

THE EUROPEANIZATION OF THE FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY OF ROMANIA. FROM THE WARSAW PACT TO THE THREE SEAS INITIATIVE

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Abstract: After the fall of the communist regime in 1989, Romania followed the European route in the following years; however, its centralized state institutions hindered the Europeanization process. This study explores the background and the impact of the Europeanization process in Romania by presenting the implementation of this process and describing how Romania's foreign and security policies were impacted by it. An attempt is made to determine whether the Three Seas Initiative is a new stage that helps in consolidating the Europeanization of the Romanian foreign and security policies. The research proposes a conceptual framework for understanding the Romanian Europeanization process separated in three different phases: transition, integration, and consolidation. Concerning the research methodology, this study will apply a narrative historical and an analytical method. This article begins by outlining the first steps made by Romania in the transition phase that were decisive in shaping the success of the Europeanization process, focusing on issues of foreign and security policies. Subsequently, the paper emphasizes the important role that Romania's early participation in the Common Foreign and Security Policy played in the EU accession process. Moreover, the article emphasizes the significant role that Romania had in securitizing the Black Sea region for the European Union. It concludes by addressing how the participation in the Three Seas Initiative coincided with a new stage of Europeanization. Romania's participation in the Three Seas Initiative could represent a further opportunity to consolidate its foreign and security policies.

Keywords: transition, Europeanization, Romanian foreign policy, security policy, Three Seas Initiative



Rezumat: În anii 1990, după căderea regimului comunist, România a urmat calea europeană, dar instituțiile centralizate ale statului au îngreunat procesul de europenizare. Acest studiu examinează contextul în care s-a produs europenizarea și impactul pe care acest proces l-a avut asupra României. Cercetarea de față prezintă procesul de implementare a europenizării și descrie modul în care politica externă și cea de securitate a României au fost transformate de impactul europenizării. Ipoteza propusă în această cercetare încearcă să stabilească dacă Inițiativa celor Trei Mări constituie o

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nouă etapă care consolidează procesul de europenizare a politicii externe și de securitate a statului român. Cercetarea propune un cadru conceptual pentru înțelegerea acestui proces care se constituie din trei etape: etapa tranziției, etapa integrării și cea a consolidării. În privința metodelor de cercetare, acest studiu apelează la metoda istorică și la cea analitică. În prima parte, articolul prezintă primii pași făcuți de România în faza de tranziție – pași care au determinat succesul procesului de europenizare. În această secțiune, o atenție deosebită este acordată chestiunilor legate de politica externă și de securitate a României. Totodată, lucrarea subliniază rolul important pe care l-a avut participarea neîntârziată a României la Politica Externă și de Securitate Comună pentru aderarea la UE. Mai mult, articolul evidențiază rolul semnificativ pe care România îl joacă în securizarea regiunii Mării Negre pentru Uniunea Europeană. În ultima parte, articolul analizează modul în care Inițiativa celor Trei Mări coincide cu o nouă etapă a europenizării. Participarea României la această Inițiativa ar putea oferi o nouă oportunitate de consolidare atât a politicii externe cât și a politicii de securitate.

Cuvinte cheie: tranziție, europenizare, politica externă a României, politica de securitate, Inițiativa Celor Trei Mări,

I. Introduction

The Europeanization represents a new phenomenon in the recent history. Perhaps the idea is old; however, the process is certainly new. The Europeanization as we know it was born after World War II. After the fall of communism, the process of Europeanization became very important for the ex-communist countries and a lot of them, made of it a national goal.

The aim of the present paper is to analyze the impact that the Europeanization process has had on Romania's foreign and security policies. European Studies became increasingly relevant in the late fifties and for almost forty years, the main theoretical focus regarded the development of the new European polity. In 1990s, Europeanization theory appears as a new phase in European integration studies¹, shifting the analysis from policy research into foreign policy scholarship. There is very little consensus as to what the phenomenon of Europeanization means or how useful it really is. For example, Subotic describe Europe as a state of mind, and sees Europeanization as a policy process². In 1994, Ladrech defined Europeanization as “an incremental process reorienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of

¹ Paolo R. Graziano and Maarten P. Vink, “Europeanization: Concept, Theory, and Methods”, in *The Member States of the European Union (Second Edition)*, ed. Simion Bulmer and Christian Lequesne (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 32-3.

² Jelena Subotic, “Europe is a State of Mind: Identity and Europeanization in the Balkans”, *International Studies Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (2011): 309.

national logic of national politics and policy-making”³. Later in 2009, Lavenex and Schimmelfenning argued that Europeanization refers to the adaptation of the principles of European governance which are designed at the European Union (EU) level, to the level of the domestic sphere (be it in discourse, public policies, political structures, or identities)⁴. Considering the variety of definitions surrounding the Europeanization process, we can identify three types of Europeanization. The first one refers to the increasing competences and authority of European institutions and actors; the second studies the effect of this growing authority over domestic policy; while the third focuses on the interconnections and transfer mechanisms existing between European states, with or without a EU focus⁵. This study uses the second type of Europeanization because it focuses on the impact of the European Union on domestic politics and policies.

Europeanization is a recent concept in the field of European Studies. A lot of Europeanization papers focus on institutional adaptation. Several scholars such as Héritier and Duina regard the misalignment between European and domestic institutional structures as a key spark for domestic change⁶. Others like Schneider emphasize European leverage in relation to changed opportunity structures and the potential reorganization of actor constellations at the national level⁷.

The two dimensions of the Europeanization process are downloading and uploading. The first dimension implies a top-down operation (or the transformation and harmonization of national foreign policies to the requirements of EU membership) while the second dimension can be identified with a bottom-up mechanism (national foreign policies affecting and contributing to the development of a common European foreign policy)⁸.

The study employs an approach based on the downloading dimension, because the Europeanization process is conceptualized here as the process of implementing European directives, regulations and institutional structures at the domestic level. The downloading dimension of Europeanization is used as the main anchor of the study. Moreover, Europeanization implies that the expectations defined at the EU level must be reflected at the national one as

³ Robert Ladrech, “Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The Case of France”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 32, no. 1 (1994): 69.

⁴ Sandra Lavenex and Frank Schimmelfenning, “EU Rules Beyond EU Borders: Theorizing External Governance in European Politics”, *Journal of European Public Policy* 16, no. 6 (2009): 795.

⁵ Ian Bache, “Europeanization: A Governance Approach”, *Archive of European Integration (AEI)*, 2002, 7, <http://aei.pitt.edu/1722/1/Bache.pdf>.

⁶ Michael W. Bauer, Christoph Knill, and Diana Pitschel, “Differential Europeanization in Eastern Europe: The Impact of Diverse EU Regulatory Governance Patterns”, *Journal of European Integration* 29, no. 4 (2007): 406.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ András Hettyey, “The Europeanization of Hungarian foreign policy and the Hungarization of European foreign policy, 2010-18”, *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* (2020): 3.

well not only in regard to decisions but also as relates to the administrative mechanisms and governance practices⁹. For our analysis, the Europeanization process of foreign policy can be defined as:

“a transformation in the way in which national foreign policies are constructed, in the ways in which professional roles are defined and pursued and in the consequent internalisation of norms and expectations arising from a complex system of collective European policy making”¹⁰.

The analysis is framed within an Europeanization approach and aims to understand the domestic changes by examining the Europeanization process of the Romanian foreign and security policies. The study is interested in a historical institutional perspective in order to address both the impact of the Europeanization process and how the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CSFP) is implemented in the Romanian foreign and security policy discourse.

The Europeanization of foreign policy has become an intensely debated topic during the last decade and has been studied from different theoretical perspectives. However, on the subject of Romania’s Europeanization of foreign policy, the research in this area is rather deficient. An important author in this field is Sorin Denca who has written a study of the Europeanization of Romania’s foreign policy from a comparative perspective. His study emphasizes national adaptation and the socialization dimension¹¹. Papadimitroiu and Gateva have written a study that discussed Romania’s accession to the EU also from a comparative perspective¹². Another comparative analysis by Nitoiu and Moga examined the foreign policy goals and performance of Romania and Bulgaria. Their paper considers that joining the European Union was a foreign policy priority for Bucharest¹³.

The present analysis aims to answer three questions. First one concerns the depth of Romania’s Europeanization of foreign and security policy after the EU accession. The second addresses the potential role of Three Seas Initiative in relation to the Europeanization process. And the third one is related to the second question in that seeks to ascertain to what degree does the phenomenon of Europeanization extend to Romania’s membership in the Three Seas

⁹ Zoltán Grünhut, “Concepts, approaches and methods on europeanisation – a meta-analysis,” *Eastern Journal Of European Studies* 8, no. 1 (2017): 165.

¹⁰ Hettyey, “The Europeanization of Hungarian foreign policy”, 3.

¹¹ Sorin Ștefan Denca, “European integration and foreign policy in Central and Eastern Europe: The cases of Hungary, Slovakia and Romania”, PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, August 2010, https://etheses.bham.ac.uk//id/eprint/1462/1/Denca_11_PhD.pdf

¹² Dimitris Papadimitroiu and Eli Gateva, “Between Enlargement-Led Europeanisation and Balkan Exceptionalism: An Appraisal of Bulgaria’s and Romania’s Entry into the European Union”, *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 10, no. 2 (2009): 152-166.

¹³ Cristian Nitoiu and Teodor Lucian Moga, “Change and continuity in Bulgaria and Romania’s foreign policies post-EU accession”, *European Politics and Society* (2020).

Initiative? In terms of research methodology, this paper will apply a comparative perspective and combine it with a narrative historical method.

In this section we intend to establish an analytical framework to study the relation between the Romanian foreign and security policy and the impact of the Europeanization process. The following section emphasizes the first steps made by Romania in the transition phase that were determinative in the Europeanization process, by focusing on foreign and security policy issues. The next section focuses on the role that Romania's early participation in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) had on the country's accession to the EU. The fourth section provides a presentation of Romania's foreign and security policy in the context of Europeanization by highlighting the significant role that the country played in securing the Black Sea region for the EU. The core argument of the last part is that Romania's membership in the Three Seas Initiative could further represent an opportunity to consolidate the Europeanization process of its foreign and security policy.

The initial empirical observations gathered here point to the fact that Romania learned to operate within the framework of EU's foreign policy, which involved the adaptation of its foreign policymaking structures and of foreign policy objectives. By the end of the research, we have concluded that Romania's participation in the Three Seas Initiative marks the beginning of the consolidation phase in the Europeanization of its foreign and security policy. This paper uses primary sources such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs reports and press releases, as well as, secondary sources in the form of research studies that have focused on Europeanization and its relation with other EU countries.

After the collapse of Communism in 1989, the ex-communist countries tried to adapt to the new international context and in doing so, sought to be admitted into the European Union. By setting on an Europeanization course, these countries had to face many changes, especially in the political, economic, legislative, and administrative sectors. Alongside other Central and Eastern European (CEE) states, Romania followed the path of Europeanization and made the necessary reforms in order to be integrated into the EU.

Before 1989, Romania was a communist state with a centralized economy. In this period, the foreign and security policy of Romania faced the same transformations which occurred throughout the whole "Iron Curtain". During the 1960s and 1970s, Romanian policy-makers carefully crafted a foreign policy that vied to achieve its own interests in international affairs while at the same time, increasingly sought to distance itself from Moscow. This had been accomplished despite the fact that Romania remained a member of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact and of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance¹⁴. During this period, Romania had also initiated relations with West Germany and

¹⁴ Robert R. King, "Romania's struggle for an autonomous foreign policy", *The World Today* 35, no. 8 (1979): 340.

received the Most Favored Nation status from the US Congress. Moreover, the Romanian leaders maintained friendly relations with anti-Soviet China and disagreed with the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia¹⁵. Despite these foreign policy actions, Bucharest had not fundamentally challenged Moscow's security interests since the Romanian leaders had chosen to follow a more individualized foreign policy in areas that were of less concern for the Soviet Union¹⁶.

After the Revolution from 1989, the Romanian communism was toppled, putting an end to Nicolae Ceaușescu's regime. In 1990, Romania had its first democratic elected president, Ion Iliescu. Iliescu took a partial set of measures when it came to developing a multi-party system and a free market¹⁷. After the Revolution, Romania developed very close ties with the United States and with the Western European countries. The end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union produced a lot of changes in the CEE region, including in Romania. Subsequently, Romania's foreign policy also underwent important changes. After the Warsaw Pact disappeared, Romania had to develop a partnership with the West. Similarly, Romania's economic system also underwent a fundamental change in the process of being transformed into a free market economy.

This study attempts to contribute to the European Studies burgeoning literature on Europeanization in the context of the emergence of the Three Seas Initiative. Furthermore, the analysis suggests that this research field requires more empirical investigations since they appear to be helpful for expanding the present institutional analyses.

II. The first steps in the Europeanization process

Few years after the Revolution, Romania decided to follow the European road and join the European Union (the European Community (EC) until 1993). A dedicated department for European Affairs was established in 1994, but at this stage, relations between Romania and the EC were mainly limited to the implementation of the trade and cooperation agreements, like the once signed in October 1990 that went in effect from May 1991. The trade agreement was important both in terms of its economic consequences and since it represented the end of Romania's isolation in Europe, owing to the political unrest in Bucharest during the first half of 1990¹⁸. By comparison, the Europeanization of Hungary's foreign policymaking had an earlier start as

¹⁵ Ronald H. Linden, "The burden of belonging: Romanian and Bulgarian foreign policy in the new era", *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 11, no. 3 (2009): 271.

¹⁶ King, "Romania's struggle", 340.

¹⁷ Joel Hellman, "Winners Take All: The Politics of Partial Reform in Post-communist", *Transitions World Politics* 50, no. 2 (January 1998): 203–34.

¹⁸ Denca, "European integration and foreign policy", 108.

Hungary was the first country from CEE to sign a Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the EC in July 1988¹⁹.

While the Romanian road to Europe was not a smooth one, it was clear that its foreign policy was beginning to change from one subservient to Moscow to one aimed towards the Western states. By May 1991, the Romanian authorities were positioned to submit the official application to begin the negotiation talks. At that time, the negotiations between the EC and the Visegrád states were well underway having already applied for membership in the EC. Eventually, the talks between Romania and the EC started in 1992 and were finalized in 1993, when Romania finally applied to become a member of the EU²⁰, signaling a major change in the Romanian foreign policy after the Cold War. Romania was now involved in the Europeanization process that began before the country's integration in the EU. Noticeably, while the process had started, it was not complete. Consequently, Romania also began to take the necessary steps for joining NATO; membership in this organization can also be thought of as a kind of Europeanization, since a lot of EU states are also NATO members. Romania eventually joined NATO in 2004 and four years later, would host the 2008 summit in Bucharest²¹. By joining NATO, Romania completed an important stage in its transition, becoming at the same time a very important asset for the Alliance.

Romania's membership to NATO played an important role in deepening the Europeanization process. Preparation for NATO accession forced Romania to take the necessary measures in adapting its security policy that also prepared it for EU accession, integration and Europeanization. Both the European Union and NATO have common norms, practices, and values like good-neighborliness and regional cooperation. Romania seized the opportunity to assume the mantle of exemplary European country. In the absence of a comprehensive EU framework governing the relations with the Eastern neighbors, Romania used NATO as a primary foreign policy vehicle²². NATO relied especially on soft power mechanisms so that the CEE actors embodied a liberal-democratic vision of governance²³.

The Alliance was heavily involved in the Eastern promotion of liberal-democratic values and norms in the field of security. These included

¹⁹ Jozef Bátora, "Europeanization of Foreign Policy: Whither Central Europe?", in *Regional and International Relations of Central Europe*, ed. Zlatko Šabić and Petr Drulak (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 228.

²⁰ Denca, "European integration and foreign policy", 108.

²¹ NATO, "NATO welcomes seven new members", April 2, 2004, <https://www.nato.int/docu/update/2004/04-april/e0402a.htm>.

²² Dimitar Bechev, "From Policy-Takers to Policy-Makers? Observations on Bulgarian and Romanian Foreign Policy Before and After EU Accession", *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 10, no. 2 (2009): 217-20.

²³ Alexandra Gheciu, "Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization? NATO and the 'New Europe'", *International Organization* 59, no. 4 (2005): 974.

accountability and transparency in the formulation of budgets and defense policies; division of powers within the state in the area of security; government oversight of the military through civilian defense ministries; and responsibility for the armed forces. Furthermore, NATO also sought to promote in the CEE states, Western defined liberal values and rules for international behavior, such as the peaceful settlement of disputes; multilateralism; human rights; and democracy²⁴. The NATO enlargement process has been complementary to the EU one in reinforcing the mechanisms of democracy²⁵ and the process of Europeanization. For Romania's foreign and security policy, the evolution of Europeanization had been advanced by NATO's framework of democracy promotion, prior to the UE accession.

Step by step, Romania's Europeanization process made its influence known in the country's foreign policy, which prompted several changes. For example, the entry into force of the Europe Agreement in 1995 was hailed as a historical moment, a turning point and an important victory for the country. In just five years, the foreign policy had successfully switched gears, moving from the defunct Warsaw Pact to NATO and from COMECON to the European Union. Soon after the Europe Agreement came into force, the Romanian government adopted two decrees. The first one defined the role of the Department of European Integration, the governmental body seen as the main agent responsible for the European integration of Romania, while the second led to the creation of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for European Integration.

In Bucharest, the coordination of European affairs was placed under the Prime-Minister Office for most of this period. In Hungary's case, during the first half of the 1990s, the Ministry of Trade had been deeply involved in the negotiations surrounding the country's European future. Because it was considered that the role of the Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs was challenged by the Ministry of Trade, the Prime Minister transferred the entire office for European Affairs from the Ministry of Trade to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thus improving the required expertise of the Ministry and streamlining the coordination process²⁶. In 1997, Slovenia created a Government Office for European Affairs led by a Minister for Europe without portfolio. This office reframed EU policies from foreign policies to internal affairs. Before this change was made, the main coordinating function, along with the organizational units for EU affairs were the attributes of the Foreign Affairs Ministry²⁷.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Michael Emerson and Gergana Noutcheva, "Europeanisation as a Gravity Model of Democratisation", *CEPS Working Document*, no. 214 (November 2004): 21, <https://www.ceps.eu/download/publication/?id=5023&pdf=1175.pdf>.

²⁶ Sorin Ștefan Denca, "Europeanization of Foreign Policy: Empirical Findings From Hungary, Romania and Slovakia", *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 5, no. 3 (2009): 394.

²⁷ Bátorá, "Europeanization of Foreign Policy", 227.

As can be seen, the Europeanization process led to changes in the Romanian institutions and the country's foreign policy²⁸. The promotion of a pro-European political discourse forced Romania to accept certain temporary high costs in exchange for being part of a project for the future. For example, the oil embargo imposed against Yugoslavia in the early '90 affected Romania's economic interest, but the country still preferred to be in line with the sanction regime imposed against its neighbor²⁹. This time, the process of Europeanization determined the government to take a hard decision, and the impact of Europeanization in this case was the oil embargo.

III. The integration phase

The stage of transition was followed by the one of integration, a stage that started in the early 2000s. During this time, Romania increased the visibility of European project for the public and transformed the prospect of integration into a tangible reality. At the institutional level, the discussions about accession intensified the political and technical negotiations between the representatives of the European Commission and the national delegation³⁰. Romania started from a worse position than that of many of the former communist countries. The process of European integration entailed a series of exogenous shocks³¹. Between 2001 and 2007, the Minister of European Integration was in charge of the management and coordination of European Affairs. As noted, it was the European integration process that provided the incentive for the country's transformation³².

After Romania became an associated state in 1995 and an acceding country in 2004, on January 1st, 2007, Romania became a Member State of the EU³³. Becoming a full member of the European Union was considered to be a true victory for the Romanian government at that time. To become a Member State, Romania had to perform reforms in multiple areas: from the political system to the administration and legislation, from the economy to foreign policy. All these changes started since Romania obtained the associated state status. However, Romania was not the only ex-communist state to do these reforms. Poland found itself in the same position: prior to the EU accession, the

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Sorin Ștefan Denca, "Romania: the Black Sea Atlanticist", in *The New Member States and the European Union. Foreign Policy and Europeanization*, ed. Michael Baun and Dan Marek (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2013), 178-9.

³⁰ Denca, "European integration and foreign policy", 112.

³¹ Denca, "Romania: the Black Sea Atlanticist", 178.

³² Denca, "European integration and foreign policy", 134.

³³ ***, "EU approves Bulgaria and Romania", *BBC News*, September 29, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/5380024.stm> accessed on 11/19/2017.

Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs had undergone a series of organizational changes in order to adapt its procedures and structures to the EU membership requirements³⁴.

The Europeanization and integration processes transformed Romania's foreign and security policy though soon after, new challenges appeared. Firstly, given its strategic position, Romania had to secure the Eastern border and provide security for the EU in the Black Sea area. Secondly, Romania had to be part of the CFSP and ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy, former name of the Common Security and Defense Policy – CSDP) and contribute to their efforts. Finally, a big challenge for Romania was to manage the relation between NATO and CFSP. Similarly, since becoming a Member State, the Czech Republic also sought to preserve a very careful balance between the NATO and EU security profiles³⁵.

Securing EU's borders continues even now to pose challenges for Romania. Its geographical size and location made it a key state in ensuring and promoting the European security. Romania is the 9th largest state in the EU; it shares borders with Ukraine, Moldova, Serbia, and the Black Sea coast, which need to be secured in relation both to the EU and NATO. Moreover, located in South-Eastern Europe, Romania is on key routes for trafficking and transit, primarily from Central Asia. In the north-east, its border is only 200 km away from the breakaway Republic of Transnistria, a widely acknowledged trafficking hotspot. Romania is responsible for stopping illegal migrants from entering the EU, for tackling the trafficking of people, drugs, arms, and other illegal goods, for preventing any infiltrators from moving further into the EU, and for keeping transnational criminals and their activities out³⁶.

A complicated situation emerged after Romania gave its support for the war in Iraq. This choice raised questions about how genuine its support for the ESDP really was. The policy-makers in Bucharest were uncertain whether ESDP would undermine the role of NATO as a security provider since for Romania, NATO and the strategic partnership with USA were of utmost importance³⁷.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the primary institutional actor in charge of the relation between Romania and the CFSP³⁸. Starting with 2003, Romania started to show that it can be an active member in the ESDP. The EU foreign and security policy enables the Union to act as one actor in world affairs. The 2009 Lisbon Treaty strengthened this policy area by creating the post of the

³⁴ Bátorá, "Europeanization of Foreign Policy", 229.

³⁵ Michael Baun and Dan Marek, "Czech Foreign Policy and EU Membership: Europeanization and Domestic Sources", *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 11, no. 1 (April 2010): 21.

³⁶ Dimitris Papadimitriou and David Phinnemore, *Romania and the European Union From marginalization to membership* (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2008), 124-5.

³⁷ Denca, "Romania: the Black Sea Atlanticist", 179-82.

³⁸ Denca, "European integration and foreign policy", 125.

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, as well as for the European Union's diplomatic corps³⁹. The provisions of the Lisbon Treaty aimed at developing a Common Security and Defense Policy that was intended to be more transparent, more coherent, and more effective, in order to increase the importance of the EU as an international actor⁴⁰. Through CFSP, the EU seeks to preserve peace and international security, promote international cooperation, develop and consolidate democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms⁴¹.

One of the consequences of the Europeanization of Romania's foreign policy was to make the state to become more involved in the CFSP and EDSP. At present, Romania remains an active participant in the political dialogue inside the EU and plays an important role in the CSDP. Through CSDP, the EU takes a leading role in peace-keeping operations, conflict prevention, and in the strengthening of international security. It is an integral part of the EU's comprehensive approach towards crisis management, drawing on civilian and military assets⁴². Being an EU Member State, Romania is currently contributing to the drafts of EU statements, positions, and demarches. Romania also observes the international sanction regime and the restrictive measures imposed by the EU and UN. Moreover, Romania participates to all working groups and structures of the Council in charge of CSDP⁴³ given that it has both a military and civilian structure. The most important institution in Romania in terms of engagement with the CFSP is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At times, the ministry has had to manage the impact of the new opportunities provided by the CFSP. Slovakia was an active rule follower in CFSP prior to the EU accession⁴⁴ while Poland also adapted well to it, especially with regard to the bureaucratic and administrative structures, or the support for political cooperation⁴⁵.

Prior to the Euro-Atlantic accession, Romania was not engaged in military actions across its borders; nevertheless, before joining the EU, Romania had been involved in the field of security and defense since it was subject to the CSDP (known as ESDP until December 2009). Today, Romania is an active participant in the CSDP, both in its political and operational dimensions. The

³⁹ ***, "European foreign and security policy", *European Union*, https://europa.eu/european-union/topics/foreign-security-policy_en.

⁴⁰ Mihaela Bușe, "Common Security and Defence Policy towards Implementing the Provisions of the Lisbon Treaty," *Ovidius University Annals, Economic Sciences Series* 12, no. 2 (2012): 149.

⁴¹ ***, "European foreign and security policy".

⁴² EEAS, "The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)", https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/common-security-and-defence-policy-csdp_en.

⁴³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Evolutions in the Common Security and Defense Policy – Press Release", updated 2020, <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/2064>.

⁴⁴ Batora, "Europeanization of Foreign Policy, 226.

⁴⁵ Joanna Kaminska, "New EU members and the CFSP: Europeanization of the Polish foreign policy", *Political Perspectives EPRU* 2, no. 2 (2007): 19, <http://www.politicalperspectives.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/EPRU-2007-S1-02.pdf>.

political dimension supports the interests identified by Member States as falling under the common security and defense umbrella; while the operational dimension contributes to the EU crisis management⁴⁶. Romania considered the early participation to the CFSP to be an important opportunity that would help prepare the country for EU accession.

Since 2003, Romania has been actively involved in numerous missions and operations conducted under the ESDP. By engaging in numerous ESDP missions, the Romanian government was better prepared to understand the importance of the EU approach to the promotion of the rule of law, the respect for human rights, and good governance. All are aspects which directly affect international stability and security⁴⁷. ESDP, later known as CSDP, represents a major element of the CFSP. It is the EU policy covering defense and military aspects as well as the issues pertaining to civilian crisis management. The ESDP oversees areas such as humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping missions, task forces for crisis management, assistance tasks and post-conflict stabilization operations. A very important aspect of the ESDP is that it does not involve the creation of a European army, but, instead, evolves in a consistent manner and in coordination with NATO⁴⁸.

Romania's national contribution, along with that of other Member States, covers both civilian and military operations since it is an important contributor to the development of the CSDP. Romanian troops have been deployed to the Western Balkans, the Middle East, Georgia, Afghanistan, or Libya, as part of both civilian and military EU operations⁴⁹. Romania is active in many missions conducted under the CSDP, on three continents. This is the case of the civilian mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM); the military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFO Althea); the integrated rule of law mission in Iraq (EUJUST LEX); the rule of law mission in Kosovo (EULEX Kosovo); the civilian mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan); the monitoring mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia); or the naval mission for combating piracy in the Gulf of Aden (EUNAVFOR ATALANTA)⁵⁰.

The ex-communist states are very implicated in the CSDP missions. Even before accession, in March 2003, Poland decided to contribute with troops to the first military operation in the ESDP framework – Operation Concordia in the Republic of Macedonia. Poland also participated to the EUPM (6 police officers) and Althea Operations (190 soldiers) in Bosnia and Herzegovina; EUFOR in the Democratic Republic of Congo (131 gendarmes); European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine

⁴⁶ Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, „Politica de Securitate și Apărare Comună (PSAC)”, <http://www.mae.ro/node/1882>.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Bușe, “Common Security and Defence Policy”, 146.

⁴⁹ Denca, “Romania: the Black Sea Atlanticist”, 179-182.

⁵⁰ Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, „Politica de Securitate și Apărare Comună”.

(EUBAM); EUJUST LEX in Iraq (Warsaw was the only one among the new Members States that contributed to this mission)⁵¹.

For EU to be effective in the CDSP field, Member States agreed on the necessity of building new civilian and military capabilities dedicated to this purpose. The European Defense Agency has a central role in developing military capabilities and also manages the fragmentation at the EU level by developing cooperation programs in this strategic field⁵². In 2008, Romania's response to the crisis in the Caucasus illustrated its determination and ability to play an important role in the expression of the Union's external policy. To the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia, Romania dispatched a team of monitors operating under the direction and coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In participating to these missions, Romania helped transform the ESDP into an important pillar of EU foreign policy in line with its national interests. Currently, Romania is among the main contributors to the EU civilian crisis management operations, in terms of personnel and equipment. In 2010, Romania had 205 civilian experts present in five European missions, behind France and Italy⁵³. In 2013, 56 Romanian seconded national experts and 55 contracted personnel were taking part in CSDP missions⁵⁴.

In order to meet EU's security needs, Romania joined with other EU partners in several programs to develop cutting edge capabilities meant to achieve these needs. Romania contributed to the successful completion of the Civilian Headline Goal, demonstrating, once again, its involvement in the development of the ESDP. The resources and troops made available by Romania were intended for peacekeeping missions, search and rescue missions, as well as humanitarian missions. Romania offered forces that had distinct compositions depending on the type of mission. In general, Romania's contribution included military personnel and skills from across all types of armed forces⁵⁵. Romania is an active member of several key structures within the CDSP, such as the EUSC (the Satellite Centre of the EU, located in Spain); the ISS (the Security Studies Institute of the EU, located in Paris); and the EDA (European Defense Agency, located in Belgium). When it comes to these memberships, Romania is also involved in the EDA programs meant to develop the latest generation capabilities⁵⁶.

⁵¹ Karolina Pomorska, "Are we there yet? From adaptation to Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy", paper prepared for the EUSA Twelfth Biennial International Conference Boston, March 3-5, 2011, 15.

⁵² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Evolutions in the Common Security and Defense Policy".

⁵³ Mihaela Bușe, "Romania and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) / Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)", *Ovidius University Annals, Economic Sciences Series* 12, no. 2 (2012): 143.

⁵⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Evolutions in the Common Security and Defense Policy".

⁵⁵ Bușe, "Romania and the European Security and Defence Policy", 143-144.

⁵⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Evolutions in the Common Security and Defense Policy".

It is certain that Romania will continue to participate in the development of the CSDP and will try to become even more involved in the effort of ensuring the security of the EU. The Romanian state also participates in the pre-deployment training provided under the umbrella of the ESDC, designed to contribute to a more time-efficient and effective implementation of the troops in combat operations⁵⁷. From early on, the Czech Republic participated in building EU Battlegroups: in 2009, for example, it formed a Battlegroup in collaboration with Slovakia. The Czech Republic was also the lead state which was responsible for the largest part of the Battlegroup's construction. In 2012, the Czech Republic took part in the establishment of a Battlegroup under German leadership together with Ireland and Austria and in cooperation with Macedonia and Croatia⁵⁸. As we have seen, the Romanian military contribution is also very high. Following in the steps of Czech Republic, Romania also confirmed its participation in two EU Battlegroups. The first group named HELBRPC BG contains Romania, Greece, Bulgaria, and Cyprus, while in the second one (ITROT), Romania is participating alongside Italy and Turkey⁵⁹.

As we can see, Romania is involved in the CSFP at every level. In 2008, there was a moment when Romania decided not to follow the CSFP and the decisions of the EU. That moment came in February 2008, when it opposed EU's decisions regarding the recognition of Kosovo's independence. This event illustrated the limits of the foreign policy's capacity for Europeanization⁶⁰. Nevertheless, Romania was not the only state in this situation, as Bulgaria also opposed Kosovo's independence. Both countries had their own historical and contemporary reasons to be concerned about Kosovo⁶¹.

IV. Romanian foreign and security policy in the Europeanization context

As mentioned, another challenge for Romania after integration was the fact that it became a border Member State, thus its foreign and security policies had to change. Noticeably, the impact of Europeanization could be observed in its foreign policy where Romania had to integrate itself in the European

⁵⁷ EAAS, "Future CSDP mission members ready for deployment", March 17, 2017, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/22937/Future%20CSDP%20mission%20members%20ready%20for%20deployment.

⁵⁸ Michal Kořan et al., "The Czech Republic in Common Security and Defence Policy of the EU: Audit and Perspectives", *Prague Centre for Transatlantic Relations Policy Paper*, March 2015, 12, [https://www.cevroinstitut.cz/upload/ck/files/PCTR/Publikace/2015/policy%20paper%20Czech%20Republic%20in%20the%20CSDP%20of%20the%20EU%20\(web\).pdf](https://www.cevroinstitut.cz/upload/ck/files/PCTR/Publikace/2015/policy%20paper%20Czech%20Republic%20in%20the%20CSDP%20of%20the%20EU%20(web).pdf).

⁵⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Evolutions in the Common Security and Defense Policy".

⁶⁰ Denca, "Romania: the Black Sea Atlanticist", 183.

⁶¹ Linden, "The burden of belonging", 287.

Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and reconfigure the cooperation rapports with its neighbors. The ENP governs EU's relation with 16 of the EU's closest eastern and southern neighbors: to the east – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine; and to the south – Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia. In the ENP, Romania had to manage relations with Moldova, Ukraine, and Serbia⁶². Through its Neighborhood Policy, the EU works with its southern and eastern neighbors to foster stabilization, security, and prosperity, in line with the Global Strategy for the Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union⁶³.

The ENP was launched in 2003 and further developed in 2004, having as objective the prevention of emergencies related to the new dividing lines existing between the enlarged EU and its neighbors. Moreover, the ENP also sought to strengthen the prosperity, stability, and security of all – Member States and neighbors alike. It was based on the values of democracy, rule of law and respect of human rights. The revised Policy aims to build more effective partnerships between the EU and its neighbors that would ensure a more stable EU Neighborhood in political, socio-economic and security terms⁶⁴. The ENP review proposed revised joint priorities for cooperation, better suited to the challenges of our time and adapted to the region's circumstances. Most of the funding for what became known as the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI) is used for bilateral cooperation, tailor-made for each Neighborhood Plan. A key element of the ENP is to strengthen and promote the role of civil society actors in reforms and democratic changes taking place in the neighborhood countries⁶⁵. The 2015 review reinforced the principle of flexibility to accelerate assistance and to ensure it is better adapted to rapidly evolving political priorities. In 2017, the Report on the Implementation of the ENP Review proposed a new framework for building more effective partnerships between the EU and its neighbors and supporting stabilization as a top priority. The 2017 report highlighted how the EU and its partners in the east and south were working to promote stabilization and resilience by focusing particularly on economic development, employability, youth employment, as well as by upholding EU's commitment to promote democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights, and good governance. For these goals to be achieved, effective and accountable public administrations and civil society participation were needed. The Report concluded that EU will also continue to enhance the visibility of the ENP, notably by promoting the short, medium, and long-term benefits of its cooperation with its neighbors.

⁶² European Commission, “European Neighbourhood Policy”, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/european-neighbourhood-policy_en.

⁶³ EEAS, “European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)”, December 21, 2016, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/330/european-neighbourhood-policy-enp_en.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ European Commission “European Neighbourhood Policy”.

Another EU policy directed at its neighbors is the Cross Border Cooperation (CBC). It supports sustainable development along EU's external borders, helps reduce differences in living standards, and addresses common challenges present throughout these borders. CBC promotes cooperation between EU Member States and neighboring countries sharing a land border or sea-crossing. In this case, Romania is meeting the necessary requirements. The main objectives of the CBC are: promoting economic and social development in border areas; addressing common challenges; putting in place better conditions for persons, goods and capital mobility. Europeanization made Romania part of CBC programs. Romanian foreign policy unfolded as part of EU's especially in the case of Ukraine. Romania was involved in the Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova Joint Operational Programme which started in 2007 and ended in 2013. Until 2020, Romania was involved in two other programmes: Romania-Ukraine Programme and Romania-Republic of Moldova Programme⁶⁶. On September 26-27, 2016, EUAM facilitated the first visit of an Ukrainian prosecutor from the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor Office to meet their counterparts in Bucharest. The visit was part of Romania's Public Ministry project to support Ukraine's anti-corruption institutions⁶⁷. A very important moment that showed how Romanian foreign policy unfolded as part of the EU came in 2014, when the Romanian government backed the EU sanctions against Russia following the controversial referendum held in Crimea⁶⁸.

Romania also took part in the implementation of the EU global strategy and CSDP⁶⁹. Following the European Union foreign policy, Romania supported its efforts to strengthen the institutional capabilities in a large number of African countries through the military operations and the civil mission conducted under the CSDP⁷⁰. Special attention was given to the Black Sea region when the Black Sea Synergy was launched in 2007. Romania participated in this program⁷¹ which was meant to strengthen support in the region by founding partnerships in vital sectors: respect of human rights; immigration management; security improvement; environment; frozen conflicts; regional development; and energy.

⁶⁶ European Commission, "Cross Border Cooperation", January 31, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/cross-border-cooperation_en.

⁶⁷ EUAM-Ukraine, "EUAM takes Ukrainian partners to all corners of Europe in best-practices exchange exercises", October 4, 2016, <https://www.euam-ukraine.eu/news/latest-news/euam-takes-ukrainian-partners-to-all-corners-of-europe-in-best-practices-exchange-exercises/>.

⁶⁸ Marian Chiriac, "Romania Backs EU Sanctions Against Russia", *Balkan Insight*, March 18, 2014, <https://balkaninsight.com/2014/03/18/tense-situation-in-ukraine-worries-neighboring-romania/>.

⁶⁹ MAE, „Raportul Anual al Ministerului Afacerilor Externe. 2018”, 15, https://www.mae.ro/sites/default/files/file/anul_2019/2019_pdf/final_raport_mae_2018_-_varianta_aprobata.pdf.

⁷⁰ Embassy of Romania to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, "ForMin Corlatean attends EU-Africa ministers' meeting", <http://londra.mae.ro/en/romania-news/4186>.

⁷¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Evolutions in the Common Security and Defense Policy".

Additionally, Romania found itself in a favorable situation under the ENP policy, which brought a greater focus on the individual involvement of each Member State in its implementation. When considering the resources and political tools offered by ENP, Romania can emerge as a leader in building an area of stability and prosperity around the Black Sea basin that can benefit both the EU and its eastern neighbors. A larger flexibility, adapting to the requirements of each bilateral relation, and focusing on mutual interests are key elements in advancing Romania's economic and political diplomacy⁷².

The Europeanization process changed the relations between Romania and its neighbors since it needs to conduct its foreign policy in agreement with the EU. Taking into consideration any future EU enlargements, Romania is now the representative of the EU for its neighbors. In the relation with the Republic of Moldova, Romania can be an example in terms of Europeanization and integration. Moldova and EU enlargement are key-issues in Romania's foreign policy, but the country's interest in Moldova's accession to the EU have collided with Russia's desire to keep the Transnistrian conflict frozen⁷³. Romania supported Moldova in its efforts to get closer to the EU. In Moldova's road to accession, Romania initiated, in January 2010, a special group called Moldova European Action Group (GAERM). Until now, this group has met in 10 sessions and has registered various breakthroughs in promoting Moldova's integration agenda⁷⁴.

The leaders from Chișinău have acknowledged the role that Bucharest can play in Moldova's path towards the EU. To support the European goal of the Moldova, Romania can perform on two separate political levels: at the bilateral level, by providing a direct and constant help to Chișinău; and at the European level, through the measures taken as a member of the EU. At the moment, however, the Republic of Moldova does not have any clear vision for EU accession. The public opinion in Romania considers that the European integration of Chișinău must be encouraged by Bucharest and the country has been active in helping and supporting Moldova in its Euro-Atlantic integration efforts⁷⁵.

Aside from the Republic of Moldova, Romania also supported Ukraine and Serbia in their European paths. Romania encouraged Ukraine to maintain a

⁷² Ramona Mănescu, "The European Neighbourhood policy is an opportunity for Romania in its relation with the countries from Eastern European flank", <http://www.ramona-manescu.ro/en/the-european-neighbourhood-policy-is-an-opportunity-for-romania-in-its-relation-with-the-countries-from-eastern-eu-flank/>.

⁷³ European Values, "Romania", <http://www.europeanvalues.net/romania/>.

⁷⁴ Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, "Agenda europeană a Republicii Moldova", May 2020, <http://mae.ro/node/1499>.

⁷⁵ Adrian Pop et al., "Romania and the Republic of Moldova – Between the European neighborhood Policy and the prospect of EU enlargement", *European Institute of Romania – Pre-accession impact studies III*, no. 5, 161-163, http://ier.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/publicatii/Pais3_studiu_5_en.pdf.

sustained pace of its reform processes, related to the exigencies discussed during the Ukraine's negotiations with the EU⁷⁶. In 2014, Romania expressed support for Serbia's bid to join the European Union. One of the motives behind Romania's support for these countries has to do with the fact that such a move would help guarantee regional peace and security⁷⁷. In this sense, Romania has confirmed its joint commitment to intensify political dialogue and consolidate bilateral relations. The cooperation between Romania and Serbia concerns aspects that involve the economic field, internal affairs, and cross-border cooperation⁷⁸. The Slovakian government has also promoted Serbia's accession bid and, just like Romania, it also did not recognize Kosovo⁷⁹.

Perhaps one of the big challenges for Romania after integration was to secure the Black Sea area for the EU. Europeanization changed the way the government in Bucharest looked at the Black Sea. As of now, Romania has more responsibilities, new challenges to face, and new opportunities to exploit. The Black Sea is very important both at the national and European level. After the integration of Romania and Bulgaria, the EU became a large organization stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Black Sea. Romania needs to secure its share of the Black Sea coast against threats, but this task may prove challenging, particularly for a country of such dimension which has limited financial resources and a weak post-communist administrative dimension⁸⁰.

The Black Sea region is an important bridge between East and West, mostly in terms of transport and energy supplies. Moreover, it is an area of enormous geopolitical sensitivity, making it one of the most remarkable regional seas in the world. The maritime management of the countries on the coast of the Black Sea faces many challenges associated with the implementation of international conventions entailing the safety and security of maritime transport and general trade. As a strategic partner, the European Commission provides long term capital meant to help improve maritime safety and security within the region. Here is where Romania plays an important role⁸¹.

On account of Romania being a promoter of European interests at the Black Sea, it gradually became the most active EU Member State in promoting the strategic status of the Black Sea area, stressing the need for an amplified

⁷⁶ Embassy of Romania in Slovak Republic, "Romania supports process of Ukraine's political association and economic integration with EU", <http://bratislava.mae.ro/en/romania-news/3457>.

⁷⁷ Radio Free Europe, "Leaders of Bulgaria, Greece, Romania Back Serbia's EU Membership", October 6, 2020, <https://www.rferl.org/a/serbia-bulgaria-romania-greece-european-union-vucic/28772556.html>.

⁷⁸ ***, "Romania will never block Serbia's path to EU", *B92*, July 17, 2014, http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2014&mm=07&dd=17&nav_id=91012.

⁷⁹ Batorá, "Europeanization of Foreign Policy", 227.

⁸⁰ Papadimitriou and Phinnemore, *Romania and the European Union*, 125-6.

⁸¹ Gheorghe Surugiu, "Clean and Secured Black Sea – a Road for European Integration," *"Ovidius" University Annals, Economic Sciences Series* 12, no. 2 (2012): 220-222.

strategic EU role in the region. Receiving the backing of other Member States, mainly Bulgaria, Greece, but also Germany, added to the success of this approach, leading eventually to the creation of the Black Sea Synergy⁸². This EU initiative points to an increased collaboration amid and between the countries surrounding the Black Sea, and was the combined result of the efforts made by two of EU's most recent members, Bulgaria and Romania⁸³.

The Black Sea Synergy was officially launched in Kiev, on February 14, 2008, during a conference of EU foreign ministers and regional states like Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Turkey, and Ukraine. The key arguments leading the EU to accept the initiative were linked to the Eastern neighborhood and its strategic location; the important networks to Central Asia, the Middle East, but also to the Western Balkans; the great opportunity to develop energy, transport and commercial routes; and the high relevance of issues surrounding democracy, human rights, or the environment⁸⁴.

V. The consolidation phase

Europeanization is not a process that comes to an end, instead it is a continuous phenomenon. In Romania, the integration stage of the Europeanization process led to the adaptation of the foreign and security policy in accordance to the Euro-Atlantic vision. After this stage, the Romanian state started the consolidation phase, a new stage in the Europeanization process. At this stage, Romania deepened its participation in cooperation projects such as the Black Sea Synergy, Craiova Group, and Three Seas Initiative. Through these projects, Romania aims to promote the European policies, to help further develop the European Union, and to improve the security of the CEE and Black Sea region.

One of the most active and important cooperation projects for the security of these two regions, is represented by the Three Seas Initiative – also known as Baltic, Adriatic, Black Sea Initiative (BABS) – which was developed at the initiative of the Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović in collaboration with the Polish President Andrzej Duda. A first high-level meeting took place during the 70th United Nations General Assembly in New York⁸⁵. The Three Seas Initiative represents a flexible political platform at presidential level, which aims to facilitate a real convergence among EU Member States while also boosting the connectivity in the region, especially as concerns the North-South axis. In doing so, it aims to contribute to the strengthening of EU

⁸² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “The Black Sea Region”, <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/2183>.

⁸³ Denca, “European integration and foreign policy”, 241.

⁸⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “The Black Sea Region”.

⁸⁵ ***, “3 Seas Initiative to reach Bucharest”, *Energy Industry Review*, September 12, 2018, <https://energyindustryreview.com/events/3-seas-initiative-to-reach-bucharest/>.

unity; as well as to further integration; and increase EU cohesion and coherence. At this moment, twelve states are part of the initiative: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Furthermore, the Three Seas Initiative is an important platform for high-level dialogue that brings regional contributions to the strengthening of the transatlantic link⁸⁶.

The Three Seas Initiative is a form of cooperation that emerged in a European context marked by rising Euroscepticism, and in a global environment defined by the rise of Chinese power challenging the US global hegemony. The creation of the Three Seas was influenced by the Russian aggression in Eastern Europe, and by the events which transpired in Ukraine in 2014. At the same time, it is important not to minimize the effects of the 2008 financial crisis for the CEE economies. The aforementioned causes were intensified by the refugee's crisis and by the debate surrounding the United Kingdom's referendum on European Union membership. Additionally, the Brexit raised further questions concerning EU's sunity.

The creation of the Three Seas Initiative was inspired by the Report *Completing Europe – From the North-South Corridor to Energy, Transportation, and Telecommunications Union*, that was spearheaded by the Atlantic Council and Central Europe Energy Partners in coordination with the Central and Eastern Europe Development Institute. *Completing Europe* was a joint report that called for the enhanced construction of a North-South Corridor of energy, transportation, and communications links extending from the Baltic to the Adriatic and Black Seas. Gen. James L. Jones Jr was one of the persons that brought a major contribution to the final form of the report. In the opening chapter of the study, Jones and Olechnowicz argued that the creation of the North-South Corridor represented a unique opportunity to further Europe's integration, to strengthen its economic resilience, and, that accordingly, the North-South Corridor should be both a transatlantic and an European priority. This report included multiple recommendations addressed to officials at national and regional levels in the European Union, policymakers in the United States, and decision-makers in the business sector, providing an agenda for how transatlantic cooperation on the North-South axis could play a dynamic role in nurturing economic growth and energy security in an Europe that is whole, free, and at peace⁸⁷.

Based on the experience of the Visegrád Group – a cultural political alliance whose purpose is of furthering integration in the EU – the objectives of the Three Seas Initiative include a deeper integration, a strong Europeanization,

⁸⁶ 3 Seas Initiative Summit, <https://three-seas.eu/>.

⁸⁷ Atlantic Council and CEEP, “Completing Europe. From the North-South Corridor to Energy, Transportation, and Telecommunications Union”, November 21, 2014, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/completing-europe-from-the-north-south-corridor-to-energy-transportation-and-telecommunications-union/>.

and good transatlantic relations. The Three Seas Initiative can be considered a new phase in the Europeanization process of CEE. This initiative serves as a new stage in Romania's foreign and security policy.

Regarding Romania's foreign policy in the context of the Three Seas Initiative, we are seeing a very involved state that supports the efforts of the initiative, aiming to produce a greater unity within the Union through regional improvement, economic interconnectivity, and growth. Romanian support to the Three Seas Initiative is demonstrated by the way in which it acts. On September 17-18th, 2018, Romania hosted the third Summit of the Three Seas Initiative in Bucharest and brought together important international actors such as the United States, the European Union, and Europe's greatest economic power, Germany⁸⁸. The biggest political achievements of the Bucharest summit were: breaking the European Commission's skepticism towards the initiative and reconfirming the United States' support⁸⁹. EU's skepticism was amplified by some international voices that considered the Initiative to be a tool for advancing American geopolitical goals⁹⁰. Moreover, the 2018 summit sent the message that the Three Seas Initiative represents a promising European regional instrument with transatlantic support⁹¹. Throughout the summit, Romania sought to make significant progress by making advances in strategic areas like transportation, energy, and digital interconnections. These aims materialized in a short list of priority interconnection projects centered on three key areas: transportation, energy, digital⁹². Additionally, the summit proved that the essential pillars and objectives of the Three Seas Initiative were about enhancing economic development, strengthening the cohesion of the European Union, and enriching the transatlantic ties⁹³.

The Initiative has a relevant impact on Romania's foreign policy, making it more operative and cooperative. The initiative helps improve the relations between Romania and other member states of BABS and, at the same time, strengthens Romania's relation with Poland and US. Poland and Romania created the Three Seas Initiative Investment Fund which demonstrated the two countries' interests in the implementation of the Initiative's projects since the

⁸⁸ Fanni Virág, "The Three Seas Initiative: The way forward", *Atlantic Council*, November, 7, 2018, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/energysource/the-three-seas-initiative-the-way-forward/>.

⁸⁹ Martin Dahl, "Evolution of Germany's Stance Regarding the Three Seas Initiative", *Yearbook of the Institute of East-Central Europe* 17, no. 3 (2019): 70.

⁹⁰ Adrian Chojan, "The United States on the Three Seas Initiative", *Yearbook of the Institute of East-Central Europe* 17, no. 3 (2019): 79.

⁹¹ Virág, "The Three Seas Initiative".

⁹² 3 Seas Initiative Summit, <https://three-seas.eu/>.

⁹³ ***, "Joint Declaration of the Third Summit of the Three Seas Initiative", *3 Seas Initiative Summit*, September 2018, 1, <http://three-seas.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/BUCHAREST-SUMMIT-JOINT-DECLARATION.pdf>.

Fund seeks to enhance regional energy security, consolidate European integration, and intensify the transatlantic relations.

Where the security policy in the context of the Three Seas Initiative is concerned, Romanian security focuses on the energy security sector. In fact, in the Initiative's vision, the entire regional security policy is related to energy security. Through the Three Seas Initiative's projects, its member states seek to create a strong infrastructure in the energy, transportation, and digital fields in an attempt to make the region less dependent on Russian gas resources. Romania views the Three Seas Initiative as a tool that can bring together EU and NATO members so that, in turn, Romania and the Three Seas Region are more effective in discouraging future aggressions from the East.

The Three Seas Initiative and Romania have the potential to be the face of Europeanization by assisting the states from Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership in developing a smoother and stronger integration process in NATO and EU. This Initiative can consolidate the role of Romania in the European Union by aiding it in its bid to become a model even for its non-European neighbors that want to follow in the way of Europe.

VI. Conclusions

The key objectives of Romania in the Three Seas region aim at forming and strengthening a democratic, prosperous area in the Eastern neighborhood, but also at opening the wider region of the Black Sea to the European and Euro-Atlantic values and processes⁹⁴. This course of action brings with it both challenges and opportunities. In the short term, it is possible that the focus in implementing the CSDP may have a negative influence on the processes within NATO which are aimed at boosting collective defense in the Baltic and the Black Sea regions. In the Black Sea region, the process of boosting the allied presence is actively being pursued. Western European allies along with the US contribute to joint exercises and provide an enhanced presence in Poland, the Baltic states, Romania, and Bulgaria⁹⁵.

The member states of the Three Seas Initiative have expressed their wish to become more involved in the process of enhancing security and defense collaboration in the EU, as they fear that a multi-speed Europe may be created where some of them will be left behind. In the discussions over the CSDP, Romania has been interested in being a more efficient partner in terms of crisis management, cyber-security, and the development of strategic communication.

⁹⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The Black Sea Region".

⁹⁵ Justyna Gotkowska, "The CSDP's renaissance. Challenges and opportunities for the eastern flank", *OSW Commentary*, June 28, 2017, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2017-06-28/csdps-renaissance-challenges-and-opportunities-eastern-flank> accessed on 11/23/2017.

It also has great expectations for modernizing the army and revitalizing the defense industry. At the same time, it has expressed its support for integration processes and stressed the need to further develop the EU–NATO cooperation in the Black Sea region⁹⁶.

The Europeanization process prompted a lot of changes in Romania’s foreign and security policy. First of all, as we have seen, the process of Europeanization started before 2000, during a period when Romania underwent a lot of preparatory processes in order to be integrated in the Euro-Atlantic structures. In 25 years, through Europeanization, Romania changed its foreign policy vision which had been for many decades trapped in Moscow’s orbit. Presently, it is an active member in the CFSP within both its civilian and military structures. In general, Romania follows the direction set by Bruxelles in terms of foreign policy, though not with some notable exceptions such as in the case of Kosovo’s independence, which Romania did not recognize even though it sent military troops for peacekeeping purposes.

The impact of Europeanization made Romania an active Member State in CEE that aids and supports future enlargements with the possible additions of the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, and Serbia. Speaking of the security policy, Romania had to secure EU’s borders and maintain maritime security in the Black Sea. In terms of foreign and security policy, the Europeanization process made Romania contribute more to the EU, transforming it into a reliable partner, overseeing the CSDP’s sustainable development.

Romania’s membership in the Three Seas Initiative marks the beginning of the consolidation phase of the Europeanization of its foreign and security policy, because the Initiative has an important role in strengthening the cohesion of the European Union. For Romania’s foreign and security policy, the Three Seas Initiative provides the necessary framework for adhering to the European regional development policies and for fulfilling the transatlantic vision regarding the region’s security. Romania regards the Initiative as a political platform created to enhance European integration and not as a counter-project to compete with the EU.

In the consolidation stage of the Europeanization process, one of the biggest challenges for Romania will be to find a way for the EU, NATO, and the US to continue working together. Romania doubts that the EU’s ties with the US (Romania’s strategic ally) will weaken in the near future. In the Black Sea region, the careful approach that Poland and the Baltic states are taking with regards to the development of the CSDP is also shared by Romania. Having said this, these states pose a challenge when it comes to the relationship between EU policy, NATO, and the strategic partnership with the US, and they need to find common interests and common goals to further ensure the future of the Euro-Atlantic relationship.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

One possible effect of the Europeanization process on the Romania's foreign and security policy would involve a change in the perception of the national interest. The new National Defense Strategy 2020-2024 promotes an extended national security concept⁹⁷ that aims to involve both the US and the EU in the Three Seas Initiative, as a way of improving the security of Central and Eastern Europe; developing the region's infrastructure; and consolidating the Euro-Atlantic ties in order to face together any threats that might arise in terms of national and European security. The country's foreign and security policy envision a strong Romania within Europe and the world. Bucharest has lobbied for durable transatlantic relations and supported the idea that the CSDP should be complementary to NATO. Additionally, for Romania, the Three Seas Initiative seems to be a means to strengthen the Euro-Atlantic relationship by ensuring that the US and EU maintain a combined effort to safeguard their joint aims in the region.

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