002 to 2006, the support for membership went down

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[12] The High Audio Visual Board was established after the 1980 coup and became a useful platform for the military to control the media on such topics as Islam, ethnic minorities and Communism.

What would be the gain of Turkey if it becomes an EU member state?	%
Economic development	21.1
Human rights	5.9
Increase in trade	4.2
Decrease in unemployment	3.7
Free movement of people	3.5
Increase in the social life	3.5
Democracy	3.2
Increase in the education level	2.1
Increase in respectability	1.5
Political gains	1.3
Increase in the cultural richness	1.2
Development of tourism	1.0
Understanding of the rule of law	0.8
Increase in the welfare	0.5
The support of the EU member states	0.4
Migration	0.3
Gain in every aspect	0.2
Opening up to the outside world	0.2
Increase in military force	0.2
Development of the industry	0.2
Equal income distribution	0.2
Improvement of Turkey's relations with other countries	0.2
Other	1.9
No answer	42.6

Figure 1 - Benefits of EU membership

from 76.35 percent to 57.41 percent. Furthermore, the percentage of support in the youth population went down to 55.33 percent from 84.96 percent in the same period.

This research also showed that 59.7 percent of the people were in favour of EU membership in the province of Istanbul and 39.1 percent were not. In the years before 2002, the support was around 56 percent. In the same year, the public support for EU membership was 76.35 percent in the whole country. However, there has been a very rapid decrease in the enthusiasm towards the EU in a very short time span. From 2002 to 2006, the support for membership went down from 76.35 percent to 57.41 percent. Furthermore, the percentage of support in the youth population went down to 55,33 percent from 84.96 percent in the same period.

The percentage of the people who want EU membership (%)[13]			
	2002	2004	2006
General Public	76.35	64.82	57.41
Youth	84.96	83.24	55.33

Figure 2 - Support for EU membership

In this decline, the over-emphasis on the open ended negotiations, the issue of trust and religion and 'the clash of civilizations' rhetoric played a considerable role. Public opinion polls showed a common belief that the EU had been reluctant towards Turkish membership because of the religious

[13] "*Turkey's Socio-political profile in the process of European Union*", August –September 2006. Public opinion Poll conducted by Prof. Dr. İbrahim Armağan, Dokuz Eylul Universitesi, Izmir

differences. The percentage who believes the EU is excluding Turkey because of religion was 63.1 percent. In 2005, this percentage was 41[14].

As long as the people believed in the possibility of EU membership, support for the membership and enthusiasm towards the EU was high. However, the decrease in the level of trust in the EU, emphasis on open ended negotiations, rhetoric such as special partnership, absorption capacity of the EU and the possible referendum in France and Austria in the case of Turkish membership played crucial role in this decline.

The developments in the Cyprus issue also discouraged the people as far as the EU is concerned. Cyprus sitting astride trade routes that link Turkey to the world is crucial in its internal and external politics. Also, the island has been considered vital for the country since Cyprus is only 70 km from the Turkish coast and is the biggest island to its East, controlling access to ports in the region. Cyprus is seen as the exit point for oil and natural gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean, and this increases the significance of the island not only for Turkey, but also for the other actors involved. In particular, after the agreement on the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline, the island became even more important. Besides, Cyprus has become the number one priority in the negotiations with the EU. The JDP government is aware of the fact that Cyprus is a significant problem in the relations with the EU, especially after

the EU membership of Southern Cyprus. It is a common belief in the Turkish government that the EU is obliged to recognise Northern Cyprus.[15] Information gleaned from interviews[16] suggests that the understanding in the government is that the EU has ignored international agreements in the membership of Cyprus and is not acting neutrally on this issue. The London/ Zurich agreements appointed Turkey, Greece and the UK as the guarantors for Cyprus and they should be consulted in any development regarding the islands' political status.[17] It is believed that the EU did not seek the opinions of the guarantor countries in the membership of the Southern Cyprus in 2004. The Turkish government believes that the Cyprus issue should have been solved before October 3, 2005, which was the agreed date to start negotiations between Turkey and the EU.[18] However still, JDP government had more flexible and tolerant views on the Cyprus issue than the previous governments. In December 2006, although the JDP resisted EU's demands on opening the ports to the Greek Cypriots for a year, just before the meeting of EU leaders on December 14-15, 2006, the Turkish government proposed to open one seaport and one airport to traffic from Cyprus. Until December 2006, Turkey insisted that EU would end the economic isolation on northern Cyprus. The possibility of the relations with EU to freeze due to the Cyprus issue, forced the JDP to propose opening

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[14] "*Avrupa Birliği ve Türkiye İlişkileri*", 15 March - 5 April 2002, Istanbul University Communications Faculty Academic Media and Public Opinion Research Group, Istanbul.

[15] Nevzat Yalçıntaş and Vahit Erdem, interviews by author, Turkish Grand National Assembly, January 2005.

[16] Interviewees' names are not given here, due to the fact that they hold administrative positions (experts/advisors on EU Affairs in Turkey - EU Joint Parliamentary Committee, OSCEPA Committee, and Secretariat General of EU Affairs). Interviews were conducted in the Turkish Grand National Assembly, December 2004.

[17] Nevzat Yalçıntaş and Vahit Erdem, interviews by author, Turkish Grand National Assembly, January 2005.

[18] Vahit Erdem, interview by author, Turkish Grand National Assembly, January 2005.

couple of ports to Southern Cyprus and in return Turkish government wanted the same number of ports to be opened for the Northern Cyprus. However, this proposal did not find acceptance at the EU level and EU foreign ministers decided to freeze eight negotiation chapters[19]. This process, starting with the referendum on the Annan Plan up to the proposals by the Turkish government, had already created impassioned discussions in the domestic politics. On top of this, the rejection of the proposal by the EU increased the mistrust towards it more than ever and eventually led to a sudden drop off in the support for membership as well as in the belief in membership.

Will Turkey become a member of the EU in the near future?[20]	
	%
Yes	33
No	59.3
No answer	7.7

Figure 3 - Belief in Turkey's EU membership

The speeches of member state leaders such as France, Austria and Germany against Turkish membership occupy an important place in the public debate, and the recognition of the Armenian genocide in a number of EU member states including France decreased the belief in a membership which was seen as an economic gain. In particular, using the Union – by reference to its "incapacitated" foreign policy decisions in the relations between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots – in domestic politics shows the lack of trust towards the EU. As the support for membership goes down, the belief in the membership goes down as well. Only 33 percent of the respondents believe in the possibility of membership. It had been observed that people's belief in Turkey becoming a member of the Union in the near future is low, while more than 55 percent do not believe in membership. Not only the belief, but also the percentage of the people seeing Turkey's membership as a must decreased considerably. In relation, the number of the people considering that Turkey should not become a member also increased, as Figure 4 demonstrates.

What do you think about Turkey EU membership process – With which of the following statements would you agree?[21]	%/2002	%/2003	%/2004	%/2005	%/2006
Turkey should become an EU member	56.5	58.7	67.5	57.4	32.2
It does not matter whether Turkey becomes a member or not	14.6	19.7	12.5	18.2	33
Turkey should not become a member	17.9	9.1	8.7	10.3	25.6
No answer	11	12.5	11.3	14.1	9.3

Figure 4 - EU membership as a must?

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[19] These chapters are free movement, finance, agriculture, fishery, transport, customs, foreign policy and services trade.
[20] A&G Arastirma, May-June 2007, available at http://www.agarastirma.com.tr/ab.asp, accessed on 08.07.2007
[21] Ibid

The main problem seems to be trust – or more likely the lack of it - towards the EU. Already in Turkey feelings of mistrust have been developed towards the western powers. Regardless of the political orientation of the parties and the people, reference to the First World War, the last years of the Ottoman Empire and the Independence War are observed throughout the years. One example where this reference reveals itself is the parliamentary debate:

> History repeats itself. Elements, which shaped the international relations in the early 1900s, continue shaping international relations today... Europeans continue their old policies on Turkey, the Middle Eastern neighbours continue to stab us from behind and our European friends' attitude towards the smear campaigns against us are all very similar to the ones in the Ottoman era. We have to respond to these immediately as we did before in the 1920s.[22]

> Europeans memorised some of the words, they keep using them. Violent Islam, special partnership, open your borders, close your borders, don't cough, don't walk, change your legislation, and so on. .... Very similar to the policies towards Ottoman Empire earlier, the minorities are again being used for their own agendas. Today, Armenians are being used by

the European "friends". Earlier French could not find any other group that would work for their imperialist aims. Therefore, they did not just arm the Armenians but also located them in administrative positions as well. They sent the Armenians to the regions from where the Brits were withdrawing.... French owe the Armenians for all their losses in the First World War. Therefore, now they are passing legislation related to the so-called Armenian genocide.[23]

> Government is aligning its own economic policies to the IMF and other international organisations. This is very similar to the policies of the Ottomans in the last years of their era.[24]

> These days we see a trend in European countries to start a smear campaign towards Turkey. It is sad to see these friends supporting these campaigns...[25]

From 2003 up to 2006, there has been a considerable decrease in the support to the EU membership in the Republican People's Party (RPP), from 81.7 percent to 69.2 percent. In JDP, although the support decreased, it did not drop as dramatically as in the case of the RPP. As seen in Figure 9, JDP supports the membership but RPP and Nationalist Action Party are less keen on supporting the EU membership. The Democratic People Party's (DPP) support has been always high for European Union

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[22] E. Yalcinbayir, MP from the JDP, 6th Meeting of the TGNA on 11.10.2006, TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, vol. 131, http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanak/donem22/yil5/bas/b006m.htm, accessed on 14.12.2006.
[23] O. Öymen, MP from the RPP, 8th Meeting of the TGNA on 17.10.2006, TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, vol. 132, http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanak/donem22/yil5/bas/b008m.htm, accessed on 14.12.2006.
[24] A. O. Güner, MP from the TPP, 64th Meeting of the TGNA on 13.02.2002, TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, vol. 86, http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanak/donem21/yil4/bas/b064m.htm, accessed on 14.12 .2006.
[25] 92nd Meeting of the Turkish Grand National Assembly on 23.04.2006, TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, vol. 117, http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanak/donem22/yil4/bas/b092m.htm, accessed on 14.12.2006.
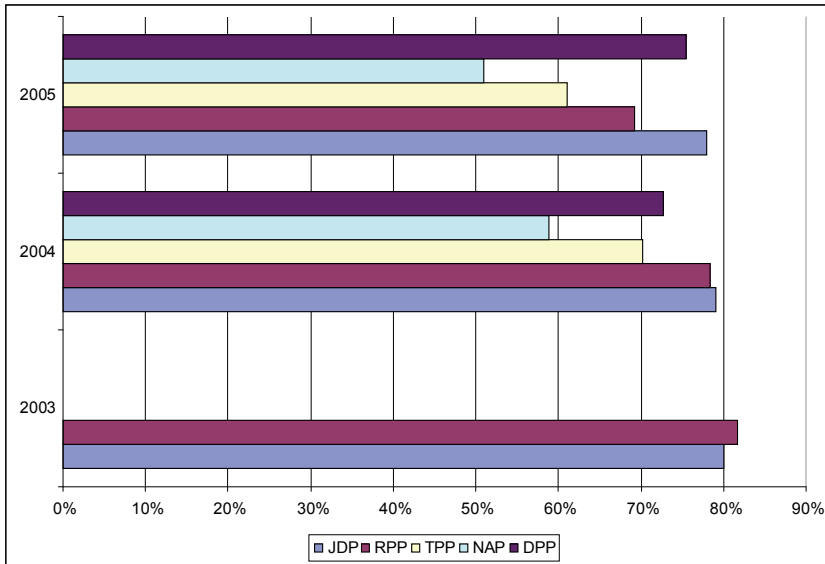
Figure 9 - Political parties and support for EU membership
Source: Pollmark Arastirma[26]

membership, due to the belief that the EU holds clout over improving Kurdish minority's rights. Therefore, it can be noticed that the DPP is the only party showing an increase in the support for membership.

Among the people, various adages- such as "Only a Turk can be a friend of a Turk"- and jokes reveal the mistrust either consciously or subconsciously felt towards the European countries and the Union.[27] This can be also observed in the public opinion polls. From 2005 to 2006 there is a considerable decrease in the level of trust towards the EU. According to the same

study, gender and the education level make a difference in the trust issue. Men trust the EU more than women do (Figure 6) and as the education level increases the percentage of the people who do not trust the EU increases (Figure 7).

Do you trust the EU?[28]		
	%/2005	%/2006
Yes	17.5	7.2
No	61.4	78.1
No answer	21.1	14.7

Figure 5 - Trust

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[26] Data is taken from Pollmark Arastirma, October 2003, November 2004, November 2005 Public opinion polls.

[27] There is a very common joke that deals with the problem of trust towards the EU in Turkey. There are three countries knocking at the EU door and only the ones which will give a correct answer to the question it was addressed will go in. The question for Romania is "When was the atomic bomb first used?" and the country responds correctly. The question for Bulgaria is "Where was it first used?" and Bulgaria gives the right answer. When it was Turkey's turn, the question was "Can you list all the names of the people who died in Hiroshima, and also provide their addresses?". This little joke speaks about the problem of trust between the two parties very clearly. When these kinds of feelings are backed by reports such as that written by Simon Serfaty in Policy Watch, they become even more evident.

[28] A&G Arastirma, May-June 2007, available at http://www.agarastirma.com.tr/ab.asp, accessed on 08.07.2007.

Do you trust the EU?[29]			
	% Men	% Women	% Total
Yes	8.2	6.3	7.2
No	74.9	81.1	78.1
No answer	16.9	12.6	14.7

Figure 6 - Gender differentiation in trust

same line, increased education level leads to less support for EU membership.

There have been several reasons why the public opinion polls showed a negative attitude towards the Union. As expected, in the candidate countries the transformation process and acceptance of the EU *acquis* are painful undertakings. The adaptation period takes more time and effort than changing the legislation

Do you trust the EU?[30]				
	% Primary School	% High School	% University	% Total
Yes	7.3	8.1	4.6	7.2
No	70.7	78.8	88.5	78.1
No answer	22	13.1	6.9	14.7

Figure 7 - Effect of education on trust

What do you think about Turkey EU membership process – With which of the following statements would you agree?[31]				
	% Primary School	% High School	% University	% Total
Turkey should become an EU member	24.7	35.8	34.5	32.2
It does not matter whether Turkey becomes a member or not	35.3	33.8	26.4	33
Turkey should not become a member	21.3	25	34.5	25.6
No answer	18.7	5.4	4.6	9.3

Figure 8 - Effect of education on seeing the EU as a must

In relation to the trust in the EU, public opinion shows that men, 29.9 percent, are less against the EU membership than women are, 36.2 per cent.[32] Also, in the

and harmonising it with the EU principles and rules. In the mean time, it is an expected outcome of this course of action to witness in the public opinion polls a drop in sympathy as regards the EU.

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[29] Ibid
[30] Ibid
[31] Ibid
[32] Ibid

The changes in the political and legal systems create a conflict of interests of the parties -public, civil society and economic actors- which in turn creates fluctuations in the support for the EU. Especially issues such as minority problems, terrorism, and religion which are sensitive and controversial create public debates centered on the EU and EU's demands. In the Turkish case, examples of these debates may be seen in the amendments required in the terrorism act, and minority rights, specifically the Kurdish minority.

Secondly, the changes in the legal system, especially the possibility that the EU could express comments on decisions given by the Turkish courts, represented divisive issues in Turkey. Turkish public began to realise that the EU is not only an economic union, but it also holds political and legal aspects. The realisation of this fact raised questions as regards sovereignty and independence. As observed in the demonstrations, people focused on these two phenomena which are seen against the existence of the republic.

The press is playing a more active role after the Helsinki Summit. The effect that intensive media coverage on EU topics and EU itself bears on the people cannot be underestimated. The news, covering political developments as well as statements by the EU member state leaders, focus on the public opinion polls in the EU and generate public debate in Turkey. The negative outcomes of the public opinion polls in the EU member states as regards Turkish accession highly influence the Turkish polls.

More essentially however, the Cyprus issue has had a crucial effect on the public in Turkey. As detailed above, accession of the Republic of Cyprus, although it has been divided, created a very negative opinion in the Turkish public about the EU. Cyprus is seen as a national security matter, and issues related to national security, such as indivisibility, sovereignty and minority rights added to an already existing mistrust towards the European states and generated low public support for the Union.

All in all, it is believed that the trust issue is the leading problem in the relations of Turkey with the EU. In Turkey, a state which was founded after a war against the European states, the continued fear of "the other" and the subsequent references to the Ottoman Empire, World War I and the Independence War, lower public support as regards EU accession. It is believed therefore that public support may only be boosted with the establishment of trust between these two entities.

Conclusion

Our investigation of public opinion in the EU and Turkey, respectively, confirms that two distinct discourses are taking place. The debate in Turkey is centred on rather different issues than those that preoccupy the public in the EU. When examining public opinion in Turkey, what was immediately obvious was the extent to which support for Turkish membership of the EU has drained away in the last few years. Whereas we saw that 76% of Turks supported membership in 2002, this figure had dropped to 57% in 2006 (Fig. 2). It is true to say that a similar decline has been seen in other EU candidate countries, as negotiations

get under way and public opinion tends to become more critical as the realities of membership begin to come into focus. However, in the Turkish case, this explanation is not sufficient, partly because cynicism about the *idea* of membership has begun to surface, and partly because the negotiations have not, in any case, progressed to a point where detailed implications of membership are popularly understood. Disillusionment with the idea of Turkey *needing* to be a member of the EU has increased: in 2002, 56 percent thought Turkey should be a member; in 2006 this had dropped to 32 percent. Likewise, those thinking that it 'does not matter' if Turkey joins the EU or not, rose from 15 percent in 2002 to 33 percent in 2006. This apathy towards EU membership makes life difficult for any government in Turkey wishing to pursue it. While it could be argued that apathy in Turkish public opinion strengthens the hand of Turkish negotiators, what seems more likely is that EU governments will exploit the apathy to their own advantage. It will certainly make it easier for governments in France or Germany to justify a lukewarm reciprocity in negotiations.

Our investigation of public opinion in the EU revealed a number of contrasting implications. Firstly, opinion generally has hardened against Turkish accession.

This can generally, if inaccurately, be attributed to separate, but connected, problems of 'enlargement fatigue' and 'absorption capacity'. Secondly, there is a wide gap in some EU member states between government policy and public opinion, on Turkish accession: Greece being a good example. Thirdly, there is also a wide divergence between levels of support for Turkey among the EU member states: we noted strong support for Turkish accession in Hungary and Britain; and strong opposition in Austria and France. This unevenness in support for Turkish accession is made more problematic by the variety of motivations that lie behind it. It is difficult to imagine the European Commission, for example, being able easily to construct a coherent 'information policy' on Turkish accession that would resonate comfortably with the publics of all the member-states. Fourthly, and most crucially, we have argued that in the EU, but not in Turkey, the debate is not about the merits or otherwise of Turkey *qua* Turkey. Instead the debate is about more fundamental questions relating to the future shape of the European Union. In a sense, Turkish accession is being used as a proxy to discuss problems internal to some member-states, as well as divergent visions of where the EU is going.

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THE EUROPEAN UNION BRINGS A BALANCE OF POWER IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

Cristian Niţoiu*

Abstract. *The Black Sea Region is clearly in a transition period, and Romanian policy markers will have to be very careful assessing this situation and stating their position. US ambitions for NATO clearly conflict with French ambitions for the EU. Furthermore, even though most EU-NATO members find themselves caught in the middle, the current zero-sum nature of NATO-EU relations seems to portend continuing turmoil on the road ahead, to the detriment of both organizations and of transatlantic relations more generally. The paper analyses the way in which the European Union changed the national interests of the states of the Back Sea Region. The key point of these transformations is set to be the "five-day war" of August 2008.*

Keywords: *Black Sea Region, national interest, EU foreign relations*
JEL classification: *International Relations.*

Introduction

The geopolitics of the Black Sea is still in a quest for stability after the 1989-91 turning of the tide. Bulgaria's and Romania's admission into NATO and the European Union has been a major factor in altering the regional balance of power. But the situation is not at all static. The political future of the EU will be the key variable of this development. An increased European integration added to a strong Euro-American relationship would probably contribute to diminishing competition between great powers, and in a stronger Western hold on the area, at the expense of Russian ambitions. But German foreign policy is now more independent, and considered upon strategic partnerships with Russia rather than upon a "Euro-Atlantic community," could reenact a serious intra-Western competition. This will then summon Sofia and Bucharest to make sensible choices.

The Black Sea Region is clearly in a transition period, and Romanian policy markers will have to be very careful assessing this situation and stating their position. US ambitions for NATO clearly conflict with French ambitions for the EU. Furthermore, even though most EU NATO members find themselves caught in the middle, the current zero-sum nature of NATO-EU relations seems to portend continuing turmoil on the road ahead, to the detriment of both organizations and of transatlantic relations more generally. Romania seems to be one of those states

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caught in the middle. Romania has a past of strong and very good relations with the French, but the seamless approach towards the US from the Romanians has weakened them. In fact, in February 2003, the French President Jacques Chirac overtly criticised the "imprudent" move of the two EU candidates, Romania and Bulgaria, mainly because it strongly complicated Paris' delicate anti-war diplomacy of the moment, but also because France felt it was losing influence over the EU "newcomers." It should not be forgotten that France consistently backed Bucharest's application for EU and NATO membership since the 1990s, and that historical ties between France and Romania have always been particularly strong. Paris has even accepted Bucharest as a member of the francophone countries, and the clear pro-American orientation of the new Romanian rulers disappointed France.

The main argument developed in this article is that the latest expansion of the European Union toward Bulgaria and Romania has changed the national interest of the states in the Black Sea Region, creating here a balance of power. First I will employ an analysis of national interest in the Black Sea Region, with an emphasis on Romania. From a rather classical perspective offered by Morgenthau, the direct interest in the region is more important than EU ties and membership. On the other hand, liberal intergovernmentalism shows that there are only a few cases in which geopolitical factors manage to short-circuit European Integration in a holistic understanding. Only economic related issues that stir up rivalries between member states can promote more or less direct changes of national interest. After setting up the theoretical ground, I will

explore Romania's policy and initiatives in the region. Two important EU policies (the Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership) that affect the Union's relations and national interest with its Eastern neighbours will be thoughtfully discussed. An important moment, maybe the most significant event after the fall of the Soviet Union, in the logic of the policies employed in the region is the "Five-Day war" of August 2008. Not only did it underscore Russia's interest, but it established the European Union as a major actor in the region. After the August war the European Union deals with its Eastern members as a unified group, not as before through individual member states.

National Interest

Morgenthau defines two levels concerning national interest, one primary and one secondary (Morgenthau 1951:22). In order to preserve the first (the nation's survival or security of the nation), there must be no question about going all the way. Secondary level interests are not so easy to define, because they often involve negotiation or compromise. Although they are positioned outside sovereignty, they can evolve in the minds of statesmen into primordial interests. Mutually advantageous deals can be struck, if an interest is secondary. They may be understood as appeasement.

Besides primary and secondary, Morgenthau differentiates between specific and general interests, temporary and permanent interests (Morgenthau 1951:25). General interests are applied in a positive manner concerning a large geographic area, a large number of nations, or several specific fields. Permanent interests are relatively constant over a long period of time. A nation might

choose at a certain moment a specific interest and then abandon it; these kinds of interests are variable in time. Specific interests are closely defined in time or space and often are the logical outgrowth of general interests. Thus, in Morgenthau's view a throughout description of national interest must include three kinds of adjectives: as primary, permanent, and specific, or secondary, temporary and general.

National Interest		Romania/ Bulgaria	Russia	Black Sea Synergy States	EU (including national interest of member states)
Importance	Vital	No threats to the national territory.	No threats to Russia's role as main economic player in the region (gas supplier).	No threats to the national territory.	No threats to the national states' territory. Protection of peace and stability.
	Secondary	Protection of Romanian citizens in Moldova and Ukraine.	Regaining its traditional position of influence in the region.	Good relations/ integration with/in Europe.	Establishing the EU as a major political player in the Region.
Duration	Permanent	Friendly relations with neighbors.	Maintaining and affirming its position as leader in the region.	Avoiding Russia's supposed hegemonic intentions.	Strong and friendly relations with Russia.
	Temporary	Attaining leadership position in the Region.	Support for the European Union's bid as a major actor in the international system.	Lack of support for EU initiatives that do not offer membership prospects.	Support for individual member states' initiatives (until the Five-Day war).
Specificity	General	Deepening the European integration process.	Keeping Europe under a Russian gas monopole.	Consolidation of democracy in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus.	Consolidation of democracy in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus.
	Specific	Acquiring diplomatic levers through initiatives.	Acquiring support from the European Union in relation to the United States.	Strong ties with individual EU member states.	Acquiring diplomatic levers through initiatives (Poland, Sweden, Germany, Austria, and Czech Republic).

Table 1. National interests in the Black Sea Region

Liberal theories of international relations affirm that "the foreign policy goals of national governments vary in response to shifting pressure from domestic social groups, whose preferences are aggregated through political institutions" (Moravcsik 1993: 481). The national interests of states are neither fixed nor uniform; they vary among states and within the same state across time and issues according to issue-specific societal interdependence and domestic institutions. Liberal intergovernmentalism considers the state as a unitary actor because it assumes that domestic political bargaining, representation, and diplomacy generates a consistent preference function. Thus, by considering the state as a unitary actor, liberal intergovernmentalism is the European integration theory that has the greatest explanatory power in relation to national interest.

The empirical analysis employed by Moravcsik established that the preferences of national governments that stemmed form European integration have mainly reflected concrete economic interests rather than other general concerns like security or European ideals. Concrete preferences emerged also from a process of domestic conflict in which specific sectoral interests, adjustment costs and, sometimes, geopolitical concerns played an important role (Moravcsik 1998: 3.)

From a liberal intergovernmentalist standpoint, geopolitical or ideological interests seem to have been decisive in some cases, particularly, where governments lack intense economic interest. This could explain why the Eastern Partnership has seen some criticism from countries such as Bulgaria and Romania who do not want to see the Union's Black Sea Synergy undermined and want to be a part of any initiative that involves the region (Velizade 2009). But the Czech Republic, which sits at the EU's helm in 2009, has thrown its weight behind the Polish-Swedish policy initiative and cast a shadow on the Romania and Bulgaria's wishes to be the EU portal to the region.

Romanian Initiatives

In the line of Romanian initiatives vis-à-vis the Black Sea, we have to note one proposed by a former Foreign Affairs Minister, Mihai Răzvan Ungureanu. At the reunion of the General Affairs and External Relations in January 2007, the first in which Romania participated as member state, the Romanian Foreign Affairs Minister said that there is a need for defining a more preeminent Eastern dimension to the ENP. This, in consequence, would confirm the European Union's commitment to the Black Sea Region. According to EUexpands.com, Minister Ungureanu suggested the implementation of a so-called "Bucharest Process", which would come to the aid of the state in this region[1].

The Carpathian countries initiatives were not always in accordance with sea neighbours interests. Matthew J. Bryza, the American Deputy Undersecretary of State, reckons Romania's policy, as wonderful. Romania, as a new member of the European Union, wants to exercise the position of leader in the Black Sea Region. Bryza draws the attention to the

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[1] *Euractiv*, 12 April 2007; http://www.euractiv.ro/uniunea-europeana/articles|displayArticle/articleID_9936/Regiune.html, 11 March 2009

fact that Romania needs to cooperate more closely with Turkey, the other NATO big state. These two countries have to conform to each other.

"It is wonderful that Romania wants to be a strong leader, with an ex-sailor on the Black Sea as president, who feels and breaths the Black Sea breeze. There are other states that want to achieve that position, that's why Turkey and Romania have to work together for a common vision. I think that things in this direction are much better now than some years ago, when Turkey was more sensible and worried of what was happening in Iraq and in the Kurdish zone and in relation with NATO's intend of bringing ships in the Black Sea. At that time, when Romania was promoting so actively NATO's role at the Black Sea, the relations with Turkey were tensed even more. It isn't that Romania shouldn't articulate its points of view, but it is better that the two allies share a common vision. Romania must seek her interest of being a regional leader, but it is very important that this will happen in the context of good relation with its neighbours" (Pop 2007).

The accession of Romania and Bulgaria incorporated two Black Sea states and thus brought the EU to the shores of the Black Sea. This implied a more engaging EU in regional cooperation[2]. Romania, with its 22-million strong population, is particularly well-placed for a greater role, and has also worked toward this aim in the past.

As the Romanian government appears determined in seeking to develop a vision on the Black Sea, Romanian analysts, not tied to government bodies, express a somewhat more gloomy view of Romanian capabilities for bringing the topic of the Black Sea Region to the European Union's agenda. Many say that present Romanian attitudes towards the Black Sea cover a far too broad and vague range of issues. Romania would gain credibility and space of maneuver if it chooses to focus on fewer, but more concrete issues that can be more easily translated into concrete projects. Doubts can be raised to whether Romanian administrative capacity is capable of living up to the ambitious ideas elaborated by the government. Furthermore, the question is whether skepticism toward BSEC would not be best addressed by steps to strengthen the organisation, rather than create parallel ventures.

EU officials share doubts of Romania's capabilities, and stress that Romania's main obligation upon joining the EU is developing the security of its external borders. It may be argued whether Romania has the capabilities to promote economical exchange across the European Union's external border, while at the same time adhering to EU security requirements. The success of regional initiatives, such as the Black Sea Forum, was dependent on a delicate balancing act where the interests of key players Russia and Turkey must be accommodated. Romania accordingly sought to utilise all diplomatic means available to ensure Russian participation, and the Black Sea Forum agenda was

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[2] *European Voice,* 12 April 2007; http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/imported/the-eu-must-feel-at-home-by-the-hospitable-sea/57199.aspx, 15 March 2009.

designed specifically not to be offensive to Russia. However, these efforts did not prove sufficient and the Black Sea Forum experience constitutes an example of the difficulties present in promoting cooperation initiatives by small actors in the region.

Black Sea Synergy and Eastern Partnership

We have to ask a critical question. Can the creation of a sound policy for the Black Sea Region help implement democracy, development and Europeanisation to the East? It is very hard to give a clear answer to such a question. But there are important advantages of regional initiatives seen in the previous attempts to create a region out of the countries around the Black Sea. Alina Mungiu Pippidi outlines some:

• "The ability to focus more Western attention if a group of countries of low interest are packed into one region whose profile is raised by an awareness campaign.
• The simplification of resource mobilisation if one framework is offered instead of many. This was the logic behind the Balkan Stability Pact.
• The easier spread of best practices from the most developed part of the region to the less developed" (Pippidi, 2006).

The European Union envisages four types of goals at the Black Sea Region. These include: promoting of stability and conflict resolution, promoting democratic institutions and the rule of law, tackling terrorism and corruption (including migration issues), and providing a safer future for Europe in terms of energy supply. The accession

to the EU in 2007 of Romania and Bulgaria, which both border the Black Sea, has given the European front a bigger stake in the region's stability. The Black Sea Synergy put together under the European Neighborhood Policy all of this challenges and goals of the European Union (Wielaard 2007).

The European Commission's report on the first year of implementation of the Black Sea Synergy salutes the progress that has been made under the umbrella of this programme:

"The initial results of the Black Sea Synergy reveal the practical utility and the potential of this new EU regional policy approach. The launch phase of the Synergy has been completed and implementation has begun. Participants favour the establishment of a long-term Black Sea cooperation process and have formulated converging ideas about its content and arrangements. Experience in the first year also demonstrates that the development of EU-supported Black Sea regional cooperation is a process taking place in a complex environment. Continued progress requires the consistent and active involvement of a growing number of actors, including both Member States and Black Sea partners. As in the first year, the Commission will be ready to contribute to this important work" (European Commission 2008a).

According to a report of the International Center for Black Sea Studies, the Black Sea Synergy had created a couple of positive effects. First of all, it reinforced the Europeanisation process by putting forward clear incentives

and delivering concrete benchmarks. Secondly, the Black Sea Synergy singularised and put the region on the map of the European Union as policy area. In this sense, it promoted regional cooperation and brought together, maybe for the first time, all the major political actors and other key stakeholders (Yakis 2008: 5).

On the other hand, the Eastern Partnership grants a more enhanced role to bilateral relations, thus putting at least some of the partners on the path to EU membership. Also it has increased funding, from € 450 million in 2008 to € 785 million in 2013 (Devrim, Schulz 2009). That is why many argue that the Eastern Partnership serves as a quasi pre-accession strategy document.

European officials often underscore the fact that the Eastern Partnership will not overlap with the Black Sea Synergy. Moreover, the two programmes address different issues. The Eastern Partnership was born from the standing fact that the EU needs to have enhanced ties with its Eastern neighbours. This will be done through a bilateral track, but bearing in mind the multilateral stake. The partnership will be suited to each country's desire. In this sense it is very important to provide ownership for each country. The Eastern Partnership will enhance only some areas dealt by the Black Sea Synergy: economic ties, trade issues, political stability and energy security. These fields of action are only one of the aspects that differentiate the two programs. While it focuses on cross border and multilateral cooperation, the Black Sea Synergy is suited to operate in Russia and Turkey and one of its political goals is tending to the frozen conflicts. On the other hand the Eastern Partnership does not say anything about Turkey or frozen conflicts, but it gladly invites Russia to join it (European Commission 2008b).

All the countries in the Black Sea Region have complained about the form and substance of the Eastern Partnership. The new EU policy is clearly changing national interests, and the May 2009 summit in Prague, is going to formalise this course of event. When it comes to Russia, its complaints are just a rhetorical exercise, and are not grounded in an attempt to understand the Eastern Partnership (Polkhov 2008). The EU envisions a stable, democratic and prosperous neighbourhood, objectives that are not at all anti-Russian.

Moldova and all other states to which the Eastern Partnership applies have argued that such a policy exclude them from an actual integration track. The membership perspective is probably the most significant driving force of domestic reforms for nowadays "new" EU member states. Although the Eastern Partnership improves this perspective it clearly marks a step forward from the strategy of strict association employed by with the Black Sea Synergy. Moreover, the integration strategy used for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe has become trivial due to the fact that the states in the Black Sea Region need even wider and deeper reforms.

It is the new EU member states that seem to have a more critical attitude toward Russia, and propose a tougher stance, or say, a united position in EU-Russian relations. On the other hand, older and established members do not wish to oppose Russia in matters that do not resonate with their broadly defined national interest. Since the development of the European Neighbourhood Policy, many member states have stated that the

European Union needs to apply a degree "hard power". This means that the EU has arrived to the conclusion that what it considers to be "soft power" policy may look as policy of appeasement, or Russia first policy (Ahlin 2006). But, dangers of actual anti-Moscow initiatives have the potential of alienating the states of the Black Sea Region.

Moldovan officials' complaints against the Eastern Partnership were not based on the fears that it is an anti-Russian initiative[3]. Indeed in Moldova the Eastern Partnership did not get the upper hand in the debate, but not because it would allegedly be anti-Russian, but mainly due to the fact that Moldova thinks that accepting this initiative will slow down its progress of European integration by associating it with the Southern Caucasus. Moldova's domestic scene offers its own incentives for such a negative attitude toward the Eastern Partnership. Both the Communist government and most pro-European political parties are equally skeptical of the Eastern Partnership. Moreover, a part of the opposition has criticised the government for showing to much openness toward this new EU initiative.

The "Five Day War"

The focus on the many challenges and risks which bound in the region has been sharpened by the Georgian crisis. Moreover the war with Russia has shown, yet again, that the main states capable of achieving and maintaining peace and stability in the region are the regional stakeholders.

After the fall of the soviet regime, Russia was highly disoriented. The 1990s with the wavering leadership of Gorbachev sharpened the sense of humiliation that the Russian people after losing their superpower position. Putin capitalised on this sentiment of inferiority felt throughout Russia and managed with an iron hand leadership to flesh the countries muscles. In addition, Russian power and political surge in the international system was influenced by the rise of oil prices. Consequently, the end of Russian convalescence meant that all the spheres of influence lost with the dismemberment of the Soviet Union had to be recaptured. Former soviet republics became the first in line for a more or less indirect offensive from Moscow, and the Saakashvili regime felt the full frontal Russian power.

The Russian Federation felt that the time was right to send to the international a strong signal that it meant business and one should try to go near its back yard. Additionally, Russia was disturbed by the United states attempts to deploy air defense shield in Poland and the Czech Republic and the talk in Brussels of future interventions of the EU made under the CFSP (Stewart 2008:1). All of these new developments made Russia truly aware of the fact that its hegemonic position in the Black Sea Region was being questioned.

Many analysts have argued that the Georgian war might signal a return of power politics employed in the past, while others see it as *sui generis* case. But one clear conclusion can be drawn from last August events, the Black Sea Region packs a great deal of instability,

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[3] *Moldova.org,* 27 February 2009; http://politicom.moldova.org/news/voronin-eastern-partnership-is-encircling-russia-like-a-ring-186084-eng.html, 15 March 2009.

that, if not properly contained through the diplomatic efforts of the European Union and the regional actors involved, can spread not only to the entire region but engorge the neighbouring areas.

It can be argued that the EU at some point perceived itself as a balancer, a mediator in the region, due to the membership of three important regional actors: Greece, Romania and Bulgaria. Russia seemed more open than the United States to recognise the role of the EU as major security actor in the international system. At the signing of final peace accord of the "Five-Day war", Russian Foreign Affairs Minister, Serghei Lavrov requested that all the three leaders of the European Union be present: Mr. Barosso, the President of the European Commission, Mr. Solana, the EU Representative on CFSP and French presidency of the Council of the EU, led by French President Nicolas Sarkozy[4]. This was for the first time when all three leaders were dealing together with an important foreign policy issue. The August events have also demonstrated, if not strengthened the idea that the major players of the Black Sea basin are the Russian Federation and Turkey. In this sense, a project that is drawn up without full cooperation since the outset with these two countries carries the risk of less cooperation from them.

Recently President Saakashvili argued that "Romania must become the leader of European integration for the whole Black Sea Region – Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and then Azerbaijan and Armenia[5]". This is clear evidence that national interests in the Black Sea Region were transformed by the "Five-Day war" as the EU no longer wishes to implement policies in the region through individual member states. Actually, Romania and Bulgaria perceiving this new trend have called on the United Nations to play an enhanced role in promoting democracy and regional peace and stability across the Black Sea area, saying that the recent conflict in Georgia signaled some of the challenges the region face (Leviev-Sawyer 2008). The national interest of Romania after the events in Georgia was underscored by former Romanian Prime Minister, Călin Popescu Tăriceanu:

"Our position as member of the European Union is not a purpose in itself, but an instrument serving the fundamental interests of Romanian society. We need the European Union to be powerful on a global level, economically competitive and politically respected, capable of taking action on the backdrop of economic challenges doubled by tension in international relations.[6]"

Conclusions

There is no doubt that the "five-day war" between Russia and Georgia in August 2008 was the most significant event in the Black Sea region since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Georgian developments signaled that the international system has changed, in the sense that politics is based now on

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[4] *Kommersant*, 8 September 2008; http://www.kommersant.com/p1022961/r_538/Russia_Georgia_conflict_EU_/, 3 June 2009.

[5] *Ziua*, 9 April 2009; http://www.ziua.ro/news.php?data=2009-04-09&id=25361, 21 April 2009.

[6] *Mediafax*, 2 September 2008; http://www.mediafax.ro/engleza/romania-to-participate-in-post-conflict-reconstruction-of-georgia-pm.html?6966%3B3115809, 15 April 2008.

interest, and values are losing momentum. An evidence of this is that the China issue did not bread much debate in the recent US elections. This interest driven world is at the same time highly multipolar, but not in the traditional way. States now do not live anymore in the security dilemma, in the sense they did some decades ago. Actually the international system is emerging to be one full of cooperation, based on the interest of every state. And in this atmosphere, the European continent presents itself as being bipolar, with Brussels and Moscow as its centers. But while the EU has the economic upper hand, Russia is keener on the political level. This has been proved by the discrepancy in response time during the August crisis. Judging by all of these facts most of the participants agreed that in external relations the EU must not be viewed as an important actor bent only on soft power. Political issues, frozen conflicts, energy security and such problems must be dealt with if the EU wants to be successful in the region.

New EU policies in the Black Sea Region, like the Eastern Partnership will further transform national interest. At least for the moment most member states do view this new policy as a potential success, because it implies only soft measures that are not financially supported by many EU members, which are not the solid policies that the states in the area desire, and furthermore may make them band wagon alongside the EU. And moreover, the success of such an initiative must bear in mind the domestic situations of these sates, and from the drafted proposal it clearly does not: the trajectory of transition in Ukraine and Georgia; the same countries torn apart, one by political issues, the other by the war with Russia; possible sudden domestic change in Belarus; and, Armenia not wishing to follow a Western path.

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HUNGARIAN-SLOVAK "COLD WAR" AND THE QUESTION OF "HUNGARIANS ABROAD" IN HUNGARY-SLOVAKIA RELATIONS

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Abstract. *The question of EU relations with countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) has been widely researched and debated both in political circles and the academia, especially in the light of the EU accession. Such issues as human rights, including minority rights, have been examined in relation to the states' compliance with the Copenhagen criteria. However, the issue of minority rights (in particular, their prominence in bilateral relations of states) after accession has not received much scholarly attention. Hungary and Slovakia, two post-Communist states of CEE, aspired for EU membership for a number of reasons, one of which being the EU potential in bringing societal stability to these countries; both joined the European Union in 2004. The relations between these two countries, however, have not improved, they even worsened. This article seeks to examine the question of worsening relations between Hungary and Slovakia in relation to the issue of minority rights. It argues that an inadequate and inconsistent EU approach to minority rights (generally considered a domestic question) can lead to further societal instability in these two countries. Re-conceptualization of the EU approach to minority rights is necessary, if the EU is to remain the stabilizing power in the CEE.*

Keywords: *minority rights, EU accession*

Introduction

Dissolution of the former Soviet Union and the whole Communist bloc in the 1990s was accompanied by rising tensions among various ethnic groups, by increasing separatist sentiments, radicalization of groups making frequent appeals to ethnic and religious differences, "historical" and territorial injustices in order to mobilize the society. Ideas of national revival were frequently expressed in the CEE states and ex-USSR, where questions of national history and especially issues of the "loss of former greatness", mutual grievances and "historical injustice" were ardently debated. Open military confrontation in the former Yugoslavia complicated the already unstable situation, risking the spill-over of the conflict into the neighboring states.

Starting with the end of the 1980s, protection of ethnic Hungarians in the neighboring states becomes one of Hungary's top foreign policy priorities. There were fears of increasing anti-Hungarian sentiments in Vojvodina

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(north-east Serbia), where around 300,000 ethnic Hungarians resided[1], as well as concerns regarding the ill-treatment of Romanian Hungarians. The situation in neighbouring Slovakia was complicated as well. Slovakia became independent in 1993, which led Hungary to express its disapproval of Slovakia's independence, since it was believed that a federal state could better protect Hungarian minority against aggressive nationalistic sentiments in Slovakia.[2]

A lot of hopes were placed on Hungary's prospective membership in the European Union. EU membership was believed to lead to the normalization of Hungary's relations with its neighbors and to general stability in the region.

The question of EU relations with the CEE states, especially in the pre-2004 period, has been the object of extensive literature.[3] Human rights protection in the CEE, and in particular the issue of minority rights, has been researched in relation to applicant states' compliance with the so-called *Copenhagen criteria*, adopted by the European Union in 1993.[4] The legality and potential destabilizing effect of the "Status Law" adopted in Hungary in 2001 have been also widely researched. However, the question of minority rights protection in the aftermath of EU enlargement (in particular, its prominence in bilateral relations of states) has not received much scholarly attention. Both Hungary and Slovakia regarded the EU as an institution capable of bringing societal stability. Both states became members in 2004. However, since 2004 relations between these two countries have not improved, even worsened, which led György Schöpflin to name this situation „a cold war".[5] Worsening Hungary-Slovakia relations became a subject of hot discussions both in the media and in political circles. Clashes between Hungarians and Slovaks, fights during football matches, continue in

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[1] According to different estimates, Hungary received around 100,000 refugees from the former Yugoslavia, out of which 30,000 were ethnic Hungarians. See Marstern, Sigurd and Sven Gunnar Simonsen, 'The Hungarians Outside Hungary', PRIO- International Peace Research Institute, Oslo. Available at
www.geocities.com/ihunsor/dokumentumok/prioonhungary.htm?200921, last accessed 21 January 2009.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] См., например, Cowles, Maria Green, James Caporaso and Thomas Risse (2001), *Transforming Europe: Europeanization and Domestic Change*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press; Fink-Hafner, Danica (2007), 'Europeanization in Managing EU Affairs: Between Divergence and Convergence, a Comparative Study of Estonia, Hungary and Slovenia', *Public Administration*, Vol. 85 (No.3); pp. 805-828; Pridham, Geoffrey (2001), 'EU Accession and Domestic Politics: Policy Consensus and Interactive Dynamics in Central and Eastern Europe', *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, Vol. 1 (No.1); pp. 49-74; Sadurski, Wojciech (2004), 'Accession's Democracy Dividend: The Impact of the EU Enlargement upon Democracy in the New Member States of Central and Eastern Europe', *European Law Journal*, Vol. 10 (No. 4); pp. 371-401; Sedelmeier, Ulrich and Helen Wallace (2000), 'Eastern Enlargement. Strategy or Second Thoughts?' in: Wallace, Helen and William Wallace (eds.), *Policy-Making in the European Union*. Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press; pp. 427-460; Williams, Margit B. (2001), 'Exporting the Democracy Deficit. Hungary's Experience with EU Integration', *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 48 (No.1); p. 29.

[4] Ram, Melanie H. (2003), 'Democratization Through European Integration: The Case of Minority Rights in the Czech Republic and Romania', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Vol. 38, No. 2; pp. 28-56; Pentassuglia, Gaetano (2001), 'The EU and the Protection of Minorities: the Case of Eastern Europe', *European Journal of International Law*, Vol.12, No. 1; pp. 3-38.

[5] Schöpflin, György (2009). 'The Slovak-Hungarian 'cold war'. *EUObserver*, 14 January 2009, available at http://euobserver.com/9/27404, last accessed 20 January 2009.

both Hungary and Slovakia.[6] Politicians keep accusing the neighbouring state in human rights violations.

This article seeks to demonstrate that the question of worsening relations between Hungary and Slovakia in relation to minority rights should be viewed within a broader context of minority rights question within the EU, namely, an inadequate and inconsistent EU approach to minority rights (generally considered a domestic question). Compliance with the Copenhagen criteria did help in settling certain controversial issues, such as ensuring linguistic rights to minorities, the right to schooling, etc. However, re-conceptualization of the EU approach to minority rights is necessary, if the EU is to remain the stabilizing power in the CEE.[7]

The Question of the Hungarian minority in context

In 1920, after the Trianon Peace Treaty was signed,[8] Hungary accepted the loss of the empire and was deprived of two-thirds of its pre-war territory, around 3 million ethnic Hungarians finding themselves outside Hungary (around 25% of the total population). The majority of Hungarians were in Vojvodina (Serbia), southern Slovakia and Transylvania (Romania). Since that time, the issue of the Hungarians outside

Hungary becomes one of the most important questions of Hungary's foreign policy. In the interwar period, Hungary became an ally of Germany, hoping to regain the lost territory and succeeded in obtaining a part of Slovakia's territory in 1938-39, Northern Transylvania in 1940 while in 1941, after Germany's invasion of Yugoslavia, it annexed Vojvodina. After the end of WWII, the Trianon borders were re-established and ethnic Hungarians were again left outside Hungary. Due to Hungary's participation in WWII on the side of Nazi Germany, ethnic Hungarians often became the subject of discrimination, persecution and deportations.[9]

During the Communist era in Hungary, cultural relations with ethnic Hungarians were maintained, though cases of discrimination were usually silenced. In the 1980s, when the weakening government of Janos Kadár was increasingly criticized by the opposition forces, the question of protecting Hungarians abroad became one of the most important political issues. Dissidents-intellectuals started to criticize the government, claiming that it ignored human rights questions and it was silent as regards instances of discrimination against ethnic Hungarians abroad.[10] For popular dissidents, violation of rights of ethnic Hungarians becomes

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[6] Budapest Sun (2008) 'Scandalous Hungarian-Slovakian football match.' *Budapest Sun*, 16 November 2008. Available at http://www.budapestsun.com/news/-scandalous-hunagarian-slovakian-football-match-, last accessed 1 December 2008.

[7] This article limits itself to the question of Hungarian minorities in Slovakia only, and does not touch upon other controversial issues in the Region such as Roma rights, which requires separate research.

[8] Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and Hungary and Protocol and Declaration, Signed at Trianon, 4 June 1920. Available at http://www.lib.byu.udu/~rdh/wwi/versa/tri1.htm, last accessed 2 March 2009.

[9] For more, see, for instance, Vago, Raphael (1989). *The Grandchildren of Trianon: Hungary and the Hungarian Minority in the Communist States*. Boulder: East European Monographs, pp. 5-42.

[10] See, for instance, János Kis (1989). *Politics in Hungary: For a Democratic Alternative*, trans. Gábor J. Follinus. Boulder: Social Science Monographs, Columbia University Press.

a matter of "betrayal of the Hungarian nation." In 1988, demonstrations start in Hungary, as a form of protest against alleged forced relocation of ethnic Hungarians in Romania. Demonstrations were accompanied by expressions of discontent with the regime.

It does not seem surprising that the first post-Communist government, a coalition headed by the center-right Hungarian Democratic Forum (*Magyar Demokrata Fórum*, *MDF*), began to openly address the issue of Hungarians outside Hungary. Debates about the protection of rights of Hungarians abroad and the amendment by Hungary of its 1949 Constitution led other post-Soviet states to start discussions on the issue of minority rights and to introduce amendments into their Constitution as well.[11] Provisions concerning protection of rights of ethnic kin abroad were introduced in Croatia, Ukraine, Slovenia, Poland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and others.[12] In 1990 the Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall made a controversial statement that he was 'in spirit' the prime minister of Hungarians throughout the world (including the 5 million residing outside Hungary's borders).[13] This statement infuriated Yugoslavia, which was at the time at the verge of dissolution and feared the emergence of break-away sentiments in Vojevodina. Other neighboring states were equally outraged. Later the Hungarian government attempted to remedy the situation by specifying that Hungary did not have territorial claims to its neighbors, however, it felt obliged to protect its ethnic kin abroad. Antall specified that, "[we] never said that the minority question was the only factor in interstate relations, but we find it impossible to have good relations with a country that mistreats its Hungarian minority."[14] He also called for political autonomy for ethnic Hungarians in the neighboring states. Hungarian government established active contacts with organizations representing ethnic Hungarians, which gave them influence (if unofficial) over Hungary's policy-making, that involved their interests as well as Hungary's relations with the neighboring states.[15] In 1991, Hungary established bilateral relations with Ukraine. However, it failed to do so with Romania and Slovakia, states where the largest number of ethnic Hungarians resided.

The coalition government headed by Prime Minister Gyula Horn (1994-1998), consisting of Hungarian Socialist Party (*Magyar Szocialista Párt*, *MSZP*) and Union of Free Democrats- Hungarian Liberal Party (*Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége- a Magyar Liberális Párt*, *SZDSZ*) affirmed their commitment to Antall's policy in relation to ethnic

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[11] See Article 6.3 of the Hungarian Constitution, www.legislationonline.org

[12] In 1991 Croatia, Slovenia, Romania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (and later Ukraine and Poland) introduced clauses into their Constitutions, related to minority rights protection. For more, see Venice Commission (2001). *Report on the Preferential Treatment of National Minorities by Their Kin-State: Adapted by the Venice Commission at its 48th Plenary Meeting, Venice, 19-20 October 2001, Council of Europe.*

[13] Quoted in Jenne, Erin (2004). 'A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog that Did not Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia'. *International Studies Quarterly* 48, p. 740.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Butler, Eamonn (2007), '*Hungary and the European Union: The Political Implications of Societal Security Prmotion*', Europe-Asia Studies, Vol. 59, No. 7; p. 1121.

Hungarians abroad, but criticized Antall's administration for excessive emphasis of the problem. Horn's government believed that since Hungary aspired for NATO and EU membership, excessive reference to minority questions could be counterproductive and could lead to complications with these two organizations. Thus, it was decided to continue developing cultural links with ethnic Hungarians, but to denounce all possible territorial claims. In 1995 Hungary signed a bilateral peace treaty with Slovakia, which confirmed the legitimacy of existing borders (which led the opposition to criticize the government for betraying the interests of ethnic Hungarians for the sake of European integration).[16]

In Article 15 the peace treaty touches upon the question of minority rights protection (Hungarian minority in Slovakia and Slovak minority in Hungary). It is stipulated that minorities have the right to participate in decision-making both at the state and regional levels, to use their native language in public and private spheres, to have equal access to the media, the right to sustain their cultural traditions. However, the problem was that Slovaks in Hungary constituted around 2% of the total population, while there were around 9.7% of Hungarians in Slovakia.[17] The Slovak Parliament ratified the treaty in March 1996. It came forward with a unilateral declaration, however, that the treaty did not presuppose "collective autonomy" for the Hungarian population of Slovakia. The Hungarian government refused to recognize the validity of this declaration. In 1996, the Hungarian government and the leaders of ethnic Hungarians abroad signed a communiqué, where they called for autonomy for ethnic Hungarians. This communiqué led to Slovak protests and accusations that Hungary was making attempts at tampering with Slovakia's territorial sovereignty and at de-stabilizing the situation in the region. In 1996 Slovakia passed a law by which the Slovak language became the only official language of the country and imposed limitations on the usage of other languages in the public life (which in turn led Hungary to accuse Slovakia of violating the 1995 peace treaty).[18]

In 1998, the center-right FIDESZ (*Magyar Polgári Szövetség*) under the leadership of Victor Orbán won the parliamentary elections. At the time it was already impossible to ignore the issue of Hungarians abroad, an issue that had become an intrinsic part of the country's foreign policy. In the period 1998-2002, Orbán suggested a number of laws which would give certain educational and other benefits to ethnic Hungarians abroad, causing criticism on the part of Slovakia, Romania and the Council of Europe. One of the controversial laws was the so-called "Law Concerning Hungarians Living in Neighboring Countries" (or otherwise known as "Status law" or "Benefits law"), passed in 2001 with an overwhelming 92% of the votes.[19]

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[16] Ibid, стр. 1121.

[17] The Situation of Hungarians in Slovakia in 2006', Government Office for Hungarian Minorities Abroad, available at www.hhrf.org/htmh/en/printable_version.php, last accessed 21 January 2009.

[18] Binnendijk, Hans and Jeffrey Simon (1996). '*Hungary's 'Near Abroad'*. Available at www.ndu.edu/inss/Strforum/SF_93/forum93.html, last accessed 21 January 2009.

[19] Law Concerning Hungarians Living in Neighboring Countries, no. LXII of 2001. Available at http://www.mfa.gov.hu/NR/rdonlyres/9F859809-1496-4602-9337-252F438BBA5B/0/statustva.htm, last accessed 1 January 2009.

According to this law, ethnic Hungarians from Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Ukraine and Slovakia could claim certain benefits. In particular, they could receive a Hungarian identity card (after signing a written declaration claiming Hungarian identity and upon recommendation by ethnic Hungarian organizations). This card would make them subject to Hungarian laws and would entitle them to apply for temporary work permits, medical insurance and social benefits. The law also stipulated financial support for educational institutions in the neighbouring countries where the language of instruction was Hungarian. The law was supposedly meant to reduce the number of ethnic Hungarians working in Hungary illegally.[20]

Hungarian «Status Law» in Hungary-Slovakia relations

Adoption of the «Status law» led to a renewed wave of mutual accusations between Slovakia and Hungary. In February 2002, Slovakia declared that this law contravened European norms and called upon the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to make a review of it. The situation was exacerbated by Orbán's speech to the European Parliament, in which he stated that Hungary did not support the principle of collective guilt (since this principle was contradictory to the legal system of the EU) and thus, Slovakia and the Czech Republic should undertake steps to remedy the effects of the 1945 Beneš decrees (which were felt up to the present time).[21] Slovakia and the Czech Republic immediately accused Hungary for "opening up the issue of the Beneš decrees in Brussels" and stopped participating at the meetings of heads of state and government in the "Visegrad Four" group.[22]

The Law was criticized for contravening the EU Directive (2000/43/EC), which prohibited discrimination based on race or ethnicity. EU diplomats underlined the danger this law might entail: it could play "into the hands of political forces in neighbouring countries that are attempting to curb the rights of the ethnic Hungarian minority"; Hungarian opposition also said that "the law might in fact act against the interests of those it is trying to protect."[23] Criticism of the law was most actively voiced in Romania and Slovakia.

After Hungary and Slovakia joined the EU in 2004, the law was declared void in relation to Slovakia (in conformity with EU anti-discrimination regulations). A new program, "National Responsibility Program", was adopted in June 2005, consisting of such elements as economic development to Hungarians abroad (to allow them to remain in their countries), a special visa regime, programs on naturalization for those willing to relocate, etc.[24]

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[20] For more, see Kingston, Klara (2001). 'The Hungarian Status Law', *East European Perspectives*, October 3, 2001. Available at http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1342537.html, last accessed February 20, 2009.

[21] 'The Situation of Hungarians in Slovakia in 2006', Government Office for Hungarian Minorities Abroad, available at www.hhrf.org/htmh/en/printable_version.php, last accessed 21 January 2009.

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] Kingston, Klara (2001). 'The Hungarian Status Law', *East European Perspectives*, October 3, 2001. Available at http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1342537.html, last accessed February 20, 2009.

[24] Butler: 1128.

Minority rights in the EU context

The term «Europeanization» is commonly used in the context of EU enlargement to mean the process of transformation, of penetration of the EU norms into the national arenas, into national law- and policy-making.[25] Europeanization is "an incremental process re-orienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that European Community political and economic dynamics becomes part of the organisational logic of national politics and policy-making."[26] The Copenhagen criteria, adopted in 1993, included a number of requirements for the Applicant states, including stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, respect for human rights and rule of law, respect of minority rights.[27]

However, there were neither clear guidelines for verifying states' compliance with the Copenhagen criteria, nor clear monitoring mechanisms. It is worth noting that during previous enlargement waves such criteria were not applied to candidate countries. According to

Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, EU influence in the Applicant states was exercised by means of conditionality or socialization (or both). Conditionality refers to assistance provided by the EU under the conditions of states' compliance with the Copenhagen criteria. Socialization implies that instead of forceful measures, the EU would make resort of increasing interactions and inter-institutional contacts with the Applicant states in order to demonstrate the model of successful transformation.[28] Europeanization also involved the acceptance of the whole body of EU law (the *acquis*), as well as harmonization of national legislation to bring it into conformity with European laws.

Hungary was one of the most successful Applicant states. In 1997 it was stated that "Hungary presents the characteristics of a democracy with stable institutions which guarantee the rule of law, human rights and respect for, and the protection of, minorities."[29] Hungary has actively raised the issue of minority rights in different European institutions, including the EU, OSCE and the Council

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[25] Risse, Thomas, M. Green Cowles and J. Caporaso (2001), "*Europeanization and Domestic Change: Introduction*" in Risse, Thomas, M. Green Cowles and J. Caporaso (eds), *Transforming Europe: Europeanization and Domestic Change*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp. 1-20; Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina (2005), '*EU Enlargement and Democracy Progress*', in Emerson, Michael (ed.) '*Democratizaton in the European Neighbourhood*'. Center for European Policy Studies (CEPS), Brussels.

[26] R. Ladrech (1994), "Europeanization of domestic politics and institutions: The case of France", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 1994, pp. 69-88.

[27] European Council, Presidency Conclusions of the Copenhagen European Council, 21-22 June 1993, SN 180/1/93, REV1, 1993.

[28] Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina (2005), '*EU Enlargement and Democracy Progress*', in Emerson, Michael (ed.) '*Democratizaton in the European Neighbourhood*'. Center for European Policy Studies (CEPS), Brussels. See also, T. Boerzel and T. Risse (2000), "When Europe Hits Home: Europeanization and Domestic Change", *European Integration Online Papers*, Vol. 4, No. 15. Available at http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2000/015.htm, last accessed 1 January 2009.

[29] Agenda 2000, Commission Opinion on Hungary's Application for Membership of the European Union (1997) Supplement 6/97, Luxembourg: European Commission. See also, Sedelmeier, Ulrich and Helen Wallace (2000), 'Eastern Enlargement. Strategy or Second Thoughts?' in: Wallace, Helen and William Wallace (eds.), *Policy-Making in the European Union*. Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press; pp. 427-460.

of Europe. In the pre-2004 period, the EU was conducting regular monitoring of the situation, checking the country's compliance with the Copenhagen criteria. The 2001 Laeken Declaration emphasized that "The European Union's one boundary is democracy and human rights. The Union is open only to countries which uphold basic values such as free elections, respect for minorities and respect for the rule of law."[30] However, there were no clear criteria for minority rights protection, just as well as there was no legally binding requirement for the states to protect minority rights after they become members. Neither was there a commonly accepted definition of who constituted a "minority." "In case of some incumbent EU member states, such as France and Greece, official minorities do not exist as everyone is considered to be a French or Greek citizen, and this explains why they have so far failed to sign up or ratify the 1995 COE 'Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities'. Many of these states also argue that because EU membership imposes the need to prevent discrimination and ensure adherence to fundamental human rights, there is no need for explicit 'minority rights' legislation."[31]

The *Provisional consolidated version of the draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe* in Article I-2 on "the Union's values" provides that "The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities" (*emphasis added*).[32] Since the Constitution was not ratified due to negative outcomes of the French and Dutch referenda, its norms are merely declaratory.

In June 2006 a new coalition government was formed in Slovakia consisting of central-right "Direction-Social-democratic Party" (*Smer-Sociálna Demokracia, SMER*), under the leadership of Robert Fico and ultranationalist "Slovak National Party" (*SNS*) under the leadership of Ján Slota, notoriously famous for its anti-Hungarian rhetoric. Soon after that, clashes between ethnic Hungarians and Slovaks took place in Slovakia. Hungarian media extensively covered the events and drew attention to the growing anti-Hungarian sentiments in Slovakia. Hungary brought the issue of anti-Hungarian attitudes on the EU level, however, the EU did not impose any sanctions on Slovakia (except suspending SMER representation in the Party of European Socialists in the EP).[33] Hungarian Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány refused to meet his Slovak counterpart, Robert Fico, at the 15th summit of the "Visegrad Four" group (which includes Hungary, Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic), and

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[30] *The Laeken Declaration on the Future of the European Union*, 2001, available at http://european-convention.eu.int/pdf/LKNEN.pdf, last accessed 1 January 2009.

[31] Butler, Eamonn (2007), 'Hungary and the European Union: The Political Implications of Societal Security Prmotion', *Europe-Asia Studies, Vol.* 59, No. 7; стр. 1130.

[32] EC (2004), *Provisional Consolidated Version of the Draft Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe, CIG 86/04, 25 June 2004*. Brussels, Conference of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States. Available at http://ue.eu.int/igcpdf/en/04/cg00/cg00086.en04.pdf, last accessed February 1, 2009.

[33] See footnote 27, at 1137.

Hungarian Foreign Minister Kinga Göncz accused Fico of being "responsible for the formation of a climate where the young generation is exposed to ideas embracing hatred against Hungarians" and "requested an answer from Slovakia as to whether these tendencies formed a part of Bratislava's official agenda."[34] In his turn, Fico declared that "Slovakia-Hungary relations are better than media claims" and accused Hungarian media of failing to "distinguish between the statements of individual politicians and official government position" and seeing anti-Hungarian or even anti-Slovak manifestations in "almost everything."[35] At the same time, he criticized Hungarian politicians, in particular, the Hungarian opposition headed by Victor Orbán: "If there were a political force in Slovakia speaking of uniting all Slovaks living beyond our borders, I might call it opposition rhetoric to be ignored."[36]

In November 2008 at a football match there was a fight between Hungarian and Slovak football fans, which left 50 people injured, and Hungary and Slovakia went on with mutual accusations.[37]

Socio-economic context

The issue of the protection of Hungarians abroad so widely discussed in political circles received different responses from the Hungarian population. Despite the fact that ethnic Hungarians from the neighbouring states share the same culture, speak the same language, have relatives in Hungary, participate in cultural and political life of the country and do not need any special measures of social adaptation in case of relocating to Hungary, significant amount of money was necessary to provide them with access to medical services and other social benefits. Thus, the government faced a double task: to protect Hungarians abroad and at the same time, keep the promises to the Hungarian electorate (including those in the social field), to ensure economic stability of the country and to stay within the limits of the state's budget. The task was impossible to fulfil in practice.

According to *The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Hungary* (2004), "The Republic of Hungary defines security in a comprehensive way: besides the traditional political and defence components, it also contains, inter alia, economic and social elements, including human rights and minority rights-related, as well as environmental elements."[38] Further in the same document there is a mentioning of the need to protect the rights of ethnic Hungarians in the neighbouring countries and the desirability of self-government and

[34] Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2008), Foreign Minister summons Slovak ambassador and requests explanation for unacceptable Slovak remarks and actions, 2 October 2008, available at http://www.kum.hu/kum/en/bal/actualities/spokesman_statements/GK_Slovak_081002.htm, last accessed 5 January 2009.

[35] MTI (2008), 'Fico says Slovakia/Hungary relations better than media claims', 17 September 2008, available at www.politics.hu/20080917/fico-says-slovakiahungary-relations-better-than-med, last accessed 20 January 2009.

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] *Budapest Times* (2009). 'Ties with Hungary started to worsen during previous government, outgoing Slovak FM says', 3 January 2009, available at www.budapesttimes.hu/content/view/10431/159, last accessed 10 January 2009.

[38] Article 1, *The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Hungary, Resolution No.2073/2004 (III.31.)*, Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, available at www.mfa.gov.hu/kum/en/bal/foreign_policy/security_policy/national_sec_strategy_of_hun.htm, last accessed 1 January 2009.

autonomy for ethnic Hungarians "that best fit their particular situation and the rights deriving from them, in accordance with European practice, as a community, remaining in their native lands."[39]

Therefore, by introducing several measures to support ethnic Hungarians abroad, Hungary attempted to prevent their migration into Hungary and spare itself of burdensome expenses for their relocation. However, as Eamonn Butler notes, "ironically, despite this possible economic explanation for Hungary's attempt to dissuade migration, the very emphasis Hungary places on national connections and rhetorical claims of a greater Hungarian nation actually encourages the migration of ethnic Hungarians into Hungary."[40]

In 2004, upon suggestion from the "World Federation of Hungarians" (*Magyarok Világszövetsége - MVSZ*) a referendum was held on the question of dual citizenship for ethnic Hungarians. The government headed by F. Gyurcsány campaigned against the idea of dual citizenship, emphasizing the fact that it would lead to the migration of some 800,000 ethnic Hungarians from neighbouring Romania, Ukraine and Serbia, and would cost an additional 37,4 billion HUF ($ 2,9 billion) annually for social security.[41] The outcome of the vote was 51.6% in favour of the dual citizenship; however, the referendum was declared void since the turnout was only 37%, meaning that only 19.1% voted "yes", while according to Hungarian regulations for a measure to be passed it was necessary to obtain the support of 25% of the population.[42] Therefore, the Hungarian nation is split over the issue of unity of all Hungarians. There is no consensus among the Hungarian diaspora either. Hungary chose to join the Schengen agreement, which led to the disappointment of ethnic Hungarians from Serbia and Ukraine who will have to apply for a Hungarian visa from then on.

Despite the above-mentioned arguments, the protection of ethnic Hungarians abroad still remains one of the most important priorities of Hungarian foreign policy, a topic frequently brought up by elites. As *Transitions Online* remarks, "Hungarians may mourn the loss of empire. But some politicians act like it still exists."[43] In 2006, a major political crisis started in Hungary, when the media got hold of a recording made at a secret MSZP meeting during which the Prime Minister F. Gyurcsány confessed that "the government lied about the state of economy."[44] Hungary and the neighbouring states with significant numbers of ethnic Hungarians experienced a wave of demonstrations and riots calling for Gyurcsány's resignation. After this crisis, "Orbán's mantra that power belongs to the people, not the elites, has only gotten more

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[39] Article III.2.2, *ibid.*

[40] Butler: 1125.

[41] *Ibid*: 1125.

[42] *Ibid*: 1125-1126.

[43] *Transitions Online* (2008). 'Orban's Political Orbit', 13 June 2008, available at www.tol.cz, last accessed 1 December 2008.

[44] For more, see, for instance, Nelaeva, Galina (2008). Hungary: Protests, Reforms and Uneasy Choices. From a Forerunner to a "State of Great Risks", *In-Spire Journal of Law, Politics and Society*, December General Issue, available at http://www.in-spire.org/current.html, last accessed 1 February 2009.

insistent [...] The government survived the subsequent wave of street protests, tacitly approved by Firesz. Softer "direct diplomacy" tactics such as petition drives and proposals for national referendums are central to Fidesz's strategy to oust the Socialists from government before the next scheduled parliamentary election in two years' time."[45] However, appeals to Hungarian unity may "run headlong into the annoying realities of 21st-century Europe. For Hungary these are things like the sky-high national debt, rural poverty, and the EU's nagging on fiscal reforms."[46]

World financial crisis hit Hungary hard. In order to avoid economic ruin, Hungary had to ask the IMF and the EU for financial aid. A deal of $ 25,1 billion was agreed with the IMF, and $ 6,53 billion was offered by the European Central Bank,[47] in response to Hungary's promise to undertake measures aimed at reducing the budget deficit.[48] Given the current economic situation, Hungary is likely to experience rising unemployment, decreasing salaries, and lowering of the living standards. Consequently, appeals to Hungarian unity are unlikely to resonate widely. However, in the situation of worsening economic condition, there is a risk that radical right-wing groups will strengthen their positions and that the middle class will become impoverished and radicalized. Historical facts are likely to be widely referred to and manipulated in the process of scapegoating.[49] European Union does not have a coherent policy in the field of minority rights. Neither does it have the means to exercise hard pressure on the member states in case of crises (compared to the pre-2004 period when EU membership was an important means of putting pressure on Applicant states). As Jacques Rupnik remarks, "it is striking that most of the pro-European coalitions that dominated CEE politics over the last decade or so fell apart as soon as they had accomplished the "historic task" of achieving EU membership. In their places have arisen harder or softer exponents of Euroskepticism."[50]

Conclusion

Even though the current economic crisis cannot be compared to the crisis of the 1930s,[51] and will most likely not lead to the rapid increase of populist groups in the CEE, nevertheless, countries of the

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[45] Statement by Schöpflin, György, member of European Parliament. Quoted in *Transitions Online*, see footnote 44.
[46] *Ibid.*
[47] HVG (2008) 'EU Plans Financial Aid for Crisis-Hit Hungary.' *HVG,* 28 октября 2008. Available at http://hvg.eu/hungary/20081028_hungary_crisis_financial_aid/print.aspx, last accessed 1 December 2008..; HVG (2008a) 'IMF Deal for Hungary Eases Nerves in Central Europe.' *HVG,* 29 October 2008, available at http://hvg.eu/hungary/20081029_imf_hungary_central_europe/print.aspx, last accessed 20 December 2008.
[48] According to Hungary's Financial Minister János Veres, "the budgetary amendment currently discussed in parliament aims for a 2.6 deficiency target, which can be achieved by a strict Ft600 billion expenditure cut." Budapest Sun (2008) 'Hungary Closing in on Euro Zone.' *Budapest Sun*, 26 November 2008, available at www.budapestsun.com/cikk.php?id=28993, last accessed 2 December 2008.
[49] Pelle, János (2008). '*The Impoverishment of the Middle Classes.*' HVG, 25 November 2008, available at: http://hvg.ru/hungary/20081201_krach_impoverishment_middle_class/print.aspx, last accessed 2 December 2008.
[50] Rupnik, Jacques (2007). 'From Democracy Fatigue to Populist Backlash'. *Journal of Democracy*. Volume 18, No. 4, стр. 22.
[51] *Ibid:* 25.

region experience increasing distancing of the population from politics (which manifests itself in low elections and referenda turnout),[52] and increasing "street" activism of the population, a sign of the radicalization of the society.[53]

Dorothee Bohle, a political scientist from Central European University, considers Hungary "deeply unstable". Economic situation in the CEE already caused mass demonstrations in Bulgaria and Lithuania, and "while Hungary has not hit the headlines in recent weeks, this is only because the country hasn't really stopped having riots since 2006." A combination of factors, including domestic ones, such as unachievable promises by the government to maintain the social support measures and then introduce austerity reforms meant to reduce the budget deficit necessary for the country to join the 'euro zone', as well as general economic circumstances caused the situation where there is obvious "mistrust and lack of legitimacy in the government. On top of this is the existence of the far right, which may make it into parliament. Hungary is deeply politically unstable."[54]

Given the worsening economic situation, chances are high that far rights groups will become more popular in both Hungary and Slovakia, which threatens to lead to more clashes between Slovaks and Hungarians, and can have a destabilizing effect on the whole region. Lack of action on the part of the EU and the unwillingness on the part of Hungary and Slovakia to find ways to solve their disputes speak for the fact that "the EU conflict resolution mechanism only works when those involved want it to work. But that needs confidence, something that is absent in Budapest. Similarly, while the EU likes to think of itself as "post-national", classical ethnic minority problems don't go away because everyone would like them to." [55]

With the lack of a common EU conflict resolution mechanism and a common minority protection policy, there is likelihood that new member states will keep "backsliding on democratic practice while pursuing a strident defence of "national interests," which can lead to loosening of the EU internal ties "to the point where the Union becomes little more than an enhanced free trade zone."[56]

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[52] Fowler, Brigid (2004), 'Hungary: Unpicking the Permissive Consensus', *West European Politics*, Vol. 27 (No. 4); pp. 624-651; Bozóki, Andras and Eszter Simon (2006). 'Formal and Informal Politics in Hungary', in: Meyer, Gerd (ed.) *Formal Institutions and Informal Politics in Central and Eastern Europe*. Opladen & Farmington Hills: Barbara Budrich Publishers.

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PUBLIC OPINION AND THE ATTITUDES OF ETHNIC GROUPS ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATION IN MOLDOVA (2000 – 2008)

Sergiu Buşcăneanu*

Abstract. This article** explores the dynamics of public opinion and the attitudes of ethnic groups on European integration in Moldova for the 2000-2008 period. Drawing on data provided by sixteen surveys, it reveals the sociological profile of "Europtimists" in Moldova and the hierarchy of demographic parameters based on the extent to which they divide public opinion concerning European integration. The paper finds out that men, persons from rural areas, youth, Moldovans/Romanians, the more educated people and with better life standards are more fervent supporters of European integration of Moldova. It argues also that differences in the education of respondents divide the public opinion in the most abrupt way with regard to the opportunity of European integration of Moldova, while the different genders induce the smallest difference between options of respondents for the "European idea". The paper suggests that, in practical terms, its findings might be of help to relevant governmental bodies that should consider well-defined targeted information campaigns while promoting the "European idea" in Moldova.

Keywords: Public opinion, ethnic groups, European integration, Moldova

1. Introduction

The experience of the new EU member states has shown how important was the stance of public opinion on their road to the EU. Without the necessary support of the public they would not succeed in promoting multidimensional processes of reforms, and obviously they would not manage to ratify via referenda the accession treaties. The significant public support helped a great deal those countries to make their integration policies success stories. To what extent is the public opinion ready to play a similar role in Moldova? Is there a necessary public support for the integration policies promoted in recent years by Moldovan governments?

This essay is one of the few research attempts to date addressing in a dedicated way the dynamics of Moldovan public opinion concerning European integration. At the same time, it is the first research undertaking which covers a longer timeframe from 2000 to 2008, and looks at the attitudes of different ethnic groups in Moldova towards European integration. After

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having analysed survey data stratified on six demographic parameters, the paper drawing on this analysis goes further by revealing the sociological profile of "Europtimists" in Moldova and the hierarchy of demographic parameters based on the extent to which they divide public opinion concerning European integration. Providing a panorama of public attitudes towards European integration this paper might be useful for further theoretical purposes and in practical terms for targeted information campaigns aiming at increasing public awareness with regard to the EU course of Moldova.

2. Dynamics of Public Opinion on European Integration in Moldova

This section pays attention to the dynamics of Moldovan public opinion on European integration in the 2000-2008 period of time. The approach is based on Barometers of Public Opinion (BPOs) commissioned by the Institute of Public Policy (IPP, 2000-2008). These surveys serve as the basis for analysis for at least three reasons: (1) BPOs measure public adherence to the "European idea" in Moldova; (2) they are conducted systematically, and allow thus identifying the dynamics of public opinion on European integration; and (3) BPOs are relatively complex, detailed and objective.

Seventeen BPOs have been conducted until 2008. The first BPO was conducted in August 2000, and the last one was launched in October 2008. Between these dates two BPOs were conducted every year, except 2000. Every BPO draws on a sample of at least 1,000 respondents, it is representative for the adult population of Moldova, except for Transnistria, and has a maximum error margin of 3 percent.

BPOs contain two basic questions which allow assessing the evolution of the "European option" in Moldova in 2000-2008. They are: "What do you think is the path our country should follow?" asked by BPOs conducted from August 2000 to May 2004; and "Should there be a referendum next Sunday on Moldova's accession to EU, how would you vote?" asked by BPOs conducted from May 2003 to October 2008. Diagram 1 below was created on the basis of answers to the first question.

Diagram 1 indicates the distribution of answers for three options from the BPOs conducted from August 2000 to May 2004: (1) "Integration within the EU"; (2) "Integration/ Stay within the CIS"; and (3) "Don't know". If the August 2000 BPO is taken as a reference point, the number of respondents who opted for Moldova's integration within the EU grew by 8.9 percentage points (from 38 to 46.9) until May 2004. At the same time, it is worth to note that the "Integration within the CIS and within the EU" was a compromise option in the August 2000 BPO, and 32 percent of respondents chose it. If this option were missing as in the other subsequent BPOs, then the separate numbers of those favouring the "Integration within the EU" or the "Integration/ Stay within the CIS" option would be probably higher. Starting with the January 2001, BPOs do not provide the compromise option ("Integration within the CIS and within the EU"), as the August 2000 BPO does. Therefore, the January 2001

Diagram 1

What do you think is the path our country should follow?

	Aug. 2000	Jan. 2001	Nov. 2001	Apr. 2002	Nov. 2002	May. 2003	Nov. 2003	May 2004
EU	38	51	47	40	38	42	51.3	46.9
CIS	20	43	35	41	38	29	26.6	30.4
DK	8	2	17	13	17	14	16.3	18.5

EU ■ CIS ▲ DK
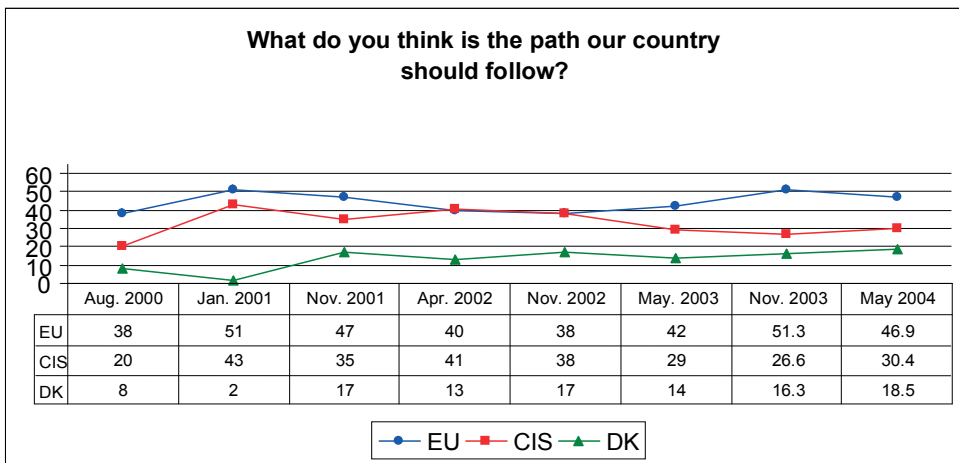
Notes: - EU – European Union; CIS – Commonwealth of Independent States; DK – Don't know.

- Data corresponding to DK answers for the August 2000, January 2001, April 2002, and May 2003 BPOs are estimates.

- A multiple answer was available for the question from the May 2003 BPO.

BPO is a more appropriate starting reference point for measuring the dynamics of the "European option", than the August 2000 BPO, given the fact that the same questionnaires were used from January 2001 to May 2004. With this caveat in mind, one could note that the number of persons who opted for the EU in January 2001 declined by 4.1 percent (from 51 to 46.9) until May 2004. For comparison, the number of respondents who opted for the CIS in the same period decreased by 12.6 percent (from 43 to 30.4), while that of respondents who did not know to answer increased by 16.5 percent (from 2 to 18.5).

Table 1 below is complementary to Diagram 1 and features the correlation between the configuration of power structure in Moldova and foreign policy options included in BPOs from August 2000 to May 2004. What the table is revealing, is that, starting with February 2001 – when PCRM came in power – until May 2004, the number of respondents who opted for "Integration within the EU" decreased, that of persons who opted for the "Integration/ Stay within the CIS" option also diminished, while that of respondents who did not know to answer, increased. This dynamics was only partially expectable and further research needs to explain why the number of respondents who opted for CIS diminished in a period when the pro-CIS foreign policy agenda of the PCRM was dominant.

Table 1 – What do you think is the path our country should follow?

Power Structure/ Options	Aug. 2000	Jan. 2001	Nov. 2001	Apr. 2002	Nov. 2002	May 2003	Nov. 2003	May 2004
Government	Braghiş		Tarlev					
Parliament	ADR		PCRM					
President	Lucinschi		Voronin					
EU	38	51	47	40	38	42	51.3	46.9
CIS	20	43	35	41	38	29	26.6	30.4
DK	8	2	17	13	17	14	16.3	18.5

Note: ADR – Alliance for Democracy and Reforms;
 PCRM – Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova.

Although the May 2004 BPO was the last one to include the question from Diagram 1, the adhesion to the "European idea" may also be observed on the basis of the question whether respondents would vote "For" or "Against" at an eventual referendum on Moldova's accession to the EU. This question is included for the first time in the May 2003 BPO and it is part of BPOs conducted till October 2008, except for the January-February 2005 barometer. Diagram 2 below was built on the basis of answers to this question.

Diagram 2 indicates the distribution of answers for three options included in the barometer surveys conducted from May 2003 to October 2008: (1) "For"; (2) "Against"; and (3) "Don't

Diagram 2

Should there be a referendum next Sunday on Moldova's accession to EU, how would you vote?

	May. 2003	Nov. 2003	May 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2005	Apr. 2006	Nov. 2006	May 2007	Nov. 2007	Apr. 2008	Oct. 2008
For	61	67.87	56.6	66.4	64.3	70.2	68.4	72.2	76.2	71.7	71
Against	6	6.21	9.5	5.4	8.5	7.6	6.3	7.2	8.2	10.1	7.5
DK			24.5	17.4	19.2	15	16.1	12.4	9.2	10.9	14.5

For ● Against ■ DK ▲

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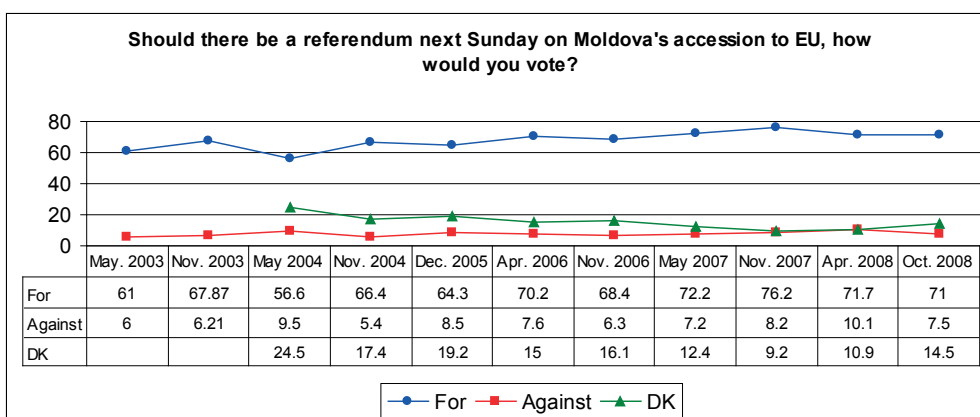
[1] As ADR was left by People's Christian Democratic Party (PCDP), there was no stable legislative majority. ADR remained *de jure* as the ruling coalition, while *de facto* it was not, Braghiş Cabinet being appointed by PCRM and PCDP.

know". The diagram shows that the number of people who would vote "For" at an eventual referendum on Moldova's accession to the EU grew by 10.0 percentage points (from 61 to 71) until October 2008, while the number of people who would vote "Against" grew by 1.5 percentage points (from 6 to 7.5). At the same time, the percentage of those respondents who did not know to answer decreased by 10.0 (from 24.5 to 14.5) from May 2004 to October 2008. Considering the period when the EU-Moldova Action Plan (EUMAP) was being implemented one could note that from December 2005 to October 2008 the number of those who would vote "For" grew by 6.7 percent, that of respondents who would vote "Against" dropped by 1.0 percent, whereas the percentage of those who did not know to answer decreased by 4.7 in the same period[2].

The 71.0 percent of respondents who would vote "For" at a referendum on Moldova's accession to the EU, according to the October 2008 BPO, reveals a certain "permissive consensus" in Moldovan society regarding the European integration[3]. This figure of 71.0 percent is somehow comparable with the average percentage (77.5) of those who voted "For" at the EU accession referenda held in 2003 in nine European countries[4]. A question to be asked here is to what extent the high proportion of Moldovan citizens supporting European integration is grounded on knowledge about the EU? According to another survey (EFM *et al.*, 2008), 93.6% of people in Moldova have heard of the EU, 77.7% know what the EU is about, but only 46.2% are familiar with the European Neighbourhood Policy, and 36.6% have heard about the EUMAP.

Though this survey does not account for the quality of knowledge about the EU, it suggests that many respondents who pretend to be informed have superficial knowledge about the EU and about the substance of EU-Moldova relations. For example, it shows that a significant share of those respondents who claimed that have heard about the EUMAP consider it wrongly a pre-accession instrument. The same survey reveals that most Moldovan citizens get information about the EU mostly from TV (29.5%) and radio (18.7%), media institutions, Russian TV stations being surprisingly very influential in this regard. What is also strange about Moldovan public opinion is that the dominant perception is that TV stations contribute the most

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[2] The EUMAP was signed on 22 February 2005 and started to be implemented since March-April 2005. The December 2005 BPO was the first survey conducted after the EUMAP was put into practice. As the EUMAP was not fully implemented during the three year period set initially, its fulfilment was rolled-over for an additional year. Though the December 2005-October 2008 period captured by BPOs is not precisely the same as when the EUMAP was being implemented, the former is however quite close to the latter.

[3] The concept was borrowed from Lindberg and Scheingold – cited in Hix (2005) – who introduced it in the realm of European Integration Studies to explain public support enjoyed by European integration process in its early years of construction.

[4] At the EU accession referenda held in 2003 the following percentages of people voted "For": 53.65 in Malta, 89.19 in Slovenia, 83.76 in Hungary, 89.95 in Lithuania, 92.46 in Slovakia, 77.45 in Poland, 77.33 in Czech Republic, 66.92 in Estonia, and 67.00 in Latvia (FCO, 2007). Cyprus and later Bulgaria and Romania have ratified accession treaties by parliamentary vote.

to the European integration of Moldova (17.5%), which are then followed by the Government (14.1%), Parliament (12.1%), Presidency (10.8%), written media (8.9%), radio stations (8.0%), political parties (7.1%), NGOs (5.5%), etc. According to the survey of EFM *et al.* (2008), the public trust in European institutions is relatively high in Moldova, being only exceeded by the trust in Moldovan Church, and the Russian TV stations, but outruns public's confidence in Moldovan governmental institutions. Survey reveals also that the EU is primarily associated with economic prosperity (16.4%), peace (15.3%), freedom of movement (14.3%), and with more jobs (11.6%). In addition, it is believed that European integration will contribute to economic development (82.4%), to the movement of persons (81.4%), to inflows of capital and new technologies (80.3%), to the increase of job opportunities and revenues (79.9%), etc. Given the high influence of Russian TV stations on the Moldovan public opinion, which explains why 49.6% of respondents, according to the October 2008 BPO, consider that the main strategic partner of Moldova should be Russia, compared with only 19.6% opting for the EU, and 19.1% for Romania, one could suppose that if this influence were lower, the number of persons ready to vote "For" at an EU accession referendum, would be greater[5].

Respondents' answers included in BPOs conducted from August 2000

to October 2008 are stratified on six demographic parameters: (a) sex; (b) residential area; (c) age; (d) education; (e) socioeconomic condition; and (f) nationality. In addition, all six parameters are further disaggregated into sub-parameters (e.g. Male/ Female for (a) sex; Urban/ Rural for (b) residential area; etc). Cumulative aggregation of data on each available sub-parameter – except those corresponding to nationality, which is addressed in the next section –, and in relation with each answer option presented in diagrams above allows articulating the following important findings[6]:

(a) Although the majority of women are "Europtimistic", their share is smaller than of men. At the same time, more men than women have opted for "Integration/ Stay within the CIS" in the August 2000 - May 2004 BPOs and chose "Against" in the surveys conducted from May 2003 to October 2008 regarding an eventual referendum on Moldova's accession to the EU. On the other hand, more women than men answered "Don't know" to both questions from the above diagrams.

(b) The majority of respondents from urban areas are "Europtimistic", but their share is surprisingly lower than in rural areas. More respondents in urban areas opted for "Integration/ Stay within the CIS" than rural respondents in BPOs conducted from August 2000

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[5] The main Russian TV stations broadcast their programs in Moldova. Among them, "OPT" public TV station, being the most influential one, and seen as backing the official course promoted by Kremlin, broadcasts its programmes on the entire territory of the Republic of Moldova.

[6] For detailed data on all demographic parameters and sub-parameters see IPP (2000-2008).

to May 2004, and "Against" in surveys conducted from May 2003 to October 2008. The number of respondents from rural areas who did not know to answer is slightly higher than that of respondents from towns.

(c) Considering answers corresponding to the following age sub-parameters: 18-29, 30-44, 45-59, and 60 years and over, one could note that generally the degree of "Europtimism" or "Euroscepticism" of respondents is directly proportional with their age. The younger the respondents are, the more "Europtimistic" they are and *vice versa*. However, an exception should be noted. Respondents aged between 45-59 years would tend more than the persons aged between 30-44 years to vote "For" and less "Against" in the case of an EU accession referendum. Here it was also found out that the older the persons are, the more increases the number of respondents who choose the "Don't know" answer option.

Drawing on the above age patterns, it would seem at a first glance that public support for the European integration would grow concomitantly with the change of generations. Data from Diagram 2 confirm the growth of this support for the time being. However, this assumption could turn false in the long run, because, as the experience of other European countries shows, the more people get elder, the less

ready they become to support the European building process. Then, European experience also reveals that "permissive consensus" is gradually eroding in time.

(d) The degree of adherence to the "European idea" is directly proportional with the educational level of respondents. The more educated they are, the more they back the European integration of Moldova and *vice versa*.

(e) There is the same kind of direct proportionality for the socioeconomic condition of respondents. The better the lives of the interviewed persons are, the more "Europtimistic" they are and the number of those who do not know to answer declines.

3. Attitudes of Ethnic Groups on European Integration

This section explores the relationship between ethnic groups and the "European option" in Moldova. I use here the more recent data from the May 2003 - October 2008 BPOs that show the options of respondents from different ethnic backgrounds to the question which asks how would they vote at a referendum on Moldova's accession to the EU. This exercise is facilitated by the fact that BPOs give disaggregate data on the options of the most important ethnic groups from Moldova. The hypothesis here is that Moldovans/Romanians[7] (78.0% out of total population) and Ukrainians (8.4%) have to choose

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[7] This category represents in fact the same ethnic, linguistic and cultural group. The difference consists only of their different self-identification, which is a legacy of change in statute through the history of the present territory of the Republic of Moldova.
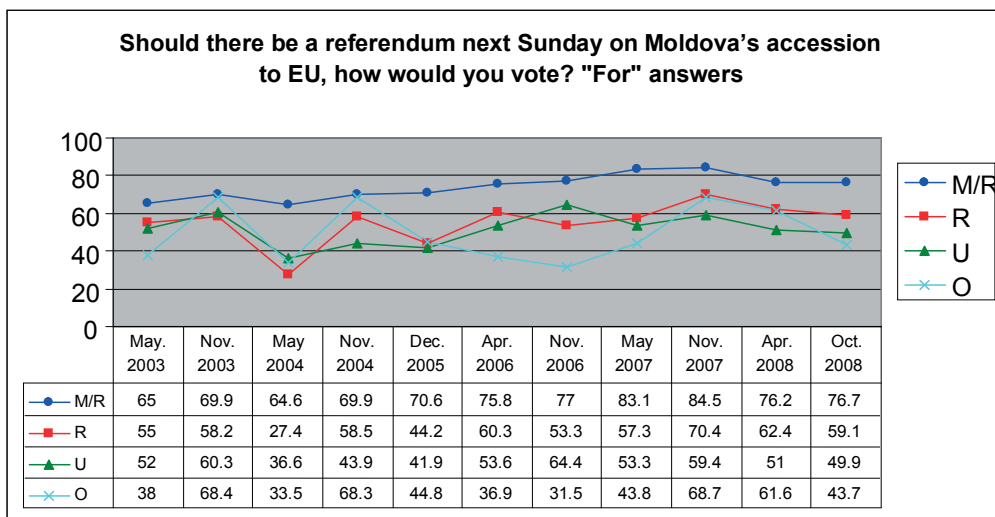
more often than Russians (5.9%) the "For" option and, respectively, less often than the latter "Against" answer. This hypothesis is grounded on the European vocation and pro-EU course assumed by Moldovan governments in late 1990s and with a renewed stance from 2003 onward, and by Yushchenko administration since the Orange Revolution in Ukraine. I suppose that the Russian minority has to be less supportive of the pro-EU course of Moldova, modelling thus the official policy promoted by Kremlin towards the EU in the Putin and Medvedev era. Hypothesising the preferences of Găgăuz (4.4% out of total population)

and Bulgarians (1.9%), presented by BPOs with the rest of minority groups (1.0%)[8] under a common heading – "Others", one could expect them to be more "Europtimist" than Russians, given their multidimensional ties with Turkey (an EU candidate country) and, respectively, with Bulgaria (an EU member state). For the sake of simplicity, it is largely possible to equate the "Others" category used by BPOs with Găgăuz and Bulgarians, as these minority groups represent 86.3% of it.

Diagram 3 illustrates the dynamics of "For" answers given by different ethnic group representatives in the

Diagram 3

	May. 2003	Nov. 2003	May 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2005	Apr. 2006	Nov. 2006	May 2007	Nov. 2007	Apr. 2008	Oct. 2008
M/R	65	69.9	64.6	69.9	70.6	75.8	77	83.1	84.5	76.2	76.7
R	55	58.2	27.4	58.5	44.2	60.3	53.3	57.3	70.4	62.4	59.1
U	52	60.3	36.6	43.9	41.9	53.6	64.4	53.3	59.4	51	49.9
O	38	68.4	33.5	68.3	44.8	36.9	31.5	43.8	68.7	61.6	43.7

Should there be a referendum next Sunday on Moldova's accession to EU, how would you vote? "For" answers

Note: M/R – Moldovans/ Romanians; R – Russians; U – Ukrainians; and O – Others.

[8] Percentages in brackets represent the shares of ethnic groups in the total population of Moldova according to the data of the 2004 census (NBSRM, 2004). 0.4 out of the total counted population did not declare its ethnic affiliation. These data exclude population of the break-away Transnistrian region. Though the 2004 census indicates two distinct figures for Moldovans (75.8%) and Romanians (2.2%), this essay cumulates these figures into a single one (78.0%), as they refer to the same ethnic, linguistic and cultural group. It is assumed that they were counted and presented as distinctive ethnic groups by the 2004 census on political grounds.
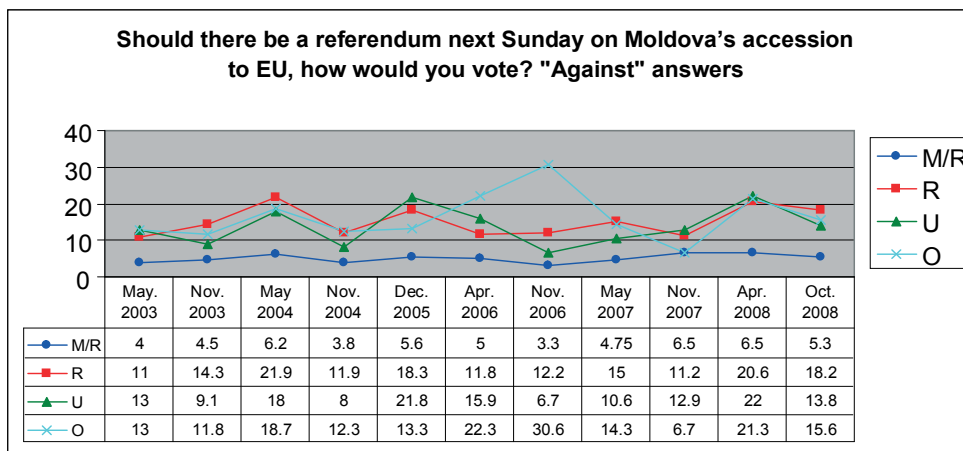
May 2003 - October 2008 period. It reveals that the majority of representatives of ethnic groups in Moldova are in favour of European integration[9]. However, aggregated data for this demographic parameter in relation with the "For" option, show that the proportion of the "Europtimists" from the dominant ethnic group outnumbers significantly that of the "Europtimists" representing ethnic minorities. Nevertheless, the number of representatives of national minorities who would vote "For" is about 3.4-fold higher than that of those who would vote "Against".

The number of Moldovans/ Romanians who would vote "For" at a referendum on EU accession of Moldova increased with 11.7 percent (from 65 to 76.7 percent), that representing Russian minority increased with 4.1 percent (from 55 to 59.1 percent), that of Ukrainians dropped by 2.1 (from 52 to 49.9 percent), while that of persons with other ethnic origin increased with 5.7 (from 38 to 43.7 percent) during the May 2003 - October 2008 period. Data for the above mentioned period reveal also that representatives of other ethnic backgrounds (labelled by BPOs as "Others") would vote the least "For" at an eventual referendum on Moldova's accession to the EU. The same data casts surprisingly out the tendency of the Russian minority's representatives to choose the "For" option more often than respondents of Ukrainian origin. These findings contradict the hypothesis formulated at the beginning of this section.

However, Diagram 4 below shows that in the case of Russians the hypothesis is partially true because, they, in comparison with the

Diagram 4

Should there be a referendum next Sunday on Moldova's accession to EU, how would you vote? "Against" answers

	May. 2003	Nov. 2003	May 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2005	Apr. 2006	Nov. 2006	May 2007	Nov. 2007	Apr. 2008	Oct. 2008
M/R	4	4.5	6.2	3.8	5.6	5	3.3	4.75	6.5	6.5	5.3
R	11	14.3	21.9	11.9	18.3	11.8	12.2	15	11.2	20.6	18.2
U	13	9.1	18	8	21.8	15.9	6.7	10.6	12.9	22	13.8
O	13	11.8	18.7	12.3	13.3	22.3	30.6	14.3	6.7	21.3	15.6

[9] As regards the question about Moldova's foreign orientation included in BPOs conducted from August 2000 to May 2004, most Moldovans/ Romanians chose the "Integration within the EU", while most representatives of Russian, Ukrainian minorities, and with other ethnic origin chose the "Integration/ Stay within the CIS". The *Etnobarometru – Republica Moldova* (eng. *Ethno-barometer – Republic of Moldova*) results, a survey conducted in 2005, revealed the same pattern of public preferences (IPP et al., 2005).

Ukrainians, also tend at the same time to opt more often for the "Against" answer option, should there be a referendum on EU accession.
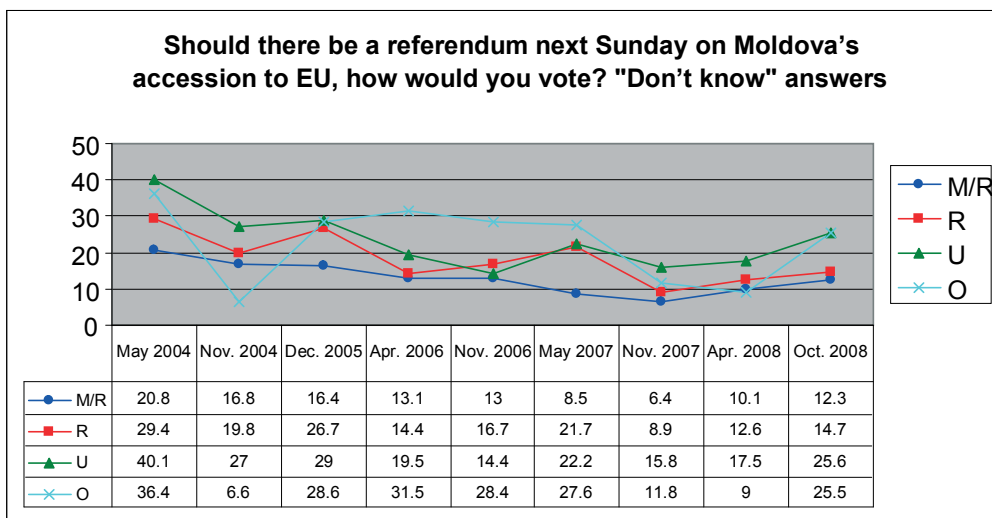
The data for the May 2003 - October 2008 period referred to in Diagram 4 are also revealing that Moldovans/ Romanians are the least inclined to vote "Against", while representatives of those ethnic groups labelled by BPOs as "Others" are the most ready to do so. This, in contrast with the above working hypothesis, stresses again that the latter are the least supportive of the European course of Moldova[10]. Though with some differences, by at large, the number of "Europtimist" or "Europesimist" representatives

of Russian, Ukrainian, and of other minorities are largely comparable. However, it remains unknown why the Russian minority representatives tend to choose more often the "For" option than Ukrainian or other minority groups, and less often the "Against" option in the case of an EU accession referendum, than respondents from those ethnic backgrounds labelled as "Others". Further research is needed to address this black box.

Finally, Diagram 5 below illustrates the distribution of "Don't know" answers for each ethnic group.

The data for the entire period referred to in this diagram reveal a somehow already familiar pattern.

Diagram 5

Should there be a referendum next Sunday on Moldova's accession to EU, how would you vote? "Don't know" answers

	May 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2005	Apr. 2006	Nov. 2006	May 2007	Nov. 2007	Apr. 2008	Oct. 2008
M/R	20.8	16.8	16.4	13.1	13	8.5	6.4	10.1	12.3
R	29.4	19.8	26.7	14.4	16.7	21.7	8.9	12.6	14.7
U	40.1	27	29	19.5	14.4	22.2	15.8	17.5	25.6
O	36.4	6.6	28.6	31.5	28.4	27.6	11.8	9	25.5

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[10] According to the EFM *et al.* (2008) survey, apart from Moldovans/Romanians, Bulgarians are also strong supporters of European integration of Moldova. I cannot confirm or disprove this finding because BPOs do not provide disaggregate data with regard to Bulgarians. Their answers are counted in BPOs together with those of Găgăuz and of representatives of the smallest minority groups from Moldova under the common heading – "Others". However, if the EFM et al. (2008) finding is correct then it could be asserted that Găgăuz, among the main ethnic groups from Moldova, are the least supporters of its European integration course.

Moldovans/ Romanians are less inclined to choose "Don't know" answer option, while representatives of other ethnic groups (other than Russians and Ukrainians) are the most ready to do so. In between there are again representatives of Russian and Ukrainian minorities, the former ones tending to choose this answer option less than the latter.

4. "Europtimists" and the Hierarchy of Demographic Parameters Dividing Public Attitudes on European Integration

Findings from the above sections allow identifying the sociological profile of the "Europtimistic" category of people from Moldova. Summing them up, one could state that *men, persons from rural areas, the younger, Moldovans/Romanians, the more educated people and with better life standards* are more fervent supporters of European integration of Moldova. The profile of "Europtimists" from Moldova is largely consistent with that of "Europtimists" at the EU level (cf. Hix, 2005). The only exception is that at the EU level persons from urban areas are supporting more the EU building process. This digression from European public opinion trends might be explained by the fact that the more significant ethnic minorities in Moldova, being less "Europtimistic" than the dominant ethnic group, are largely concentrated in towns, and by the dominance of rural population in Moldova.

Cumulative aggregation of data on available demographic sub-parameters (e.g. Male/Female; Urban/ Rural; etc.) in relation with the "Integration within the EU" and "For" answer options from Diagrams 1 and 2 above allows in addition establishing a hierarchy of all parameters based on the extent to which they divide Moldovan public opinion on European integration. This hierarchy for the August 2000 - October 2008 period was found as follows: (1) Education; (2) Age; (3) Nationality; (4) Socioeconomic condition; (5) Residential area; and (6) Sex[11]. In other words, differences in education of respondents divide in the most abrupt way the public opinion on European integration opportunity of Moldova, while the different genders induce the smallest difference between options of respondents for the "European idea". A worthwhile observation here is that age differences and those in terms of ethnic affiliation are only slightly less dividing the public opinion than discrepancies in education, what makes these types of demographic differences comparable according to their significance for public preferences. On the other side, gender differences and those with regard to area of residence are also comparable, but they are the least significant and do not account for adversative attitudes towards European integration.

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[11] "Data from BPOs that ask how would respondents vote should there be a referendum on Moldova's accession to EU, from May 2003 to October 2008, reveal a similar hierarchy: (1) Nationality; (2) Age; (3) Education; (4) Socioeconomic condition; (5) Sex; and (6) Residential area. This might suggest that ethnic differences started to become more salient in determining respondents' options on European integration of Moldova. In any case, it is again confirmed that age, education and nationality (in alphabetical order) are the most important demographic parameters dividing public opinion on European integration, while residential area and sex are the least important ones.

5. Conclusions: Need for a Well-Defined Targeted Communication

This essay explores the dynamics of Moldovan public opinion on European integration for the 2000-2008 period. For this purpose, the paper has used data provided by sixteen BPOs commissioned by the Institute of Public Policy. The most general conclusion is that the majority of Moldovan citizens, including the majority of representatives of different ethnic groups, support the European integration of Moldova. However, for the sake of more precision after aggregating data on six demographic parameters this paper found out that men, persons from rural areas, the younger, Moldovans/ Romanians, the more educated people and with better life standards are more fervent supporters of European integration of Moldova. The sociological profile of this more "Europtimistic" category of people from Moldova is largely consistent with that of "Europtimists" at the EU level.

This paper has surprisingly found out that the hypothesis according to which representatives of Russian minority have to be less in favour of a pro-EU course of Moldova than those of Ukrainian, and of other minorities could not be proved by the available data. The proportions of "Europtimists" or "Europesimists" from Russian, Ukrainian or other ethnic backgrounds are largely comparable.

The present essay finally concludes that the differences in education of the respondents divide in the most abrupt way the public opinion on European integration opportunity of Moldova, while the different genders induce the smallest difference between options of respondents for the "European idea". In practical terms, the identified hierarchy of demographic parameters based on the extent to which they divide Moldovan public opinion concerning European integration might be of help to relevant governmental bodies that should consider specific outreach campaigns while promoting the "European idea" in Moldova. To this effect the paper suggests implicitly that persons with secondary or professional education, the elderly, and representatives of national minorities have to be primary targets within such information campaigns. In general, more communication across education, age, and ethnic cleavages would also serve this purpose.

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