THE EUROPEAN UNION AND GLOBAL ORDER

EDITORS:

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Mulțumiri

Coordonatorii volumului doresc să le mulțumească cadrelor didactice prezentate mai jos pentru sprijinul acordat de către aceștia în desfășurarea conferinței, care a avut ca rezultat acest volum colectiv. De asemenea, adresăm mulțumiri comitetului științific pentru ajutorul oferit în evaluarea lucrărilor ce se regăsesc în următoarele pagini.

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CUVÂNT-ÎNAINTE / FOREWORD

Volumul I '*The European Union and Global Order'*, rezultat al sesiunii de comunicări științifice cu același nume, propune audienței o serie de analize asupra celor mai presante probleme de pe agenda europeană și globală.

Lucrările regăsite în volum vizează o arie variată de preocupări din domeniul relațiilor internaționale și al studiilor europene, într-un context internațional, național sau regional supus unor provocări majore. În momentul de față, Uniunea Europeană se confruntă cu provocări fără precedent și de natură diferită, atât interne, generate de efortul de redresare economico-financiară și reluare a creșterii economice sau de creare de locuri de muncă, cât și externe, generate de creșterea instabilității în vecinătate, fenomenul migrației și provocări conexe ale acestuia, amenințarea teroristă. Însă, demersul științific nu se limitează doar la dezbateri despre Uniunea Europeană într-un context crucial pentru acest proiect politic, ci, mai mult, are în vedere discuțiile aprofundate asupra evenimentelor ce conturează scena relațiilor internaționale. Printre acestea, se numără demersurile întreprinse de administrația SUA, comunicarea diplomatică, negocierea unor acorduri, dar și conflictele ce amenință ordinea globală, conflicte ce au revenit pe agenda internațională datorită unor noi zone de conflict care au destabilizat areale largi din Europa, America de Sud sau Orientul Mijlociu.

Prezentul demers științific cuprinde douăzeci și patru de contribuții menite să aprofundeze principalele teme avute în discuție în cadrul manifestării științifice. La prima vedere, volumul vizează o gamă variată de subiecte din sfera relațiilor internaționale și ale studiilor europene, și, tocmai acest caracter divers al contribuțiilor atestă multitudinea de perspective și modalități în care temele pot fi dezbătute și interpretate.

Multitudinea contribuțiilor înaintate a făcut ca acest volum să se orienteze în jurul a cinci direcții majore și anume: *Instituțiile și procesul decizional în UE,* care a vizat o analiză asupra principalelor modalități de consolidare a rolului parlamentelor naționale în angrenajul decizional european, cooperarea inter-instituțională, provocările aduse de Președinția Consiliului Uniunii Europene sau mult-discutatele scenarii privind viitorul Europei; *Politici publice, Integrare Europeană,* ce abordează necesitatea întreprinderii unor măsuri de politică publică la nivel național cu scopul corectării principalelor deficiențe întâlnite la nivelul societății (educația în zonele rurale,

respectiv, integrarea persoanelor cu dizabilități); *Politică externă, Diplomație și Relații internaționale,* direcție ce surprinde în principal instabilitatea și conflictele din vecinătatea estică a Uniunii Europene; *Challenges and Opportunities in the European Union,* ce are în vedere principalele provocări și oportunități la nivelul UE, de la creșterea gradului de implicare a publicului în elaborarea politicilor publice, digitalizare, calitatea vieții, la beneficiile aduse de parteneriatele încheiate la nivelul UE; *Geostrategy and Conflict Management in International Relations* analizată prin prisma comunicării diplomatice, de la strategia geopolitică în America de Sud, SUA și Orientul Mijlociu, până la demersurile întreprinse de administrația americană.

În fine, coordonatorii volumului *'The European Union and Global Order'* doresc să adreseze mulțumiri tuturor contributorilor, participanți, respectiv cadre didactice, persoane cu care au cooperat în vederea realizării acestui număr, atât prin înaintarea articolelor, cât și prin oferirea unor păreri avizate asupra acestora. Le mulțumim pentru profesionalismul, răbdarea și disponibilitatea de care au dat dovadă.

<p style="text-align:center">*</p>

The first volume of *The European Union and Global Order*, a result of its namesake scientific communication session, proposes to the public a series of analyses of the most pressing issues on the European and global agenda.

The works that comprise this edited volume address a wide variety of interests related to International Relations and European Studies, in an international, national or regional context faced with some major obstacles. The European Union currently faces unprecedented challenges that are substantially unique, both internal, generated by the effort of economic and financial recovery, resumption of economic growth or job creation, as well as external, generated by the increase of instability in the neighborhood, the phenomenon of migration and challenges related to it, such as the terrorist threat. However, this edited volume is not only limited to debates concerning the European Union, but extends to thorough studies on the primary events that shape international relations. These include actions undertaken by the American administration, diplomatic communication, treaty negotiations, as well as conflicts that threaten global order and which have returned to the international agenda due to some new areas of conflict that have destabilized large portions of Europe, South America or the Middle East.

This publication consists of 24 articles that expand upon the main topics debated at the conference. A wide variety of topics from the fields of International Relations

and European Studies are approached in the present volume, and it is precisely this diversity that highlights the multitude of perspectives such topics can invite.

Due to the great number of works included herein, we may identify five main themes that are discussed: *EU Institutions and the Decision-Making Process*, analyzing the fundamental ways in which the role of the national parliaments in the European decisional system could be strengthened, interinstitutional cooperation, the main challenges brought about by the Presidency of the Council of the EU, and the long-debated scenarios regarding the future of the EU; *Public policies and European Integration* which highlights the need for national public policies to correct some of the main social deficiencies (education in rural areas and the integration of people with disabilities); *Foreign Policy, Diplomacy and International Relations*, targeting the conflicts and instability in the EU's Eastern Neighborhood; *Challenges and Opportunities in the European Union*, which presents the main challenges and opportunities at the EU level, the digitalization, the quality of life and the benefits of EU's partnerships; *Geostrategy and Conflict Management in International Relations,* examined from the prism of diplomatic communication, includes the geopolitical strategy in the American continent and the Middle East, as well as the strategies and decisions undertaken by the US administration.

Finally, the editors of *'The European Union and Global Order'* collective volume would like to express their gratitude to all those involved in the making of this publication, from the participants who submitted their works, to the professors who offered them comprehensive feedback. We thank them for their high level of professionalism, their patience and their dedication!

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„RENAȘTEREA EUROPEANĂ"
PROPUSĂ DE EMMANUEL MACRON –
ÎNTRE UTOPIE ȘI REALITATE

Bianca Ionelia BOSOANCĂ[*]

ABSTRACT

Având în minte 'povestea tipic britanică' a Brexitului dar și multitudinea incertitudinilor ce se conturează în interiorul Europei, prima întrebare care apare este aceea: Încotro se îndreaptă Uniunea Europeană? Ideea frumoasă pe care au conturat-o fondatorii construcției europene de la 1950, astăzi nu se mai regăsește în provocările cu care se confruntă Uniunea Europeană. De aceea este nevoie de ceva nou, care să resusciteze Uniunea Europeană în fața provocărilor aduse de criza identitară și de intensificarea populismului la nivel european. Liderii europeni încearcă să contureze și ei alternative pentru viitorul Europei, dezbătând scenariile posibile. Liderul francez, Emmanuel Macron, vine cu propria viziune despre reformarea Uniunii Europene. Este ideea lui Macron una utopică sau se bazează pe o realitate ce necesită reformarea? Care sunt perspectivele "renașterii europene" în viziunea lui Macron? Cum este influențat publicul țintă de limbajul discursului său ? Prezenta lucrare de cercetare realizează o analiză calitativă utilizând instrumente precum studiul de caz și analiza de discurs, acestea fiind abordate din perspectiva teoriei psiholingvistice și a metodelor de analiză a discursului.

INTRODUCERE

Astăzi, într-o Europă care se confruntă cu din ce în ce mai multe probleme, liderii europeni încearcă să găsească noi mecanisme de reformare a acesteia. Alături de Jean-Claude Juncker care prezintă viziunea Comisiei Europene cu privire la viitorul Uniunii Europene, un alt discurs este cel al președintelui francez, Emmanuel Macron. Diferența dintre discursurile celor doi lideri europeni o face modul de abordare a problemelor cu care se confruntă Uniunea Europeană. În timp ce Jean-Claude Juncker propune o radiografie asupra Europei urmată de îmbunătățirea punctelor vulnerabile, Emmanuel Macron propune o reformare din temelii a

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acesteia[1]. El propune o „renaștere europeană" în jurul a trei mari ambiții: libertatea, protecția și progresul.[2]

Lucrarea de cercetare își propune să analizeze discursul liderului politic, Emmanuel Macron, care conturează în jurul discursului său un mesaj ideologic dar și o sursă de putere pe care vrea să o manifeste în Europa, desenând traiectoria Uniunii Europene după ambițiile franceze. Pe lângă discursurile ținute în cadrul întâlnirilor oficiale sau declarațiilor din media, de această dată, Emmanuel Macron alege să publice o scrisoare adresată cetățenilor în pragul campaniei electorale cu privire la alegerile europarlamentare. Scrisoarea sa apare pe site-ul președinției franceze și este redactată în toate limbile statelor membre, explicând cetățenilor de ce este important să meargă la vot. Deși aparent deține cele mai solide și persuasive argumente, se pare că discursul său nu a convins încă statele membre să i se alăture în lupta împotriva euroscepticilor. Ideile „renașterii europene" încă nu își găsesc ecoul în interiorul statelor membre, acolo unde naționalismul pare să primeze și fiecare stat își apără propriile valori la nivel național. Inspirându-ne din marile teorii ale relațiilor internaționale, vom utiliza două dintre acestea, pentru a suprinde aspectele de realitate și cele de utopie ale discursului liderului francez. Vom folosi teoria constructivistă pentru analiza discursului său, pentru a suprinde noutatea și aspectele evidențiate de această teorie, dar și elemetele teoriei realiste pentru a vedea care sunt punctele discursului său care nu conving liderii europeni.

Prin intermediul teoriei constructiviste vom surprinde modul în care lumea conviețuiește împreună, modul în care structurile normative construiesc identitățile și interesele actorilor dar și modul în care actorii respectă regulile[3]. Alexander Wendt susține că structurile asociațiilor umane sunt în mare parte culturale, nu fenomene materiale, rezultatul fiind identitatea și crearea de interese și reglementarea comportamentală[4].

Realsimul pe cealălată parte explică distribuția puterii în cadrul sistemului de relații internaționale. Prin această teorie vom vedea care este importanța concentrării

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[1] European Commission, *Two vision, one direction – Plans for the future of Europe as laid out in President Juncker's State of the Union and President Macron's Initiative for Europe*, European Political Strategy Centre (2014): 2.

[2] *Scrisoarea Președintelui Macron – Pentru o Renaștere europeană*, 4 martie 2019, Elysee, https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2019/03/04/pentru-o-renastere-europeana.ro, [accesat în 26.05.2019].

[3] Michael Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998): 164.

[4] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, (Chicago: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 193.

puterii la nivelul relațiilor internaționale și cum influențează aceasta în mod decisiv statele care se remarcă la nivel european și global, ca actori lideri. Hans J. Morgenthau susține că politica este o luptă pentru putere, care se manifestă diferit la nivel internațional față de politica internă a statelor. La baza filosofiei realiste stă individul, natura umană mânată de dorința de mărire, stăpânire, putere. Omul este prins între impulsul moral și tentația de dominare și acumulare. Această tensiune, pe care o resimte omul în existența sa și care îi justifică acțiunile, este extinsă la relațiile dintre state[5].

Articolul urmărește realizarea unei analize calitative a discursului pentru care sunt utilizate instrumente de analiză precum studiul de caz și analiza de discurs. Discursul lui Emmanuel Macron este analizat pe baza teoriei psiholingvistice și a metodelor de analiză a discursului. De aici vom putea concluziona care sunt mecanismele de formare a discursului liderului politic ale liderului francez Emmanuel Macron.

O abordare a analizei pe baza scrisorii liderului politic francez Emmanuel Macron, ne-a permis să identificăm și să analizăm mecanismele care sprijină strategiile discursiv-politice utilizate în construirea discursului său. Este cunoscut faptul că politicienii folosesc adesea strategii persuasive în momentul în care livrează un discurs politic, cu scopul de a convinge un public despre validitatea prezumțiilor lor. Cu toate că analiștii politici iau în considerare în mod frecvent aspectele ideologice ale discursurilor politice, există alte aspecte lingvistice care nu au fost încă pe deplin explorate în discursurile liderilor europeni. Mai mult decât atât, este de remarcat faptul că o analiză a palierului politic și cel lingvistic, ne ajută să înțelegem că autoritatea principală este difuzată prin limbă și este intim conectat la conceptul de putere.

Analiza discursului încearcă să descrie și să explice fenomenele lingvistice în termeni afectivi, cognitivi, situaționali și culturali ale utilizării acestora și identifică resursele lingvistice prin care noi (re)construim viața noastră (identitatea, rolul, activitatea, comunitatea, emoția, poziție, cunoaștere, credință, ideologie și așa mai departe)[6]. Folosim analiza discursului pentru a aborda modul în care este folosit limbajul pentru a creea, a menține și a provoca relații de putere și ideologii[7].

Conceptul de ideologie este adesea folosit în mass-media și în științele sociale, dar este notoriu vag. Utilizarea sa de zi cu zi este mai degrabă negativă și se referă la ideile rigide, greșite sau partizane ale celorlalți: avem adevărul și avem ideologii[8].

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5 Hans Morgenthau, *Politica între națiuni*, (Iași: Polirom, 2007): 735.
6 Agnes Weiyun He, "Linguistic Anthropology and Language Education", in Wortham and Rymes (eds.), *Linguistic Anthropoly of Education*, (Praeger: Westport and London, 200): 429.
7 Paul Baker and Sibonile Ellece, *Key Terms in Discourse Analysis*, (London: Continuum, 2011): 167.
8 Teun A Van Dijk, "Politics, ideology and discourse" in Ruth Wodak, (Ed.), *Politics and Language* (Elsevier Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics, 2015): 728.

Critical Discourse Analysis pune accent pe o perspectivă critică asupra obiectului analizat, respectiv pe inegalitate și pe rolul relațiilor de putere și ideologii, pentru a forma și a menține relații sociale favorabile pentru unele grupuri dominante, dar nefavorabile pentru altele, prin influențarea formei și a conținutului discursurilor Norman Faircloug. Acesta urmărește analizarea textelor scrise și vorbite pentru a dezvălui discursul surse de putere, dominanță, inegalitate și părtinire[9].

În cele din urmă, cea mai atrăgătoare teorie psiholingvistică pentru designerii discursurilor politice convingătoare este teoria minții. Definit ca „o condiție prealabilă pentru limbă”, teoria minții reia două aspecte: recunoașterea cuvintelor precum „acest”, „aici” și „eu” fiind folosite pentru a caracteriza vorbitorul și „povestirea”. Recunoscând faptul că vorbirea se referă la vorbitor și nu despre ascultător, acesta din urmă devine „obligat” să reacționeze la povestea relatată de către vorbitor și să înțeleagă valorile și convingerile sale și, în cele din urmă, să le valideze revendicările exprimate. O astfel de circumstanță permite vorbitorilor să își modeleze producțiile într-un mod care convinge sau manipulează sentimentele[10].

Pe parcursul articolului vom răspunde gradual la întrebările de cercetare fixate la începutul scrierii acestuia și anume: Este ideea lui Macron una utopică sau se bazează pe o realitate ce necesită reformarea? Care este legătura dintre Brexit și discursul lui Macron? De ce demersul francez în favoarea democrației participative este mai ofertant decât tentația populismului?

1. CONTEXTUL EUROPEAN ACTUAL

În prezent Uniunea Europeană se confruntă cu un declin al valorilor, cu o ne-legitimare a intereselor statelor membre raportat la cele ale „Uniunii Europene de astăzi” și nu în ultimul rând cu o lipsă acută a instrumentelor de acțiune în domeniile de competență ale acesteia unde este necesară luarea unor măsuri și impunerea de sancțiuni statelor care decid să se sustragă de la îndeplinirea obligațiilor ce le revin din statutul de state membre ale Uniunii Europene. Care sunt perspectivele de dez-voltare a formulei „celor 27 de state”? Cum se poziționează Franța față de ideea de reformare a construcției europene?

Toate cele amintite mai sus sunt întrebările cele mai vehiculate de presa inter-națională dar și de discursurile figurilor importante ale Europei de astăzi. Liderii

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[9] Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1992)
[10] Stephen J. Field, *Psycholinguistics. The Key Concepts*, (London: Routledge, 2004): 302–303.

politici ai lumii propun o serie de ipoteze și scenarii cu privire la soarta Uniunii Europene, unele dintre acestea fiind încurajatoare, altele mai sumbre, unele mai radicale și altele fiind destul de moderate. Cercetătorii și analiștii politici încearcă să contureze propriile viziuni pe baza evenimentelor care se întâmplă chiar sub ochii lor, succesul acestora venind din punctele lor de vedere care sunt menite să prindă la public și să obțină susținere în cadrul sondajelor de opinie cu care aceștia își testează valabilitatea ipotezelor lor. Președintele Franței, Emmanuel Macron, vine cu propria viziune curajoasă cu privire la „renașterea Uniunii Europene" în contextul unei Europe care stă sub semnul destrămării și apare astfel întrebarea, este ideea lui Macron una utopică sau se bazează pe o realitate ce necesită reformarea?

Contextul european actual este marcat de evenimente cu o semnificație majoră pentru Uniunea Europeană și pentru viitorul acesteia. Printre cele mai importante evenimente ale scenei politico-diplomatice europene se numără Brexitul, creșterea euroscepticismului în Europa, alegerile Europarlamentare din primăvara anului 2019 și poziția Franței cu privire la reconfigurarea europeană. În cele ce urmează vom detalia importanța acestor subiecte în contextul actual și vom încerca să surprindem cum se influențează reciproc într-o realție de cauzalitate.

În următoarele rânduri vom analiza principalele evenimente ce au avut loc pe scena europeană și vom explica de ce Emmanuel Macron accentuează importanța acestora în scrisoarea sa adresată cetățenilor. Președintele francez aduce în discuție Brexitul, subliniind importanța asumării deciziei în rândul cetățenilor și de a-i face conștienți că este importantă asumarea luării unei decizii. Vorbim despre alegerile europarlamentare din luna mai, alegeri în cadrul cărora europenii au cuvânt important de spus deoarece ei vor alege dacă democrația va câștiga sau va pierde în fața tendințelor populiste apărute la nivel european.

Începem discuția cu subiectul Brexit, care este cel mai intens subiect dezbătut în această perioadă. Așa cum spunea Macron în scrisoarea sa adresată cetățenilor, Brexitul este un simbol al crizei Europei, care nu a răspuns nevoilor de protecție a popoarelor în fața marilor șocuri[11].

Deși povestea britanică și scepticismul acestora nu este o noutate pentru europeni, se pare că referendumul din 2016 a adus o surpriză atât pentru Uniunea Europeană cât și pentru liderii britanici care nu s-au așteptat la un asemenea rezultat. Extrem de vehemenți cu ideea plecării din Uniunea Europeană, se pare că britanicii fac ultimele calcule înainte de a ajunge la un consens. Se pare că acum, calculele făcute de Prim

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[11] *Scrisoarea Președintelui Macron – Pentru o Renaștere europeană.*

Ministrul de la vremea respectivă, David Cameron, nu mai coincid cu realitatea economică adusă de decizia pro-Brexit luată în 2016. Referendumul din 2016 nu a dat și indicații precise despre ce fel de relație își doresc cetățenii între Marea Britanie și Uniunea Europeană și de aici a apărut haosul în care aceasta se află în prezent. Deși momentan opțiunea lor rămâne orientată spre un scenariu pro-Brexit, britanicii încearcă să mai obțină o amânare a termenului pentru a vedea formula finală în care vor părăsi Uniunea Europeană.

Haosul este dat de duplicitatea consecințelor luării unei decizii, care poate fi pro-Brexit sau pentru rămânerea în Uniunea Europeană,și poate cauza revolta simpatizanților uneia dintre părți. Pe de o parte, parlamentarii britanici simt obligația morală de a pune în practică rezultatul referendumului, altfel ar contribui la erodarea gravă a democrației, pe de altă parte, punerea în practică este cu atât mai dificilă când există divergențe de opinie între partide și lipsește o majoritate parlamentară clară. Iar consensul nu poate fi atins decât prin pașii normali ai procedurii democratice, oricât de anevoios poate părea[12].

Nu trebuie să uităm că una dintre principalele cauze care a declanșat Brexitul a fost creșterea euroscepticismului în Marea Britanie. Vorbim despre amplificarea neîncrederii britanicilor în Uniunea Europeană, neîncredere accentuată pe fondul discursului eurscceptic al lui Nigel Farage și al partidului său eurosceptic. Discursul acestuia a continuat și după votul de la referendumul din 2016, susținând faptul că el va continua și în formula noului partid înființat – Brexit Party – să militeze pentru plecarea cât mai rapidă din blocul comunitar, cu riscul ca Scoția să se desprindă ulterior de Regat. El chiar este încrezător că Scoția nu va face acest pas susținând că discursul acesteia este unul de amenințare care de trei ani de zile a rămas în același stadiu și nu face decât să stagneze la nivel de discurs[13].

Reîntorcându-ne la construcția europeană și la viitorul acesteia, trebuie să luăm în calcul fenomenul intensificării euroscepticismului în Europa și pericolul unei multiplicări a cazului Brexit și în alte state membre. Însăși plecarea Marii Britanii din blocul comunitar este o pierdere regretabilă pentru Europa, dar nu una care să fie ireconciliabilă. Uniunea Europeană dispune de forța altor piloni care să o susțină și după plecarea Marii Britanii și de aceea ea nu trebuie să își risipească energia doar pe acest dosar neînchis. Liderii europeni trebuie mai mult ca niciodată să regândească

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[12] *Ibid.*

[13] *Farage says Brexit is more important than keeping the UK from splitting apart*, Indipendent, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-nigel-farage-uk-scotland-wales-northern-ireland-union-a8988146.html, [accesat în 26.05.2019].

instrumentele și politicile actuale pentru a recâștiga încrederea cetățenilor în valorile europene. Cetățenii trebuie să se identifice mai bine cu această construcție și să înțeleagă toate efectele pozitive pe care aceasta le-a adus odată cu aderarea. Se pare că generațiile de după anul 2000 nu mai sunt conștiente astăzi de minusurile Europei din trecut, nu știu cum erau vremurile când cele patru libertăți nu existau și cei care au trăit acele vremuri pare că au uitat ceea ce înseamnă o Europă fără Uniunea Europeană.

Andrés Rodríguez-Pose accentuează faptul că deși atenția asupra intensificării populismului a crescut masiv după votul pro-Brexit din anul 2016 și după alegerea lui Donald Trump ca președinte al Statelor Unite ale Americii, populismul nu este nimic nou[14]. Așadar, partidele pro-Europene sunt cele responsabile de viitorul Europei, într-o Europă incertă. Marea provocare a acestora este aceea de a avea un mesaj clar, care să ajungă la cetățeni dar și forța mobilizatoare de a aduce rezultate pozitive Uniunii Europene, prin reforme și instrumente care să ajute Uniunea Europeană să prospere. Partidele pro-europene nu trebuie să se scindeze în prea multe formațiuni politice și grupuri în Parlamentul European, ci să coopereze și să formeze o majoritate în fața puternicului curent eurosceptic ce vine din urmă.

Momentul 26 mai 2019 a reprezentat triumful pro-europenismului în fața euroscepticismului deja instalat în Europa. Majoritatea voturilor și a mandatelor din Parlamentul European au fost obținute de către partidele pro-europene, ceea ce sugerează că viitoarea configurație a Uniunii Europene se apropie de scenariile pozitive ale acestei structuri. Pentru cel puțin următorii cinci ani, Uniunea Europeană nu este în pericol de se dezintegra. Pro-europeni dețin majoritatea pozițiilor cheie ale Uniunii Europene și vor da viitoarele direcții de acțiune ale comunității. David-Maria Sassoli este noul Președinte al Parlamentului European pentru următorii doi ani și jumătate, iar pentru celelalte două poziții cheie ale Uniunii Europene – Comisia Europeană și Consiliul European au fost aleși tot lideri Pro europeni.

Triunghiul decizional al Uniunii Europene va avea un rol important în viitorul mandat european, fiind structurile care vor decide viitoarele direcții ale Uniunii Europene și politicile europene cărora li se va acorda importanță deosebită. Printre actorii cheie ai acestei ecuații se numără Franța și Germania, cele două state de la care s-a pornit ideea de integrare europeană, gândită inițial la nivel economic și multiplicată ulterior la scară mai largă.

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[14] Andrés Rodriguez-Pose, „The revenge of the places that don't matter (and what to do about it)", *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, Volume 11, Number 1 (2018): 189–209.

Franța este unul dintre statele fanion ale discuției despre viitorul Uniunii Europene, luptând pentru progresul Europei și pentru apărarea modelului european în fața pericolelor venite din exteriorul și din interiorul acesteia. Emmanuel Macron are ambiția de a reforma Uniunea Europeană din temelii, printr-un set de reforme îndrăznețe dar încă extrem de contestate de celelalte state europene. Principala acuzație adusă acestuia este legată de interesele economice pe care Franța le are în materie de industrie de armament, această acuzație fiind completată și de altele secundare. Printre acestea se mai numără cele legate de invocarea unor măsuri de acțiune fără existența unor instrumente concrete dar și de aducerea în discuție a unor idei care sunt relativ noi, dar nu în totalitate, așa cum afirmă liderul francez. În continuare vom analiza discursul lui Emmanuel Macron, pentru a vedea modul de construire al discursului și tehnicele de persuasiune utilizate de acesta.

2. DISCURSUL LUI EMMANUEL MACRON

Înainte de a analiza discursul lui Emmanuel Macron, despre care aminteam în partea introductivă a articolului, vom dedica câteva rânduri evoluției președintelui francez. Vom încerca astfel să înțelegem contextul alegerii sale și factorii care influențează parcursul politic al acestuia.

Emmanuel Jean-Michel Frederic Macronpe numele său complet, s-a născut în 1977 în nordul Franței, a studiat la o serie de școli de elită înainte de a se alătura Ministerului Finanțelor din Franța, în 2004. După o perioadă de patru ani la o bancă de investiții, s-a alăturat personalului președintelui François Hollande în 2012, devenind ministru al economiei, industriei și a datelor digitale. După formarea partidului centrist *En Marche!* în 2016, Macron a devenit un prim-surprinzător în cursa prezidențială. El a învins liderul Frontului Național, Marine Le Pen în mai 2017 pentru a deveni, la vârsta de 39 de ani, cel mai tânăr președinte din istoria franceză[15].

Victoria din 2017 a fost una extrem de importantă pentru Franța deoarece pro-europenismul a câștigat în fața euroscepticismului promovat de contracandidata sa directă, Marine Le Pen. Nu a fost o luptă tocmai ușoară și victoria a fost una extrem de importantă pentru Franța și pentru Uniunea Europeană. De atunci și până în prezent, Macron s-a afirmat cu un discurs persuasiv, un discurs în care sunt promovate valorile europene și lupta pentru o reconstrucție a Uniunii Europene.

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[15] *Bibliography of Emmanuel Macron*, A&E Television Networks, 2019, https://www.biography.com/political-figure/emmanuel-macron, [accesat în 29.05.2019].

Discursul său despre renașterea europeană, subliniază pericolele care amenință Uniunea Europeană: Brexit, creșterea naționalismului, îndoieli ale cetățenilor. Renașterea europeană se conturează în jurul a trei mari ambiții: libertatea, protecția și progresul[16]. Libertatea se conturează prin crearea unei agenții europene de protecție a democrațiilor, protecția prin înființarea unui Consiliu European de Securitate Internă, a unei poliții de frontieră comună și a unui oficiu european de azil. Ideea de progres se conturează și ea în jurul unui scut social și a unei bănci europene a climatului.

De ce este important acest discurs? În primul rând pentru că este adresat sub o altă formă, nu așa cum ne-am obișnuit până acum. Discursul președintelui este structurat sub forma unei scrisori publicate pe pagina adminstrației prezidențiale, scrisoare adresată direct cetățenilor europeni, în toate limbile statelor membre. În al doilea rând, scrisoarea vine într-un moment crucial, în care cetățenii sunt cei care vor decide dacă democrația participativă triumfă în fața mișcării populiste și totodată într-un moment în care Europa se află în plin haos din cauza plecării Marii Britanii din Uniunea Europeană.

În rândurile care urmează vom analiza discursul lui Emmanuel Macron printr-o metodă de analiză intitulată Critical Discourse Analysis, care îi aparține profesorului emerit de lingvistică Norman Fairclough. Aceasta presupune trecerea discursului prin cele trei stadii ale analizei critice a discursului: identificarea mecanismelor de susținere a discursului persuasiv, interpretarea semnificației și contextul producerii discursului[17].

Discursul lui Emmanuel Macron, adresat cetățenilor Uniunii Europene, cu privire la „renașterea europeană"[18] a fost redactat sub forma unei scrisori traduse în toate cele 22 de limbi ale statelor membre. Scrisoarea are aproximativ 1.700 de cuvinte și este scrisă pe baza unor tehnici discursive persuasive. Acesta poate fi împărțită în douăsprezece secțiuni distincte după cum urmează: mesajul politic, despre pericolele care amenință Europa, despre Brexit și efectele sale negative, apel la istorie pentru a sublinia importanța Uniunii Europene, cele trei mari ambiții ale proiectului său, progresele realizate în UE, propriul exemplu al Franței care sprijină cele trei propuneri, apelul la consultarea cetățenilor și nu în ultimul rând revine la ideea de „renaștere europeană", pe care o accentuează în mesajul său politic.

Discursul său are o structură clară, care este gândită în termeni persuasivi. Această componentă a persuasiunii, o vom exemplifica în următoarea parte a analizei discursului,

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[16] *Scrisoarea Președintelui Macron – Pentru o Renaștere europeană.*
[17] Norman Fairclough, Discourse and Social Change.
[18] *Scrisoarea Președintelui Macron – Pentru o Renaștere europeană.*

urmărind fiecare componentă care susține puterea de convingere a liderului francez. Verbele personale, persoana I, numărul singular și plural susțin mecanismele discursului ca să producă efectele dorite de emițător și anume de a ajunge mai ușor la receptor, făcându-l pe acesta să se identifice cu cel care i-a transmis mesajul. Un alt mecanism folosit este adresarea directă cetățenilor, nu prin intermediul statului sau al șefilor de stat sau guvern, ci alegând cea mai simplă cale de a ajunge la public – adresarea directă către cetățeni, prin scrisoarea tradusă în toate limbile oficiale recunoscute în cadrul Uniunii Europene.

Ne vom îndrepta acum atenția asupra interpretării semnificației discursului pentru a vedea care sunt efectele produse de utilizarea mecansimelor persuasive ale discursului. Macron își începe scrisoarea adresată cetățenilor prin formula "cetățeni ai Europei", li se adresează direct pentru a crea o relație cu audiența. În esență el transmite un mesaj politic de participare la alegerile europarlamentare, întărind identificarea colectivă, pozitivă, cu publicul prin sintagme precum „noi" „trebuie" / „ne" „unesc", aceasta fiind una dintre strategiile persuasive ale sale.

În cea de-a doua parte a scrisorii sale, Macron atrage atenția asupra pericolelor cu care se confruntă Europa acceptând ideea că „nicicând nu a fost Europa mai necesară de la cel de-al doilea Război Mondial până astăzi"[19]

În cea de-a treia parte a scrisorii Macron invocă Brexitul și efectele sale negative, vorbind despre riscurile care amenință întreaga Europă, spunând că „riscul nu este apartenența la Uniunea Europeană, ci minciunile și iresponsabilitatea care pot să o distrugă"[20]. Aici el subliniază ideea naționalismelor care sunt promovate de grupurile eurosceptice și sunt menite să slăbească încrederea în instituțiile europene, în favoarea unei reveniri la o putere deținută la nivel național și nu supranațional. Aceasta este capcana în care au căzut britanicii și una dintre pietrele de temelie ale începerii acestui referendum cu final nefericit.

Cea de-a patra secțiune a scrisorii lui Emmanuel Macorn face apel la istorie pentru a sublinia importanța Uniunii Europene și implicit că „în numele Franței, duc neîncetat această luptă pentru progresul Europei și pentru apărarea modelului European"[21].

Următoarele trei secțiuni ale scrisorii punctează cele trei propuneri ale lui Emmanuel Macron cu privire la ceea ce trebuie făcut pentru Uniunea Europeană, evidențiind construirea renașterii în jurul a trei mari ambții: libertatea, protecția și

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[19] *Ibid*.
[20] *Ibid*.
[21] *Ibid*.

progresul[22]. Întărește ideile susținute prin intermediul verbului *a trebui* pe care îl folosește la persoana I, numărul plural ,pentru a sublinia ideea că liderii europeni sunt cei responsabili să-i implice pe cetățeni în procesul reconstrucție al Uniunii Europene.

Următoarea secțiune aduce în discuție un apel făcut cetățenilor, pentru consultarea acestora ca actori ai procesului de schimbare. El propune ideea de Conferință pentru Europa pentru a propune toate schimbările de care proiectul nostru politic are nevoie[23]. Această conferință va reuni specialiști din toate domeniile, deschiși, pentru a veni cu propuneri în discuțiile despre prioritățile Europei. Și aici ideile lui Macron sunt sunținute prin verbe persuasive dar și prin forma de persoana I, numărul plural care accentuează ideea de grup unit, care lucrează pentru binele comun. Macron, pe lângă faptul că îi implică pe cetățeni în luarea deciziilor, îi responsabilizează cu privire la rolul lor în această consultare. Folosește aici verbe precum *să discute*, *să traducă*.

În ultimul paragraf al scrisorii, Emmanuel Macron revine la ideea de renaștere europeană încurajând cetățenii să participe la luarea deciziei cu privire la viitorul Europei, prin implicarea în alegerile europarlamentare. El susține că europenii trebuie să iasă din capcana Brexit și să dea un sens alegerilor care se apropie și o lecție tuturor[24]. Folosește sintagme precum *veți decide* și *să trasăm* pentru a oferi sentimentul că puterea stă în mâna cetățenilor și ei își decid propriul viitor.

Analizând discursul politic din prisma contextului în care a fost produs putem remarca faptul că acesta este adresat cetățenilor într-un moment de cumpănă al Europei. Totodată începerea campaniei electorale pentru Parlamentul European și alegerile europarlamentare din luna mai 2019 reprezintă un moment important pentru francezi și pentru viitoarea configurație a Uniunii Europene.

Care este legătura dintre Brexit și discursul lui Macron? Președintele francez apelează la aducerea în atenția cetățenilor a unui eveniment relativ recent și contro-versat, pentru a susține mesajul său politic. Macron dorește ca Franța să redevină un actor important în Uniunea Europeană, fiind primul care vine cu o serie de soluții concrete pentrurevitalizarea construcției. Vocea Franței a fost, este și va rămâne extrem de puternică, iar influența franceză asupra deciziilor luate în cadrul Uniunii Europene nu este deloc de neglijat. Mai mult decât atât, Franța este cea mai îndreptățită să propună soluții salvatoare pentru că este unul din statele fondatoare ale construcției și are credibilitatea necesară pentru a propune scenarii viitoare de dezvoltare a structurii.

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[22] *Ibid*.
[23] *Ibid*.
[24] *Ibid*.

De ce demersul francez în favoarea democrației participative este mai ofertant decât tentația populismului? Prin exemplul din propria țară, de triumf al democrației în fața populismului promovat de Emmanuel Macron, prin scrisoarea adresată europenilor, liderul francez câștigă atât capital de imagine, cât și poziții cheie în viitoarea structură a Uniunii Europene. Macron are interese și la nivel personal, prin dorința de a aduce cât mai multe voturi partidului care l-a promovat și de a câștiga cât mai multe posturi de eurodeputați pentru țara sa. Așadar, pentru Macron, este oportun să lanseze o astfel de invitație cetățenilor, în pragul alegerilor europarlamentare.

Așadar, discursul lui Emmanuel Macon este realizat pe baza unor tehnici discursive, utilizând persuasiunea pentru a convinge cetățenii că au un rol important în procesul decizional și trebuie să-și exercite acest drept civic. Urmărind structurarea discursului lui Macron și analizând elementele de persuasiune existente, vom trece la subcapitolul următor unde vom încerca să vedem de ce acesta nu își găsește susținerea discursului în rândul șefilor de stat.

3. DISCURSUL ÎNTRE UTOPIE ȘI REALITATE?

Deși în rândurile anterioare am demonstrat că discursului lui Macron este foarte bine structurat din punct de vedere al tehnicilor discursive folosite, se pare că acesta nu reușește să convingă liderii europeni că ideea susținută este una sustenabilă pentru Uniunea Europeană. Renașterea europeană propusă de acesta este văzută ca un discurs utopic, în plină campanie electorală, un discurs care punctează doar câteva idei mărețe și renaște inițiative deja existente la nivelul discursului Uniunii Europene.

Discursul lui Macron reușește să stârnească interes din perspectiva faptului că ideile sale marchează o dezbatere europeană serioasă cu privire la viitorul Uniunii Europene, viitor care este destul de incert datorită Marii Britanii. Uniunea Europeană conștientizează faptul că se află într-o situație delicată prin prisma faptului că nu are instrumente de acțiune concrete prentru rezolvarea unei probleme de interes major, cum a fost exemplul Brexit-ului. În momentul acela, Uniunea Europeană a conștientizat că se află într-o situație fără precedent, cu un tratat care lasă mult loc interpretărilor și lipsită de instrumente clare de acțiune în acest caz. Și lista momentelor Brexitului poate continua și cu alte exemple care să ilustreze ipoteza mai sus menționată.

Liderul Ungariei, Viktor Orban afirmă că această inițiativă ar putea marca începutul unei dezbateri europene serioase, fiind binevenită ca dialog între liderii europeni. În

privința detaliilor, acesta menționează faptul că există diferențe de opinii, dar mult mai important decât opiniile divergente este ca această inițiativă să fie un început bun în sensul unui dialog serios și constructiv pe tema viitorului Europei (Mediafax – Discursul lui Viktor Orban, 2019).

Pe de altă parte discursul liderului francez este unul care stârnește controverse în rândul liderilor europeni. Aceștia consideră că discursul său este lipsit de substanță și are mai mult un caracter propagandist al unei idei de „renaștere europeană" în plină campanie electorală pentru alegerile din Parlamentul European. Fiind un promotor al ideii de Europă cu mai multe viteze, Macron încearcă să stimuleze ideea de ritm accelerat de dezvoltare al statelor membe, în pofida faptului că momentan exitsă decalaje uriașe între acestea. Acesta este și motivul principal pentru care propune un ritm de dezvoltare diferit al statelor membre, ritm care însă le facilitează doar pe cele mai dezvoltate dintre acestea.

Neîncrederea europenilor în ideile lui Macron vine și din controversatele probleme interne ale Franței. Problemele cu protestele vestelor galbene și nerezolvarea acestora într-un timp scurt, scot la iveală minusurile sistemului administrativ francez. Acesta este și principalul repros la adresa liderului francez, cum va reuși acesta să determine europenii să creadă în ideile sale în condițiile în care acesta nu are succes în propriul său stat. Nu uităm faptul că revolta vestelor galbene, care este o mișcare de sorginte populistă, a fost provocată de măsurile adoptate în Franța cu privire la creșterea prețului carburantului și a altor majorări care i-au nemulțumit pe francezi. Protestele acestora au devenit din ce în ce mai violente și se pare că autoritățile franceze nu reușesc să țină în frâu aceste demonstrații de forță. De aici apar și suspiciunile, cum se menține credibilitatea unui lider la nivel european în condițiile în care acesta nu reușește să gestioneze problemele interne în propria țară? Cum va reuși acesta se gestioneze probleme de interes european dacă el eșuează în propria țară?

Un alt aspect care ne dă de înțeles faptul că Macron și-a pierdut din credibilitate este legat de rezultul alegerilor europarlamentare din Franța din 26 mai 2019. Partidul său, La Republique En Marche, s-a clasat la aproape un procent distanță de prima poziție. Așadar partidul de extremă dreapta Adunarea Națională (RN), condus de Marine Le Pen, s-a plasat pe prima poziție în alegerile pentru Parlamentul European desfășurate în Franța, devansând cu 0,9 puncte procentuale partidul susținut de președintele Emmanuel Macron (23,31% față de 22,41%)[25].

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[25] Irina Constantin, *Rezultate alegeri europarlamentare finale, Franța. Scorul partidului lui Macron*, DCNews, 27 mai 2019, https://www.dcnews.ro/rezultate-alegeri-europarlamentare-finale-franta-scorul-partidului-lui-macron_658208.html, [accesat în 05.06.2019].

Ca urmare a scrisorii adresate europenilor despre renașterea europeană, Macron este dur criticat de liderii europeni. Margaritis Schinas, purtătorul de cuvânt al Comisiei Europene declară că mai multe dintre elementele prezentate de Emmanuel Macron au fost deja propuse sau sunt pe cale de a fi puse în practică de Comisia Europeană, preluând una din declarațiile făcute de însuși Jean Claude-Juncker[26].

Puțin mai cumpătat în declarații este președintele Consiliului European, care încearcă să sublinieze ideea implicării instituțiilor Uniunii Europene în procesul schimbării. „Nu putem să așteptăm renașterea Europei – renașterea Europei trebuie să înceapă acum" spunea acesta într-un discurs de-al său[27].

Nu la fel de încrezător în ideile lui Emmanuel Macron este și Viktor Orban. Acesta critică ideile președintelui francez, afirmând că ceea ce este bun pentru Franța, nu înseamnă că este potrivit și pentru restul statelor din Uniunea Europeană. Unul dintre subiectele controversate, este cel legat de migrație. „Macron crede că imigrația este bună. Noi credem că este ceva rău[28] (Mediafax – Discursul lui Viktor Orban, 2019).

Sebastian Kurz, liderul partidului de guvernământ de dreapta al Austriei – Partidul Libertății (FPO), crede că multe sugestii din discursul lui Macron sunt utopice, în special propunerea pentru o uniune socială și cea referitoare la un salariu minim european"[29].

Nu este suficient pentru Macron să aibă un discurs scris ca la carte, dar care nu reușește să convingă liderii europeni prin credibilitate și sustenabilitatea ideilor transmise. Pentru ca liderul francez să devină credibil la nivel european este nevoie ca acesta să își reîmprospăteze imaginea Franței (printr-o mai bună gestionare a problemelor interne), imagine care este oglinda președintelui în fața colegilor săi din cadrul Consiliului European.

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[26] Robert Lupitu, *Jean-Claude Juncker, ironic la adresa scrisorii lui Emmanuel Macron privind „Renașterea europeană": Mai multe dintre idei au fost deja propuse de Comisia Europeană*, Calea Europeană,5 martie 2019, https://www.caleaeuropeana.ro/jean-claude-juncker-ironic-la-adresa-scrisorii-lui-emmanuel-macron-privind-renasterea-europeana-mai-multe-dintre-idei-au-fost-deja-propuse-de-comisia-europeana/, [accesat în 05.06.2019].

[27] *Ibid*.

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] Andrei Popescu, *Cancelarul Austriei critică viziunea "utopică" a lui Macron privind viitorul Europei*, The Epoch Times 13 martie 2019,http://epochtimes-romania.com/news/cancelarul-austriei-critica-viziunea-utopica-a-lui-macron-privind-viitorul-europei---285076, [accesat în 05.06.2019].

CONCLUZII

Discursul lui Emmanuel Macron despre renașterea europeană (Elysee, 2019), abordează pericolele care amenință Uniunea Europeană: Brexit, creșterea naționalismului, îndoieli ale cetățenilor. Renașterea europeană se conturează în jurul a trei mari ambiții: libertatea, protecția și progresul. Libertatea se conturează prin crearea unei agenții europeane de protecție a democrațiilor, protecția prin înființarea unui consiliu european de securitate internă, a unei poliții de frontieră comună și a unui oficiu european de azil. Ideea de progres se conturează și ea în jurul unui scut social și a unei bănci europene a climatului.

Discursul liderului politic este realizat pe baza unor tehnici discursive, utilizând persuasiunea pentru a convinge cetățenii că au un rol important în procesul decizional și trebuie să-și exercite acest drept civic.

Neîncrederea europenilor în ideile lui Macron vine și din controversatele probleme interne ale Franței. Problemele cu protestele vestelor galbene și nerezolvarea acestora într-un timp scurt, scot la iveală minusurile sistemului administrativ francez. Acesta este și principalul reproș la adresa liderului francez, cum va reuși acesta să determine europenii să creadă în ideile sale în condițiile în care acesta nu are succes în propriul său stat. De aici apar și suspiciunile, cum se menține credibilitatea unui lider la nivel european în condițiile în care acesta nu reușește să gestioneze problemele interne în propria țară.

Discursul despre renașterea Europei este în accepțiune personală un document consistent, poate chiar cel mai consistent după referendumul britanic din 2016 cu privire la viitorul Uniunii Europene, un document inspirat din tehnicile psiho-lingvistice ale specialiștilor neuro-lingviști. Critica adusă acestui document este legată de caracterul ideologic al discursului liderului francez dar și de utopia ce se ascunde în spatele unor cuvinte rostite la începutul unei campanii electorale importante pentru Europa, idei care nu au însă în spate un plan concret de punere în acțiune.

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PREȘEDINȚIA CONSILIULUI UE: OPORTUNITATE SAU POVARĂ PENTRU STATELE MEMBRE?

Ioana-Alexandra BOTOACĂ[*]

ABSTRACT

Prezenta lucrare aduce în prim plan o temă de actualitate pe de o parte pentru Uniunea Europeană iar pe de altă parte pentru România și anume „Președinția Consiliului", fapt care îi oferă o importanță maximală. Obiectivele acestei lucrări sunt consituite pe baza analizei de document și a analizei comparative urmărind examinarea președinției considerate a fi „de succes" și argumentarea acestei considerații. De asemenea, problematica președinției pentru statele membre asupra oportunității de negociere în cadrul procesului de luare a deciziilor, în opoziție cu funcția privită doar ca sarcină și necesitate, este principalul punct prezentat în lucrare, după cum relatează și titlul acesteia. Analiza face trimiteri la Președinția actuală, deținută de România, pe baza examinării documentelor oficiale aferente acesteia. Cu ajutorul analizei comparative accentul cade pe obiectivele asumate la începutul mandatului, pe un scurt bilanț, pe analiza principalelor evenimente desfășurate în timpul președinției precum și pe impresii ulterioare. Concluzia prezintă o nouă perspectivă asupra posibilității statelor membre de a deține prin rotație președinția uneia dintre cele mai importante instituții ale Uniunii Europene, care alcătuiește alături de Comise și Parlament triunghiul insituțional.

Cuvinte cheie: *Președinția Consiliului, președinție de succes, priorități, agenda președinției, proces decizional, negocieri bilaterale.*

INTRODUCERE

Tema acestei lucrări*, Președinția Consiliului UE: oportunitate sau datorie pentru statele membre?,* este într-o continua actualitate atât pentru Uniunea Europeană, cât și pentru România implicit întrucât a deținut pentru prima dată această funcție în perioada 1 ianuarie – 30 iunie 2019. Tocmai gradul de noutate permanent, m-a determinat să aleg această tematică.

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Literatura de specialitate tratează acest subiect într-un mod foarte variat pe de o parte situându-se autorii care analizaează președinția Consiliului din perspectiva statelor și a puterii de negociere și de influență a deciziilor, punând astfel acentul pe aspectele normative privind rolul președinției și pe analiza etapelor de negociere. O altă abordare a subiectului din perspectiva statelor se concentrează pe analiza președinției statelor mari spre deosebire de state mici din Europa de Est, care au aderat în ultimul deceniu și capacitatea de a-și urmări prioritățile și obiectivele propuse. Pe de altă parte, regăsim o analiză din perspectiva modalităților de vot în funcție problemele de politică publică pe baza căreia anumiți autori și-au îndreptat atenția spre practicile de lobby sau de reprezentare a intereselor folosite de statele membre în cadrul Consiliului.

Ipoteza lucrării mele însă, se concentrează pe două problematici importante, care au stârnit interesul de-a lungul timpului, și anume: care sunt capacitățile, marja de acțiune dar și limitele statului care deține președinția de a interveni în procesul decizional al Consiuliului Uniunii Europene și cum este percepută această funcție de statele membre, ca responsabilitate, necesitate sau ca oportunitate de negociere? Iar a doua problematică face referire la ceea ce înseamnă o președinție de *succes*, care sunt criteriile de atribuire a accesui titlu și cum pot fi validate?

Aceste întrebări își găsesc răspunsul în urma aplicării metodologiei de cercetare, bazată pe analiza de conținut calitativă a documentelor oficiale, a studiilor și articolelor științifice publicate pe această temă, care mă ajută să determin factorii de influență, dar și procedura normativă de elaborare a unei politici publice la nivelul Uniunii Europene precum și sarcinile statului care deține președinția așa cum sunt prezentate în Tratatul de la Lisabona. O altă metodă folosită care m-a ajutat să determin răspunsul celei de-a doua întrebări este analiza comparativă a agendelor trio-urilor, a programului fiecărei președinții, a priorităților propuse de statele alese, a agendelor de lucru ale Comisiei precum și analiza comparativă a problemelor de ordin intern și extern cu care Uniunea Europeană se confrunta în timpul fiecărui mandat accentuând stadiul fiecărei probleme în funcție de președinție. Astfel am identificat criteriul de analiză care îmi acordă un răspuns în privința succesului unei președinții și anume raportul între ce s-a realizat și ce nu s-a realizat în funcție de priorități. Accentuez însă analiza asupra României, cu ajutorul studiului de caz care îmi permite examinarea mai cuprinzătoare a unor aspecte privitoare la evenimentele desfășurate la nivel european în timpul exercitării președinției, la capacitatea de a acționa, la asa zisele limite normative sau contextuale de îndeplinire a obiectivelor precum și la rezultatele obținute în funcție de prioritățile stabilite.

Prima parte a articolului debutează cu o expunere teoretică, o viziune generală despre ce înseamnă Preşedinţia Consiliului, posibilitatea de implicare în cadrul procesului legislativ și limitele negocierii, făcând referire directă la titlul acestui articol și la prima întrebare de cercetare. Capitolul se raportează și la concepția nefavorabilă asupra îndeplinirii mandatului preşedinţiei, din cauze administrative sau care privesc exercitarea puterii de negociere a Preşedinţiei. Începutul celei de-a doua parte se concentrează asupra problematicii referitoare la *succesul* Preşedinţiei, urmând ca pe baza analizei comparative asupra bilanţului activităţii Preşedinţiei României, Estoniei și Bulgariei, să fie evidenţiate aspecte tehnice a ceea ce înseamnă o preşedinţie de succes, pornind de la numărul și domeniile adiacente dosarelor încheiate, evenimente semnificative desfăşurate în timpul mandatului până la opiniile publice ulterioare.

În final regăsim concluziile unui studiu tehnic al resurselor și limitelor de putere ale statelor membre precum și a rapoartelor de încheiere a preşedinţiilor menţionate.

1. PREŞEDINŢIA CONSILIULUI UNIUNII EUROPENE

Consiliul Uniunii Europene reprezintă una dintre cele mai importante instituţii ale Uniunii Europene, alcătuind alături de Comisia Europeană și de Parlamentul European triunghiul instituţional.

Consiliul nu are o persoană desemnată în funcţia de preşedinte care să reprezinte instituţia, ci acesta este prezidat de preşedinţia rotativă a statelor membre, exercitată la fiecare la şase luni. Conform Tratatului de la Lisabona, statele care deţin preşedinţia Consiliului lucrează împreună în triouri, asigurând o agendă de acţiune valabilă 18 luni, pentru o mai bună coordonare și îndeplinire a obiectivelor, iar pentru perioada preşedinţiei fiecare stat îşi stabileşte priorităţile într-o agendă proprie[1]. Pe baza tratatului menţionat anterior, Preşedinţia îndeplineşte două roluri principale și anume: reprezentarea Consiliului în relaţiile cu celelalte instituţii ale UE, în special cu Parlamentul și Comisia în scopul negocierii dosarelor legislative, dar și cooperarea cu Preşedintele Consiliului European și cu Înaltul Reprezentant al Uniunii pentru Afaceri Externe și Politica de Securitate și rolul de a planifica și prezida reuniunile formaţiunilor Consiliului.[2]

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[1] *TRATATUL DE LA LISABONA, de Modificare a Tratatului Privind Uniunea Europeană și a Tratatului de Instituire a Comunităţii Europene (2007/C 306/01).*

[2] *„Preşedinţia Consiliului UE”* Consiliul Uniunii Europene https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ro/council-eu/presidency-council-eu/, (accesat în 20.03.2019).

1.1. OPORTUNITATEA DE NEGOCIERE
ÎN CADRUL PROCESULUI DECIZIONAL

Oportunitatea de negociere și implicare a statului care asigură președinția Consiliului Uniunii Europene în ceea ce privește adoptarea unei propuneri de politică publică a constituit de-a lungul timpului o tematică nevralgică dezbătută de specialiștii în europenistică care și-au expus punctele de vedere diferite în cuprinsul literaturii de specialitate. Astfel, putem analiza aceste contradicții pornind de la anumite responsabilități ale președinției, pe care le putem considera inclusiv capacități de influențare a procesului decizional.

În primul rând, statul care deține președinția are posibilitatea să stabilească propriile priorități naționale, iar în cazul în care aceste priorități fac obiectul unor dosare aflate deja în procesul de negociere, Președinția poate facilita procesul de adoptare a unei decizii favorabile.

În al doilea rând, Președinția Consiliului, are responsabilitatea de a fixa agenda împreună cu Secretariatul General. Așadar, putem spune că Președinția beneficiază încă de la început de informații referitoare la dosarele aflate în curs de dezbatere, la opțiunile părților implicate în procesul de negociere, având capacitatea de expertiză asupra problemelor de actualitate. De asemenea, flexibilitatea de a planifica, prezida și coordona reuniunile celor zece formațiuni ale Consiliului, ale celor două mari grupuri de pregătire și ale grupurilor de lucru îi oferă președinției oportunitatea de a identifica opiniile contradictorii care îngreunează procesul decizional. „În calitate de administrator al sesiunilor de negocieri, Președinția, deschide și încheie reuniuni, formulează ordinea de zi a reuniunii, oferă dreptul de a vorbi, direcționează procedurile de votare și rezumă rezultatele obținute.[3] Și nu în ultimul rând, unul dintre cele mai importante roluri ale președinției îl reprezintă cel de mediator și broker, deoarece prin „accesul privilegiat la informațiile despre preferințele adevărate ale părților permite președintelui să elaboreze propuneri viabile de compromis[4].” Acest rol este cel mai bine evidențiat, cu precădere în cadrul reuniunilor informale cunoscute sub numele de *Triloguri,* care au loc tocmai pentru a accede la un consens între negociatori. Astfel, președinția poate urmări, intermedia discuții informale și media problemele asociate obiectivelor prestabilite benefice pentru țara sa, iar succesul acestor mijlociri în privința dosarelor dificile care servesc inclusiv priorităților naționale fac

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[3] Jonas Tallberg "The Power of the Presidency: Brokerage, Efficiency and Distribution in EU Negotiations" *JCMS* Volume 42. Number 5 (2004): 999–1022

[4] *Ibid.,* 9

subiectul unei președinții de succes. Rolul de mediator este îndeplinit prin accesul președinției la informațiile „ascunse", dobândite prin cooperarea cu Secretariatul General care are așa numita funcție de sprijin, informații ce sunt cuprinse în „notele către Președinție", care reprezintă documente confidențiale, întocmite în mod special pentru statul care deține Președinția și care fac referire la dosarele de politică publică aflate în dezbatere, procedura de vot, temeiul juridic al unei propuneri legislative, pozițiile de negociere ale guvernelor dar și anumite concesii la care Președinția ar putea face apel în temeiul funcției de broker. O altă practică care servește funcției amintite constă în discuțiile bilaterale confidențiale cunoscute sub numele de „confesiuni", convocate fie în timpul sesiunilor plenare de negocieri, fie în timpul pregătirii acestora; acestea îi oferă președinției posibilitatea de a cunoaște pozițiile și gradul de flexibilitate ale guvernelor.

1.2. NECESITATEA ÎNDEPLINIRII OBLIGAȚIILOR

Pentru a analiza numeroase viziuni expuse în literatura de specialitate conform cărora președinția ar însemna mai mult o povară administrativă decât o oportunitate de promovare a priorităților naționale am să încep cu o privire de ansamblu asupra aspectelor administrative, care îngrădesc președinția în exercitarea puterii. Astfel, cel mai vizibil obstacol este mandatul scurt, de șase luni pe care o președinție îl poate îndeplini, acest impediment al timpului neoferind președinției posibilitatea de a epuiza toate metodele de negociere în vederea găsirii unui numitor comun. Asta înseamnă ca nu are posibilitatea să își îndeplinească prioritățile stabilite în propria agendă deoarece procesul legislativ este greoi iar problemele sensibile depășesc cele șase luni. Șansa fiecărui stat de a negocia și încheia dosare legislative devine astfel disproporționalà întrucât dosarul legislativ este negociat de un stat membru care deține președinția, și finalizat de un alt stat membru care a preluat mandatul, fapt pentru care predecesorului său nu i se acordă vizibilitate[5].

După cum se menționează și în Programul pe 18 luni al Consiliului (1 ianuarie 2019 – 30 iunie 2020): „la începutul trioului, prioritatea esențială va fi finalizarea dosarelor încă nesoluționate din cadrul actualei agende strategice, în special a celor enumerate în Declarația comună privind prioritățile legislative ale UE pentru 2018–2019."

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[5] Jelmer Schalk, René Torenvlied, Jeroen Weesie, Frans Stokman, *The Power of the Presidency in EU Council Decision-making,* Los Angeles, London, New Delhi and Singapore, European Union Politics, 2007, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1465116507076431.

Provocările contemporane, evenimentele care coincid fiecărei președinții limitează la rândul lor posibilitatea de implicare a statului care deține mandatul, după cum vom analiza în al doilea capitol cazul României, care se confruntă cu anumite „crize” ale Uniunii Europene ca de exemplu BREXIT-ul, controversa Reformei proiectului european, finalizarea mandatului Comisiei Juncker, alegerile europarlamentare sau negocierea cadrului financiar multianual. Procedurile de vot din cadrul Consiliului Uniunii Europene reprezintă la rândul lor constrângeri în exercitarea rolului de broker și mediator, deoarece „condiționează capacitatea președinției de a construi un acord și de a promova soluția ideală”[6]. De exemplu, în cazul votului unanim, președinția este forțată să ia în considerare punctele de vedere ale fiecărui stat, mai ales ale statelor puternice, care ulterior pot bloca și alte decizii, iar compatibilitatea cu aceste state îi oferă șanse mai mari în promovarea poziției preferate. În cazul propunerilor legislative care necesită votul cu majoritate calificată, președinția beneficiază de o mai mare flexi-bilitate în exercitarea rolului său de broker, fapt pentru care compromisurile se pot construi mai ușor, iar negocierile efetuate pot servi inclusiv preocupărilor naționale.

Nu în ultimul rând, „Președinția trebuie, prin definiție, să fie neutră și imparțială”[7], principiu normativ care constituie o altă piedică în promovarea și exercitarea prio-rităților naționale chiar dacă acestea coincid cu cele europene, însă sintagma citată face referire și la imparțialitatea președinției față de statele membre, privind procesul de negociere și evitarea favorizării vreunui stat.

Pentru a concluziona în privința acestor două opinii controversate despre ade-văratul rol și al statelor în exercitarea Președinției, putem spune ca există factori atât de natură internă, administrativă, cât și de natură externă care pot determina viziuni diferite. Analiza acestor factori precum și informarea continuă ne ajută să găsim un răspuns potrivit în funcție de așteptările noastre.

2. PREȘEDINȚIE DE SUCCES?

Sintagma „Președinție de succes” este recurentă atât în literatura de specialitate cât și în discursurile liderilor politci sau comentatorilor mass-mediei politice mai ales în momentul bilanțului de sfarșit al unei Președinții. Catalogarea unei Președinții ca a fiind sau nu de succes vine în urma expertizei diferitelor tipuri de factori precum

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[6] Jonas Tallberg, op.cit., 999–1022.
[7] *„Rolul și atribuțiile Președinției Consiliului UE”,* Ministerul pentru Românii de Pretutindeni secțiunea RO 2019EU http://www.mprp.gov.ro/web/rolul-si-atributiile-presedintiei-consiliului-ue, (accesat în 15.06.2019).

cei tehnici care fac referire la numarul dosarelor incheiate, cei administrarivi specifici regulilor de funcționare a Uniunii sau factori de procedură a desfășurării procesului legislativ asupra aprobării și ulterior a adoptării unui proiect de politică pubică.

Am să încep cu Președința României, concentrându-mă asupra factorilor de natură tehnică, aducând detalii despre importanța și contextul aplicării lor, facând trimitere și la celelalte tipologii astfel încât să obținem o viziune despre însemnătatea acestei sintagme, urmând a fi analizate Președiințiile Estoniei și Bulgariei.

2.1. PREȘEDINȚIA ROMÂNIEI

România a preluat primul mandat al Președinției Consiliului Uniunii Europene în data de 1 ianuarie 2019 până la data de 30 iunie 2019 formând trio-ul alături de Finlanda și Croația. Sub deviza „Coeziunea, o valoare comună europeană", România acționează pe baza celor patru priorități stabilite aflate în concordanță cu valorile, principiile și subiecte dezbătute la nivelul Uniunii Europene.

Prima dintre aceste priorități este „Europa Convergenței" prin intermediul căreia România promovează competitivitatea economică cu accent pe susținerea IMM-urilor, urmărind diminuarea discrepanțelor economice dintre statele Europei de Vest și statele Europei de Est, prin susținerea interconectivității, transporturilor și a piețelor de capital. Cea de-a doua prioritate denumită „Europa Siguranței", își propune funcționarea eficientă a spațiului european de libertate, securitate și justiție, prin implementarea mecanismului de evaluare Schengen și prin cooperare polițienească.

Următoarea prioritate „Europa ca actor global" accentuează consolidarea Politicii de Securitate și Apărare Comună, cooperarea cu NATO, colaborarea în cadrul Strategiei UE pentru Regiunea Dunării în contextul Președinției României din perioada octombrie 2018–octombrie 2019, precum și facilitarea unui dialog mult mai eficient între statele semnatare a Parteneriatului Estic cu ocazia celor 10 ani de la inițiere. Ultima dintre cele patru priorități este „Europa valorilor comune", care analizează problematica încrederii cetățenilor în instituțiile naționale și europene, de la combaterea știrilor false la dezinformarea online.

Analizând activitatea Președinției Române din punct de vedere tehnic conform unui raport publicat de Consiliul Uniunii Europene privind progresul legislativ de la 1 ianuarie 2019 până la 1 martie 2019, România a reușit să încheie 60 de dosare legislative, să ajungă la un acord provizoriu în privința a 12 dosare[8]. La finele

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8   „*Progress Made On EU Legislation Under The Romanian Presidency*", Consiliul Uniunii Europene, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/38739/ro-midterm-report.pdf, (accesat în 03.04.2019).

Președinției potrivit bilanțului prezentat de doamna prim-ministru, și a declarațiilor liderilor politici ai Uniunii Europene, România a surprins Europa și a îndeplinit cu succes mandatul. Astfel, au avut loc aproximativ 2500 de reuniuni și evenimente, dintre care 300 organizate în România, cel mai important fiind Summit-ul de la Sibiu privind viitorul Europei, au fost încheiate 90 de dosare legislative, printre cele mai dificile numărându-se directiva dreptului de autor și directiva gazelor naturale, negociate într-un timp record de trei luni până la finalul activității legislative a Parlamentului European. România a fost primul stat care a prezidat Consiliul prezentând, la nivel de prim-ministru, prioritățile mandatului în plenul Consiliului Economic și Social European[9]. După cum am menționat, Summit-ul de la Sibiu din data de 9 Mai, a fost evenimentul reprezentativ al Președinției, stabilind noi angajamente față de „criza viitorului european", cuprinse în Declarația de la Sibiu alcătuită din zece puncte. Declarația cuprinde consimțământul liderilor europeni asupra protecției cetățenilor, democrației, statului de drept și menținerii unei singure Europe unite[10]. Analizând contextul desfășurării acestui summit, este necesar de amintit că a avut loc cu două săptămâni înaintea alegerilor europarlamentare, sub presiunea creșterii partidelor politice eurosceptice din cadrul statelor membre, la moment de răscruce politică pentru Uniune, dar și de funcționare din cauza amânării primului termen al Brexit-ului. Pe fondul incertitudii politico-administrative din cadrul Uniunii precum și a amenințărilor externe, Summitul de la Sibiu promitea în termeni abstracți și teoretici stabilitatea la nivel european dupa cum însuși președintele Comisiei afirma:" Sibiul este momentul în care trebuie să oferim tuturor europenilor o perspectivă convingătoare pentru viitor".[11] Însă rezultatele promițătoare stau doar în baza Declarației formulate în termeni ambigui care reflectă exact criza Uniunii de astăzi, anulând însă dezideratul viitorului ce s-a dorit a fi reconfigurat la Sibiu.

În contextul schimbărilor de ordin intern ale Uniunii, a alegerilor europarlamentare, a definirii Agendei Strategice 2019–2024, a finalizării mandatului Comisiei Junker, România a avut la dispoziție doar trei luni de mandat efectiv. Acestor dificultăți

[9] „Bilanțul mandatului României la președinția Consiliului Uniunii Europene", Președinția României la Consiliul Uniunii Europene https://www.romania2019.eu/2019/07/03/live-prim-ministrul-viorica-dancila-si-ministrul-delegat-pentru-afaceri-europene-george-ciamba, (accesat în 6.07.2019).

[10] „Declarația de la Sibiu", Președinția României la Consiliul Uniunii Europene https://www.romania2019.eu/2019/05/09/declaratia-de-la-sibiu/, (accesat în 9.05.2019).

[11] Jean-Claude Juncker, „Rezultatele ce pot fi obținute până la Summitul de la Sibiu", *State of the Union 2018,* https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/soteu2018-factsheet-sibiu-delivery_ro.pdf, (accesat 9.05.2019).

li se adaugă incertitudinea provocată de Brexit, precum și atenția sporită asupra migrației, și controversa privind reformarea proiectului european sub presiunile grupărilor populiste. În ciuda acestora, putem afirma că Președinția României a fost una de succes, aceasta evidențiindu-se și în declarațiile liderilor europeni precum cea a președintelui Consiliului European, Donald Tusk: „Multe mulțumiri lui Klaus Iohannis și echipei sale pentru o președinție energică și de succes. Ați reușit să finalizați 90 de dosare în mai puțin de 100 de zile, ceea ce este impresionant. Ne vom aminti mereu summit-ul de la Sibiu pe care l-ați găzduit de Ziua Europei".[12]

Anumite declarații ale specialiștilor aduc în prim-plan analizând Președinția României contradicția privind libertatea sau limitarea puterii de acțiune a Președinției, analizată mai sus. Astfel după cum afirmă Iordan Bărbulescu, profesor universitar doctor: „Președinția Consiliului nu mai este nici ea ceea ce era înainte de intrarea în vigoare a Tratatului de la Lisabona, când nu aveam Președinte permanent al Consiliului European și, deci, tu, ca țară, aveai și asta în răspunderea ta, nu aveam Președinte permanent la Consiliul Relații Externe și, deci, aveai un cuvânt de spus în acest domeniu etc. Vreau să spun că rolul statului este diminuat față de președințiile de dinainte de 2009"[13]. Tot pe fondul Președinției Române, Radu Carp, profesor universitar doctor, susține ipoteza asupra succesului incert al unei Președinții: „Președinția României la Consiliul Uniunii Europene nu poate fi evaluată obiectiv... Nu știm ce înseamnă o președinție „de succes", nici ce înseamnă un eșec. Există însă două componente de care trebuie să se țină cont într-o astfel de evaluare. Prima se referă la partea logistică... Cea de-a doua componentă se referă la gestionarea dosarelor."[14]

2.2. PREȘEDINȚIA ESTONIEI

Președinția Estoniei poate fi un exemplu pentru România, deoarece este considerată o președinție de succes. Vom încerca să analizăm această perspectivă pornind de la argumentarea pro sau contra a prezumției conform căreia numărul dosarelor încheiate configurează o președinție de succes.

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[12] Donald Tusk, „Many thanks to @KlausIohannis and his team for an energetic and successful @ro2019eu presidency", https://twitter.com/eucopresident/status/1144956136438816768?, (accesat în 30.07.2019)

[13] Iordan Bărbulescu „Ediție specială: primul mandat al României la Președinția Consiliului UE" *NewsletterIER,* anul XI, nr.98 (iulie 2019), http://ier.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/newsletter_iulie_2019_ro_final.pdf, (accesat în 30. 07.2019).

[14] Radu Carp „Ediție specială: primul mandat al României la Președinția Consiliului UE" *NewsletterIER*, anul XI, nr. 98 (iulie 2019), http://ier.gov.ro/wp- content/uploads/2019/07/newsletter_iulie_2019_ro_final.pdf, (accesat în 30.07.2019)

Astfel, cele patru principii pe care s-a axat mandatul estonian sub motto-ul Unitate prin echilibru, sunt: „O economie europeană deschisă și inovatoare" – care pune accentul pe competitivitatea și concurența loială în cadrul pieței unice, în special în domeniul energetic. Al doilea principiu: „O Europă a siguranței și securității" face referire la consolidarea luptei împotriva terorismului și a criminalității organizate, combaterea migrației ilegale, securitatea frontierei externe și parteneriatul strategic Uniunea Europeană–Statele Unite ale Americii. Poate cea mai importanta dintre priorități, față de care Estonia și-a depășit standardele este „O Europă digitală și libera circulație a datelor", care presupune promovarea progresului tehnologic prin dezvoltarea comerțului electronic transfrontalier și a serviciilor electronice și publice digitale transfrontaliere. Prin intermediul ultimei priorități „O Europă incluzivă și socială", Estonia promovează egalitatea de șanse pentru accesul la educație de înaltă calitate și la ocuparea forței de muncă"[15].

Analizând din punct de vedere tehnic raportul oficial privind rezultatele Președinției Estoniei, majoritatea priorităților amintite se dovedesc a fi îndeplinite, Estonia reușind să ajungă la consens în multe dintre politicile ce se potriveau obiectivelor sale. Printre cele 377 de propuneri legislative dezbătute sub președinția estonă, se numără: acordul privind bugetul Uniunii Europene pentru anul 2018 de 160 de miliarde de euro, a fost convenită crearea Procuraturii Europene, acordul politic cu Parlamentul European cu privire la noua metodologie de calcul a dumpingului precum și propunerea de modernizare a instrumentelor de protecție comercială.

În ceea ce privește securitatea, s-a realizat rețeaua ATLAS de unități speciale de intervenție, un acord asupra directivei privind cartea albastră a UE, care se ocupă de libera circulație a resortisanților țărilor terțe cu înaltă calificare în cadrul Uniunii, Estonia a organizat primul exercițiu cibernetic, EU CYBRID 2017, alături de miniștrii apărării din Tallinn la care a participat și Secretarul General NATO, prilej de consolidare a cooperării NATO-UE.

Cele mai vizibile demersuri au fost efectuate în domeniul digital, fapt pentru care Președinția estonă este cunoscută și sub numele de „Președinție digitală", nume datorat și platformei Gateway Președinția, care i-a adus de altfel și succesul. Concretizarea preocupării Estoniei de piața unică digitală și de libera circulație a datelor, a venit odată cu Summit-ul digital de la Tallin la care au participat șefii de stat și de guvern ale tuturor statelor membre precum și liderii instituțiilor europene, summit

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[15] „*Prioritățile Președinției Estoniei*" Președinția Estoniei la Consiliul Uniunii Europene, https://www.eu2017.ee/node/921.html, (accesat în 3.04.2019).

încheiat cu înțelegerea reciprocă a statelor privind Europa digitală și stabilirea obiectivelor până în 2025. Au urmat apoi, adoptarea unei propuneri legislative privind libera circulație a datelor cu caracter personal, declarația conexiunii 5G, semnată la Tallinn de miniștrii a 28 de state membre alături de Norvegia, acord între statele membre privind codul de comunicații electronice, un acord privind reglementarea geoblocking, ceea ce a dus la eliminarea parțială a restricțiilor impuse de locație asupra bunurilor și serviciilor cumpărate din magazinele online ale altor state membre. Pe baza ultimei priorități, Estonia a parcurs pași importanți precum: semnarea Pilonului European al Drepturilor Sociale, încheierea acordului între statele membre de a crea Corpul Solidarității Europene, adoptarea directivei privind echilibrul dintre viața profesională și cea privată pentru părinți și îngrijitori.

Estonia a obținut un acord cu Parlamentul European în toate dosarele privind clima (sistemul de comercializare a cotelor de emisii al Uniunii Europene). Eforturile pentru un mandat de succes s-au dovedit și prin faptul că au fost create două noi poziții reprezentative permanente pentru Președinția Estoniană și anume, funcția de ministru adjunct pentru afaceri europene, și un reprezentant oficial însărcinat cu participarea la reuniunile ECOFIN în domeniul bugetar. Cele mai importante decizii au fost luate în cadrul celor 137 de triloguri desfășurate atât la Bruxelles cât și la Luxemburg.[16]

Lăsând la o parte numărul dosarelor încheiate de Estonia în funcție de care președinția ar putea fi considerată de succes, putem analiza și alte aspecte importante precum formularea priorităților care au fost într-o perfectă consonanță cu obiectivele regăsite pe agenda de lucru a Comisiei și cu prioritățile formulate de președintele Juncker. De exemplu, piața unică digitală, a treia prioritate pentru Estonia, reprezintă cea de-a doua prioritate pe agenda Comisiei. Pregătirile președinției estoniene au început prin demararea primului plan de acțiune în 2014, fiind reactualizat de două ori, grăbiți fiind din cauza referendumului din Marea Britanie, care a consfințit retragerea acesteia din Uniune, fapt pentru care președinția estonă a început cu 6 luni mai devreme.

Prin urmare, putem afirma faptul că, în cazul Estoniei numărul dosarelor încheiate este rezultatul bunei organizări și planificări a acțiunilor, susținând alături de programul și strategia Președinției Estoniei aserțiunea conform căreia a exercitat un mandat de success.

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[16] *„Raport privind rezultatele Președinției Estoniei"* Președinția Estoniei la Consiliul Uniunii Europene https://www.eu2017.ee/node/5392.html, (accesat în 3.04.2019).

2.3. PREȘEDINȚIA BULGARIEI

După cum am amintit anterior succesul unei președinții nu constă doar în numărul de dosare încheiate, ci face obiectul mai multor aspecte atât administrativ-organizatorice cât și strategice. Vom observa acest ultim aspect în cazul mandatului Bulgariei.

Astfel, Președinția Bulgară desfășurată între 1 ianuarie 2018 și 20 iunie 2018, a continuat obiectivele agendei trio-ului începută de Estonia, dar a adus și elemente de noutate. Sub deviza Uniți suntem mai puternici, Bulgaria și-a formulat cele patru priorități și anume: „Viitorul Europei și al tinerilor”, care face referire la creșterea economică și coeziune socială, ca principii de referință pentru viitorul cadru financiar multianual, a doua prioritate, „Balcanii de Vest” este o noutate pe agenda Bulgariei, prin care se dorește o mai bună conectivitate a Uniunii Europene cu statele din Balcani precum și întărirea politicii regionale. Prin intermediul următoarei priorități „Securitate și stabilitate”, asemenea Estoniei, dar și României, face referire la migrația ilegală, întâietate având, însă aici politica Uniunii in privința azilului, politici eficiente de returnare și readmisie precum și amplificarea controalelor de frontieră și schimbul de informații. Ultima prioritate și poate cea mai importantă deoarece consolidează demersurile Estoniei este „Economia digitală”, accentuând dezvoltarea pieței unice digitale și facilitarea legăturii între educație și cerințele pieței muncii în contextul dezvoltării tehnologice.

Bineînțeles că și Bulgaria a fost supusă provocărilor interne și externe ale Uniunii Europene: Brexit, populismul, globalizarea, securitatea, anti-terorismul și viitorul incert al Uniunii Europene, după cum sunt specificate și în documentul oficial privind rezultatele președinției. Însă în ciuda acestora, putem remarca demersuri importante concretizate în cele 78 de acorduri încheiate între Consiliu și Parlament. Printre cele mai importante proiecte legislative adoptate se numără: stabilirea datei pentru alegerile Parlamentului European, Concluziile Consiliului privind extinderea și parteneriatele de stabilizare și asociere, aflate în concordanță cu prima prioritate. Rezultatele privind Balcanii de Vest s-au rezumat doar la Summit-ul celor 28 de state membre UE cu cei 6 lideri din Balcanii de Vest, la încurajarea unei perspective privind conectivitatea în domenii precum: transportul, energia, educația. În conformitate cu cea de-a treia prioritate s-au adoptat: revizuirea planului de acțiune al Strategiei de securitate maritimă a UE, proiectul de directivă privind negocierea unui acord comercial cu Australia și Noua Zeelandă. Cele mai importante acte legislative privesc domeniul economic digital, în care au fost înregistrate progrese precum: directiva privind testul

de proporționalitate, concluziile Consiliului privind strategia politicii industriale a UE, Concluziile Consiliului privind aplicarea drepturilor de proprietate intelectuală.[17]

După cum putem observa, Bulgaria spre deosebire de Estonia și-a asumat individual anumite obiective precum Balcanii de Vest, care nu veneau nici în completarea agendei trio-ului, acest obiectiv nefiind o prioritate a programului de lucru al Comisiei.

De aceea celelalte obiective care au adus rezolvare problemelor identificate pe agenda comună, au înregistrat un număr mai mare de dosare legislative expuse negocierii și chiar încheiate. Astfel, Bulgaria este dovada incontestabilă a faptului că numărul dosarelor încheiate nu au o relevanță însemnată în ceea ce privește o președinție de succes, în acest caz, având un mare aport și anumite limitări menționate în primul capitol referitor la capacitățile unei președinți de a acționa pe baza intereselor și scopurilor naționale. În ciuda eforturilor depuse și a progresului realizat în conformitate cu celelalte priorități, atenția asupra Balcanilor de Vest față de care nu s-au adoptat măsuri semnificative, în contextul în care Președintele Comisiei a menționat că nu se pune problema unei extinderi în viitorul apropiat, ci doar a unei cooperări, Bulgaria nu a fost catalogată ca o președinție cu un succes deplin, ci mai degrabă i-a fost recunoscută stăruința.

CONCLUZIE

Prin urmare, mandatul statelor membre exercitat prin rotație, reprezintă atât oportunitatea de a negocia obiectivele naționale, dar și îngrădirea acestora atunci când aceste obiective nu sunt în conformitate cu prioritățile Uniunii Europene. Astfel, apar contradicțiile dezbătute în literatura de specialitate, referitoare la capacitatea de acțiune a statului care asumă Președinția, considerată datorie sau oportunitate în funcție de rezultate, dar și de necesitățile administrative.

După cum am observat în cazul Estoniei, în ciuda limitelor administrative, a provocărilor interne și a presiunilor din mediul extern și a faptului că a trebuit să-și înceapă mandatul mai devreme din cauza Brexit-ului, s-a dovedit a fi o președinție foarte admirată, în primul rând pentru ca a gestionat foarte bine interesele naționale avându-le la bază pe cele europene precum promovarea unei economii digitale.

În schimb, Bulgaria și-a asumat obiective parțial prioritare pentru Uniune, precum cooperarea regională prin intermedierea unei legături mai strânse a Uniunii Europene

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[17] „*Raport privind Președinția Bulgariei*", Președinția Bulgariei la Consiliul Uniunii Europene https://eu2018bg.bg/en/59, (accesat în 2.04.2019)

cu Balcanii de Vest, având în vedere că nu se pune problema de o extindere recentă, fapt ce dovedește limitarea Președinției pentru că nu poate acționa în mod deliberat în favoarea obiectivelor naționale.

În privința Președinției României, încheierea legislaturii Parlamentului Euroepan care a lăsat o marjă de negociere de doar trei luni, poate fi considerată atât o piedică în exercitarea rolului de broker al Președinției cât și o oportunitate mai ușoară de încheiere a dosarelor, mulți dintre participanții la negociere fiind interesați de rezolvarea problemelor de politică publică. Chiar dacă cele patru priorități ale României nu păreau la început foarte concrete, iar obiectivele erau abstracte, țara noastră a dat dovadă de profesionalism în rezolvarea problemelor deja existente într-un context politic destul de instabil. Astfel, conform opiniilor politice și sociale, Președința Consiliului Uniunii Europene sub mandatul României a fost una de succes.

În urma aspectelor tehnice prezentate, putem spune că Președinția Consiliului reprezintă o adevărată provocare pentru statele membre în privința negocierii dosarelor de politică publică întrucât caile informale de acțiune sunt mai restrânse și insignifiante spre depsebire de cele oficiale, prevăzute în actele de procedură ale Uniunii, care îngrădesc posibilitatea unui stat de exercita Președinția pe baza propriului plan de acțiune.

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ROLUL PARLAMENTELOR NAȚIONALE ÎN PROCESUL DECIZIONAL EUROPEAN

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ABSTRACT

Această contribuție are în vedere analizarea modalităților prin care rolul parlamentelor naționale în angrenajul decizional al Uniunii Europene ar putea fi întărit. Pornind de la deficiențele aplicării principiului subsidiarității, într-o comunitate politică caracterizată de o politizare sporită, de un proces decizional lent și de necesitatea permanentă de a se ajunge la cel mai mic numitor comun, întrebările de cercetare pe care le vom aborda se referă în primul rând la limitele controlului parlamentar în materie de integrare europeană, după Tratatul de la Lisabona și, în al doilea rând, cum ar putea fi utilizată mai bine dezbaterea continuă privind viitorul Europei, dar, mai ales scenariul 'Doing less more efficiently', pentru a consolida cu adevărat rolul parlamentelor naționale în procesul decizional european. Parlamentele naționale sunt considerate „marii perdanți" ai procesului de integrare europeană, datoriă pierderii competențelor legislative în favoarea instituțiilor europene și a erodării controlului pe care parlamentele naționale îl exercită asupra propriilor executive. Tratatul de la Lisabona vizează redresarea poziției parlamentelor naționale în angrenajul decizional prin consolidarea principiului subsidiarității și crearea unei „Uniuni tot mai profunde între popoarele Europei, în cadrul căreia deciziile se iau cu respectarea deplină a principiului transparenței și cât mai aproape cu putință de cetățeni" (art.1 TUE).

Cuvinte cheie: *viitorul Uniunii Europene, mai puțin, dar mai eficient, parlamente naționale, principiul subsidiarității*

INTRODUCERE

Acest articol se concentrează asupra rolului parlamentelor naționale în angrenajul decizional al Uniunii Europene, având în vedere capacitatea lor limitată de a exercita un control democratic în afacerile europene, și asupra încercărilor de a remedia această situație prin Tratatul de la Lisabona. Prezentul demers științific își propune să răspundă la câteva întrebări de cercetare pe care le considerăm relevante pentru tema aleasă, acestea referindu-se în primul rând la limitele controlului parlamentar

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în materie de integrare europeană, după Tratatul de la Lisabona și, în al doilea rând, la cum ar putea fi utilizată mai bine dezbaterea continuă privind viitorul Europei, dar, mai ales scenariul ʻMai puțin, dar mai eficient', pentru a consolida cu adevărat rolul parlamentelor naționale în procesul decizional european.

Studiile existente privind impactul politicii europene asupra parlamentelor naționale tind să fie de acord cu capacitatea insuficientă a parlamentelor naționale de a avea un cuvânt de spus în afacerile europene, însă tind să ofere o evaluare mixtă a mecanismelor destinate implicării parlamentelor naționale la nivel european. Pe de o parte, regăsim autorii care sugerează că negocierile la nivel de stat au diminuat importanța organelor parlamentare naționale[1], iar pe de altă parte, există acei autori pentru care, procesul de integrare europeană oferă parlamentelor naționale posibilitatea de a se angaja în afacerile internaționale în moduri care ar fi putut fi de neconceput în lipsa sa, mai exact, cercetătorii se concentrează asupra accesului parlamentelor naționale la informații privind probleme legate de integrarea europeană și capacitatea acestora de a crea mecanisme de cooperare cu colegii lor la nivel european[2].

În contextul multiplelor crize care afectează Uniunea Europeană, pornind de la faptul că provocările cu care se confruntă Europa nu dau semne de abatere, de la conștientizarea nevoii de acțiune în domenii sensibile din punct de vedere politic, în care, la un moment dat, capacitatea de acțiune atât a instituțiilor europene, cât și a statelor membre a fost limitată, Președintele Comisiei Europene consideră că este timpul să implice toți actorii proiectului European în reflecțiile privind viitorul Europei. „Multe dintre transformările profunde cu care se confruntă în acest moment Europa sunt inevitabile și ireversibile. Altele sunt mai greu de prevăzut și se vor produce într-un mod neașteptat. Europa poate fie să se lase purtată de aceste evenimente, fie să încerce să le controleze. Trebuie să luăm această decizie acum. Cele cinci scenarii expuse în prezenta carte albă vor contribui la orientarea dezbaterii privind viitorul Europei[3]," spunea Jean Claude Juncker. De cele mai multe ori, discuția privind viitorul Europei s-a rezumat la a alege între „mai multă" sau „mai puțină" Europă, însă, această viziunea este derutantă și superficială deoarece posibilitățile menționate în documentul privind viitorul European oscilează între menținerea situației actuale, o schimbare a

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[1] Ben Crum, "Parliamentary accountability in multilevel governance: What role for parliaments in economic governance?" în *Journal of European Public Policy,* Vol. 25, Nr. 2, (2017): 268–286.

[2] Klaus Goetz, și Jan-Hinrik Meyer-Sahling, "The Europeanisation of national political systems: Parliaments and executives", în *Living Reviews European Governance,* (2008): 1–30.

[3] Jean-Claude Juncker, *White paper on the Future of Europe. Reflection and scenarios for the EU-27 by 2025*, Comisia Europeană, COM(2017)2025, 01.03.2017, 15–16.

domeniului de aplicare și a priorităților, sau un salt al tuturor statelor membre ori doar al unora.

Pornind de la dezbaterea continuă privind Uniunea Europeană, de la strânsa asociere a scenariului `Doing less more efficiently`, cu principiul subsidiarității, scopul este de a identifica modalitatea în care acest scenariu poate să susțină consolidarea rolului parlamentelor naționale în angrenajul deciziona european. Principiul subsidiarității furnizează o metodă de punere în balanță a intereselor europene și ale statelor membre, plecând astfel de la prezumția prioritizării intereselor europene și a privilegierii realizării acestora, chestionând doar stabilirea actorului care să efectueze punerea în aplicare, dar adevărata aplicare a subsidiarității ar trebui să pună problema realizării intereselor statelor membre.

Prezentul demers științific va fi organizat sub forma unui studiu de caz, conceput astfel încât să ne ofere posibilitatea de a analiza, interpreta și aprofunda rolul parlamentelor naționale în procesul de luare a deciziilor al UE. Scopul va fi extrapolarea aspectelor cheie, care pot oferi un mijloc de a înțelege mai clar necesitatea redresării rolului lor într-o Uniune Europeană care trebuie să-și consolideze prerogativele democratice. Studiul de caz va fi completat de analiza de document. În scopul identificării principalelor dimensiuni și caracteristici ale studiului nostru de caz, prin intermediul analizei, vom încerca să rezolvăm problema preluării de date, pentru a putea urmări implicarea parlamentelor naționale în afacerile europene. De asemenea, pentru a ajunge la date relevante privind obiectul cercetării, o altă tehnică de cercetare la care se va recurge va fi interviul semi-structurat. Avantajele acestei tehnici sunt: flexibilitatea, posibilitatea de a obține răspunsuri specifice la fiecare întrebare, colectarea unor răspunsuri spontane, știut fiind că primele reacții sunt mai semnificative decât cele realizate sub control normativ. Interviul va avea tema „Consolidarea rolului Parlamentului României în angrenajul decizional al Uniunii Europene" iar scopul este de a identifica poziția Parlamentului României vis-à-vis de necesitatea consolidării rolului parlamentelor naționale în angrenajul decizional European.

Plecând de la deficiențele aplicării principiului subsidiarității, într-o comunitate politică caracterizată de o politizare sporită, de un proces decizional lent și de necesitatea permanentă de a se ajunge la cel mai mic numitor comun atât la nivel european, cât și la nivel național, în ceea ce privește controlul parlamentar, în secțiunile următoare vom discuta despre rolul parlamentelor naționale înainte și după momentul Lisabona, despre evoluția discuțiilor cu privire la reconsiderarea principiului subsidiarității pornind de la cel de-al patrulea scenariu privind viitorul Europei 'Doing less more efficiently' despre limitele controlului parlamentar asupra guver-

nelor în chestiuni de integrare europeană/ afaceri europene, iar în final, vom discuta despre Directiva lucrătorilor detașați, drept exemplu pentru a evidenția influența limitată a parlamentelor naționale în afacerile europene.

1. ROLUL PARLAMENTELOR NAȚIONALE ÎNAINTE ȘI DUPĂ MOMENTUL LISABONA

Introducerea principiului subsidiarității în textul Tratatului de la Maastricht a fost considerată ca reprezentând o soluție necesară pentru atenuarea temerilor unora dintre statele membre cu privire la extinderea necontrolată a compentențelor Uniunii Europene spre zone de 'hard politics'. Ulterior, pe fondul politizării procesului de integrare europeană, s-a încercat să se găsească noi formule prin care aplicarea principiului subsidiarității să poată fi cât mai facil realizată, orice reformă a cadrului tratatelor Uniunii Europene fiind însoțită de o discuție aprofundată privind subsidiaritatea. În 2003, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing a ridicat problema subsidiarității în discursul său de deschidere al Convenției privind viitorul Europei, subliniind că „dezvoltarea unor soluții viitoare pentru Europa este o problemă importantă, deoarece este necesar să răspundem dificultății de a combina un puternic sentiment de apartenență la UE cu cel al menținerii unei identități naționale"[4].

Rolul parlamentelor naționale a fost diminuat pe măsură ce integrarea europeană a progresat, competențele Uniunii au crescut, iar domeniile sale de competență s-au extins. Prin transferul către instituții comune cu putere de decizie a unor competențe deținute până în acel moment de statele naționale, construcția europeană în sine antrenează o diminuarea rolului parlamentelor naționale în calitate de autorități legislative, bugetare și de control. Reprezentanții Parlamentului European și ai parlamentelor naționale au atras în mod repetat atenția asupra acestui fenomen. Într-un discurs ținut cu puțin timp înainte de încheierea mandatului său, fostul președinte al Parlamentului European, Hans-Gert Pöttering, a declarat că „Parlamentul European și parlamentele naționale sunt parteneri. Munca noastră este complementară. Împreună, putem să facem Uniunea Europeană mai democratică, să o aducem mai aproape de cetățenii săi și să ne asigurăm că principiul subsidiarității este respectat"[5].

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[4] *Report from the Presidency of the Convention to the President of the European Council*, CONV 851/03, Bruxelles, 2003, http://european-convention.europa.eu/pdf/reg/en/03/cv00/cv00851. en03.pdf.

[5] Katrin Ruhrmann, *End of Term Review of Hans-Gert Pöttering as President of the European Parliament*, Bruxell: Cabinetul Președintelui Parlamentului European, 10.07.2009, http://www.

Până în momentul adoptării Tratatului de la Lisabona, statele membre analizau o măsură pe cale de a fi adoptată în funcție de efectele pe care aceasta urma să le producă într-un domeniu oarecare, iar Uniunea Europeană evalua măsura prin prisma gradului în care aceasta urma să contribuie la îndeplinirea scopurilor comunității. Impactul măsurii luate la nivel național era apreciat în mod cu totul marginal, din ansamblul procesului de analiză instituțional, lipsind orice considerente explicite legate de suveranitatea națională și orice proporționalitate a scopurilor europene. Este de menționat aici principiul „fidelității față de Uniune"[6]. Bărbulescu consideră că statele membre vor adopta măsurile necesare pentru a-și îndeplini obligațiile. Ele trebuie să faciliteze instituțiilor/organelor Uniunii Europene îndeplinirea atribuțiilor și să interzică acele măsuri naționale care ar putea afecta negativ funcționarea Uniunii sau îndeplinirea obiectivelor acesteia.

Prin adoptarea Tratatului de la Lisabona, pentru prima dată se acordă parlamentelor naționale un rol bine definit în afacerile europene, distinct de cel al guvernelor statelor membre, efectul acestei abordări fiind acela al unei mai mari reprezentativități a cetățenilor la nivelul procesului decizional european. Tratatul recunoaște rolul parlamentelor naționale și le consolidează posibilitatea participării active la lucrările Uniunii, respectând, în același timp, rolul instituțiilor europene. De asemenea, Tratatul de la Lisabona pune la dispoziția parlamentelor naționale un instrument prin care acestea se pot angaja în procesul decizional european, și anume sistemul de avertizare timpurie (EWS). Se poate observa că acest mecanism nu a atins dinamica anticipată, deoarece scopul EWS nu este de a bloca luarea deciziilor la nivel european, ci de a îmbunătăți calitatea legislației europene. Acesta ar fi trebuit să fie văzut ca un instrument important de cooperare, consultare și dialog, dar aplicarea procedurii cartonașului galben de către parlamentele naționale pare să consolideze prezumția de a acorda prioritate intereselor europene și de a prefera realizarea acestora. Totuși, la zece ani de la intrarea în vigoare a Tratatului de la Lisabona se poate spune că mecanismul de avertizare timpurie nu a ajuns încă la desăvârșire deoarece există și acum o diferență profundă în a înțelege ceea ce mecanismul subsidiarității reprezintă de fapt, care sunt criteriile pentru a putea emite un aviz motivat, cum ar trebui să fie interpretat acesta ori ce elemente ar trebui să conțină.

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europarl.europa.eu/former_presidents/pottering/mid_term_review/en/090707-Endterm-Review-Email-EN.pdf.

[6] Iordan Gheorghe Bărbulescu, *Noua Europă – Identitate și model european,* (Iasi: Polirom, 2015): 55.

Considerăm că, prin prevederile sale, Tratatul de la Lisabona aduce o schimbare majoră în încercarea de a consolida rolul parlamentelor naționale și de a redresa deficitul democratic al Uniunii Europene. Cu toate acestea, nu oferă explicații clare cu privire la modul în care poate fi exercitat controlul subsidiarității. Aplicat la nivel european, principiul subsidiarității servește drept criteriu care reglementează exercitarea de către Uniunea Europeană a acelor competențe care sunt împărtășite cu statele membre. Astfel, Uniunea Europeană intervine numai în măsura în care obiectivele măsurilor de politică propuse nu pot fi realizate în mod satisfăcător de către statele membre la nivel central, regional sau local, iar acțiunea sa ar putea aduce o valoare adăugată. Pornind de la această premisă și de la strânsa legătură dintre scenariul 'Doing less more efficiently' și principiul subsidiarității, în următoarea secțiune, discutăm despre modul în care acest scenariu ar putea contribui la dezvoltarea rolului parlamentelor naționale în luarea deciziilor la nivel european.

2. PRINCIPIULUI SUBSIDIARITĂȚII ÎN CONTEXTUL SCENARIULUI 4 – *DOING LESS MORE EFFICIENTLY*

'Doing less more efficiently' este elementul central al viziunii Comisiei Europene asupra viitorului Europei, scenariul fiind ancorat într-o concepție a Uniunii Europene în care acesta se concentrează pe prioritățile politice și este condus de principiul de a acționa "big on big things and small on small things"[7].

Există o strânsă asociere a acestui scenariu cu principiul subsidiarității, principiu conform căruia UE intervine numai în măsura în care obiectivele actelor preconizate nu pot fi realizate în mod satisfăcător de către statele membre. Premisa de la care pleacă scenariul este consensul în ceea ce privește faptul că nici UE-27 în forma actuală, nici țările europene pe cont propriu, nu sunt suficient de bine pregătite pentru a face față provocărilor curente din agenda europeană și globală, iar din acest punct de vedere, statele membre decid să își concentreze atenția și resursele limitate asupra unui număr restrâns de domenii, cum ar fi inovarea, comerțul, securitatea, migrația, gestionarea frontierelor și apărarea, în alte domenii urmând să acționeze mai puțin sau deloc[8]. Mai exact, acesta are în vedere o uniune politică, în care statele membre

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[7] Georgiana Ciceo, "Doing Less More Efficiently, or How Relevant the Enduring Principle of Subsidiarity is For the Current Debate on EU Reform" în *Journal of European Integration History,* Vol. 24, (2018): 322.

[8] Jean-Claude Juncker, *op. cit.*, 22–23.

sunt de acord să renunțe la o parte din putere în anumite domenii, să utilizeze în comun resursele și să centralizeze anumite decizii la nivelul Bruxelles. Se consideră că scenariul pune accentul pe faptul că UE-27 acționează puțin sau deloc în domeniile în care acțiunea sa este percepută ca având o valoare adăugată mai limitată sau în domeniile în care există percepția că promisiunile nu au fost îndeplinite. Printre aceste domenii se numără dezvoltarea regională, sănătatea publică sau anumite elemente ale politicii sociale și de ocupare a forței de muncă care nu sunt legate în mod direct de funcționarea pieței unice. Cu toate acestea există însă riscul înstrăinării acelor părți ale societății care consideră că UE nu are legitimitate sau că Uniunea a preluat prea multe competențe de la autoritățile naționale. Mai mult, există riscul ca acuzațiile conform cărora Ununii Europene îi lipsește legitimitatea și acaparează prea mult puterea, în detrimentul parlamentelor naționale, să se augmenteze. Varianta de a prelua puterea de decizie din mâinile statelor membre, ar reprezenta o cale periculoasă, care inevitabil ar duce la încălcări masive ale drepturilor cetățenilor și a autorității naționale, sau mai mult, de a se configura sub forma unei formule autoritare, care este opusă principiului subsidiarității, principiu de bază al Uniunii Europene.

În ceea ce privește alternativa pentru viitorul UE 'Doing less more efficiently', trebuie menționat că acest scenariu menține o anumită ambiguitate cu privire echilibrul între „a face mai puțin" în unele domenii politice și „a face mai mult" în celălalte[9]. Cu toate acestea, adevărata problemă este că până acum nu a existat o prevedere clară sau o doctrină legală, privind modul de a decide cel mai adecvat nivel de acțiune. Există prea puține clarificări în ceea ce privește menținerea relevanței principiului subsidiarității în contextul acestui scanariu. Totuși, o clarificare provine de la Taskforce 'Subsidiarity, Proportionality and the Doing less more efficiently scenario'[10] creat la nivelul Comisiei Europene și condus de către Frans Timmermans. Chiar dacă soluțiile avansate de Taskforce au un caracter modest și nu abordează nucleul deficitului democratic, grila de evaluare comună a subsidiarității, în special, s-ar putea dovedi utilă în încercarea de a găsi modalități mai coerente și mai clare de aplicare a principiului subsidiarității. În același timp, grupul de lucru contestă orice recurs la conținutul politic al principiului subsidiarității, argumentând că „evaluarea subsidiarității de către parlamentele naționale nu ar trebui să se refere la conținutul propunerilor

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[9]   Georgiana Ciceo, *op. cit.*, 331.
[10]   *Raport referitor la Grupul de lucru privind subsidiaritatea, proporționalitatea și scenariul „Mai puțin, dar mai eficient"*, Bruxelles: Comisia Europeană, (2018): 32, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/files/report-task-force-subsidiarity-proportionality-and-doing-less-more-efficiently_en.

legislative ale Comisiei"[11]. Ca atare, parlamentele naționale nu sunt invitate să își exprime opiniile cu privire la modul în care ar trebui dezvoltate politicile la nivelul UE, ci doar la nivelul adecvat în care ar trebui luate măsuri – UE sau statele membre. Jančić consideră că, prin aceasta, Taskforce-ul neagă „principalele deficiențe ale EWS"[12].

Ceea ce contează în momentul de față nu este atât de mult modul de realocare a puterilor dintre UE și statele membre în domenii de competență partajată, cât de a crea un mecanism specific pentru a proteja statele membre împotriva interferențelor neegale din partea Uniunii și pentru a oferi cooperare între diferitele niveluri de autoritate responsabile pentru o problemă dată. Cu toate acestea, dificultățile procedurale pe care această redistribuire a competenței le implică și absența consensului politic asupra acelei competențe, fac ca această opțiune să fie viabilă doar teoretic. Robert Zbirall consideră că Tratatul de la Lisabona a permis din punct de vedere juridic să restituie statelor membre o parte din competența pe care au transferat-o Uniunii Europene, fie prin revizuirea legislației primare, fie prin abrogarea legislației secundare[13].

Dacă în prima parte am discutat despre consolidarea rolului parlamentelor naționale după momentul Lisabona, principiul subsidirității și cum ar putea dezbaterea continuă privind viitorul Europei să contribuie la dezvoltarea rolului parlamentelor naționale, în cele ce urmează vom discuta despre dificultatea exercitării controlului parlamentar asupra executivelor, în chestiuni de integrare europeană/ afaceri europene.

3. LIMITELE CONTROLULUI PARLAMENTAR ÎN AFACERILE EUROPENE

Rolul parlamentelor naționale în afacerile UE a devenit un subiect important în dezbaterea privind legitimitatea democratică a procesului decizional al Uniunii Europene. Consolidarea controlului parlamentar și a dreptului de participare atât la nivel național, cât și la nivel european este adesea considerată o măsură eficientă pentru a aborda deficitul democratic al UE și percepută motivul pentru care le conferă un loc important în noile dispoziții privind Principiile democratice a Uniunii[14]. Cu toate

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[11] Davor Jančić, *Franz Timmermans' subsidiarity proposals do not go far enough to address the EU's democratic deficit*, 26.07.2018, 1, https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2018/07/26/frans-timmermans-subsidiarity-proposals-do-not-go-far-enough-to-address-the-eus-democratic-deficit/.

[12] *Ibid.*, 2.

[13] Robert Zbiral, "Restoring Tasks from the European Union to Member States: A Bumpy Road to an Unclear Destination?" în *Common Market Law Review*, Vol. 52, (2015): 51–84.

[14] Katrin Auel, și Thomas Christiansen "After Lisbon: National Parliaments in the European Union", în *West European Politics,* Vol. 38, (2015): 261.

acestea, modul în care acest obiectiv poate fi atins, depinde în mod crucial de gradul și de modul în care parlamentele naționale utilizează efectiv drepturile lor instituționale.

În general, parlamentele naționale sunt considerate „perdanții" procesului de integrare europeană, datorită pierderii unora dintre competențe în favoarea instituțiilor europene, și, bine-înțeles a erodării controlului asupra guvernelor în materie de integrare europeană/ afaceri europene. Claudia Hefftler[15] este unul dintre autorii care întărește această idee considerând că actorii guvernamentali, birocrații și chiar grupurile de interese au fost câștigătorii procesului de integrare europeană, în detrimentul parlamentelor naționale, care se dovedesc a fi marii perdanți. Implicarea guvernelor în mecanismele decizionale europene au condus treptat la o asimetrie informațională. De asemenea, Andrew Moravcsik[16] este unul dintre analiștii care vede Uniunea Europeană ca având prin excelență un caracter interguvernamental, cu alte cuvinte UE este doar o structură foarte complicată de tratate, în mod tradițional, guvernele gestionând relațiile externe. Moravcsik argumentează că „UE realocă resursele politice schimbând contextul intern, instituțional, informațional și ideologic. Această realocare îi favorizează în general pe cei care participă în mod direct la negocierile internaționale, adică executivele naționale".

Procedura controlului parlamentar este exercitată de către parlamentele naționale asupra modului în care puterea executivă se comportă în afacerile europene, pornind de la pozițiile exprimate, până la măsurile luate în privința problemelor europene specifice. Deși, Tratatul de la Lisabona asigură cadrul pentru un grad mai mare de implicare a parlamentelor naționale în procesul decizional European, posibilitatea de a controla în mod eficient agentul este foarte redusă. În literatura de specialitate, Carina Sprungk[17] aduce în discuție dificultatea cu care se exercită controlul parlamentar asupra guvernelor în chestiuni de integrare europeană/ afaceri europene, prezentând-o sub forma relației decident-agent. În general vorbind, agenții sunt responsabili față de principiile cu rol director stabilite de către decidenți, care își exercită controlul asupra agentului și influențează acțiunile sale. Pentru a fi în măsură să afecteze comportamentul agentului, decidenții trebuie să aibă dreptul să solicite informații și să impună sancțiuni, cele mai importante fiind blocarea sau modificarea deciziilor luate de agent,

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[15] Hefftler, Claudia et. al, *The Palgrave Handbook of National Parliaments and the European Union, (*Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015): 61.

[16] Moravcsik, Andrew, "*Why the European Union Strengthens the State: Domestic Politics and International Cooperation*", Centre for European Studies, Working Paper, Series 52, 47–49, http://aei.pitt.edu/9151/.

[17] Carina Sprungk, "A New Type of Representative Democracy? Reconsidering the Role of National Parliaments in the European Union", în *Journal of European Integration,* Vol. 35, (2013): 553.

neautorizarea agentului sau impunerea unor sancțiuni specific. Unul dintre cele mai importante motive pentru pierderea din vedere a agenților este, de fapt, asimetria informației în favoarea agentului. Parlamentele trebuie să verifice numeroase documente care, deseori, nu sunt traduse, corespund unei agende politice diferite și afectează frecvent mai multe politici interne. Din acest punct de vedere, controlul politicii guvernamentale în afacerile UE necesită construirea unui nou domeniu de expertiză și investirea unor resurse considerabile. Același lucru este valabil și pentru posibilitatea de a impune sancțiuni, ca un privilegiu al majorității parlamentare. În timp ce acesta din urmă își păstrează dreptul formal de a înlătura guvernul din funcție, dacă se abate prea mult de la poziția sa în politicile UE, dreptul de a schimba deciziile agentului prin blocarea sau modificarea deciziilor acestuia este grav restricționat. Percepția asupra influenței limitate a parlamentelor naționale, de unde și apariția deficitului democratic, este determinată de faptul că deciziile, care, în alte circumstanțe, ar fi fost luate de parlamente, sunt luate de guverne, în Consiliu, uneori împreună cu Parlamentul European, în cadrul procedurii de co-decizie. Transparența Consiliului este limitată, iar datorită acestui fapt, parlamentele urmăresc și monitorizează cu dificultate activitatea guvernului. Termenul „deficit democratic" este utilizat în sensul că instituțiile UE și procedurile decizionale nu sunt suficient de democratice și par inaccesibile cetățenilor datorită complexității lor. Adevăratul deficit democratic al UE pare a fi absența unei sfere politice europene. Alegătorii europeni nu simt că au o modalitate eficace de a respinge și de a schimba, în unele privințe, cursul politicului și/sau al politicilor. Soluția parlamentelor naționale constă în dezvoltarea și consolidarea unui rol activ în detrimentul celui reactiv, ceea ce presupune intervenția parlamentară în fazele timpurii ale procesului de luare a deciziilor. Poziția formală a parlamentelor nationale în cadrul structurii Uniunii Europene se limitează în prezent la cinci sarcini fundamentale, cea mai importantă fiind monitorizarea răspunderii guvernului pentru activitatea sa în cadrul procesului de luare a deciziilor în cadrul Uniunii. Acest lucru ar putea lua forma unui sistem de acordare a mandatelor, în care un parlament național oferă guvernului său instrucțiuni privind votarea înaintea reuniunilor Consiliului, un proces care poate fi stabilit în mod legal, la fel ca în Danemarca, sau prin întâlniri regulate cu ministrul respectiv, la fel ca și în Olanda. În mod alternativ, parlamentele naționale se pot implica indirect, sub forma controlului *ex post*, în care reprezentanții executivului raportează rezultatele reuniunilor Consiliului în fața parlamentului, după fiecare eveniment.

Monitorizarea activității guvernamentale reprezintă o problemă și în țara noastră. Fără a minimiza într-un mod voit rolul Parlamentului, acesta rămâne prins în propria

agendă, în timp ce Guvernul este obligat să ia decizii, de multe ori, fără să mai aștepte opinii elaborate ale Parlamentului. Din acest punct de vedere, rolul parlamentelor naționale trebuie consolidat, iar acest lucru s-ar putea realiza prin intermediul Comisiilor pentru afaceri europene de la nivelul statelor membre. Una peste alta, Comisiile pentru afaceri europene reprezintă un pol de putere și decizie datorită Protocolului anexat Tratatului de la Lisabona. Mecanismele instituționale și parlamentare aduc aceste Comisii într-un circuit european, în care cu adevărat se iau decizii, astfel încât pe viitor, Comisiile pot deveni generetoare de legislație și decizii.

4. STUDIU DE CAZ:
DIRECTIVA LUCRĂTORILOR DETAȘAȚI

Tratatul de la Lisabona a consolidat rolul parlamentelor naționale în procesul decizional al UE, prin crearea sistemului de avertizare timpurie. Principiul subsidiarității, controlat prin mecanismul de alertă timpurie este instrument cheie la nivelul UE pentru legislative, care pot astfel să aibă un cuvânt de spus în procesul de elaborare a legislației UE. Astfel, parlamentele și-au luat în serios rolul de a emite avize motivate care se opun proiectului legislativ al Comisiei Europene în domenii de competență neexclusivă, atunci când acest lucru este considerat mai bine realizabil la nivel național. În acest sens, cel mai bun exemplu este propunerea Comisiei Europene de modificare a Directivei 96/71/CE privind detașarea lucrătorilor în cadrul prestării de servicii, când 11 parlamente naționale emit avize motivate cu privire la încălcarea principiului subsidiarității și declanșează cel de-al treilea cartonaș galben.

În 2014, a fost adoptată Directiva 2014/67/UE (așa-numita „directivă privind asigurarea respectării aplicării Directivei 96/71/CE"). Scopul său este să sprijine aplicarea practică a normelor privind detașarea lucrătorilor prin abordarea unor probleme legate de fraudă, de eludarea normelor și de schimbul de informații între statele membre. În mod concret, această directivă: sensibilizează într-o mai mare măsură lucrătorii detașați și întreprinderile cu privire la drepturile și obligațiile lor; îmbunătățește cooperarea dintre autoritățile naționale responsabile de detașarea lucrătorilor; abordează problema întreprinderilor de tip „cutie poștală" care utilizează detașarea ca modalitate de a eluda legea; definește responsabilitățile statelor membre în ceea ce privește verificarea respectării normelor privind detașarea lucrătorilor; stabilește cerințe pentru întreprinderile care detașează lucrători, cu scopul de a facilita transparența informațiilor și efectuarea inspecțiilor; abilitează sindicatele,

precum și alte părți, să depună plângeri și să întreprindă acțiuni juridice și/sau administrative împotriva angajatorilor care detașează lucrători, în cazul în care drepturile acestora nu sunt respectate; asigură aplicarea efectivă a sancțiunilor administrative și colectarea amenzilor în statele membre în cazul nerespectării cerințelor impuse de legislația UE privind detașarea lucrătorilor. Directiva pune la dispoziția autorităților naționale instrumente eficace pentru a face distincția între detașările reale și abuzuri sau eludări ale legii[18].

Propunerea de revizuire a Directivei detașării lucrătorilor în cadrul prestării de servicii a generat luări de poziții dintre cele mai diverse, uneori chiar adverse, constituindu-se ad-hoc două tabere, inclusiv la nivel de stat. Austria, Belgia, Franța, Germania, Luxemburg, Țările de Jos și Suedia au semnat o scrisoare comună prin care au solicitat sprijin pentru modernizarea directivei privind detașarea lucrătorilor. O poziție diametral opusă au exprimat Bulgaria, Republica Cehă, Estonia, Ungaria, Lituania, Letonia, Polonia, Slovacia și România care, tot printr-o scrisoare comună au susținut că o revizuire a Directivei din 1996 este prematură și și-au exprimat îngrijorarea în ce privește faptul că principiul remunerației egale pentru aceeași muncă ar putea fi incompatibil cu piața unică, deoarece diferențele de salarizare constituie un element legitim al avantajului competitiv pe care îl au prestatorii de servicii. Prin urmare, lucrătorii detașați ar trebui să intre în continuare sub incidența legislației statului membru de origine în ceea ce privește securitatea socială și nu ar trebui să se ia nicio măsură pentru revizuirea legăturilor dintre detașarea lucrătorilor și coordonarea securității sociale în acest sens[19].

După cum am spus, conform principiului subsidiarității, UE intervine numai în măsura în care obiectivele actelor preconizate nu pot fi realizate în mod satisfăcător de către statele membre. Parlamentele naționale verifică respectarea principiului subsidiarității prin mecanismul de alertă timpurie. Conform acestei proceduri („alerta timpurie" *ex ante*), în termen de opt săptămâni de la data transmiterii unui proiect de act legislativ, orice parlament național poate adresa președinților Parlamentului European, al Consiliului și, respectiv, al Comisiei un aviz motivat în care să expună motivele pentru care consideră că proiectul în cauză nu este în conformitate cu principiul subsidiarității. Atunci când un aviz motivat este susținut de cel puțin o

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[18] Daniela Șerban, „Fișă de Informare – Directiva 96/71 privind detașarea lucrătorilor în cadrul prestării de servicii", *Camera Deputaților*, 13.03.2016, http://www.cdep.ro/afaceri_europene/ afeur/2016/fi_1981.pdf.

[19] Ilie Dumitru, „Detașarea lucrătorilor în Uniunea Europeană, între realitate juridică și demagogie politică", în *Revista Universul Juridic*, Nr. 9, (2017): 36–49.

treime din voturile atribuite parlamentelor naționale (un vot pentru fiecare cameră în parlamentele bicamerale și două voturi pentru parlamentele unicamerale), proiectul trebuie reexaminat („cartonaș galben").

Pornind de la acest drept, cele 11 parlamente au declanșat al treilea cartonaș galben, însă Comisia Europeană susține că propunerea nu încalcă principiul subsidiarității și menține propunerea inițială. Această abordare a Comisiei cuprinde două critici. În primul rând, această scurtă declarație este mai mult o desființare unilaterală a unei obligații de a justifica respectarea subsidiarității, decât o analiză aprofundată a tuturor opțiunilor disponibile pentru atingerea obiectivelor acțiunii. În al doilea rând, în loc să furnizeze o analiză de fond substanțială a subsidiarității, susținută de date comparative, Comisia adoptă o poziție pur tehnică, bazată pe forma actului juridic aflat la îndemână[20]. Desigur, Direcția Generală pentru Ocuparea Forței de Muncă, Afaceri Sociale și Incluziune a Comisiei a comandat un studiu de specialitate privind sistemele de stabilire a salariilor și ratele minime de remunerare, dar acesta nu a abordat în niciun fel chestiunea subsidiarității. Prin urmare, Comisia nu a îndeplinit cerințele prevăzute în Protocolul privind subsidiaritatea, care îi obligă să prezinte o declarație detaliată de evaluare a impactului financiar al acțiunii propuse, însoțită de indicatori calitativi și cantitativi, conform cărora acțiunea UE este mai eficientă și că acțiunea internă este insuficientă. Comisia nu și-a îndeplinit obligația de „a face posibilă evaluarea respectării principiilor subsidiarității și proporționalității"[21]. Considerăm că acestă situație oferă un motiv suficient pentru ca orice cameră parlamentară națională să sesizeze Curtea Europeană de Justiție pentru încălcarea principiului subsidiarității. Într-un mod informal, eșecul de a lua în considerare în mod adecvat principiul subsidiarității este în contradicție cu promisiunea electorală a președintelui Comisiei, Jean-Claude Juncker, și al prim-vicepreședintelui, Frans Timmermans, către un dialog mai profund cu parlamentele naționale , în special în materie de subsidiaritate.

Considerăm că poziția parlamentelor naționale ar trebui luată și mai mult în considerare de către Comisia Europeană. Aceasta ar trebui să ia în considerare propunerile primite din partea legislativelor statelor membre, cu atât mai mult atunci când este ridicat cartonașul galben. În cadrul reuniunii COSAC, intitulată „Întărirea rolului parlamentelor naționale în Uniunea Europeană", Ana Birchall, viceprim-ministrul pentru implementarea parteneriatelor strategice, a susținut că suspendarea avansării acestei propuneri, în paralel cu un efort de dialog direct și discuții directe cu toate

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[20] Davor Jančić, *National Parliaments After the Lisbon Treaty and the Euro Crisis, Resilience or Resignation?, (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017): 303.

[21] *Ibid.,* 304.

cele 11 parlamente naționale, astfel încât la finalul acestor discuții să se vină cu o variantă de compromis îmbunătățită față de actuala variantă, care să includă și să reprezinte și criticile și observațiile transmise, ar fi fost un exemplu de o mult mai bună și mai transparentă cooperare între Comisia Europeană și legislativele din cele 11 state membre[22]. De asemenea, reprezentanta României a subliniat că reinstaurarea încrederii în proiectul european și între statele membre și Comisia Europeană este critică, și din acest punct de vedere este esențial ca opiniile parlamentelor naționale să fie luate în considerare mult mai mult pe viitor și ca vocea acestora sa fie mult mai auzită și mai respectată, mai ales dacă ținem cont că ea reprezintă vocea cetățenilor.

CONCLUZII

Una dintre cele mai stringente probleme plasată pe agenda post-Nisa este rolul parlamentelor naționale în angrenajul decizional al Uniunii Europene. Aceasta presupune evaluarea sistemului politic al Uniunii Europene în sens larg și căutarea căilor de întărire a rolului parlamentelor nationale în diferitele faze ale procesului de luare a deciziilor la nivelul Instituțiilor Europene. Dezbaterea cu privire la rolul parlamentelor naționale nu poate evita problema legitimității democratice a deciziilor politice la nivel european și felul în care se poate realiza aceasta în mod concret. Consolidarea dimensiunii parlamentare, atât la nivel national, cât și la nivel european, este destinată să aducă un aport consistent în legitimarea democratică a procesului politic de luare a deciziilor. Prezentul demers științific a subliniat că, deși chestiunea implicării parlamentelor naționale în afacerile europene continuă să fie de o importanță critică pentru democratizarea proceselor decizionale de la nivel european, Tratatul de la Lisabona a rezolvat doar parțial această problemă. În prezent se depun eforturi pentru a rezolva problema consolidării rolului parlamentelor naționale în circuitul European, într-o manieră unitară la nivelul UE, deoarece există deja o serie de bune practici în statele membre care ar putea fi generalizate.

Reforma Uniunii Europene ar putea aduce noi modalități de participare a parlamentului la luarea deciziilor la nivelul UE. Dintre cele cinci scenarii luate în considerare acum, scenariul de reformă 'Doing less more efficiently' este strâns legat de principiul subsidiarității, având în vedere asocierea acestuia cu ideea delimitării competențelor

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[22] Ana Birchall, „Întărirea rolului parlamentelor naționale în Uniunea Europeană", lucrare prezentată în cadrul conferinței *Conferința Organelor parlamentare Specializate în Afaceri Comunitare și Europene ale parlamentelor Uniunii Europene*, 14–15 noiembrie 2016, Bratislava.

în cadrul diferitelor niveluri de guvernare. Însă, contururile precise ale reformei ce va trebui întreprinse sunt departe de a fi clare, iar experiența actuală de aplicare a principiului subsidiarității poate oferi mai puțină claritate. Analizele modeste, ambiguitatea privind viabilitatea principiului subsidiarității în contextul acestui scenariu, nu pot decât să consolideze această viziune pesimistă asupra consolidării rolului parlamentelor naționale, exceptând cazul în care susținătorii săi oferă o soluție corectă pentru modul în care trebuie luate decizii cu privire la domeniile în care statele membre trebuie să coopereze mai eficace și cele în care acțiunea UE rămâne esențială.

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INTEGRAREA PERSOANELOR SURDE ȘI A DEFICIENȚILOR DE AUZ LA NIVELUL UNIUNII EUROPENE ȘI STATELOR UNITE ALE AMERICII

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ABSTRACT

Lucrarea de față reprezintă un punct de vedere asupra problematicii referitoare la evoluția integrării persoanelor surde în contextul actual al relațiilor internaționale, luând în considerare ceea ce reprezintă „American Sign Langauge" în limbajul semnelor americane, respectiv unul dintre cele mai puternice simboluri, un factor important al identității culturale și lingvistice în cazul persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz. Așadar, lucrarea de față își propune să analizeze modele de bune practici în promovarea egalității de șanse, eliminarea faptelor de discriminare, principii de care ar trebui să beneficieze toate persoanele cu dizabilități auditive, știut fiind faptul că munca, atât individuală, cât și cea într-o echipă presupune colaborare și comunicare eficientă în fața persoanelor auzitoare. Abordând tema de cercetare „Integrarea persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz în contextul Uniunii Europene și în Statelor Unite ale Americii" îmi propun să contribui la procesul dezvoltării limbajului semnelor simbolice, fenomenelor istorice pentru a susține, pe plan cultural, ideile promovate de această inițiativă deoarece, reprezintă un aspect foarte important în comunicarea destinată persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz.

Cuvinte cheie: *deficienți de auz, surzi, integrare, politici publice, modele bune practici, limbajul semnelor americane, limbajul semnelor românești*

INTRODUCERE

Interesul cercetării de față a pornit de la analiza culturii și lingvisticii în limbajul semnelor internaționale și urmărește să analizeze modele de bune practici în integrarea persoanelor cu deficiențe de auz în Uniunea Europeană și Statele Unite ale Americii. O atenție aparte va fi acordată Universității Gallaudet și instituțiilor publice și juridice și organizațiilor internaționale neguvernamentale ale surzilor.

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Prezentul demers urmărește cum, prin măsuri de politica publică, pot fi generate oportunități de dezvoltare pentru persoanele surde și cu deficiențe de auz a comunicării atât în limbajul semnelor americane, internationale, cât și în cele românești. Prin urmare, în vederea realizării obiectivelor de cercetare propuse, prezentul studiu urmărește să răspundă următoarelor întrebări de cercetare: în ce măsură se regăsesc elemente de luptă împotriva discriminării la locul de muncă, în limbajul semnelor, cum poate contribui Strategia europeană pentru persoanele cu dizabilități la îmbunătățirea situației persoanelor cu deficiențe de auz și care sunt bunele practici oferite de experiența americană pentru a crește integrarea socială a persoanelor surde sau cu deficiențe de auz.

1. O STRATEGIE EUROPEANĂ 2020 ÎN DOMENIUL OCUPĂRII FORȚEI DE MUNCĂ, AL EDUCAȚIEI ȘI FORMĂRII ȘI AL INTEGRĂRII SOCIALE PENTRU PERSOANELE SURDE ȘI CU DEFICIENȚE DE AUZ

Obiectivul acestei lucrări este de a prezenta unele acțiuni care ar trebui luate în considerare pentru o strategie europeană 2020 destinată problematicii persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz din Uniunea Europeană și care să conțină prevederi specifice în domeniul ocupării forței de muncă, al educației și formării și al integrării sociale persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz, inclusiv pentru integrarea persoanelor cu dizabilități, în cadrul demersului de operaționalizare a Strategiei Uniunii Europene.

În acest sens, este important de știut că nu există nicio statistică în ceea ce privește numărul persoanelor surde în contextul european, și foarte puține date legate de accesul egal pe piața forței de muncă și de eliminare a discriminării pe motive de dizabilitate, sex și vârstă. Statisticile arată că „16% din populația Uniunii Europene este formată din persoane cu dizabilități, 78% dintre persoanele cu dizabilitati grave nu au acces la piața muncii; rata de inactivitate în rândul acestor persoane este de două ori mai mare decât cea a restului populației, iar rata ocupării forței de muncă a rămas la un nivel cu 20% sub media pentru persoanele fără dizabilități (SOC/363,8)"[1]. Buzducea afirmă că această statistică de 16% din populația Uniunii Europene, presupune măsuri și politici adecvate în vederea integrării pe piața muncii pentru creșterea bunăstării și a eliminării inegalităților sociale și politice a persoanelor cu dizabilități auditive,

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[1]   Doru Buzducea, *Economia socială a grupurilor vulnerabile,* (Iași: Editura Polirom, 2013): 91.

considerându-se că 78% dintre persoanele, cu afecțiuni grave, rămân în afara pieței muncii.

În Uniunea Europeană (UE), există Strategia europeană 2020 pentru persoanele cu dizabilități care a apărut din cauza barierelor în implementarea politicilor și strategiilor. Așa cum arată Cziker: „unul dintre instrumentele care face referire la aceste aspecte este *Strategia Europeană 2020 a Uniunii Europene* care are ca obiectiv eliminarea sau diminuarea barierelor în integrarea persoanelor cu dizabilități prin aplicarea unor măsuri pe opt direcții de acțiune: accesibilitate, participare, egalitate, ocuparea forței de muncă, educație și formare, protecție socială, asigurarea condițiilor de sănătate, acțiune externă"[2]. Cziker a considerat că domeniile menționate au în vedere acordul de integrare a persoanelor cu dizabilități și accesul egal la asistență medicală și socială, inclusiv servicii de sănătate și de interpretare în limbajul semnelor, etc., în consens cu drepturile și liberațile fundamentale a Uniunii Europene și al Convenției Națiunilor Unite, precum și a strategiei „Europa 2020". În acest scop, Europa 2020 înseamnă susținerea promovării persoanelor surde, cât și cu deficiențe de auz în structurile Uniunii Europene a celor mai importante informații legate de aceste persoane, acesta fiind cel mai semnificativ lucru, pentru crearea locurilor de locurilor de muncă, pentru educație, pentru servicii de interpretare în limbajul semnelor gestuale.

Obiectivul principal al Strategiei UE 2020 constă în elaborarea politicilor și legislației europene în practica limbajului semnelor internaționale, sens în care au fost identificate opt domenii de acțiune principale: „*accesibilitate, participare, egalitate, ocuparea forței de muncă, educație și formare, protecție socială, sănătate și acțiune externă*"[3]:

1. Accesibilitate – „*este definită ca fiind posibilitatea oferită persoanelor cu handicap de a avea acces, în condiții de egalitate cu ceilalți, la mediul fizic, la transporturi, la informații și la sisteme și tehnologii ale informației și comunicațiilor (TIC), precum și la alte infrastructuri și servicii. În aceste domenii există încă bariere importante*" – în vederea asigurării nevoilor de interpretariat

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[2] Roxana Elena Cziker, *Analiza calității servicilor oferite persoanelor cu deficiențe senzorale multiple/dizabilități multiple. Cercetare–acțiune de tip participativ*, (București: Editura Mica Valahie, 2014): 103.

[3] Comisia Europeană, *Strategia europeană 2010–2020 pentru persoanele cu handicap: un angajament reînnoit pentru o Europă fără bariere*, Comunicarea Comisiei către Parlamentul European, Consiliu, Comitetul Economic și Social European și Comitetul Regiunilor, COM(2010) 636 final, 15.11.2010, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52 010DC0636&from=RO, 4.
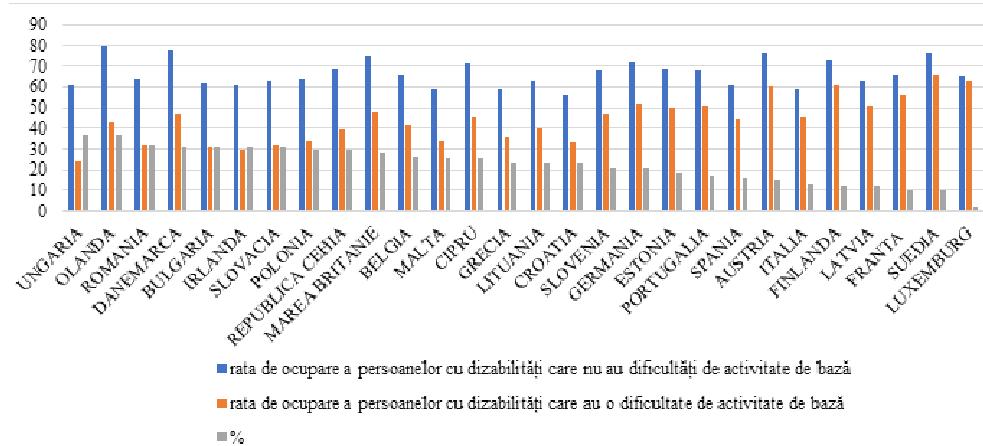
în limbajul semnelor pentru accesul persoanelor surde și cu dizabilități și promovarea egalității de gen și de șanse.

2. Participare efectivă – „*drepturile respective cuprind dreptul la libera circulație, dreptul de stabilire și de alegere a unui mod de viață și dreptul de a participa din plin la activități culturale, recreative și sportive*" – luându-se în considerare promovarea limbajului semnelor românesc, internaționale, precum și a culturii comunității persoanelor surde.

3. Egalitatea de șanse – „*eradicarea discriminării pe motiv de handicap în UE*" – se cere ca în activitățile instituțiilor publice să se promoveze egalitatea de șanse pentru persoanele surde, cât și cu dizabilități (școli, spitale, etc).

4. Ocuparea forței de muncă – „*Posibilitatea pentru mai multe persoane cu handicap de a-și câștiga existența pe piața deschisă a forței de muncă*" – promovarea drepturilor persoanelor surde, cât și a celor cu alte dizabilități de acces pe piața muncii.

5. Educație și formare – „*promovarea unui învățământ favorabil incluziunii și a învățării de-a lungul vieții pentru elevii și studenții cu handicap*" – pentru implementarea acestei direcții de acțiune este necesar ca toate cadrele didactice implicate în actul educațional din școlile speciale să cunoască limbajul semnelor gestuale. De asemenea, de o importanță deosebită trebuie să se bucure și sprijinul acordat formării și perfecționării interpreților profesioniști în limbajul semnelor gestuale.

6. Protecție socială – „*promovarea unor condiții de trai decente pentru persoanele cu handicap*", inclusiv informații traduse, practice, în limbajul semnelor românești: educație, sănătate și cultură, comportament în caz de cutremur și incendiu, comportament în caz de infarct, siguranța pe internet, sfaturi de circulație cu bicicleta în oraș, prevenirea furtului și altele. (sursa: *ANIALMG, 2016*).

7. Sănătate – „*promovarea accesului egal al persoanelor cu handicap la serviciile de sănătate și la infrastructurile care furnizează aceste servicii*" – de asemenea, servicii medicale gratuite (telefonul cu video și interpret în limbajul semnelor gestuale, dacă este nevoie, scutirea taxelor de spitalizare și altele).

8. Acțiune externă – „*promovarea drepturilor persoanelor cu handicap în cadrul acțiunii externe a UE*" – promovarea drepturilor persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz, utilizându-se lingvistica în limbajul semnelor gestuale. Scopul Strategiei Europene 2020 vizează și persoanele surde, cât și pe cele cu dizabilități, respectiv direcții în procesul decizional de luare a deciziilor, în elaborarea politicilor, programelor, acțiunilor și măsurilor, ceea ce presupune recunoașterea limbajului semnelor internaționale.

Se are în vedere promovarea și îmbunătățirea exercitării depline a drepturilor surzilor și a libertăților fundamentale ale persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz și deplina participare la viața comunităților a acestor persoane.

Hogeforster își exprimă opinia în această privință arătând că „deficiența pregătirii necesare o reprezintă lipsa locurilor de muncă adecvate pentru surzi, de asemenea, bariere importante pentru integrarea persoanelor surde pe piața muncii."[4].

Hogeforster consideră că o mare problemă o constituie lipsa locurilor de muncă pentru persoanele surde, cât și cu deficiențe de auz. Instituțiile publice, nu asigură comunicarea în limbajul semnelor cu persoanele surde sau cu deficiențe de auz, ceea ce conduce la o excludere a acestor persoane din viața socială a comunităților.

Graficul 1. *Persoanele surde și cu deficiențe de auz,*
pe tipuri de locuri de muncă din Uniunea Europeană
Sursa: Eurostat, 2015

În structurile Uniunii Europene, numărul de persoane surde angajate este foarte mic, aceasta fiind o situație îngrijorătoare deoarece aceștia își găsesc mai greu locuri de muncă din cauza lipsei interpreților autorizați în limbajul semnelor în limba maternă, și a accesului redus la informații, datorită faptului că cele mai multe persoane surde și cu deficiențe de auz, nu au posibilitatea finalizării studiilor superioare.

România se află pe locul al treilea în Europa, din punctul de vedere al persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz, care nu au găsit niciun loc de muncă sau au dificultăți de angajare.

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4   Max Hogeforster, *Building the socially responsible employment policy in the Baltic States,* (Hamburg: Editura Baltic Sea Academy, 2014): 67.

2. NOI ABORDĂRI: LIMBAJUL
SEMNELOR INTERNAȚIONALE

Cercetările privind limbajul semnelor internaționale reprezintă un concept complex, în primul rând, este extrem de important în caracterizarea persoanelor surde și a deficienților de auz. Prin urmare, cuvântul și limbajul semnelor internaționale constituie o modalitate de comunicare eficientă. Limbajul semnelor internaționale poate fi caracterizat, ca fiind o dimensiune culturală a surzilor, atât în plan personal, cât și în cel profesional.

Cercetările comparative asupra studierii surzilor și deficienților de auz, promovarea diversității lingvistice în limbajul semnelor internaționale, precum și cercetătorii Herreweghe, Meulder și Vermeerbergen au arătat că titlul temei *„de la Erasure la recunoaștere (și înapoi din nou?): în cazul limbajului semnelor flamande".* Trei autori au precizat că un studiu realizat de către cercetător De Clercka arătat că „persoanele surde au primit informații despre învățământul surzilor din Flandra, serviciile pentru surzi, serviciile guvernamentale și organizațiile pentru persoanele cu dizabilități, începând cercetarea științifică cu privire la persoanele surde și limbajul semnelor în regiunea Flandra și organizațiile internaționale pentru persoanele surde, cum ar fi *Federația Mondială a Surzilor (F.M.S.) și Uniunea Europeană a Surzilor (EUD, fostă ECRS – Secretariatul Regional al Comunității Europene).* Cursul F.M.S. și U.E.S are rolul de a încuraja persoanele surde să-și asume responsabilitatea și să participe la structurile și instituțiile guvernamentale existente pentru persoanele surde"[5]. Marschark și Spencer care consideră că nu există nici o discriminare și conflicte de interese între F.M.S și E.U.D. care au primit informații necesare pentru persoanele surde, iar părțile interesate, F.M.S și U.E.S. și alte instituțiile publice și organizațiile neguvernamentale ale surzilor, care vor încuraja cooperarea între statele membre ale U.E. Se apreciază în mod deosebit efortul oamenilor surzi pentru a participa la cursuri de formare profesională și educație. Este cunoscut faptul că și în sfera cercetării științifice se are în vedere domeniul limbajului semnelor internaționale, culturale și lingvistice specifice ale persoanelor surde.

Abia în anul 2004, Helga Stevens, persoană surdă, director la Uniunea Europeană a Surzilor, a fost ales la alegerile parlamentare în Belgia, cu majoritatea voturilor de la persoanele surde: „Helga Stevens, la acea vreme și director al Uniunii Europene a Surzilor, a fost ales drept primul deputat surd în Parlamentul Flamand și datorită

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[5] Marc Marschark, Patricia Elizabeth Spencer, *The Oxford Handbook of Deaf Studies in Language, (*Oxford:Editura Oxford University Press, 2016): 51.

lobby-ului continuu al lui Fevlado, unele partide politice au acordat recunoașterea limbajului semnelor flamande (VGT) în programele lor pre-electorale"[6].

Începând cu anul 2014, Helga Stevens, în calitate de europarlamentar, vicelider al Grupului Conservatorilor și Reformiștilor Europeni în cadrul Parlamentului European. Membra în Comisia pentru libertăți civile, justiție și afaceri interne, Comisia pentru ocuparea forței de muncă și afaceri sociale, și doua delegații, Comisia de cooperare parlamentară UE – Republica Kazahstan, UE – Republica Kârgâzstan, UE – Republica Uzbekistan, UE – Republica Tadjikistan și pentru relațiile cu Republica Turkmenistan și Republică Mongolia, la delegația pentru relațiile cu Peninsula Coreeană.[7]

3. POLITICA ȘI LEGISLAȚIA ÎN LIMBAJUL SEMNELOR INTERNAȚIONALE ÎN CONTEXTUL EUROPEAN

Parlamentul European a publicat un articol se referă la recomandarea 1598 (2003) a Adunării Parlamentare privind protecția limbajelor semnelor în statele membre ale Consiliului Europei: „recunoaște limbile semnelor ca expresie a bogăției culturale a Europei și ca o caracteristică a patrimoniului lingvistic și cultural al Europei"[8]. Uniunea Europeană a Surzilor recunoaște în adunarea Consiliului Europei protecția limbajului semnelor din punct de vedere conceptual, ca fiind o caracteristică a patrimoniului cultural și lingvistic a Uniunii Europene.

Politicile și legislațiile în limbajul semnelor în contextul european reprezintă un proces de integrare a persoanelor surde, cât și a celor cu deficiențe de auz care au loc ca urmare a dezvoltării Uniunii Europene și Națiunilor Unite. Dificultățile legate de instituționalizarea persoanelor surde pornesc de la cunoașterea teoriilor existente într-o logică juridică normală și limbajul drept al semnelor la nivel internațional, cât și amercian. Schembri și Lucas afirmă că cercetatorii Wheatley și Pabsch susțin că au definit foarte bine legislația ca fiind „în afară de declarațiile O.N.U menționate mai sus, instituțiile europene au jucat un rol important în promovarea recunoașterii juridice în limbilor semnelor la nivel internațional (Wheatley și Pabsch, 2010)"[9].

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[6] *Ibid.*, 55.
[7] Helga Stevens, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/ro/125105/HELGA_STEVENS/home, (accesat în data de 22.04.2019)
[8] Nina Timmermans, *The status of sign languages,* Strasbourg,Editura Council of Europe Publishing, 2005, la adresa https://rm.coe.int/16805a2a1a, (accesat în data de 22.04.2019): 23.
[9] Adam C. Schembri și Ceil Lucas, *Sociolinguistics and Deaf Communities,* (Cambridge: Editura Cambridge University Press, 2015): 137.

Așadar, trebuie recunoscut faptul că legislația americană și europeană ar putea să folosească atât limbajul semnelor americane, cât și internaționale. Evident că efectele pozitive ale integrării persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz au la bază respectarea protecției drepturilor pentru persoanele surde. Așa cum se arată, abia în anul 1998: „Parlamentul European a emis o Rezoluție privind limbile semnelor pentru a promova recunoașterea oficială a limbajelor semnelor în statele membre, precum și inițiativele de asigurare a educației și interpretării în limbajul semnelor, printre alte aspecte"[10]. Parlamentul European a notificat că informațiile necesare să o determine să privească rolul persoanelor surde cu privire la implementarea proiectelor de o recunoaștere a valorilor din domeniul limbajului semnelor internaționale. Există asigurarea serviciilor este pus în aplicare acestora, ceea ce presupune o aprobare deplină de către Președintele Parlamentului European, José María Gil-Robles.

În concluzie, se poate argumenta faptul că recomandările făcute de către Parlamentul European cu privire la metodologia de elaborare a implementării unor proiecte de o recunoaștere a limbajului semnelor internaționale, cât și naționale este o acțiune pozitivă. Acest lucru se realizează prin activitatea desfășurată de Asociațiile Naționale ale Surzilor și Federațiile Mondiale ale Surzilor.

4. ABORDĂRI TEORETICE ȘI CULTURALE PRACTICE ÎN LIMBAJUL SEMNELOR INTERNAȚIONALE

Abordarea diversității socioculturale se bazează pe o realitate obiectivă aparținând acestor tipuri de culturi: cultura surzilor și comunicarea lingvistică în limbajul semnelor internaționale, de pe o parte, în sensul de o intervenție specifică a persoanelor surde, de asemenea, afirmarea identității și culturilor surzilor.

Pornind de la analiza elementelor culturale este evident faptul că promovarea acestei diversități lingvistice a avut ca temă, așa cum a arătat Barbu: „*minorități cultural-lingvistice*"[11]. Același autor consideră integrarea persoanelor surde ca o evoluție, care facilitează comunicarea și prin intermediul limbajului semnelor internaționale, pentru minoritatea interculturală și lingvistică a surzilor.

Cercetătorii Davis și Bauman au arătat că identitatea și imaginea teatrului în sine faptul că „de prea multe ori, prejudecățile culturale față de cultura surzilor și defici-

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[10] *Ibid*.
[11] Florea Barbu, *Limbaj gestual: comunicare și interpretare*, (Iași: Editura Lumen, 2010): 67.

ențelor de auz se îmbină cu cele ale multiculturalismului, ambele situri importante pentru gândirea alterității"[12]. Lindgren consideră că multiculturalismul aparține acestei culturi moderne, spre exemplu, persoanele surde și cu deficiențe de auz vor fi invitați să participe la Teatrul, Filmul, Media, Arte Vizuale, dat fiind faptul că limbajul semnelor te ajută să înțelegi rolul imaginarului și al personajului.

În concluzie, consider că este extrem de important teatrul în limbajul semnelor gestuale, vital în viața persoanelor surde, plecând de la cunoștințele despre teatru și scena, acestea ne pot ajuta să ne construim o mai bună colaborare.

5. INTEGRAREA PERSOANELOR SURDE ȘI CU DEFICIENȚE DE AUZ ÎN STATELE UNITE ALE AMERICII

Universitatea Gallaudet (*Gallaudet University*)s-a înființat în anul 1864, se află în centrul capitalei Washington D.C. este o universitate particulară pentru persoanele surde și cu deficiențe de auz, într-o zonă extrem de pitorească, cu vedere minunată. Campusul universității Gallaudet este împărțit cu Școala Elementară de Demonstrație Kendall (*Kendall Demonstration Elementary School*) care funcționează din anul 1857[13]. Fondatori școlii pentru surzi și cu deficiențe de auz sunt americanul Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet și francezul Louis Laurent Marie Clerc[14].

În lumea studenților surzi și cu deficiențe de auz se consideră că misiunea universității este să promoveze și să deruleze activități de cercetare și studiere a persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz și în limbajul semnelor americane și în limba engleză. Așa cum am menționat mai sus, că majoritatea studenților surzi și cu deficiențe de auz în contextul învățământului universitar Gallaudet, consideră că „ambele specializări au aceleași cerințe de bază, dar majoritatea specializărilor în limba semnelor americane se concentrează mai mult pe studiul limbii engleze, atât de competență și lingvistică, în timp ce studiul surzilor se axează pe alte aspecte ale culturii surzilor"[15]. Limbajul semnelor americane va permite determinarea speciali-

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[12] Kanta Kochhar-Lindgren (coord.), *Hearing Difference: The Third Ear in Experimental, Deaf, and Multicultural Theater,* (Washington D.C.:Editura Gallaudet University Press, 2006): 2.

[13] vezi pe larg, Școală Elementară de Demonstrație Kendall, accesat la data de 05.05.2019, la adresa: https://www.gallaudet.edu/kendall-demonstration-elementary-school

[14] vezi pe larg, Universitatea Gallaudet din Washington, D.C., accesat la data 05.05.2019, la adresa: https://www.gallaudet.edu/about/history-and-traditions/150th-anniversary/gallaudet-history

[15] Genie Gertz și Patrick Boudreault, *The SAGE Deaf Studies Encyclopedia, (*Thousand Oaks, California: Editura SAGE Publications, Inc, 2016): 280.

zării în cadrul programelor de limbă engleză, a competențelor lingvistice, în vederea stabilirii domeniului studiilor culturale ale surzilor și a multilingvismului.

Sub aspectul culturii surzilor, în timpul studiilor universitare, oricare ar fi specialitatea și domeniul de studii ales, acestea se realizează în limbajul semnelor americane și în limba engleză.

Cadrele didactice și studenții surzi și cu deficiențe de auz din cadrul Universității Gallaudet vorbesc despre „inimă și sufletul culturii" care este cultura surzilor americane și de faptul că datorită acestei remarcabile culturi: „o inimă a culturii americane pentru surzi, datorită unei lungi istorii și proeminențe ale școlilor, statutul său în secolele XIX și XX a fost ca apărător al manualismului și al limbajului semnelor americane și activismul corpului său pentru studenți și absolvenți"[16]. În fapt, comunitatea incluzivă a universității Gallaudet, în contextul în care a început la mijlocul secolului XX, prin acest relativ manualism și activism al limbajului semnelor americane se preconizează mai degrabă ca un concept cultural.

6. LEGISLAȚIA AMERICANĂ ȘI POLITICA ÎN LIMBAJUL SEMNELOR AMERICANE

Legea americană prevede regulamentul „*Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*" respectiv Legea americanilor cu dizabilități, care asigură anumite drepturi fundamentale ale persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz, cât și cu dizabilități.

Pornind de la serviciile de interpretare în limbajul semnelor americane, legea asigură confidențialitatea și protejarea persoanelor surde, chestiuni ce țin de etica profesională a interpreților autorizați în limbajul semnelor americane: „înainte de a stabili ca mai multor legi cu privire la drepturile persoanelor cu dizabilități, cum ar fi *Actul de Reabilitare din 1973, Actul privind Educația pentru Persoanele cu Dizabilități Americane (IDEA)*, majoritatea persoanelor surde au fost refuzate la accesul la informații în evenimente importante legate de viață, cum ar fi educație, ocuparea forței de munca, serivicii medicale și servicii juridice"[17].

Politicile și legislațiile, într-un astfel, în limbajul semnelor americane poate fi deosebit de util în cazul persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz pentru accesul nelimitat, în general, de la orice instituție publica sau privată.

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[16] *Ibid*.

[17] Tamar Heller, Sarah Parker Harris, Carol Gill, Robert Gould, *Disability in American Life: An Encyclopedia of Concepts, Policies, and Controversies,* (Santa Barbara, California: Editura ABC-CLIO, LLC, Vol. 1: A–L 2019): 606.

7. ASPECTE PRIVIND OCUPAREA FORȚEI DE MUNCĂ ÎN RÂNDUL PERSOANELOR SURDE ȘI CU DEFICIENȚE DE AUZ DIN STATELE UNITE ALE AMERICII

Politica de ocupare a forței de muncă în Statele Unite ale Americii se bazează pe o abordare pozitivă, bazată pe respectarea drepturilor, extrem de benefică pentru sprijinul persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz. Cercetările asupra persoanelor surde și a locurilor de muncă, arată că impactul asupra veniturilor este pozitiv și semnificativ, așa cum arată raportul de activitate de la Centrul Național de Surzi.
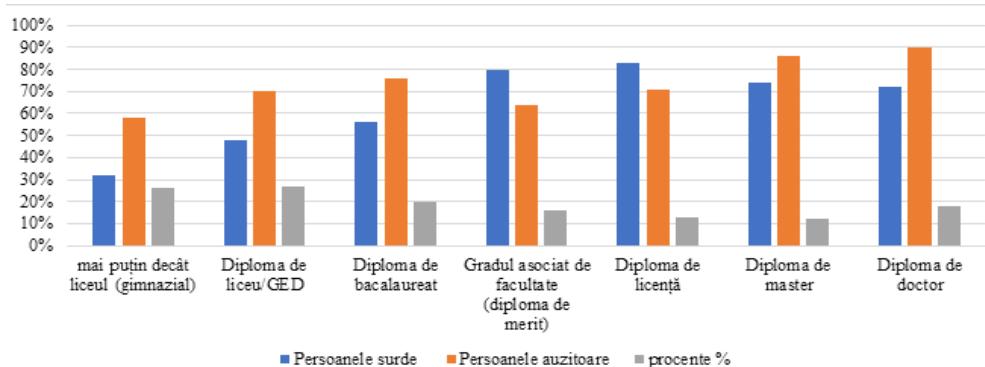
Tabelul 1. *Numărul salariaților pentru persoanele surde și auzitoare și repartizarea lor pe tipuri de angajați pe care orice angajator din Statele Unite ale Americii*

Persoanele surde sunt angajați	Persoanele auzitoare sunt angajați	Salarii pentru surzi pe lunar	Salarii pentru auzitori pe lunar
53.3%	**75.8%**	**$4166,67**	$4158,33

Sursa: National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes, 2019

Cu toate acestea, „ratele de ocupare a forței de muncă și veniturile medii anuale variază foarte mult în cadrul comunităților surzi, la fel ca în cazul populației auzitoare"[18].

Centrul National de Surzi (*National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes*) arată în raportul stabilit că ratele de ocupare a forței de muncă au fost convergente la nivelul Statelor Unite ale Americii și că s-a făcut o evaluare a celor mai bune practici cu venituri medii pentru persoanele surde care sunt la egalitate cu veniturile auzitorilor cu studii superioare.

Graficul 2. *Situația absolvenților în funcție de forma deînvățâmant din Statele Unite*
Sursa: The National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes (NDC), 2019.

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[18] *Ibid.*, 12.

Cu toate acestea, „diferența de angajare între persoanele surde și auzitoare se restrânge pe masura creșterii nivelului de învățământ (*Graficul 2*). Cea mai mare diferență de ocupare a persoanelor surde și auzitoare se găsește în rândul persoanelor care nu au absolvit învățământul liceal (26,3%), iar cea mai mică diferență de angajare se regăsește la persoanele care au diploma de licență (12,8%) sau au diplomă de master (12%)"[19].

Datele de la Centrul National de Surzi (NDC) sunt foarte bine structurate și explicate. Centrul Național de Surzi (NDC) menține legătura cu Asociațiile Naționale ale Surzilor din Statele Unite și cu Universitatea Gallaudet, inclusiv în privința necesarului financiar.

Reprezentanții Centrului sunt domnul avocat Andrew Rozynski, persoana auzitoare, cunoscător al limbajului semnelor americane (ASL), și doamna Sheryl Eisenberg-Michalowski, persoană surdă, ofițer de legătură cu dizabilități auditive de la Centrul „*Eisenberg & Baum Law Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing*" s-a înființat în anul 2011, în localitatea New York City din cadrul Curții Supreme de Justiție a Statelor Unite ale Americii, având drept scopul de a proteja comunității surzilor și cu deficiențe de auz. Centrul are în atenție multe dintre aspectele legate de săvârșirea infracțiunilor privind discriminarea la locurile de muncă, eliminarea barierelor în comunicare, eliminarea falsificării unui interpret autorizat în limbajul semnelor americane, insultarea persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz să-și obțină și să-și apere drepturile pe care le au, combaterea hărțuirii sexuale și a abuzului sexual și altele.[20]

În cadrul Centrului de Drept „*Eisenberg&Baum pentru Surzi și Deficiențe de auz*" se desfășoară activități privind urmărirea penală pentru săvârșirea infracțiunilor de discriminare și crime, precum și cele de investigare a unor fapte sau acte de discriminare, prin Biroul Federal de Investigare (*F.B.I*). Rejudecarea acestor cauze se realizează de către Curtea Supremă de Justiție a Statelor Unite ale Americii.

CONCLUZII

Studiul de față își propune să prezinte importanța pe care o are pentru persoanele surde integrarea socială realizată în mod eficient, pe de o parte și de încurajare a persoanelor surde și cu deficiențe de auz de a-și cunoaște drepturile, pe de altă parte. De asemenea, este important de cunoscut istoria surzilor, cultura surzilor și diversi-

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[19] *Ibid*.

[20] Eisenberg & Baum, LPP, *We Fight for the Rights of Deaf People*, la adresa: https://www.deaflawcenter.com/, (accesat la data 05.05.2019)

tatea lingvistică în limbajul semnelor internaţionale, cadrul actual al relaţiilor dintre activitatea comunităţii surzilor care îşi propune promovarea culturii locale în toate Asociaţiile Surzilor dintr-un context internaţional.

Este important de reţinut faptul că, pornind de la cartea *American Sign Lanuage and International Sign Language*, există posibilitatea de a utiliza oricând este nevoie şi interes, de către profesori universitari, de liceu, cercetători, persoane auzitoare şi altele interesate limbajul semnelor internaţionale, cât şi americane.

De asemenea, studiile ar trebui să cuprindă informaţii referitoare la metodologia de cercetare asupra procesului de integrare a persoanelor surde, precum şi asupra limbajului semnelor în contextul internaţional din perspectiva culturală şi psiholingvistică.

S-a descoperit faptul că mai sunt multe lucruri de îndeplinit, pe linie şcolară, instituţională şi profesională, dar că există perspective de schimbare pozitivă în acest sens, însă ele trebuie făcute cu rapiditate. De asemenea, este imperios necesară elaborarea de strategii promovare a drepturilor surzilor, în special de eliminare a discriminărilor, fie prin structura Uniunii Europene a Surzilor, fie prin colaborare cu Federaţia Mondială a Surzilor şi, într-un context mai larg, cu Universitatea Gallaudet. Aceste strategii de promovare poate contribui la Strategia europeană pentru persoanele cu dizabilităţi în ceea ce priveşte îmbunătăţirea situaţiei persoanelor cu deficienţe de auz.

Pe baza modelelor de buna practică prezentate în acest studiu, limbajul semnelor este decisiv în orice domeniu pentru implementarea şi punerea în practică a drepturilor şi a şanselor pentru persoanele surde, fiind o chestiune extrem de importantă, aceea a studierii situaţiei acestei categorii de populaţie, într-un context al globalizării prin integrare şi oferirea de oportunităţi pentru comunitatea surzilor.

În ceea ce priveşte perspectivele de cercetare viitoare vor fi axate pe valorificarea informaţiilor în limbajul semnelor internaţionale prin intermediul Federaţiei Mondiale a Surzilor, Uniunii Europene a Surzilor, Universităţii Gallaudet, instituţiilor publice şi organizaţiilor neguvernamentale ale surzilor, Asociaţiilor Naţionale ale Surzilor şi Asociaţiilor Naţionale a Interpreţilor Autorizaţi în Limbajul Semnelor.

În concluzie, este deosebit de importantă integrarea în comunicarea cu persoanele surde a limbajului semnelor internaţionale. Din acest punct de vedere, cercetarea a fost realizată având ca temă integrarea persoanelor surde.

Prin urmare, ar trebui să existe parteneriate şi relaţii de cooperare între Uniunea Europeană a Surzilor şi Asociaţiile Naţionale a Surzilor, precum şi cu Asociaţii Naţionale a Interpreţilor Autorizaţi în Limbajul Semnelor şi alte organizaţii neguvernamentale

ale surzilor, să se poate sprijini dezvoltarea educației și culturii, comunicarea în limbajul semnelor românesc, practic, să se realizeze schimb de informații ce pot fi extrem de utile în ceea ce înseamnă protecția socială și o incluziune socială a persoanelor surde.

În acest studiu s-a urmărit elaborarea cadrului lingvistic în domeniul limbajului semnelor internaționale și în domeniul „*Deaf studies*", dat fiind sensul cu totul specializat care îl poate exprima o acțiune posibilă sub toate formele: integrarea socială a persoanelor surde, teoria personalității surde, cultura surzilor, limbajul semnelor gestuale, istoria limbajului semnelor, lingvistica specifică în limbajul semnelor, politica și legislația în limbajul semnelor, interpretare în limbajul semnelor, educație în limbajul semnelor.

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GESTIONAREA AMENINȚĂRILOR HIBRIDE ALE FEDERAȚIEI RUSE LA NIVELUL GUVERNANȚEI UNIUNII EUROPENE. MĂSURI DE COMBATERE ALE PROPAGANDEI ȘI DEZINFORMĂRII RUSEȘTI DE CĂTRE INSTITUȚIILE UNIUNII EUROPENE

Răzvan-Ovidiu CEUCA[*]

ABSTRACT

Cadrul internațional est-european care a dus la declanșarea conflictelor din Crimeea și Donbas din 2014 reprezintă contextul exemplar în care regimul de la Kremlin a reușit să utilizeze într-o manieră unitară și sincronizată capacitățile militare cinetice și capacitățile noncinetice, manifestându-se, totodată, o evoluție în acest sens față de utilizarea lor în contextul evenimentelor din Georgia din 2008. În timp ce în martie 2014 trupele rusești au preluat controlul asupra regiunii Crimeea înainte de a anexa formal peninsula, după ce cetațenii au votat pentru a adera la Federația Rusă într-un referendum local, în raport cu estul Ucrainei Federația Rusă a optat pentru o abordare de prelungire a conflictului prin atragerea populației în conflict și sprijinirea combatanților auxiliari[1]. În acest sens, Uniunea Europeană are de înfruntat un tip de amenințare fără precedent, fapt pentru care se pun următoarele întrebări: Cum se raportează Uniunea Europeană la fenomenul fake news? Care sunt vulnerabilitățile identificate? Care sunt măsurile luate de către Uniunea Europeană pentru combaterea fenomenului? Prin urmare, ne propunem să identificăm, pe baza literaturii de specialitate și a studiului de caz, modalitățile prin care fake news – ca parte componentă a dezinformării active – afectează coeziunea statelor membre ale Uniunii Europene și care sunt măsurile luate de către aceasta pentru a combate acest fenomen.

1. CADRELE TEORETICE RELEVANTE PENTRU RĂZBOIUL HIBRID AL FEDERAȚIEI RUSE

Încercarea de a influența luarea deciziilor politice dincolo de sfera politică proprie nu este un fenomen nou, ci reprezintă o parte integrantă a istoriei geopolitice. În

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[1] Bettina Renz și Hanna Smith, *Russia and Hybrid warfare – going beyond the label* (Helsinki: Kikimora Publications, 2016),4.

ceea ce privește războiul hibrid al Federației Ruse, este necesar să ținem cont de faptul că acesta are o componentă de tip *sharp power*. Spre deosebire de conceptele clasice de *hard power* și *soft power*, conceptul de *sharp power* implică un grad mai ridicat de camuflare decât *hard power*-ul și surprinde natura malignă și agresivă a regimurilor autoritare, spre deosebire de atracția manifestată prin *soft power*. Prin urmare, *sharp power*-ul permite regimurilor autoritare să pătrundă în țesătura unei societăți pentru a amplifica clivajele existente, tocmai în scopul de a proiecta valorile sistemelor autoritare față de publicul țintă (monopolul asupra puterii, controlul de sus în jos, cenzura și loialitatea forțată), manipulându-l prin informații distorsionate. Astfel, oficialii de la Kremlin nu trebuie să convingă publicul țintă din țările democratice vizate că sistemul autocratic rusesc este atrăgător, ci că democrația este mai puțin atractivă[2]. Practic, obiectivul principal al *sharp power*-ului ca instrument politic este crearea de instabilitate în sistemul politic vizat.

Având în vedere o sumă de elemente semnificative, precum nivelul de democrație și de stabilitate în cadrul statelor membre sau eficiența guvernanței la nivelul Uniunii Europene, statele democratice ale căror valori se potrivesc normelor internațional-liberale (pluralismul, drepturile și libertățile fundamentale, statul de drept, ca principii-cheie în cadrul statelor și în cadrul relațiilor internaționale) – putem afirma că acestea își exercită influența contribuind la prevenirea și soluționarea conflictelor, în mod tradițional, acest fapt devenind o variantă mai atractivă. Totuși, influența poate constitui un element ce poate servi și scopurilor de interferență și de destabilizare. În acest fel, unii actori statali văd un mijloc de a-și atinge obiectivele, făcând alți actori, sisteme și valori democratice mai puțin atractive, printr-o serie de instrumente fie mai clare, fie mai estompate, reunite în conceptul de *sharp power*[3]. Astăzi, mass-media și rețelele sociale combină vechile canale de transmiterea informației cu noi mijloace electronice de diseminare, permițând mesajelor (potențial distrugătoare) să se răspândeasc ă instantaneu. Dezinformarea poate fi și este combinată cu alte instrumente de natură hibridă de tip „toolbox" pe care statele cu regimuri autoritare tind să le aiba la îndemână. În ultimii ani, conștientizarea în cadrul comunității de cercetare a

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2   Christopher Walker și Jessica Ludwig, „The Meaning of Sharp Power. How Authoritarian States Project Influence," *Foreign Affairs*, 16 noiembrie 2017, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2017-11-16/meaning-sharp-power (accesat la data de 2.05.2019).

3   Joseph S. Nye Jr, „How Sharp Power Threatens Soft Power. The Right and Wrong Ways to Respond to Authoritarian Influence", *Foreign Affairs*, 24 ianuarie 2018, https://www.foreign affairs.com/articles/china/2018-01-24/how-sharp-power-threatens-soft-power (accesat la data de 2.05.2019).

dezinformării online, adresată actorilor statali, a crescut în întreaga lume, aceasta căpătând o importanță mult mai mare în contextul referendumului asupra menținerii Regatului Unit în Uniunea Europeană și al alegerilor prezidențiale din S.U.A. în 2016. Cu toate acestea, însă, amenințările hibride non-militare nu se limitează doar la procesele democratice din cadrul Uniunii Europene, însă, odată cu anul 2014, Uniunea Europeană a ajuns să reprezinte o țintă de o importanță primară pentru propaganda și atacurile cibernetice inițiate de către regimul de la Kremlin.

De aceea, în cadrul literaturii de specialitate, mai mulți autori au studiat și au teoretizat fenomenul războiului hibrid, atât din încercarea de a găsi cauzele principale favorizatoare declanșării lui, în special după crizele din Crimeea și Ucraina, cât și din încercarea de a găsi modalități de combatere ale acestuia de către actorii amenințați sub toate aspectele. Astfel, cel mai relevant autor pentru această problemă de cercetare este Frank G. Hoffman, fiind, totodată, și cel care inițiază acest concept pentru a desemna diferite moduri de luptă care includ capacități convenționale, dar și neregulate precum acțiuni teroriste, discriminarea, violența, constrângerea și dezordinea criminală, toate acestea fiind conduse de state sau chiar actori non-statali, scopul colaborării și coordonării acestora fiind obținerea unui efect de sinergie în dimensiunea fizică și psihologică a conflictului[4].

Un alt autor la fel de semnificativ pentru această dezbatere este Mark Galeotti. Acesta discută despre relevanța serviciilor de informații ale Federației Ruse precum și despre modul de acțiune al acestora în contextul „războiului hibrid". De asemenea, la nivel organizațional, autorul descrie modul în care „hidra lui Putin" își desfășoară activitatea. Astfel, atributul principal al serviciilor de informații rusești este cel de promovare a intereselor geopolitice, printr-o campanie activă și agresivă care folosește următoarele modalități de acțiune: acțiuni de subversare și destabilizare ale guvernelor europene, atacuri asupra inamicilor politici, implicații ale altor instituții și indivizi în operațiuni, crearea unui climat de frică și de haos menit să submineze dorințele politice și publice, lansarea de atacuri cibernetice, discreditarea unor indivizi sau grupuri de indivizi și interferarea cu fluxul liber de informații[5]. În ceea ce privește modul în care comunitatea de securitate și intelligence este structurată, aceasta este împărțită în următoarele servicii: F.S.B. (Serviciul Federal de Securitate al Federației

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[4]   Frank G. Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars*(Arlington: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007),7.

[5]   Mark Galeotti, *Putin's Hydra: Inside Russia's Intelligence Services* (Londra: European Council on Foreign Relations, 2016),1.

Ruse), G.R.U. (Directoratul Principal de Spionaj), S.V.R. (Serviciul de Informații Externe) și F.S.O. (Serviciul Federal de Securitate)[6].

În raport cu interferarea cu fluxul liber de informații, Peter Pomerantsev și Michael Weiss explică modalitățile prin care regimul de la Kremlin face acest lucru prin intermediul unor „arme"[7], adică al utilizării informației, a ideilor și a culturii drept arme politice pentru a-și atinge interesele în raport cu Uniunea Europeană[8]. Astfel, informația ajunge să fie utilizată ca armă pentru a distruge „hegemonia asupra informației" a Occidentului, întrucât regimul Putin merge pe ideea conform căreia adevărul poate fi exploatat și realitatea maleabilizată în așa fel încât să răspândească cât mai multă propagandă bazată pe teorii conspiraționiste[9]. În ceea ce privește utilizarea ideilor și a culturii, acest element se bazează pe un spectru de influență mai vast, care vizează atât cetățenii europeni, cât și factorii de decizie politică din statele membre ale Uniunii Europene. Prin urmare, scopul Kremlinului este acela de a utiliza cultura și ideile drept instrumente de divizare a coeziunii europene, de corupere a gândirii cetățenilor europeni și cooptarea cât mai multor adepți[10], utilizând atât diaspora rusă din spațiul ex-sovietic, cât și ONG-urile afiliate Moscovei[11]. Totuși, la nivel ideologic, autorii afirmă că regimul lui Vladimir Putin manifestă o abordare fluidă pentru promovarea diferitelor interese: pe de o parte, este vorba de susținerea acordată naționaliștilor de extremă dreaptă care sunt seduși de narațiunile anti-Uniunea Europeană, iar, pe de altă parte, este vorba de extremiștii de stânga care sunt atrași de narativul luptei împotriva hegemoniei Statelor Unite ale Americii[12].

În ceea ce privește războiul informațional raportat la dorința Uniunii Europene de a include și Ucraina pe lista statelor membre prin Acordul de Asociere din 2014, Federația Rusă vede opinia publică în masă drept o arenă crucială a politicii globale, în care puterile rivale lucrează prin diverse modalități la subminarea reciprocă, pentru a-și atingere propriile interese pe seama altora[13]. Astfel, autorii explică cauzele utilizării

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[6] *Ibid*.,3.
[7] "Weaponization of information".
[8] Peter Pomerantsev și Michael Weiss,*The Menace of Unreality: How the Kremlin Weaponizes Information, Culture and Money* (New York: The Interpreter,2014), 14.
[9] *Ibid*., 15–16.
[10] *Ibid*.,18.
[11] *Ibid*., 19.
[12] *Ibid*., 19.
[13] Stephen Hutchings și Joanna Szostek, „Dominant Narratives in Russian Political and Media Discourse during the Ukraine Crisis", în *Ukraine and Russia: People, Politics, Propaganda and Perspectives*, eds. Agnieszka Pikulicka și Richard Sakwa (Bristol: E-International Relations, 2015), 184.

unor narațiuni anti-occidentale, în contextul în care Occidentul optează, conform lentilei geopolitice și propagandistice rusești, pentru o politică externă prea intervenționistă a Occidentului în Ucraina[14]. Ca urmare, Federația Rusă încearcă, prin intermediul războiului informațional, să-și asume rolul de actor cu „valori tradiționale" care trebuie să fie promovate la nivel mondial, pentru a reuși să contracareze influența „malignă" a Vestului pe întreg continentul european[15]. Din punct de vedere al componentei non-militare, Stephen Hutchings și Joanna Szostek se raportează la problema de cercetare pe baza a trei cadre conceptuale relevante: **război informațional**, **planuri dominante** și **narațiuni anti-occidentale**. Primul concept explică modul în care arena politicii globale reprezintă „teritoriul" folosit pentru desfășurarea acestui tip de război, folosindu-se drept mijloace subminarea reciprocă între marii actori pentru a-și susține propriile interese, timp în care se urmărește și influențarea opiniei publice și contracararea amenințărilor la securitatea și suveranitatea statului[16]. Particularizând cazul Federației Ruse, autorul afirmă că unul din scopurile cruciale pe care aceasta le are ar fi gestionarea viziunii mondiale rusești post-Ucraina[17]. În consecință, pentru a-și putea pune în aplicare aceast narativ, Federația Rusă are nevoie de câteva planuri dominante[18], care presupun destabilizarea interferențelor occidentale în lume, în scopul reducerii politicii intervenționiste duse de către Occident, acordarea unui cuvânt Rusiei cu privire la chestiunile de țin de procesul decizional internațional, precum și oportunitatea cooperării Rusiei cu Europa[19]. Pentru a reduce cât mai mult acest intervenționism și această politică occidentală izolaționistă față de Federația Rusă, aceasta se folosește de anumite narațiuni anti-occidentale, precum promovarea Rusiei ca o mare putere europeană, având misiunea de construire a unei națiuni, purtând, totodată, misiunea de a promova standardele mondiale în raport cu propriile valori tradiționale și ortodoxe[20]. Făcând o mențiune asupra celui de-al Doilea Război Mondial, Federația Rusă se folosește, în acest sens, de mitul Marelui Război pentru Apărarea Patriei împotriva fascismului[21].

Tot în strânsă legătură cu războiul informațional al Federației Ruse, al cărui teren de desfășurare s-a regăsit în Ucraina, Maria Snegovaya, în lucrarea sa *Putin's*

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[14] *Ibid.*, 187.
[15] *Ibid.*, 190.
[16] *Ibid.*, 184.
[17] *Ibid.*, 189.
[18] Considerăm acest cadru conceptual ca fiind esențial din perspectiva agendei noastre de cercetare.
[19] *Ibid.*, 187.
[20] *Ibid.*, 189–190.
[21] *Ibid.*, 190.

information war in Ukraine. Soviet origins of Russia's Hybrid Warfare, explică strategiile utilizate în cadrul acestuia și face trimitere la o campanie deliberată de dezinformare, susținută de acțiunile serviciilor de informații, menită sa inducă inamicul într-o stare de confuzie și să-i ofere Rusiei un avantaj strategic la un cost relativ minimal. Prin urmare, scopurile practice ale acestei tactici ar fi fie federalizarea Ucrainei, fie obținerea de către Federația Rusă a acordului de la Kiev în privința acordării unui statut special regiunilor separatiste din estul Ucrainei, Donețk și Lugansk. Desigur, această nouă dimensiune a războiului adaptează vechea tactică sovietică a „controlului reflexiv" la contextul geopolitic contemporan[22]. Pe lângă motivul utilizării mijloacelor non-militare de către Federația Rusă datorită inferiorității militare și economice conștiente în raport cu Occidentul, aceste moduri de luptă inovative vor juca un rol-cheie în atingerea unor obiective politice și strategice. Astfel, operațiunile militare vor fi utilizate doar sub pretextul menținerii păcii, al reglementării crizelor și al convoaielor umanitare, tocmai pentru a obține succesul final în cadrul conflictului[23]. Conceptual, Snegovaya explică problema de cercetare pe baza a trei concepte-cheie: **controlul reflexiv**, **presiunea de putere** și **dezinformarea activă**. Primul concept își are rădăcinile în vechile modalități sovietice de tip hibrid, însă, adaptat la contextul situației din Ucraina, strategia controlului reflexiv merge pe convingerea Occidentului de a face ceva ce liderii ruși și-ar fi dorit și anume să adopte o atitudine pasivă față de planurile Federației Ruse de a dezmembra Ucraina. La nivel tactic, această strategie merge pe operațiuni de negare și înșelăciune (maskirovka), împingerea obiectivelor în zona de conflict, păstrarea legitimității acțiunilor, precum și pe efortul exercitat la nivel global cu scopul formării narațiunilor dorite de Rusia asupra Ucrainei, prin mass-media formală și socială[24]. De asemenea, ca principal instrument folosit, se merge pe ideea „idioților utili", anume acei oameni care susțin ideologiile de stânga, nemulțumiți de integrarea în Uniunea Europeană și de rolul internațional al SUA sau nostalgici după comunism care devin mai susceptibili la propaganda rusească[25]. Cel de-al doilea concept reprezintă o componentă importantă a războiului informațional sovietic, care merge pe tactica prezentării informațiilor false[26], pe influențarea

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[22] Maria Snegovaya, *Putin's information war in Ukraine. Soviet origins of Russia's Hybrid Warfare* (Washington: Institute for the Study of War, 2015), 10.
[23] *Ibid*., 12.
[24] *Ibid*., 8.
[25] *Ibid*., 21.
[26] *Ibid*., 13.

algoritmului de luare a deciziilor de către inamic[27] și pe „trupele de informare" care reprezintă principalul motor al agresiunii militare rusești și care au rolul de a nega în mod constant implicarea Rusiei în diverse operațiuni militare pe teritoriul Ucrainei[28]. În plus, folosindu-se de avantajul său în calitate de observator extern în Ucraina, Federația Rusă folosește „pacea hibridă" pentru a putea să treacă de la operațiuni de luptă convenționale la moduri de luptă non-militare, cum ar fi constrângerea economică cu scopul de a produce o schimbare instituțională în Ucraina. În mod simultan, acoperirea informațională oferă o mai mare flexibilitate și eficiență armatei, prin îmbunătățirea manevrabilității și vitezei răspunsurilor la câmpul de luptă[29]. Folosind cele două strategii expuse mai sus, Federația Rusă se mai folosește de încă un element important și anume de strategia dezinformării active. Aceasta din urmă merge pe tactica ascunderii obiectivelor reale ale Rusiei, pe negarea existenței forțelor militare pe teritoriul Ucrainei, pe acoperirea diplomatică în cadrul operațiunilor militare, menținând, totodată, libertatea de acțiune a Kremlinului, pe confuzarea inamicului[30], precum și pe tactica „distrage și denaturează", prin care organele de presă ale Kremlinului au adus acuze de fascism asupra protestatarilor de pe maidan[31].

În ceea ce privește răspunsul împotriva „interferențelor hibride" din partea unor organizații internaționale precum Uniunea Europeană sau N.A.T.O., Nicu Popescu sugerează o serie de măsuri de combatere – prin prisma conceptelor de **război hibrid și răspuns corespunzăzator** – pecare N.A.T.O. și Uniunea Europeană ar trebui să le adopte în perfectă coordonare, încercând, totodată,să definească noile modalități hibride de război ale Federației Ruse, raportându-se la ceea ce aceasta a moștenit de la vechile metode și tehnici sovietice pentru a obține anumite efecte în zonele sale de interes, fără a folosi, însă, capacitățile convenționale. Astfel, rolul N.A.T.O. în acest context ar fi axat pe dimensiunea militară și de intelligence, ale căror instrumente să fie intervenția armată directă sau descurajarea, în timp ce rolul Uniunii Europene ar fi centrat pe forțele de menținere a ordinii, sisteme de management ale granițelor, agenții anti-corupție, transparență în sectorul energetic, precum și finanțarea partidelor politice[32].

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[27] *Ibid*., 14.

[28] *Ibid*., 15.

[29] *Ibid*., 16–17.

[30] *Ibid*., 10.

[31] *Ibid*., 13.

[32] Nicu Popescu, *Hybrid tactics: neither new nor only Russian* (Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2015), 1–2.

2. COMBATEREA AMENINȚĂRILOR HIBRIDE DE CĂTRE UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ

În cercetarea noastră vom utiliza analiza de discurs a primelor răspunsuri oficiale regăsite la nivelul Uniunii Europene, plecând de la conținuturile regăsite la nivelul primelor configurări de politici în cadrul *Acțiunii Externe* a Uniunii Europene. În acest sens, principale surse primare utilizate rezidă în comunicate ale instituțiilor (Parlamentul European, Consiliul European și Comisia), ale Înaltului Reprezentant pentru Afaceri Externe și Politica de Securitate, precum și ale unor personalități precum Donald Tusk, președintele Consiliului European, prin care erau trasate anumite direcții în ceea ce privește studierea fenomenului de război hibrid și combaterea ulterioară a acestuia. Totuși, acestor comunicate li se mai adaugă și alte briefing-uri realizate de către Serviciul Parlamentar European de Cercetare, având drept scop elaborarea unor cadre teoretice – prin prisma conceptelor de **măsuri active** și **dezinformare activă** – asupra operațiunilor de interferență străină în Uniunea Europeană, precum și asupra utilizării dezinformării în spațiul cibernetic, oferind, totodată, modalitățile principale de răspuns ale Uniunii Europene cu privire la aceste două fenomene.

În discursul oficial al Uniunii Europene, termenul de *hibrid* este tratat și dezbătut drept un termen-umbrelă, acesta făcând referire cu precădere la preocupările și activitățile legate de construirea rezistenței împotriva „radicalizării" islamice și împotriva „extremismului violent" cu lecțiile învățate din acțiunile rusești în Ucraina în ultimii ani. Cele două lait-motive ale discursului Uniunii Europene și practicile emergente privind combaterea „amenințărilor hibride" sunt legate de **comunicarea strategică** și **reziliența**, corelate cu aspecte privind prevenirea, reacția la criză și recuperarea prejudiciilor create de amenințările hibride, care acționează ca scopuri suplimentare. În acest sens, reziliența este definită drept *„capacitatea de a rezista stresului și de a se recupera, în urma acestor de provocări"*[33]. Acest cadru este conceput pentru a favoriza reziliența Uniunii Europene și a statelor membre, precum și a partenerilor împotriva oricăror amenințări de natură hibridă venite din partea unor actori statali sau non-statali. În acest sens, Uniunea Europeană trasează responsabilitățile cu privire la combaterea acestor amenințări față de statele membre, întrucât foarte multe

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[33] European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, *Joint framework on countering hybrid threats: a European Union response. Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council*, JOIN(2016) 18 final, Bruxelles: 6 aprilie 2016, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX: 52016JC0018&from=en (accesat la data de 30.12.2018), 5.

vulnerabilități naționale, valorificate de diferiți actori, sunt specifice pentru fiecare țară membră[34].

Uniunea Europeană și statele membre continuă să se confrunte cu amenințări de natură hibridă din ce în ce mai grave și mai acute, care sunt de tot mai multe forme neconvenționale, cum ar fi radicalizarea care duce la atacuri teroriste, atacuri chimice, atacuri cibernetice sau campanii de dezinformare. Toate aceste acțiuni au un element în comun – destabilizarea și subminarea societății și valorilor europene. În ceea ce privește definirea amenințărilor hibride, *Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă*, cu privire la prezentarea sumară a modului în care Uniunea Europeană a gestionat amenințările hibride la adresa sa, conturează câteva aspecte asupra modului în care una dintre instituțiile Uniunii Europene privesc acest tip de amenințări. Conform autorului, amenințările hibride combină activitățile convenționale și neconvenționale, militare și non militare, care pot fi utilizate în mod coordonat de către actorii statali sau non statali pentru a atinge obiective politice specifice. Campaniile hibride sunt multidimensionale, combinând măsuri coercitive și subversive, utilizând instrumente și tactici convenționale și neconvenționale. Ele sunt concepute pentru a fi dificile de detectat sau atribuit. Aceste amenințări vizează vulnerabilitățile critice și încearcă să creeze confuzie pentru a împiedica luarea rapidă și eficientă a deciziilor. Totodată, amenințările hibride pot varia de la atacuri cibernetice la adresa sistemelor informatice, la întreruperea serviciilor critice, cum ar fi furnizarea de energie sau serviciile financiare, la subminarea încrederii publice în instituțiile guvernamentale și în instituțiile europene și chiar aprofundarea clivajelor sociale[35]. Prin urmare, dacă este să luăm în considerare și modul în care Uniunea Europeană, prin instituțiile cu atribuții în materie de politică externă, privește aceste amenințări, atunci putem să trasăm și câteva direcții de acțiune în materie de combatere. Astfel, conștientizarea, reziliența și răspunsul se află în centrul acțiunii Uniunii Europene. de combatere a amenințărilor hibride. În acest sens, *S.E.A.S.* își îmbunătățește capacitatea de a detecta și înțelege activitățile rău intenționate încă de la un stadiu incipient al acestora. În 2015, spre exemplu, au fost identificate 22 de domenii de acțiune care au vizat următoarele aspecte[36]:

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[34] *Ibid.,* 2.

[35] European Union External Action, *A Europe that Protects: Countering Hybrid Threats*, Bruxelles: 13 iunie 2018, https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/economic-relations-connectivity-innovation/46393/ europe-protects-countering-hybrid-threats_en (accesat la data de 30.12.2018).

[36] *Ibid.*, 2.

- Crearea *Celulei de Fuziune Hibridă a Uniunii Europene* pentru colectarea de informații și intelligence de la statele membre pentru a informa factorii de decizie atât în instituțiile Uniunii Europene, cât și în statele membre;
- Crearea *Centrului European de Excelență pentru Combaterea Amenințărilor Hibride* la Helsinki pentru a efectua analize solide și pentru a organiza cursuri și exerciții pentru statele membre și aliații NATO;
- Furnizarea unei comunicări strategice proactive și optimizarea monitorizării mass-media pentru a combate știrile false;
- Creșterea rezistenței în sectorul energetic prin diversificarea surselor de energie și ale rutelor acestora, precum și promovarea standardelor de siguranță și securitate;
- Luarea de măsuri pentru a preveni perturbarea transporturilor;
- Organizarea exercițiilor în materie de sănătate și protecție civilă la nivelul întregii Uniuni pentru a testa nivelul de pregătire;
- Consolidarea securității informatice în Europa, printr-o gamă largă de măsuri concrete pentru oferirea unui impuls major structurilor Uniunii Europene de securitate cibernetică și capacităților acestora de reacție;
- Combaterea dezinformării online pentru un internet mai sigur, pentru a preveni interferențele în alegeri și pentru a oferi mai multe informații despre Uniunea Europeană și politicile sale;
- Colaborarea cu N.A.T.O. așa cum s-a subliniat în *Declarația Comună de la Varșovia* din 2016[37].

3. MĂSURI DE COMBATERE
ALE PROPAGANDEI ȘI DEZINFORMĂRII RUSEȘTI
DE CĂTRE INSTITUȚIILE UNIUNII EUROPENE

În ceea ce privește domeniul campaniilor de dezinformare și al atacurilor ciber-netice, ca răspuns la campaniile de dezinformare ale Rusiei, s-a creat Grupul de Acțiune Estic StratCom, denumit informal și „spărgătorii de mituri ai Uniunii Europene”, care expune zilnic dezinformarea online a Federației Ruse. După solicitările repetate din partea Parlamentului European pentru a eficientiza aceste măsuri, grupului de

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[37] European Council, *Joint declaration by the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, and the Secretary General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg*, Varșovia: 8 iulie 2016, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/ 21481/nato-eu-declaration-8-july-en-final.pdf (accesat la data de 30.12.2018), 1–2.

lucru i s-a acordat, în cele din urmă, un buget separat de doar un milion de euro pe an. Cât despre securitatea cibernetică a Uniunii Europene, în timp ce recent instituita Cooperare Structurată Permanentă în Domeniul Apărării (P.E.S.C.O.) se concentrează în principal pe investiții în domeniul securității, unul dintre cele 17 proiecte de apărare colaborative – conduse de Lituania și implicând cinci membri ai Uniunii Europene – prevede crearea unor echipe de reacție rapidă în cadrul sectorului cibernetic al Uniunii Europene. În decembrie 2017, s-a înființat o echipă permanentă de intervenție în situații de urgență (CERT-UE), care acoperă toate instituțiile, organismele și agențiile Uniunii Europene, alocând, totodată, 50 de milioane de euro pentru a dezvolta o rețea de competențe informatice care să conecteze entitățile private și publice – inclusiv centrele de cercetare, programele universitare și partenerii industriali – pentru a aborda cel mai bine provocările în materie de securitate cibernetică și pentru a consolida capa-cităţile individuale ale statelor membre[38].

Proliferarea dezinformării – inclusiv a unor știri false care au fost povești fac-tuale – a devenit vizibilă în contextul crizei din Ucraina, câștigând lipsa de integritate ca o provocare globală în timpul campaniei electorale prezidențiale din 2016 a Statelor Unite. În timp ce Uniunea Europeană și Parlamentul European îşi intensifică eforturile de combatere a dezinformării online la începutul alegerilor europene din 2019, echipa „spărgătorilor de mituri" ai Uniunii Europene a fost pusă sub presiune. Fenomenul știrilor false este cel puţin la fel de vechi ca și presa tipărită. Cu toate acestea, media socială și instrumentele de personalizare au accelerat răspândirea zvonurilor și teoriilor conspiraţioniste. Fenomenul a câștigat vizibilitate globală în timpul alegerilor prezidenţiale americane din 2016, când știrile din domeniul științific și din întreagul spectru politic au luat amploare mai mult de pe Facebook decât din media sau din trusturile de presă internaționale[39]. Potrivit dicţionarului Collins, care a ales „fake news" drept cuvântul anului 2017, termenul a cunoscut o creștere a utilizării fără precedent de 365% faţă 2016, în mass-media de la nivel global.

Analiştii subliniază faptul că propaganda rusă contemporană răspunde la eveni-mente, adaptându-se la circumstanţele locale, la naraţiuni și la publicul țării vizate. Mass-media de stat din Rusia, cum ar fi Sputnik și RT, arată puţin angajament faţă de obiectivitate. Drept urmare, știrile diseminate de aceasta au o eficacitate ridicată în convingerea publicului: primele impresii sunt rezistente, însă repetarea creează

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[38] *Ibid*., 10.

[39] Naja Bentzen, „Online disinformation and the EU's response", *European Parliament*. EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service, mai 2018, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/ etudes/ATAG/2018/620230/EPRS_ATA(2018)620230_EN.pdf (accesat la data de 19.02.2018.), 1.

familiaritate, iar familiaritatea duce la acceptare. Mesajele pot fi apoi amplificate de către administrațiile și băncile sponsorizate de Kremlin, precum și de către civilii pro-Kremlin[40]. Narațiunile care nu pot rezona cu țările scandinave pot funcționa bine în Slovacia sau în alte țări cu legături tradiționale lingvistice și culturale mai apropiate de Rusia. Un raport recent al Centrului de Studii Strategice de la Haga arată faptul că, comunicările strategice ale Rusiei au fost *„eficiente în modelarea percepțiilor cetățenilor asupra Uniunii Europene în interiorul Rusiei, atât în țările Parteneriatului Estic, cât și în Uniunea Europeană în sine; în special în rândul vorbitorilor nativi ruși".* În timp ce narațiunile pot diferi de la o țară la alta, analiștii sunt de acord că Moscova încearcă să submineze unitatea europeană, să destabilizeze democrațiile și să înrăutățească încrederea în instituțiile democratice naționale și europene. Acest model a fost repetitiv în cadrul Uniunii Europene: de la operațiunile de influență în perioada premergătoare referendumului din 2016 din Țările de Jos cu privire la Acordul de Asociere al Ucrainei la Uniunea Europeană, acesta a continuat cu atacurile cibernetice pentru a reduce în continuare încrederea în urma votului pentru menținerea Regatului Unit în Uniunea Europeană. Mai mult, acest tipar se regăsește și în promovarea de către mass-media afiliată Kremlinului a problemelor polarizante în timpul alegerilor germane din 2017 și a tensiunilor dintre catalani și monarhia spaniolă din 2018. Comisarul Uniunii Europene pentru Securitate, Julian King, a numit în mod deschis campania de dezinformare pro-Kremlin o „strategie orchestrată" și a spus că *„dezinformarea reprezintă o amenințare serioasă la adresa societății noastre"*[41].

În acest context, începând cu anul 2017, în cadrul instituțiilor Uniunii Europene are loc o intensificare a dezbaterilor pe tema dezinformării promovate de Kremlin în așa fel încât să se recurgă la niște măsuri de combatere eficiente. Prin urmare, în octombrie 2017, Comisia a lansat o consultare publică privind „știrile false și dezinformarea online". De asemenea, a înființat un grup de experți la nivel înalt (HLEG), reprezentând mediul academic, platformele online, mass-media și organizațiile societății civile,[42] unde sunt stabilite și principalele atribuții ale Comisiei Europene în raport cu dezinformarea. Astfel, Comisia sprijină un proces multilateral, care implică platforme, mijloace de informare în masă, cercetare și organizații ale societății civile, pentru a

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[40] Naja Bentzen, „Foreign influence operations in the EU", *European Parliament*. EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service, iulie 2018, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/625123/EPRS_BRI(2018)625123_EN.pdf (accesat la data de 30.12.2018), 3.

[41] *Ibid.*, 4.

[42] Naja Bentzen, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

găsi soluțiile corecte în conformitate cu principiile fundamentale și aplicabile în mod coerent în întreaga Uniune Europeană. Concomitent, a fost subliniat un plan de acțiune pentru intensificarea eforturilor de combatere a dezinformării în Europa și în afara acesteia, concentrându-se pe patru domenii-cheie. Acest plan are rolul de a construi capacitățile Uniunii Europene și de a consolida cooperarea între statele membre, prin îmbunătățirea detectării, printr-un răspuns coordonat la amenințări, prin colaborarea cu platformele și industria online, precum și prin creșterea gradului de conștientizare și a responsabilizării cetățenilor. Planul de acțiune completează comunicatul ***„Combaterea dezinformării online: o abordare europeană”,*** care propune instrumente de auto reglementare pentru a combate răspândirea și impactul dezinformării online în Europa și pentru a asigura protecția valorilor europene și a sistemelor democratice. Prin urmare, patru principii esențiale în acest sens stau la baza ghidării întregii acțiuni:

- **Îmbunătățirea transparenței** în ceea ce privește modul de producere sau sponsorizare al informațiilor și modul în care acestea sunt produse, sponsorizate, difuzate și direcționate, pentru a permite cetățenilor să evalueze conținutul pe care îl accesează online și pentru a descoperi potențialele încercări de manipulare a opiniei;

- **Diversitatea de informații** pentru a permite cetățenilor să ia decizii în cunoștință de cauză, bazate pe gândire critică, prin sprijinirea jurnalismului de înaltă calitate, educație în domeniul mass-mediei și reechilibrarea relației dintre creatorii și distribuitorii de informații;

- **Credibilitatea informațiilor** și promovarea acesteia, oferind un indiciu al fiabilității lor, în special cu ajutorul notificatorilor de încredere și prin îmbunătățirea trasabilității informațiilor și a autentificării furnizorilor influenți de informații;

- **Soluții incluzive cu o implicare largă a părților interesate** pe termen lung care necesită sensibilizarea publicului, o educație mai bună în domeniul mass-mediei, implicarea cât mai multor părți interesate și cooperarea dintre autoritățile publice, platformele online, agențiile de publicitate, notificatorii de încredere, jurnaliști și grupurile media[43].

Un alt aspect important care trebuie luat în considerare îl reprezintă efectul dezinformării asupra publicului de vîrstă tânără european. Datorită interconectivității

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[43] Comisia Europeană, *Comunicare a Comisiei către Parlamentul European, Consiliu, Comitetul Economic și Social European și Comitetul Regiunilor. Combaterea dezinformării online: o abordare europeană,*COM(2018) 236 final, Bruxelles: martie 2018, http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2018/RO/COM-2018-236-F1-RO-MAIN-PART-1.PDF (accesat la data de 3.01.2019), 7.

informațiilor și datorită imensității cu care acestea sunt spamate pe toate platformele de presă și social media, este destul de greu ca acestora să li se acorde o valoare de adevăr. Prin urmare, până la acest stadiu, nu putem ști cu exactitate valoarea de adevăr a unui eveniment despre care s-a vorbit în presă sau în cadrul mediei sociale până nu verificăm numeroase surse care au tratat evenimentul respectiv. Cu toate acestea, din varii motive, tineretul european pare să fie extrem de expus la aceste tactici de dezinformare, acesta fiind principala țintă vizată de către actorii care utilizează știrile precum o armă împotriva tineretului ușor manipulabil. Astfel, pentru Comisia Europeană, dezvoltarea pe tot parcursul vieții a competențelor critice și digitale, în special în rândul tinerilor, este crucială pentru a consolida reziliența societăților noastre la dezinformare. În acest fel, „*Planul de acțiune pentru educația digitală”*, adoptat de Comisie în ianuarie 2018[44], evidențiază riscurile pe care dezinformarea le prezintă pentru cadrele didactice și elevi, precum și nevoia urgentă de a dezvolta aptitudinile și competențele digitale ale tuturor elevilor, atât prin sistemul de învățare formală, cât și prin sistemul de învățare non formală. Cadrul competențelor digitale pentru cetățeni, elaborat de Comisie, stabilește gama largă de competențe de care au nevoie toți elevii, de la educația în domeniul informației și al datelor, până la crearea de conținuturi digitale și siguranța și confortul online[45].

REZULTATELE CERCETĂRII

Amenințările hibride sub forma propagandei și dezinformării reprezintă un element crucial pe agenda politică a Uniunii Europene, la nivelul guvernanței acesteia de către instituțiile acreditate, în special Comisia și Parlamentul European. Scandalul internațional legat de proliferarea fenomenului *fake news* prin intermediul rețelelor de socializare, în special *Facebook* a reușit să tragă un semnal de alarmă pentru Uniunea Europeană cu privire la acest aspect legat de răspândirea știrilor false, pe platformele de socializare, însă primele semnale au fost trase odată cu interferarea Federației Ruse în cadrul campaniei electorale din Statele Unite ale Americii din 2016. În acest context,

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[44] Comisia Europeană, *Comunicare a Comisiei către Parlamentul European, Consiliu, Comitetul Economic și Social European și Comitetul Regiunilor privind Planul de acțiune pentru educația digitală*, COM(2018) 22 final, Bruxelles: ianuarie 2018, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/ RO/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0022&qid=1524587637977&from=RO (accesat la data de 3.01.2019).

[45] European Commission, *The Digital Competence Framework 2.0*, The European Commission's science and knowledge service, Bruxelles: 9 ianuarie 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomp/ digital-competence-framework (accesat la data de 12.01.2019).

Uniunea Europeană a identificat *Facebook* ca fiind cea mai importantă rețea de socializare unde regimul Putin poate acționa cu ajutorul instrumentelor de tip **sharp power**. Prin urmare, un ecosistem informațional performant, liber și pluralist, bazat pe standarde profesionale ridicate, este indispensabil pentru o dezbatere democratică sănătoasă. În acest sens, Comisia Europeană încearcă prin toate mijloacele să instituie în cadrul Uniunii Europene un cadru informațional cât mai facil, la care să aibă acces toți cetățenii europeni, cadru care să reducă cât mai mult interferența cu știrile false răspândite de terțe entități media și care să le ofere cititorilor o transparență și o diversitate informațională cât mai mare. Totuși, în raport cu tacticile aferente **sharp power**-ului, se încearcă mizarea pe un răspuns multidimensional, care prevede demascarea eforturilor de influență ale statelor autoritare precum Federația Rusă, care atentează în mod direct asupra instituțiilor publice naționale și europene, precum și adoptarea unei poziții mai ferme în numele principiilor democratice.

Cu toate acestea, pentru viitoarea agendă de cercetare ca urmare a faptului că dezbaterea teoretică cunoaște noi contribuții, prin conceptul de **interferența hibridă** cu cele trei părți componente ale sale – **diplomația clandestină**, **geoeconomia** și **dezinformarea** – ne propunem să investigăm în ce măsură Uniunea Europeană își adaptează politicile de combatere a fenomenului *fake news*, promovat de multiplicatorii de forțe ai Kremlinului (trolii și boții), mai ales în ceea ce privește protejarea valorilor Uniunii Europene în diferitele state-membre vizate de către dezinformarea regimului Vladimir Putin.

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UN TRIUNGHI PLIN DE TENSIUNE: UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ, REPUBLICA MOLDOVA, FEDERAȚIA RUSĂ, ÎN CONTEXTUL PARTENERIATULUI ESTIC

Ariadna IGNATIUC[*]

ABSTRACT

Lucrarea dată analizează dimensiunea politică a Parteneriatului Estic în Republica Moldova. Alegerea subiectului dat a fost determinată de necesitatea accentuării relației formate între cei trei actori: UE, RM, Rusia, în contextul în care fiecare dintre aceștia manifestă propriile interse în regiune. Este o temă importantă de cercetare care revendică, pe de o parte tratarea obiectivă a influenței componentei politice a Parteneriatului Estic asupra Republicii Moldova, o țară aflată la hotarele Uniunii Europene, care se confruntă cu diverse probleme inclusiv și de ordinul integrității teritoriale, pe de altă parte explică interesele Republicii Moldova de a dezvolta o politică pro-europeană. Prin urmare, princi-palele întrebări de cercetare se vor axa pe motivația Republicii Moldova, precum menționam și mai sus, de a se apropia de Uniunea Europeană, dar și răspunsul Rusiei cu privire la o astfel de politică. Această cercetare va aduce în prim-plan situația Republicii Modova în cadrul Parteneriatului Estic pe plan politic și va oferi o configurație a rezultatelor obținute în conjunctura dată.

INTRODUCERE

Parteneriatul Estic reprezintă un instrument important al Politicii Europene de Vecinătate în contextul în care acesta are rolul de a consolida relațiile Uniunii Europene cu vecinii săi din est. Unul dintre acești vecini este și Republica Moldova care, precum a specificat Înaltul Reprezentant Pentru Afaceri Externe și Politică de Securitate, Federica Mogherini, este un partener cheie al UE în cadrul Parteneriatului Estic.[1]

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[1] *Preliminary remarks by Federica MOGHERINI, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, following the Foreign Affairs Council*, Brussels, 18.03.2019, https://newsroom. consilium.europa.eu/events/20190318-foreign-affairs-council-march-2019/122910-1-press-conference-part-1-20190318, (accesat în 21.03.2019).

Obiectivele primordiale ale cercetării țin de evidențierea aspectelor politice ale Parteneriatului Estic în raport cu Republica Moldova. Astfel rezultatele cercetării vor reflecta influența componentei politice a Parteneriatului Estic asupra Republicii Moldova, adică limitele și resursele de putere ale acestui proiect substanțial realizat la nivelul Uniunii Europene în relația cu Republica Moldova, dar și reacția unui al treilea actor foarte interesat de evoluția conjuncturii date, Federația Rusă, statul care încă își lasă staționate forțele armate în Transnistria, ținând sub control această regiune, amenințând, în acest mod, integritatea teritorială a Republicii Moldova, stat aflat la hotar cu Uniuniunea Europeană.

În dependență, de schimbările la nivel politic care se realizează cu fiecare summit situația dezvoltă o nouă conjunctură, de aceea motivația mea este să cercetez toate aceste implicații politice, încadrându-le într-o dimensiune bine definită.

Metodele de cercetare utilizate de către acest studiu sunt, analiza comparativă și analiza de conținut, pentru că acesta se bazează pe cercetarea comunicatelor de presă ale Ministerului de Externe al RM, ale celui din Federația Rusă și și pe cele emise de instituțiile UE. Astfel datele obținute în urma analizei documentelor oficiale vor fi supuse abordării comparative, pentru a atesta elemente ce le diferențiază sau care sunt comune. Literatura de specialitate consultată de către mine, și anume câteva cărți, documente oficiale și articole reprezintă punctul de la care a pornit procesul de cercetare. Lucrarea este structurată pe patru capitole. Primul prezintă configurațiile politice ale relației dintre Parteneriatul Estic și RM, fixate de UE. Al doilea tratează perspectiva Republicii Moldova asupra Parteneriatului Estic, al treilea pe cea a Rusiei și al patrulea abordează triunghiul politic format între UE, RM și Rusia. Prin urmare, cercetarea dată va construi o imagine de ansamblu asupra situației Republicii Moldova în cadrul Parteneriatului Estic, prin prisma unor elemente specifice.

1. ASPECTELE POLITICE ALE RELAȚIEI DINTRE PARTENERIATUL ESTIC ȘI RM

Uniunea Europeană a dezvoltat Parteneriatul Estic, incluzând și Republica Moldova pentru a se asigura că și în acest stat prin intermediul mecanismului dat va fi instaurată o stare în care să domine democrația și statul de drept. La modul practic, această cooperare regională se realizează la nivel politic, și ea constituie domeniul de interes al acestei cercetări, dat fiind faptul că au loc periodic întruniri între cele două părți, Uniunea Europeană și Republica Moldova.

Voi începe cu faptul că ex-premierul Pavel Filip s-a întâlnit la Bruxelles cu Înaltul Reprezentant pentru Afaceri Externe și Politică de Securitate, Federica Mogherini, în data de 3 mai 2018, când a avut loc și cea de-a patra reuniune a Consiliului de Asociere dintre UE și Republica Moldova. Am urmărit declarațiile celor doi oficiali făcute publice după întrunire, iar analizându-le mi-am dat seama că vocea Uniunii Europene este destul de fermă în ceea ce ține cerințele pe care le înaintează Republicii Moldova cu privire la combaterea corupției și implementerea reformelor în domeniul justiției. De altfel, oficialul european a menționat că pentru Moldova, UE rămâne a fi un „partener" și „un prieten", iar premierul a subliniat acest lucru, specificând că statul pe care-l reprezintă e susținut în continuare de un astfel de partener strategic important.[2] Însă, folosind metoda analizei de conținut am observat faptul că, concluziile la care s-a ajuns în urma discuțiilor din cadrul Consiliului de Asociere, publicate pe site-ul Consiliului demonstrează că Uniunea Europeană e destul de îngrijorată cu privire la situația din Republica Moldova, fiind atinse diverse subiecte precum furtul miliardului, problemele de ordin economic, inclusiv și cele ce țin de garantarea libertății, pluralismului presei.

Ultimul summit al Parteneriatului Estic a avut loc pe 24 noiembrie 2017. Declarația comună a summitului scoate în evidență voința puternică a UE de a susține statele partenere în ceea ce ține „integritatea teritorială, independența și suveranitatea".[3] Totuși, am sesizat că în declarația referitoare la Republica Moldova si nu numai, UE specifică că va monitoriza procesul de implementare a reformelor asumate de către state, fiind destul de hotărâtă în acest sens, dând de înțeles că își dorește ca toate 6 să-și consolideze propriile regimuri democratice. În articolul său, David Rinnert menționează că până în 2013 Republica Moldova era văzută ca „o istorie de succes"[4], fiind înregistrate progrese în procesul negocierilor, ca să se ajungă la semnarea Acordului de Asociere între UE și acest stat în 2014. Același punct de vedere este explicat prin prisma argumentului ce ține de legătura Republicii Moldova cu România și faptul că România a fost mereu avocatul Moldovei în UE[5]. În iunie 2014, a fost

[2] *Relațiile UE cu Republica Moldova*, Bruxelles: Consiliul Uniunii Europene, 2018, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ro/policies/eastern-partnership/moldova/, (accesat în 21.03.2019).

[3] *Summitul Parteneriatului estic, 24/11/2017*, Bruxelles: Consiliul European, 2017, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ro/meetings/international-summit/2017/11/24/, (accesat în 21.03.2019).

[4] David Rinnert, "The Republic of Moldova in the Eastern Partnership from 'Poster Child' to 'Problem Child'?", Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, august 2013, https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id-moe/10184.pdf, (accesat în 25.03.2019).

[5] Roman Petrov și Peter Van Elsuwege, *Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union*, (New York: Routledge, 2014): 160.

semnat și acordul privind Zona de Liber Schimb Aprofundat și Cuprinzător care a pus accent și pe consolidarea statului de drept în Republica Moldova, și pe necesitatea implementării unor reforme care să asigure transparență în justiție, de exemplu.[6] Filipo Celata și Raffaella Coletti menționează importanța dialogului politic și a respectării drepturilor omului[7], fapt care evidențiază configurația lucrurilor din țară în aceste domenii. Observăm că opiniile autorilor coincid. Iar noua conducere din Moldova încearcă să demonstreze că până la momentul de azi instituțiile statului fiind capturate, au fost încălcate drepturile omului și toate principiile democratice, conform cărora un stat ar trebui să funcționeze, au fost neglijate. Specificam mai sus ca până în 2013 Republica Moldova era văzută ca „o istorie de succes", situația s-a modificat brusc după ce s-a aflat despre renumitul furt al miliardului din sistemul bancar moldovenesc. Acest fapt e confirmat și de declarațiile Șefului Delegației UE la Chișinău, Peter Michalko, care a specificat în cadrul unei emisiuni televizate că UE solicită ca cei vinovați să fie pedepsiți, pentru că faptul că nu se face acest lucru „dăunează imaginii guvernării, sistemului de justiție".[8]

UE a fost în raport cu Republica Moldova dură în declarații odată ce Parlamentul de la Chișinău a adoptat sistemul electoral mixt, aspect demonstrat de o declarație comună a Înaltului Reprezentant pentru Afaceri Externe și Politică de Securitate, Federica Mogherini, și Comisarului European pentru Politica Vecinătății și Negocieri de Extindere, Johannes Hahn[9]. „Votul de joi al Parlamentului Republicii Moldova în vederea implementării de schimbări în sistemul electoral al țării contravine direct recentelor recomandări al Comisiei de la Veneția și Oficiului OSCE pentru Instituții Democratice și Drepturile Omului", se accentuează în declarație. Totodată, oficialii europeni declară: „În timp ce este dreptul suveran al statului să-și aleagă un sistem electoral, Uniunea Europeană consideră cu tărie că orice schimbare a sistemului electoral trebuie să întărească democrația, să fie bazată pe un consens larg între forțele

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[6] Tina Freyburg, Sandra Lavenex, Frank Shimmelfennig, Tatiana Skripka și Anne Wetzel, *Democracy Promotion by Functional Cooperation. The European Union and its Neighbourhood,* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015): 88.

[7] Filipo Celata și Raffaella Coletti, *Neighbourhood Policy and the Construction of the European External Borders*, (London: Springer, 2015): 47.

[8] Emisiunea În Profunzime cu Lorena Bogza, invitat: ambasadorul UE la Chișinau, Peter Michalko, 13.09.2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1kAuyGWRFk, (accesat în 25.03.2019).

[9] European External Action Service, „Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini and Commissioner Johannes Hahn on the amendments to the electoral legislation in the Republic of Moldova", Comunicat de presă, 21.07.2017, https://eeas.europa. eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/30221/statement-hrvp-mogherini-and-commissioner-hahn-amendments-electoral-legislation-republic_en, (accesat în 25.03.2019).

politice, să aibă loc în urma unei consultări veritabile a societății civile și a recomandărilor partenerilor internaționali", mesajul fiind destul de clar explicat autorităților de la Chișinău.

Prin intermediul acestei declarații pot fi percepute limitele de putere ale UE în raport cu Republica Moldova, utilizând în calitate de instrument Parteneriatul Estic, e de fapt și cazul celorlalte 6 state membre. Astfel UE nu se poate implica în politica internă a statului, poate oferi doar recomandări, pe care eu le-aș încadra în lista resurselor de putere. Recent pe 24 februarie au avut loc alegerile în conformitate cu noul sistem și UE și-a exprimat punctul de vedere iarăși prin vocea domnului Peter Michalko referitor la corectitudinea lor, dând de înțeles în cadrul unei intervenții televizate că toate acele nereguli, care au fost sesizate de catre observatorii internaționali, trebuie investigate de autorități.[10]

În acest capitol, am tratat perspectiva Uniunii Europene asupra Republicii Moldova, nuanțând câteva contexte importante pentru statul dat. Îl voi finaliza, evidențiind principalele preocupări ale Comisiei pentru afaceri externe, specificate în Raportul referitor la punerea în aplicare a Acordului de Asociere UE-Moldova, publicat în octombrie 2018 [11], acestea fiind legate de statul de drept și de independența justiției, dar și de monopolizarea pieței mass-media. Până la urmă din 2013, până în 2019 s-au schimbat multe, inclusiv și Republica Moldova „a evoluat" dintr-o poveste de succes sau dintr-un „copil ascultător", în unul „problematic."[12] Totuși, schimbările politice recente din Republica Moldova nu ar fi fost posibile cu siguranță fără susținerea partenerilor europeni acordată guvernului format după alegerile parlamentare, din februarie 2019.

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[10] Emisiunea In PROfunzime cu Lorena Bogza, invitat: Ambasadorul Uniunii Europene la Chisinau, Peter Michalko, 22.03.2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lI8U01JuYe4, (accesat în 25.03.2019).

[11] *Raport referitor la punerea în aplicare a Acordului de asociere UE–Moldova*, Bruxelles: Parlamentul European, Comisia pentru afaceri externe, 2018, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2018-0322_RO.html?redirect, (accesat în 25.03.2019).

[12] David Rinnert, "The Republic of Moldova in the Eastern Partnership from 'Poster Child' to 'Problem Child'?", Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, august 2013, https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id-moe/10184.pdf, (accesat în 25.03.2019).

2. DIRECȚIA PRO-EUROPEANĂ
A REPUBLICII MOLDOVA ȘI REACȚIILE RM
LA DECLARAȚIILE OFICIALILOR EUROPENI

Acest capitol, precum sugerează și denumirea sa, va prezenta inițial conceptul de politică „pro-europeană" abordat la un moment dat de Republica Moldova și totodată va aduce în prim-plan răspunsurile autorităților de la Chișinău la întrebările adresate de cei de la Bruxelles. Acest concept a început să fie tot mai mult utilizat după evenimentele din aprilie 2009, care s-au desfășurat sub însemnul unei revoluții contra unui regim „autoritar" [13], manifestațiile demonstrând nemulțumirea oamenilor care au ieșit să protesteze în centrul Chișinăului împotriva Partidului Comunist ce tocmai câștigase alegerile într-un mod fraudulos, în opinia lor. Astfel a început să fie mediatizat conceptul de „Europa", iar în 2014 a fost semnat și Acordul de Asociere cu UE. Atunci, premierul Iurie Leancă declara că evenimentul este unul istoric, care va aduce multe beneficii pentru cetățeni[14].

Cu toate acestea, cercetarea nu are ca reper analiza întregului parcurs din 2009, până în 2014, în schimb își propune, aplicând analiza comparativă să reflecte diferențele apărute între părerile autorităților de la Chișinău și ale UE referitoare la pașii pe care Republica Moldova trebuie să-i întreprindă mai departe, pentru a se dezvolta. De exemplu, așa cum a fost menționat anterior, schimbarea sistemului electoral i-au facut pe oficialii europeni să lanseze o declarație dură la adresa Republicii Moldova. În schimb, ex-președintele Parlamentului, Andrian Candu, a acuzat opoziția că răspândește informații eronate și prezintă o realitate falsă.[15] Despre cauzele eșecului integrării europene a RM s-a scris, iar principalul motiv ar fi existența unui regim oligarhic în țară. Înainte de alegeri cei din Partidul Democrat (partidul care era majoritar în Parlamentul din Republica Moldova înainte de alegeri) au anunțat că-și schimbă vectorul din pro-european în pro-Moldova, însă domnul Candu (membru al Partidului Democrat) a precizat în cadrul unui interviu: „A fi pentru Moldova asta

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[13] Vladimir Tismaneanu, "Moldova's Revolution Against Cynical and Cronyist Authoritarianism", *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty*, 13.07. 2009 , http://www.andrew.cmu.edu/user/romanian/moldova_abuse/Tismaneanu%20-%20Moldova's%20Revolution.pdf, (accesat în 25.03.2019).

[14] Guvernul Republicii Moldova, „Iurie Leancă a semnat Acordul de Asociere a Republicii Moldova la Uniunea Europeană", Comunicat de presă, 27.06.2014, https://www.rise.md/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Comunicat-Guvern-Iurie-Leanc%C4%83-a-semnat-Acordul-de-Asociere-a-RM-la-UE.pdf, (accesat în 25.03.2019).

[15] Partidul Democrat din Republica Moldva, Briefing săptămânal după ședință de lucru, 22.01. 2019, https://realitatealive.md/live-briefing-saptamanal-organizat-de-pdm-dupa-edin-a-de-lucru-din-22-ianuarie-2019---89840.html?fbrefresh=1548153658 , (accesat în 25.03.2019).

nu înseamnă a fi împotriva UE. Totodată, membrii Partidului Democrat au venit la un moment dat cu o inițiativă legată de introducerea în Constituția Republicii Moldova a sintagmei „integrare europeană", motivând că astfel vor pune capăt disputei geo-politice care dezbină societatea. [16] Părerile s-au împărțit, cei din opoziție menționând că acest fapt e doar un instrument de a manipula segmentul pro-european.

Ultimul summit al Parteneriatului Estic l-a determinat pe fostul premier Pavel Filip să specifice: „Noi conștientizăm în același timp că Parteneriatul Estic nu este un instrument de aderare la UE, dar perioada noastră este una complicată trebuie să recunoaștem acel lucru. Important este recunoașterea aspirațiilor partenerilor din Est". În același timp, oficialul moldovean a declarat: „Mesajele politice pentru societatea noastră contează. Am spus acest lucru și în cadrul summit-ului. Republica Moldova fiind o societate divizată încă, cu părere de rău, fiecare mesaj politic din partea UE, din partea țărilor membre contează foarte mult pentru noi și asta înseamnă consolidarea încrederii în vectorul european." [17]

Se atestă faptul că prim-ministrul accentuează una dintre cele mai importante probleme care e prezentă în Republica Moldova și anume: existența unor păreri îm-părțite în cadrul societății cu referire la direcția pe care statul să o aleagă în domeniul politicii externe, la bază fiind un conflict geopolitic.

Totuși, există și niște date statistice care demonstrează că încrederea moldovenilor în UE e semnificativă, 54% din cetățenii intervievați au declarat acest lucru, iar 79 % sunt conștienți de sprijinul financiar pe care-l acordă UE, conform unui sondaj de opinie, realizat de către Proiectul „VECINII UE de la est", finanțat de UE în anul 2017.[18]

Acest capitol conturează relația dintre Republica Moldova și UE, în contextul în care statul este membru al Parteneriatului Estic. Datorită apartenenței date, UE formulează recomandări la adresa RM și supraveghează situația din țară. Iar guvernarea de la Chișinău, adoptă diferite poziții în dependență de circumstanțe și configurații politice, cert este ca aceasta are niște angajamente asumate.

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[16] Adevărul Live, Andrian Candu despre alegerile parlamentare de la Chișinău și de ce UE critică guvernarea democraților, 22.10.2019, https://adevarul.ro/moldova/politica/andrian-candu-exclusivitate-adevarul-live-ora-2000-despre-alegerile-parlamentare-chisinau-ue-critica-guvernarea-democratilor_1_5bcdc0f9df52022f75c0d008/index.html?fbclid=IwAR3mZ6tejKdSn58eKAgEll4KAwmRN6UhLfvq4y5GcEIoxs_tZyDKPddtzRE, (accesat în 25.03.2019).

[17] Dan Alexe și Alla Ceapai, „Parteneriatul Estic: summit consensual la Bruxelles", *Radio Europa Liberă Moldova*, 24.11.2017, Dicționar European, https://moldova.europalibera.org/a/parteneriatul-estic-summit-consensual-la-bruxelles/28874892.html, (accesat în 25.03.2019).

[18] Delegația Uniunii Europene în Republica Moldova, „Sondaj de Opinie Publică despre Uniunea Europeană 2017", Comunicat de presă, 05.10.2017, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/33370/sondaj-de-opinie-public%C4%83-despre-uniunea-european%C4%83-2017_ro, (accesat în 26.03.2019).

3. POZIȚIONAREA FEDERAȚIEI RUSE
ÎN RAPORT CU APARTENENȚA REPUBLICII
MOLDOVA LA PARTENERIATUL ESTIC

Rusia are interese strategice în regiunea Republicii Moldova și acest fapt e demonstrat de staționarea armatei ruse pe teritoriul Transnistriei. UE participă ca observator la procesul de negociere în formatul 5+2 privind soluționarea conflictului din Transnistria și continuă să sprijine o soluționare pașnică și cuprinzătoare, bazată pe suveranitatea și integritatea teritorială a Moldovei cu un statut special pentru Transnistria.[19] Acest diferend transnistrean continuă a fi un focar de instabilitate pentru Moldova, rezultat în urma unui act de agresiune din partea Rusiei, dar care poate avea repercusiuni și asupra UE, dată fiind poziționarea Republicii Moldova la hotarul cu Uniunea Europeană. Însă, lipsa unei politici externe coerente din partea Uniunii Europene demonstrează capacitatea limitată de rezolvare a conflictului [20].

În acest context, e absolut important de remarcat faptul că anunțul despre crearea Parteneriatului Estic l-a determinat pe Ministrul de Externe al Rusiei, Sergei Lavrov, să specifice că acest proiect reprezintă un instrument de răspândire a sferelor de influență a UE: „Noi suntem acuzați că avem sfere de influență, dar ce este Parteneriatul Estic, dacă nu o încercare de extindere a sferei de influență a UE."[21] Rusia își face publică astfel opinia față de Parteneriatul Estic, considerând că acesta e un mijloc de a instaura un control asupra viitoarelor state membre, iar acest aspect sigur a fost unul care a adus modificări statuquo-ului dorit de Rusia, adică cele 6 state să continue „cooperarea profundă" doar cu ea.

Cel de-al patrulea summit, care a avut loc în anul 2015 a fost precedat de o declarație interesantă a domnului Sergei Lavrov care a menționat că „a primit asigurări de la Înaltul Reprezentant al UE pentru Afaceri Externe, Federica Mogherini, că Parteneriatul Estic nu va afecta interesele ruse." Totodată, Înaltul Oficial a declarat: „Nu putem impune vreo decizie UE și partenerilor săi. Un singur lucru vrem, iar colegii noștri de la Bruxelles știu acest lucru de mult timp – să vedem că procesul în desfășurare între Uniunea Europeană și țările dispuse să-și aprofundeze relațiile

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[19] *TREI ȚĂRI VECINE MEMBRE ALE PARTENERIATULUI ESTIC: UCRAINA, MOLDOVA ȘI BELARUS,* Fișe tehnice UE, Strasbourg: Parlamentul European, 2019, 4–5, https://www.europarl. europa.eu/ftu/pdf/ro/FTU_5.5.5.pdf, (accesat în 27.03.2019).

[20] Whitman, Richard și Wolff, Stefan, *The European Neighbourhood Policy in Perspective. Context, Implementation and Impact*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 197, (accesat în 14.07.2019).

[21] Valentina Pop, "EU expanding its 'sphere of influence', Russia says", *EUobserver,* 21.04.2009, Foreign Affairs, https://euobserver.com/foreign/27827, (accesat în 27.03.2019).

economice, umanitare și de altă natură cu UE nu dăunează intereselor legitime ale Federației Ruse."[22] Însă, nu specifică clar despre care interese este vorba. Cert e că traducând ceea ce zice domnul Lavrov, Rusia și-ar dori să dețină controlul asupra acestor state care pentru nimeni nu e un secret au fost, sunt și vor fi în vizorul ei, dar nu poate, spre nefericirea ei, fiindcă statele au ales să dezvolte o politică externă pro-europeană mai degrabă, decât pro-rusă.

Comisia Uniunii Europene a redactat un document în anul 2013 care vorbește despre presiunile [23] Rusiei asupra statelor ce au ales să devină membre ai acestui Parteneriat. Printre acestea numărându-se aspecte legate de creșterea prețurilor la gaze naturale sau embargouri. Uniunea Europeană dă de înțeles că Rusia utilizează vulnerabilitatea RM la capitolul resurse energetice, fiind conștientă că e dependentă de ea și manipulează acțiunile privind parcursul geopolitic al acesteia prin intermediul instrumentului dat. Ba mai mult, succesul summit-ului de la Vilnius a fost umbrit de tensiunile generate de Moscova și anume faptul că din capitala rusă spre Moldova veneau amenințări precum suspendarea alimentării cu gaze, dar și interzicerea importurilor vinurilor moldovenești.

Însuși, vicepremierul Dmitri Rogozin într-o vizită la Chișinău a declarat tranșant și direct: „Luați seama să nu înghețați la iarnă... în vârtejurile integrării europene în care v-ați antrenat."[24] Iar cu privire la vinuri, Serviciul fitosanitar rus „Rospotrebnadzor" a sistat importurile de vinuri din RM, motivând că vinul este de o calitate proastă și nu corespunde normelor sanitare. Pe de altă parte, Chișinăul a calificat decizia ca fiind una politică, dat fiind faptul că se apropia summit-ul de la Vilnius și presiunile din partea Moscovei se tot intensificau. Șeful Serviciului fitosanitar rus, Ghenadi Onișcenko, a menționat că Rusia nu mai are de gând să joace rolul de dădacă a economiei Republicii Moldova[25]. Iarăși se atestă tendința de a scoate în evidență dependența Moldovei de

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[22] Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the European Union, "Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's statement following a meeting of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe", Comunicat de presă, 19.05.2015, https://russiaeu.ru/en/news/foreign-minister-sergey-lavrovs-statement-following-meeting-committee-ministers-council-europe, (accesat în 27.03.2019).

[23] *Statement on the pressure exercised by Russia on countries of the Eastern Partnership*, Bruxelles: European Commission, 2013, p. 2–4, http://eunewsletter.am/wp-content/uploads/2013/SPEECH-13-687_EN.pdf, (accesat în 27.03.2019).

[24] Pro TV Chișinău, Rogozin: „Luați seama să nu înghețați la iarnă și să nu pierdeți vreun vagon", 02.09.2013, http://protv.md/stiri/politic/rogozin-luati-seama-sa-nu-inghetati-la-iarna-si-sa-nu-pierdeti-1---152229.html, (accesat în 28.03.2019).

[25] Valeria Vițu, „Rusia a impus embargou asupra vinurilor moldovenești", *RFI România,* 11.09.2013, https://www.rfi.ro/economie-70967-rusia-impus-embargou-asupra-vinurilor-moldovene-ti, (accesat în 28.03.2019).

Rusia. Intimidările venite din partea Federației Ruse erau realizate chiar înainte de summit-ul de la Vilnius.

În ciuda, amenințărilor, Republica Moldova a parafat la Vilnius Acordul de Asociere cu UE. Pe când, în 2016, aflat la Chișinău, Rogozin tratează lucrurile altfel, menționând: „Moldova trebuie să conteze pe prioritățile pieței ruse și ale pieței Uniunii Eurasiatice, deoarece acolo există cerere pentru producția moldovenească."[26], făcând astfel aluzie la ideea că, de facto, Rusia e dispusă să ierte „păcatele europene" ale Moldovei.

Chiar și această declarație care s-ar părea la prima vedere că e doar de factură economică, transmite și un mesaj politic, și anume că RM trebuie să renunțe la cooperarea cu Uniunea Europeană și să urmeze un vector rusesc. Moldova nu a acceptat oferta și, în continuare, urmărește implementarea Acordului de Asociere cu UE.

4. UN TRIUNGHI PLIN DE TENSIUNE: UE, RM, RUSIA

În mod intenționat, RM a fost plasată între cele două forțe pe plan internațional, deoarece aceasta reprezintă realitatea. Precum specifică și Calletti, țările din estul Europei reprezintă o arie strategică, importantă atât pentru UE, cât și pentru Rusia, și aceste state nu încetează să joace pe două planuri.[27] Moldova dintotdeauna a încercat, citându-i în acest context pe politicienii de la Chișinău, să fie „prietenă bună" și cu Bruxelles-ul, și cu Moscova, doar că a făcut totuși o alegere importantă în 2013, începând cu summit-ul de la Vilnius, nelăsându-se intimidată de amenințările Rusiei. Și până la urmă, de unde pornește acest conflict de interese? Moldova este un stat pe care Federația Rusă îl vrea sub controlul său, să nu uităm de faptul că aceasta a făcut parte din URSS, iar politica imperialistă dusă de Rusia presupune un interes strategic major asupra regiunii date. Parteneriatul Estic din start a fost perceput de Rusia ca fiind o amenințare pentru interesele sale, precum am menționat și în capitolul anterior, dovadă în acest sens fiind declarațiile ministrului de externe al Rusiei, Sergei Lavrov: „Noi suntem acuzați că avem sfere de influență, dar ce este Parteneriatul Estic, dacă nu o încercare de extindere a sferei de influență a UE."[28]

UE declară că a creat acest mecanism, Parteneriatul Estic, pentru a le oferi posibilitatea statelor din Europa de Est și Caucazul de Sud să evolueze în domenii precum statul de drept, consolidarea democrației și dezvoltarea economică. Parteneriatul însă

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[26] Vitalie Călugăreanu, „'Dor' de Moldova", *DW-Chișinău,* 06.07. 2016, https://www.dw.com/ro/dor-de-moldova/a-19382149, (accesat în 28.03.2019).

[27] *Ibid*., 179, (accesat în 14.07.2019).

[28] *Ibid*., (accesat în 27.03.2019).

reprezintă doar un instrument al Politicii Europene de Vecinătate prin interemediul căreia UE „colaborează cu vecinii săi de la sud și est pentru a ajunge la cea mai strânsă asociere politică și la cel mai înalt grad de integrare economică posibilă."[29]

Iar astăzi Republica Moldova e în proces de implementare a Acordului de Asociere cu UE și beneficiază și de regim liberalizat de vize. Prin urmare, îndepărtarea de Rusia e vizibilă. Totuși, președintele Igor Dodon de când a fost investit în funcție s-a întâlnit de mai mult de 10 ori cu Vladimir Putin și niciodată cu Klaus Iohannis, președintele României. Clasa politică, exact ca și societatea din Republica Moldova, e scindată din punct de vedere geopolitic și acest fapt determină îngreunarea procesului de implementare a Acordului de Asociere cu UE.

CONCLUZII

În introducere, au fost menționate câteva întrebări și în capitolele ce au urmat introducerii acestea au fost abordate, în conformitate cu metodologia aleasă. Pornind de la cercetare dată, pot fi supuse analizei și alte direcții, precum reforma Parteneriatului Estic, dat fiind faptul că acest mecanism împlinește deja 10 ani de la lansare. Deci, valoarea adăugată a cercetării ține anume de modul în care aceasta prezintă și explorează subiectul, ca în continuare să facă trimitere la noi aspecte care merită să fie aprofundate. Sintetizând conținutul celor 4 capitole, e necesar de accentuat că Republica Moldova, fiind membru al Parteneriatului Estic, și-a asumat o poltică pro-europeană, având o parte a teritoriului ocupat de armata Federației Ruse, dependentă energetic de Rusia, dar a ales să coopereze cu Uniunea Europeană în cadrul Politicii Europene de Vecinătate și să se alieze la niște valori precum statul de drept și liber-tatea de exprimare.

Reacția Federației Rusiei înainte de Summit-ul de la Vilnius a fost marcată de amenințări și intimidări, deoarece aveau să sufere interesele sale ce-și au izvorul în politica imperialistă pe care o desfășoară, fapt demonstrat și de declarația din 2011 a lui Vladimir Putin: „Uniunea Sovietica a fost „Marea Rusie", iar destramarea URSS a reprezentat „cea mai mare catastrofa geopolitica a secolului trecut" [30].

Cert este că mai multe limite, în raport cu țările Parteneriatului Estic, are meca-nismul Politicii Europene de Vecinătate decât resurse de putere, fiindcă fiecare stat e

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[29] *Parteneriatul estic,* Politici, Bruxelles: Consiliul European, 2019, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ro/policies/eastern-partnership/, (accesat în 29.03.2019).

[30] REGNUM, Владимир Путин: „Распад СССР – крупнейшая геополитическая катастрофа века", 25.04.2005, https://regnum.ru/news/444083.html.

suveran și poate să primească doar recomandări din partea Uniunii Europene în ceea ce ține politica internă. Uniunea Europeană tinde însă să-și protejeze spațiul său de securitate, Republica Moldova aflându-se la hotarul cu aceasta, fapt ce o motivează să fie foarte atentă la tot ce se întâmplă în această țară și să-și exprime de fiecare dată punctul de vedere atunci când se discută aspecte foarte importante. Uniunea Europeană nici nu și-ar dori, cu siguranță, să se repete ceea ce s-a întâmplat în Ucraina, în Republica Moldova. Prin urmare această cercetare reflectă interesele fiecăruia dintre actori pe această scenă regională, scoțând în evidență un triunghi plin de tensiune.

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European External Action Service, „Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini and Commissioner Johannes Hahn on the amendments to the electoral legislation in the Republic of Moldova", Comunicat de presă, 21.07.2017, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/30221/statement-hrvp-mogherini-and-commissioner-hahn-amendments-electoral-legislation-republic_en.

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INFLUENȚA PARLAMENTULUI EUROPEAN
ASUPRA SERVICIULUI EUROPEAN
DE ACȚIUNE EXTERNĂ

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ABSTRACT

Tema propusă are ca obiectiv ilustrarea relației ce se stabilește între Parlamentul European și Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă (SEAE), de asemenea se va centra asupra unui studiu de caz menit să evidențieze maniera în care PE a folosit implicarea sa în negocierile privind înființarea SEAE pentru a-și extinde influența în materie de politică externă.

Pornește din a explica guvernanța UE în materie de politică externă și necesitatea instituirii SEAE, deoarece, în ciuda unei atenții considerabile acordate înființării și funcționării SEAE, puține studii au evidențiat relația pe care acesta o stabilește cu PE, relație ce poate fi privită ca piatră de temelie pentru ca Parlamentul să obțină mai multă influență în domeniul politicii externe a UE.

Deși Parlamentul a dispus de un rol limitat în cadrul procesului decizional de politică externă, el a susținut încă de la început conceptul PESC, urmărind astfel extinderea competențelor sale.

Prin implicarea sa în procesul de negociere pentru instituirea SEAE, PE a fost în măsură să co-negocieze crearea acestuia și să creeze o relație structurată între Înaltul Reprezentant și acest nou corp diplomatic, dobândind astfel mai multă influență.

Cuvinte cheie: *Parlamentul European, SEAE, negocieri, politică externă*

INTRODUCERE

Tema propusă prezintă importanță majoră, fiind de actualitate, pentru că aduce în prim-plan un nou tipar de negociere în cadrul procesului decizional al UE, ilustrează prerogativele exercitate de Parlamentul European, care a dobândit un rol foarte important în chestiunile legate de politica externa a UE printr-o serie de noi competențe și acțiuni care i-au fost atribuite, într-o manieră foarte amănunțită, de asemenea, evidențiază legătura ce se stabilește între Parlamentul European și Serviciul European de Acțiune

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Externă (SEAE), deoarece în ciuda unei atenții considerabile din punct de vedere academic acordate înființării, dar și mecanismelor de funcționare ale SEAE, foarte puține studii au evidențiat de fapt relația propriu-zisă ce se stabilește între cele două instituții, relație care poate fi privită ca fiind piatra de temelie pentru ca Parlamentul European să obțină mai multă influență în domeniul politicii externe a UE, domeniu în care acesta nu dispunea de competențe adecvate, rolul său fiind destul de limitat.

Astfel, introducerea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă a avut ca obiectiv inițial eficientizarea acțiunilor Uniunii Europene prin sporirea gradului de coerență și vizibilitate a acestora, dar și reconstrucția arhitecturii financiare deoarece UE trebuia să dispună de un serviciu diplomatic eficace, permițându-I astfel să își îndeplinească obiectivele strategice conturate prin Tratatul de la Lisabona și să contribuie la consolidarea rolului acesteia pe scena internațională. Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă a luat ființă în urma unui proces dur și îndelungat de negociere între actori, motiv pentru care instituirea acestuia poate fi privită ca fiind rezultatul unei lupte interinstituționale desfășurată în paralel cu procesul de ratificare a Tratatului de la Lisabona.

În elaborarea proiectului științific, intenționez să utilizez ca metodologie de cercetare, analiza de document, deoarece această metodă contribuie la soluționarea unei probleme de importanță majoră, și anume, obținerea datelor în situația în care nu avem posibilitatea de a interoga persoane implicate sau care au adus contribuții în domeniul supus analizei, de asemenea această metodă este utilizată pentru colectarea datelor calitative și cantitative. În cazul temei abordate în cadrul demersului științific, documentele analizate caută să evidențieze rolul crucial pe care Parlamentul European l-a jucat în procesul de negociere privind înființarea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă, documentând pozițiile instituțiilor implicate în negocieri. Astfel, documentul principal ce constituie baza propriu-zisă a demersului științific îl constituie regulamentul de înființare al Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă.

De asemenea, intenționez să elaborez un studiu de caz, fiind deopotrivă o metodă ideală pentru investigarea aprofundată și completă a subiectului. Un alt motiv pentru care am ales să utilizez și studiul de caz în proiectul de cercetare, îl constituie faptul că este extrem de bogat în detalii, de asemenea, evoluția în timp a cazului este înglobată în structura sa. Astfel, studiul de caz va fi conceput pentru a oferi răspunsul la întrebarea centrală a temei, și anume, în ce măsură a reușit PE să folosească implicarea sa în procesul de negociere privind înființarea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă pentru a-și crește rolul în materie de politică externă și de securitate a UE, cu intenția declarată de a evidenția rolul radical pe care l-a jucat Parlamentul European în acest

proces în comparație cu ceilalți actori implicați și ce argumente a invocat în vederea susținerii PESC și consolidării propriei poziții.

Proiectul de cercetare va fi structurat în trei capitole, fiecare fiind conceput în vederea atingerii anumitor obiective. Astfel, în primul capitol voi face referire la guvernanța UE în chestiuni legate de politică externă și de securitate comună, al doilea capitol va fi consacrat evidențierii necesității înființării SEAE, prezentând autonomia acestuia și contextul în care a apărut, iar ultimul capitol va fi organizat sub forma unui studiu de caz care să permită răspunsuri la întrebarea centrală a temei propuse, respectiv, în ce măsură a reușit Parlamentul European să utilizeze implicarea sa în negocierile privind crearea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă pentru a-și extinde rolul în materia de politică externă și de securitate a UE. Studiul de caz va evidenția pozițiile actorilor implicați în procesul de negociere, cu intenția declarată de a puncta implicarea Parlamentului European, care și-a utilizat cu vehemență competențele de care dispunea în acel moment, hotărând să intre în arena negocierilor tocmai cu intenția de a-și extinde rolul în domeniul politicii externe, acest lucru fiind posibil numai printr-o planificare strategică corespunzătoare.

1. GUVERNANȚA UE ÎN CHESTIUNI DE POLITICĂ EXTERNĂ ȘI DE SECURITATE

Așadar, pentru înțelegerea naturii reale a politicii externe europene este necesară o scurtă revizuire a istoriei sale îndelungate, deoarece încă din perioadele timpurii, UE a avut idealul de a deveni un actor influent pe scena internațională, iar numeroasele sale obiective includeau prevenirea și gestionarea conflictelor, însă nu au fost depuse suficiente eforturi pentru a integra o dimensiune militară în politica sa externă.

În ceea ce privește desăvârșirea obiectivelor principale ale UE, Robert Schuman și Jean Monnet au identificat patru elemente esențiale care au constituit, de altfel, piatra de temelie în vederea configurării unei noi Uniuni Europene, respectiv, asigurarea păcii politice și a reconstrucției economice, acțiunile comune ale statelor membre, asigurarea cooperării între națiunile europene, iar în cele din urmă, convergența intereselor popoarelor europene. Istoria integrării europene demonstrează clar faptul că, Comunitatea Economică Europeană a depus mereu eforturi considerabile în vederea obținerii unei dimensiuni externe substanțiale, însă, proiectele concrete care făceau referire la organizarea europeană au prins contur în mod oficial abia după cel de-al doilea război mondial, moment în care procesul de constituire a comunitatilor s-a concretizat cu adevărat. Comunitatea Europeană a luat ființă ca urmare a necesității

interconectării sistemelor economice ale statelor membre.[1] Deși a fost concepută inițial sub forma unei uniuni vamale, capabilă să efectueze verificările necesare asupra producțiilor de cărbune și oțel ale Germaniei, Comunitatea Europeană și-a dezvoltat treptat componenta politică, consolidând instituțiile comune de la Bruxelles și înglobând embrionul unei componente militare vizând integrarea Uniunii Europei Occidentale în nou creata Uniune Europeană, prin Tratatul de la Maastricht.[2]

Anii '50 au fost marcați de lipsa profundă de interes a popoarelor europene pentru subiectele consacrate politicii externe, însă anul 1957 inaugurează deschiderea direcției principale a relațiilor externe ale Comunităților Europene prin Tratatul de la Roma. Odată cu consolidarea direcției principale a relațiilor externe a urmat o altă etapă semnificativă, fiind profilate eforturi substanțiale de extindere a competențelor economice externe dobândite de CE, această extindere constituind principalul obiectiv care a stat la baza Planului Plevnei, din anul 1950, Planului Fouchet propus în anul 1961 și necesității creării Uniunii Europei Occidentale, principalul scop fiind acela de a transforma CE într-un actor autonom. Chiar dacă aceste încercări au eșuat, în cele din urmă, deoarece nu au reușit să atingă obiectivul propus inițial, totuși, logica procesului de integrare europeană a generat o evoluție progresivă în vederea unei cooperări mult mai coerente în politica externă.[3]

Acest eveniment a precedat apoi și alte etape, considerate de altfel ca fiind pietre de hotar, respectiv, Cooperarea Politică Europeană, Actul Unic European precum și Tratatul de la Maastricht, prin care a fost instituită PESC drept pilon al structurii Uniunii Europene, acea perioadă fiind caracterizată de organizarea UE pe baza sistemului de piloni. Anii '70 au fost marcați de crearea Cooperării Politice Europene, aceasta constituind precursorul Politicii Externe și de Securitate (PESC) cu obiectivul de a scoate în evidență necesitatea cooperării la nivel european.[4]

Ca urmare a Tratatului de la Lisabona, apărut în anul 2007, sistemul de piloni ai UE a fost abrogate, fiind făcute apoi mențiuni cu privire la politica externă și de securiate comună în articolele 15 și 42 din Tratatul UE, care înglobează toate domeniile politicii externe și toate aspectele legate de securitatea Uniunii, de asemenea, includ o politică de securitate și apărare comună care face referire la apărare și la operațiunile militare și civile de gestionare a crizelor. Politica externă și de securitate a

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[1] Barry Buzan și Ole Weaver, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, (Londra:Lynne Reiner Publishers Inc., 1998): 7–8.

[2] *Ibid.,* 9–10.

[3] Federiga Bindi și Irina Anghelescu, *The foreign policy of the European union*, (Washington: Brookings Institution press):14.

[4] *Ibid.,*2.

UE face obiectul unor norme și proceduri specifice. În ceea ce privește luarea deciziilor majore, rolul esențial îi revine Consiliului, care își exercită prerogativele prin intensificarea intereselor strategice ale UE, determinarea obiectivele și definirea orientările generale ale PESC. Astfel, Consiliul UE își exprimă votul cu privire la acțiunile care vor fi întreprinse sau la pozițiile care vor fi luate în temeiul PESC.[5]

Un alt aspect important legat de PESC e dat de faptul că Tratatul de la Lisabona a introdus trei inovații instituționale de importanță majoră, și anume, poziția Înaltului Reprezentant al Uniunii pentru afaceri externe și politică de securitate, poziția Președintelui Consiliului European și Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă.[6]

Astfel, istoria dezvoltării politicii externe a Uniunii Europene prezintă așa-numitele lupte dintre factorii cheie de decizie în încercarea de a separa activitățile Uniunii Europene, astfel încât să nu fie abordate chestiuni de politică externă ce comportă un grad înalt de sensibilitate numai în domenii tehnice. A fost punctată ideea de separare a domeniilor de high politics de cele de law politics. Ar fi fost necesară o intervenție a Comisiei în ceea ce privește preluarea conducerii, în timp ce statele membre și-ar fi menținut prerogativele suveranității. În practică, însă, politica externă UE a fost întotdeauna pusă în aplicare prin diferitele canale instituționale și procedurale ale Uniunii Europene, utilizând instrumentele furnizate atât de pilonii comunitari, cât și de cei interguvernamentali ce aparțin construcției europene.[7]

2. ÎNFIINȚAREA SEAE

Deși instituirea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă a avut ca obiectiv consolidarea vizibilității, eficacității și coerenței externe la nivelul Uniunii Europene, relația stabilită între SEAE și Parlamentul European constituie, de fapt, fundamental principal pentru ca PE să obțină mai multă influență în domeniul politicii externe a UE, domeniu în care competențele îi erau limitate, exercitându-și autoritatea numai prin prerogative de consultare și prin cele bugetare. Astfel, am elaborat un studiu de caz menit să evidențieze rolul pe care Parlamentul European l-a jucat în timpul negocierilor privind înființarea SEAE, cu intenția de a verifica dacă acesta a reușit să-și atingă obiectivul inițial, acela de a-și extinde influența în materie de politică externă a Uniunii, prin implicarea sa în acest proces.

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[5] Petre Prisecaru, *Guvernanța Uniunii Europene*, (București: Editura Economica, 2005): 37.
[6] Christopher Bickerton, *European Union Foreign Policy From Effectiveness to Functionality*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011): 30.
[7] Hazel Smith, *European Union Foreign Policy What it Is and What it Does,* (London: Pluto Press, 2002): 67.

Înființarea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă a constituit, în mod evident, un punct de referință în vederea dezvoltării Uniunii Europene, fiind, de altfel, piatra de temelie în identificarea unei identități proprii a UE. Procesul de instituire a Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă a fost caracterizat ca fiind unul unic și complex, tocmai pentru că Parlamentul European, Comisia Europeană, Consiliul și Înaltul Reprezentant s-au aflat pentru prima dată, împreună, la masa negocierilor, aceste negocieri fiind apoi conturate sub forma unui quadrilog, fapt ce a constituit o noutate în cadrul procesului legislativ al UE, acest nou cadru fiind rezultatul modificărilor legislative din Tratatul de la Lisabona.[8] Dat fiind faptul că au existat factori care să ateste faptul că Tratatul de la Lisabona nu a reușit să reorganizeze în mod eficient cadrul UE în materie de politică externă, cu scopul de a oferi un loc corespunzător Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă, ca unitate complet nouă, ci nu ca instituție formală precum Comisia Europeană sau Parlamentul European, SEAE s-a aflat întotdeauna în căutarea obținerii independenței și unui rol semnificativ, față de alți actori importanți din cadrul procesului decizional.[9]

Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă a luat ființă în urma unui proces dur și îndelungat de negocieri între actori, de aceea poate fi privit ca fiind rezultatul unei lupte interinstituționale, unde negocierile s-au desfășurat în paralel cu procesul de ratificare a Tratatului de la Lisabona în intervalul aprilie 2009–iulie 2010.[10] Aceste negocieri au implicat, în principiu, actorii cheie ai procesului decizional, respectiv Parlamentul European, care a exercitat cea mai mare presiune în vederea înființării noului corp diplomatic, având intenția de a-și extinde influența în materie de politică externă prin intermediul Serviciului, fapt ce a determinat o implicare surprinzător de activă în acest proces, Consiliul, Comisia Europeană și Înaltul Reprezentant al Uniunii care aduce la masa negocierilor propunerea de instituire a Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă.[11] Confruntare propriu-zisă a implicat mai multe spații birocratice din interiorul instituțiilor cheie implicate. De asemenea, au existat dispute care s-au concretizat sub forma unor bătălii orientate spre obținerea unui rol semnificativ. Opiniile divergente în rândul acestor actori ai afilierii instituționale corespunzătoare acțiunii externe europene au reluat în primul rând vechea controversă dintre

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8   *Ibid*.
9   Michael Smith, „The European External Action Service and the security–development nexus: organizing for effectiveness or incoherence?" în *Journal of European Public Policy,* Vol. 20, No. 9, p. 1300.
10   Report on the institutionals aspects of setting up The European Externa Action Service, 2009/2133, Brussels, 20 October 2009.
11   *Ibid*.

interguvernamentalism și supranaționalism. Raportul președinției suedeze privind SEAE a căutat să rezolve această problemă prin desemnarea Serviciului drept un organism sui generis separat de Comisie și de Consiliu.[12]

Luând în considerare faptul că Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă nu aparține nici Comisiei, nici Consiliului, fiind mai degrabă un organism independent, Parlamentul European a încercat din greu să contracareze o asemenea ezitare instituțională în ceea ce privește responsabilitatea. Acesta a solicitat în mod constant crearea unui serviciu diplomatic de tip *sui generis*, din punct de vedere organizațional și bugetar, care să fie incorporat în structura administrativă a Comisiei, cu scopul de a asigura o transparență deplină cheltuielilor .[13]

3. IMPLICAREA PE ÎN PROCESUL DE NEGOCIERE CU PRIVIRE LA INFIINȚAREA SEAE

Propunerea de instituire a Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă a fost adusă la masa negocierilor de către Înaltul Reprezentant al UE, preluată de către Consiliu și Comisie, aprobată apoi în Parlament.[14] În momentul lansării propunerii de instituire a Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă, la sfârșitul lunii martie a anului 2010, nici măcar Înaltul Reprezentant pentru Afaceri Externe și Politica de Securitate nu a putut preconiza faptul că negocierile pentru punerea în aplicare a proiectului propriu-zis se vor prelungi până la sfârșitul anului, respectiv până în luna octombrie. Votul în plen privind decizia Consiliului pentru înființarea SEAE a avut loc chiar înainte de sărbătorile parlamentare din iulie 2010.[15]

Astfel, la data de 8 iulie 2010, Parlamentul European a votat printr-o rezoluție legislativă, cu o majoritate convingătoare respectiv, 549 pentru și 78 împotrivă, în favoarea proiectului de decizie a Consiliului, de instituire a Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă. Aceast lucru a condus la eliminarea unuia din obstacolele semnificative în vederea înființării Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă, chiar dacă organizarea

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[12] Proposal for the establishment of the EEAS, Working document by Elmar Brok (AFET), and Guy Verhofstadt (AFCO), rapporteurs on EEAS, 20 april 2010.

[13] Turunen, Tuula și Legrand, Jérôme, *Politica externă: obiective, instrumente și realizări,* 2018, pp. 3–5, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/ro/sheet/158/politica-externa-obiective-instrumente-si-realizari?fbclid=IwAR3oaDj3PlvE-gF0SNPkSLAjWq6rcPFFzZRaFWrffDnFQm7ZhllhQ8F0EO8, (accesat în 20 aprilie 2019).

[14] Proposal for the establishment of the EEAS, Working document by Elmar Brok (AFET), and Guy Verhofstadt (AFCO), rapporteurs on EEAS, 20 april 2010.

[15] Report on the institutionals aspects of setting up The European Externa Action Service, 2009/2133, Brussels, 20 October 2009.

și funcționarea SEAE făceau doar obiectul unei consultări parlamentare, totuși, în discuțiile privind un proiect anterior, a fost evident faptul că modificările și criticile aduse regulamentelor privind personalul dar și chestiunilor financiare nu ar fi posibile în cazul în care punctele de vedere ale deputaților europeni nu ar fi luate în considerare.[16] Un astfel de proiect a generat un proces dur și îndelungat de negocieri în cadrul instituțiilor europene.

Propunerea de instituire a Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă a adus o revizuire majoră în cadrul arhitecturii financiare a UE în ceea ce privește acțiunea externă. Această propunere a avut ca obiectiv o creștere a resurselor disponibile și a reflectat ambiția UE referitoare la o agendă de acțiune externă foarte politizată și orientată spre satisfacerea propriilor interese dar și a cetățenilor, respectând totodată agenda de dezvoltare a UE care se baza pe principii precum proprietatea și previzibilitatea.[17] Un asemenea proiect făcea referire la modul în care instituțiile Uniunii Europene urmau să-și exercite competențele orientate spre conducerea, gestionarea și controlul asupra desfășurării acțiunii externe europene.

Deși Parlamentului European a dispus de un rol foarte limitat în acel moment, evidențiindu-se numai prin exercitarea unui rol consultativ, ca urmare a unei planificări strategice corespunzătoare, s-a folosit, de prerogativele de codecizie asupra bugetului, reușind să-și consolideze pe această cale, poziția în cadrul negocierilor, în comparație cu ceilalți actori ai quadrilogului care nu au manifestat interes în mod similar. Astfel, Parlamentul European a intrat în arena negocierilor cu intenția de a-și crește rolul în materie de politică externă.

Odată cu inițierea procesului de negociere, propunerea Consiliului, care a fost discutată în cadrul Comisiei și a Parlamentului European, a fost întâmpinată cu reacții mixte, confruntându-se opoziție deputaților din PE, ca urmare a unor considerații privind personalul Serviciului, anumite domenii de cooperare, programele din domeniul politicii externe și în special bugetul.[18] Astfel, Parlamentul European a subliniat necesitatea exercitării influenței sporite la nivel strategic și în alegerile de politică secundară.[19]

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[16] Simon Duke, „The European External Action Service and public diplomacy" în *European Public Diplomacy*, (2010) 113.

[17] Report on the institutionals aspects of setting up The European Externa Action Service, 2009/2133, Brussels, 20 October 2009.

[18] Decizia Consiliului privind organizarea și funcționarea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă, 11665/1/10, REV 1, Bruxelles, 20 iulie 2010.

[19] Jones, De Groof și Kahiluoto, *Governing a new broad instrument for EU external action: the ins and outs of the institutional power struggle,* No. 107, (2018): 6–8.

Cu două luni înainte de intrarea în vigoare a Tratatului de la Lisabona, a fost înaintat un raport adoptat de PE înainte de lansarea propunerii de instituire a SEAE de către Înaltului Reprezentant. În acest fel, s-a concretizat faptul că nu a fost pentru prima oară când Parlamentul European s-a ocupat de chestiuni legate de instituirea unei unități menită să contribuie la reconstrucția financiară a UE. Având o vastă experiență în acest domeniu, Elmar Brok (inițiatorul raportului respectiv) a inclus în raportul respectiv principalele considerații ale Parlamentului European cu privire la forma viitoarei configurații a Serviciului.[20]

De asemenea, Brok a adus și o serie de declarații referitoare atât la procesul de negociere pentru înființarea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă, cât și la poziția Înaltului Reprezentant. În primul rând, acesta a dorit să clarifice faptul că membrii Parlamentului European au fost în favoarea instituirii Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă, certificând astfel sprijinul ce urma să fie acordat demarării acestui proiect. Potrivit declarațiilor acestuia, dorința Parlamentului European de a avea un Înalt Reprezentant a fost inclusă în Convenția pentru Constituția Europeană, iar acest Înalt Reprezentant și-ar fi exercitat atribuțiile în ceea ce privește coordonarea relațiilor externe ale Uniunii și în gestionarea politicii externe și de securitate a UE, având la dispoziție un serviciu care să îi permită să se angajeze într-o poziție fermă față de Comisie, Consiliu și restul lumii, de asemenea, să explice unitatea și coerența politicii externe europene și să se asigure faptul că Uniunea nu reprezintă doar un plătitor global, ci și un jucător global.[21]

De asemenea, a declarat faptul că punerea în aplicare a metodei comunitare și garantarea și extinderii drepturilor Parlamentului European în limitele tratatului, ar facilita informarea și consultarea membriilor PE în chestiunile legate de politică externă, înainte de luarea deciziilor. În plus, ar fi fost luată în considerare și posibilitatea adresării unor întrebări ambasadorilor, de exemplu, ca parte a unui schimb de opinii, nu în același mod precum în cadrul procesului de consultare, ci după numirea lor și înainte de a intra în funcție. Din acest motiv, pe lângă oportunitățile oferite de drepturile bugetare, pe lângă faptul că tratatele cu țări terțe trebuiau ratificate în viitor de către Parlamentul European, ar fi existat, de asemenea, un proces

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[20] European Parliament, Proposal for the establishment of the EEAS, Working document by Elmar Brok (AFET), and Guy Verhofstadt (AFCO), rapporteurs on EEAS, 20 aprilie 2010.

[21] European Parliament, European External Action Service (debate), No. 2010/0816(NLE), http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2F%2FEP%2F%2FTEXT%20CRE%2020100707%20ITEM-012%20DOC%20XML%20V0%2F%2FEN&fbclid=IwAR3Un91yvcDPkQ5QXOsVKpn0eE-zFXeYg5ElhHfBseyhCPhIC8Rh5QfMyrc, (accesat în 20 martie 2019).

de informare și consultare în faza intermediară, care ar fi permis Parlamentului să joace un rol semnificativ în structurarea politicii externe europene.[22]

În completarea delarațiilor făcute de Elmar Brok, Guy Verhovstadt a adus o serie de noi afirmații ce punctau faptul că, acordul politic al actorilor, privind înființarea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă a reprezentat un adevărat progres ce putea constitui un motiv de mândrie, mai ales în cadrul instituțiilor implicate în acest proces, dat fiind faptul că a depășit anumite limite, contracarând remarca prim-ministrului francez care afirma faptul că instituirea Serviciul nu putea depăși liniile roșii ale Franței. Prin acordul respectiv, liniile roșii ale Franței au fost depășite, prin utilizarea și punerea în aplicare a Tratatului de la Lisabona. A declarat, de asemenea, faptul că Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă a reprezentat un element esențial în vederea dezvoltării unei politici externe reale a Uniunii. A pus apoi problema necesității dezvoltării unei direcții clare care ar trebui urmată de Serviciu, apoi necesitate conducerii corespunzătoare, invocând faptul că Tratatul de la Lisabona i-a conferit Înaltului Reprezentant competențele necesarea pentru a prelua conducerea SEAE, sfătuindu-l să contribuie la dezvoltarea noii structuri diplomatice sub forma unui instrument comunitar. Declarațiile sale finale au asigurat faptul că expertiza și competențele Înaltului Reprezentant vor contribui la identificarea interesului Uniunii Europene și implicit, la susținerea acestuia.[23]

În final, Roberto Gualtieri aduce o serie de declarații menite să completeze afirmațiile celor doi raportori, acesta punctând compromisul la care sa ajuns în Madrid ca fiind pe deplin în concordanță cu obiectivele care au condus activitatea coordonată și desfășurată de dl Brok și de dl Verhofstadt, aceea de a furniza Europei un serviciu care să dispuă de resurse și influență suficiente astfel încât să sporească coerența și eficacitatea acțiunii externe ale UE, fiind în același timp, strâns legat de metoda comunitară și de Comisie și sub rezerva controlului democratic deplin al Parlamentului European. Acesta a garantat faptul că Parlamentul European va continua să utilizeze în mod ferm și vehement prerogativele legislative și bugetare, în special în lunile de implementare a proiectului, astfel încât să poată fi definit statutul personalului și regulamentul financiar în conformitate cu principiile generale ale raportului în cauză. De asemenea, a garantat utilizarea preogativelor Parlamentului European în vederea acordării sprijinului deplin Înaltului Reprezentant, fiind o instituție preocupată mai

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[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ibid.*

mult decât oricare alta în ceea ce privește dezvoltarea unei adevărate politici externe europene.[24]

Astfel, deputații europeni au convenit, în unanimitate, să-și utilizeze influența asupra noii structure diplomatice, în așa fel încât să fie avantajați. Astfel, raportorii au decis să pună în aplicare o propunere alternativă, prin înaintarea unui document prin care deputații europeni au descris cu exactitate obiectivele, arhitectura și personalul ce ar fi trebuit incluse în SEAE. Documentul respectiv cuprindea argumente noi referitoare la aspectele legate de controlul bugetar.[25]

Înaltul Reprezentant nu a reșit să contracareze această inițiativă, motiv pentru care a considerat necesară identificarea unei alternative menită să conducă la un acord politic și la votarea deciziei Consiliului de instituire a Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă, înainte de sărbători.[26] Astfel, au rezultat două declarații esențiale, o declarație privind responsabilitatea politică și o declarație privind administrația centrală. Declarația privind administrația centrală aborda problemele structurilor de gestionare, ridicate de multe organizații neguvernamentale și introduse pe ordinea de zi de către Parlamentul European. În ceea ce privește declarația privind responsabilitatea politică, Înaltul Reprezentant a acordat Parlamentului European dreptul de a interviva șefii de delegații nou-numiți și reprezentanții UE pentru țări și organizații pe care Parlamentul le consideră importante din punct de vedere strategic.[27]

Schimbarea majoră indusă de Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă a solicitat, astfel, tuturor instituțiilor UE, precum și statelor membre, să coordoneze, la nivel intern, politica externă a UE. Actorii implicați au avut datoria să garanteze faptul că propriile aranjamente instituționale, dar și metodele de lucru sunt în conformitate cu scopul urmării.[28]

Prin crearea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă, UE a beneficiat de o structură operațională în cadrul politicii externe, formată din unități responsabile pentru politică, de asemenea capabile să gestioneze situațiile de criză, de o vastă rețea de reprezentanțe diplomatice și de personal care provine din diverse domenii.[29] S-a convenit faptul că Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă va constitui piatra de temelie pentru noua politică externă a Uniunii, fiind un serviciu diplomatic modern

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[24] *Ibid.*
[25] Report on the institutionals aspects of setting up The European Externa Action Service, 2009/2133, Brussels, 20 October 2009.
[26] European Parliament, No. 2010/0171(COD).
[27] Decizia Consiliului, No. 2010/427/UE.
[28] Jones, De Groof și Kahiluoto, *op. cit.*, 9.
[29] Decizia Consiliului, No. 2010/427/UE.

și operațional, cu obiective bine definite, printre care se numără promovarea interselor și valorilor UE, dar și coordonarea și asigurarea coerenței relațiilor Uniunii cu restul lumii, prin stimularea eforturilor comune, atât din partea instituțiilor, cât și din partea statelor membre.

CONCLUZII

Un domeniu esențial ce susține conturarea rolului de putere globală a Uniunii Europene, îl constituie domeniul politicii externe și de securitate. Din acest motiv, rolul pe care Parlamentul European l-a jucat în cadrul negocierilor privind instituirea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă a constituit un factor de importanță majoră, oferind legitimitate democratică deciziilor care au influențat securitatea și bunăstarea cetățenilor Uniunii Europene.

Dat fiind faptul că baza arhitecturii Uniunii Europene o constituie cultura dialogului și cooperării, orientarea Parlamentului European în domeniul politicii externe a trebuit consolidată pe dimensiunea cooperării în materie de politică externă, protejând astfel și interesele statelor membre și oferind Uniunii, per ansamblu, posibilitatea de a acționa într-o manieră mult mai eficientă. Rolul Parlamentului European în domeniul politicii externe a Uniunii a fost unul relativ limitat, însă odată cu intrarea în vigoare a Tratatului de la Lisabona, competențele sale au prins contur în mod treptat.

Negocierile privind instituirea Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă au constituit o adevărată provocare ce a încurajat Parlamentul European să acționeze în așa manieră încât să demonstreze faptul că reprezintă o autoritate semnificativă în cadrul Uniunii Europene, de asemenea deține experiență în domeniul PESC și în cadrul diplomației emergente a UE, acest lucru fiind demonstrat prin raportul pe care l-a adus în discuție în timpul procesului. Strategia Parlamentului European s-a bucurat de succes în cadrul negocierilor, fapt ce a demonstrat că influența Parlamentului European a crescut în mod treptat odată cu schimbările produse prin apariția Tratatului de la Lisabona. Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă, în mod cert, a reprezentat un progres semnificativ întregistrat în cadrul Uniunii Europene, oferind posibilitatea acestei construcții confederale de a-și consolida poziția pe scena internațională, chiar dacă înființarea Serviciului a depins de acțiunea comună a Comisiei, Consiliului, iar în cele din urmă, de aprobarea Parlamentului European. Introducerea SEAE a constituit un factor foarte important în consolidarea poziției UE, deoarece Uniunea a încercat

din perioade timpurii să dispună de o politică externă comună, iar Parlamentul European a susținut cu entuziasm peisajul instituțional post-Lisabona, promovând un rol însemnat al Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă, cu intenția de a-și crește rolul, precum și o politică externă și de securitate cu un grad de coerență mult mai sporit.

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RELUAREA CONTACTELOR POSTBELICE ROMÂNO-ITALIENE (1955–1958). APROPIEREA CULTURALĂ CARE A PAVAT DRUMUL SPRE REFACEREA RELAȚIEI POLITICE

Maria-Ioana RUS[*]

ABSTRACT

Repercursiunile celui de-al Doilea Război Mondial s-au transpus într-o cooperare deficitară între România și Italia. Astfel, relațiile bilaterale româno-italiene s-au manifestat într-o primă parte prin tensiuni, care pe parcurs s-au diminuat, chiar dacă angajamentele unei cooperări la nivel oficial nu au fost vizibile. Italia manifesta interes limitat pentru statele din răsăritul Europei și era interesată într-o aliniere la direcția americană în politica mondială. Eforturile părții române au reușit, totuși, să atragă o anume simpatie în rândul cercurilor politice și culturale italiene, îndeosebi prin intermediul acțiunilor de diplomație culturală. Prezentul articol își propune să răspundă la următoarele întrebări de cercetare: Care sunt factorii ce aufăcut posibilă cooperarea dintre cele două state? Cum au valorificat acestea, din punct de vedere politic perioada supusă analizei? Având în vedere dimensiunea impusă articolului ne vom concentra doar asupra relațiilor politice în perioada menționată.

Cuvinte cheie: *relații politice bilaterale, Italia, România, manifestări culturale, atitudine pro-americană*

INTRODUCERE

Pentru a reda cu exactitate informațiile rezultate în urma cercetării, ne propunem structurarea prezentului articol în trei părți. Pentru început, vom prezenta contextul internațional în care s-au desfășurat raporturile bilaterale româno-italiene în perioada 1955–1958. Vom continua prin a sublinia și a explica constrângerile politice interne și externe care au determinat cele două state să-și reconsidere relațiile bilaterale, urmând să analizăm măsurile luate în acest sens.

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În vederea reconstituirii relațiilor politice româno-italiene din perioada amintită, vom analiza documente din Arhiva Diplomatică a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe (România), iar informațiile arhivistice vor fi corelate cu date din lucrări românești și italiene de specialitate.

1. CONTEXTUL INTERNAȚIONAL

Odată cu moartea lui Iosif Vissarionovici Stalin în anul 1953, a început procesul de destalinizare, ceea ce a presupus o luptă politică în Uniunea Sovietică, iar situația internațională a cunoscut o perioadă de relaxare. „Destalinizarea este pusă în discuție în timpul celui de-al XX-lea Congres al Partidului Comunist al Uniunii Sovietice (14–25 februarie 1956) în cursul căruia discursurile condamnă cultul personalității, evocă noi raporturi est-vest și insistă asupra importanțeițărilor neutre și diversitatea căilor naționale în edificarea socialistă"[1]. Noul lider, succesorul lui Stalin, Nikita Sergheevici Hrusciov, în discursul său din cadrul Congresului PCUS,a denunțat maniera dictatorială de conducere a lui Stalin și s-au adus pentru prima data în discuție greșeli ale partidului comunist.

Totodată, s-a produs o schimbare și în rândul statelorsatelit, care s-au regrupat. Un eveniment de mare importanță a fost mișcarea de protest anticomunistă din Ungaria (1956), care l-a constrâns pe Secretarul General al Partidului Comunist, Mátyás Rákosi, să demisioneze. De asemenea, prim-ministrul maghiar, Imre Nagy a fost înlocuit cu Janos Kadar, în timp ce Ungaria se afla sub ocupația trupelor militare sovietice. „În tabăra occidentală, de asemenea, Europa se organizează față de Statele Unite"[2].

Dinamica evenimentelor a luat amploare în Europa de Est. Perioada cuprinsă între 1955–1958 a marcat o etapăde relaxare în relațiile internaționale, care, așa cum vom demonstra în cele ce urmează, a facilitat apropierea dintre țări, chiar dacă România a rămas, într-o anumită măsură, anchilozată în propriul ei trecut, ocupată de trupe sovietice pe toată perioada menționată.

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[1] Maurice Vaïsse, *Relații internaționale după 1945* (Oradea: Editura Universității din Oradea, 2010): 65.

[2] *Ibid.,* 66.

2. CONTEXTUL POLITIC INTERN DIN ROMÂNIA
ȘI ITALIA ȘI POLITICA EXTERNĂ FAȚĂ DE URSS

În România, moartea lui Stalin a însemnat perioada de liniștire. Liderii comuniști români au continuat să mențină direcția pe traiectoria politică a Moscovei datorită „încrederii pe care Gheorghiu-Dej trebuia să o capete din partea noului lider sovietic[3]". „Dej s-a dovedit a fi ingenios și precaut în folosirea repercusiunilor succesiunii politice sovietice"[4].

Detașarea României de URSS și începutul creării propriei sale politici externe au fost demarate în anul 1955 – prima perioadă de destindere – și au continuat până la începutul anilor '60, perioadă în care România s-a dovedit mai stalinistă decât multe alte state: „începutul politicii naționale a comuniștilor români și încercarea acestora de a se manifesta autonom în relațiile externe a început încă din 1948 și s-a consolidat odată cu înlăturarea Anei Pauker din viața politică"[5].

Rolul instituțiilor statului (insclusiv cele cu rol în politica externă) a fost diminuat de liderii partidului comunist, cărora le aparțineau deciziile importante; toate discuțiile referitoare la problemele importante în raport cu Europa de Vest erau purtate la nivel de partid.

În politica internă italiană „începând cu 1953 democrația creștină a pierdut supremația, fiind nevoită să colaboreze cu partidele de stânga care câștigă teren la alegerile din 1958, 1962 și 1968. Moartea lui Alcide De Gasperi, urmată de alegerea papei Ioan al XXIII-lea care a succedat pontifului conservator al papei Pius al XII-lea și *aggiornamento* propus de Conciliul Vatican II au făcut posibilă „deschiderea față de stânga"[6].

Decesul liderului sovietic I.V. Stalin a contribuit, totodată, la relaxarea relațiilor dintre URSS și Italia. Semnificativ în acest sens a fost discursul lui Gheorghi Malenkov (august 1953) care a evidențiat necesitatea unor relații economice cu Italia, spre a sprijini industria acesteia din urmă.

Direcția impusă de la Moscova a fost preluată și în celelalte țări comuniste, cu toate acestea schimburile economice nu au fost unele semnificative în primii ani ai perioadei de destindere în politica internațională. Noua politică promovată de

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[3] Crina-Cristina Capota, *Relațiile româno-italiene. 1948–1965* (Teză de dotorat, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, 2014): 18.
[4] Dennis Deletant, *Teroarea comunistă în România. Gheorghiu-Dej și statul polițienesc, 1948– 1965*, (Iași: Editura Polirom, Iași, 2001): 189.
[5] Crina-Cristina Capota, *op. cit.*, 18.
[6] *Ibid.*, 27–28.

președintele Giovanni Gronchi (neoatlantismul) dincolo de dimensiunea promovării constante a unei politici externe italiene autonome, a însemnat și o apropiere sporită față de URSS.

Strategiile de politică externă ale Italiei au fost influențate în mod semnificativ de implicarea statului în negocierile pentru fondarea comunităților europene, ca mai apoi, dupa eșecul proiectului Comunitatea Europeană pentru Apărare, Italia să se afle în postura de redefinire a politicii sale externe. Toate acestea au condus la obținerea unui spațiu de manevră pe plan extern [7].

3. REFACEREA RELAȚIILOR BILATERALE

„După cel de-al Doilea Război Mondial, mai ales în ultimele decenii ale Războiului Rece, în pofida diferenței de sisteme politice, a apartenenței la două blocuri diverse și a opțiunilor de politică externă, România și Italia au reușit să găsească puncte de comun interes, grație în primul rând conștiinței reciproce a legăturilor istorice și culturale de neșters"[8]. Din prisma conduitei de politică externă a fiecărei țări se poate observa modul în care atât Italia cât și România au evoluat față de celelalte state, sau, după caz, au refuzat orice mijloc de colaborare în plan internațional și au reușit, de cele mai multe ori, să acționeze prin negocieri bilaterale, în domeniul economic, cultural, etc.

Anul 1955 a însemnat debutul unei perioade de îmbunătățire a relațiilor bilaterale româno-italiene. În acest an, s-a putut observa soluționarea unor probleme de fond latente, obiect al divergențelor româno-italiene pentru mai mulți ani.

Vorbim, în acest context, despre ridicarea sechestrului asupra pachetului de acțiuni APIR (Azienda Petroli Italo-Romena), aparținând Republicii Populare Române și vinderea acestuia în Italia; încheierea acordului garantând oficial că bunurile fiecăruia dintre cele două state (aflate pe teritoriul celuilalt) să nu poată fi puse sub sechestru în condițiile în care o persoană fizică sau juridică ar fi solicitat acest lucru; reglementarea situației localului fostei Academii Române de la Roma, care aparținea de drept fostului Partid Popular Român.

Un alt eveniment de remarcat a fost eliberarea lui Eraldo Pintori, funcționar al Legației Italiei din București, care a fost acuzat pentru spionaj în anul 1951 și condamnat la muncă silită pe viață. Dincolo de contactele bilaterale amintite, un aspect sensibil a fost reprezentat de faptul că presa italiană, atât în publicații tipărite,

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[7] *Ibid*.,26–27.

[8] Ambasada României în Republica Italiană, *Relații bilaterale – Scurt istoric*, https://roma.mae.ro/node/221, (accesat la data de 19.07.2019).

cât și prin intermediul radiodifuziunii, a prezentat o serie de informații false privind atactul venit din partea fasciștilor asupra Legației Republicii Populare din Berna. Alte articole false au apărut în presa Italiei odată cu eliberarea lui Pintori, prin care se informa faptul ca Pintori a fost condamnat pe nedrept de către RPR. Astfel de știri distribuite în toată țara au atras atenția MAE, care a solicitat reprezentantului italian stoparea lor deoarece contravin asigurărilor oferite în momentul deciziei de eliberare a lui Pintori și de repatriere a acestuia în Italia[9].

La nivel diplomatic, în anul 1955 s-au demarat o serie de acțiuni precum încercările prin diverse mijloace de a se obține de la Parlamentul italian un răspuns la invitația trimisă de către MAN, prin care un grup de parlamentari au fost invitați să viziteze RPR. Răspunsul pozitiv a venit din partea Președintelui Senatului, dar și din partea Președintelui grupului italian din UIP (Uniunea Interparlamentară), Codacci-Pisanelli, în cadrul sesiuni ce a avut loc la Helsinki, unde s-a decis ca delegația parlamentară italiană care urma să viziteze URSS să se oprească la întoarcere, în RPR. În mod reciproc, delegații romāne au luat parte la manifestări politice de nivel internațional desfășurate pe teritoriul Italiei, cum ar fi, de pildă, sesiunea Uniunii Interparlamentare sau Congresul Mondial al Primarilor.

Situația pe care au adus-o anii următori în politica externă italiană a fost parțial influențată de orientarea pro-americană a guvernului de la Roma condus de Antonio Segnideși, spre deosebire de executivul anterior (Mario Scelba) se pretinde că se dorește acum dobândirea unei anumite independențe față de politica de peste ocean, acțiune condusă de Gronchi împreună cu o parte a creștinilor democrați.

În asentimentul unei deschideri față de americani, corespondența diplomatică disponibilă în cadrul arhivelor MAE romān subliniază și reluarea campaniilor de presă calomnioase îndreptate împotriva URSS și a democrațiilor populare. Acest demers la nivelul mass-media italiene a fost influențat de efectele anticipate ale concluziilor Congresului al XX-lea al PCUS, care avea scopul de a domina în continuare viața politică. În acest sens se disting două etape: cea dintâi începe după Congres, fiind caracterizată de recunoașterea ascunsă a valorii deosebite a evenimentului, prin rezultatele favorabile aduse de URSS în plan politic, atât intern cât și extern. A doua etapă a demarat brusc, astfel, „că la comanda unui stat major, s-a pornit campania de presă, urmând totuși o gradație în intensitate"[10].

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[9] Ministerul de Afaceri Externe, *Arhivele Ministerului de Externe, Referat de relații. Semestrul I. 1955*, Fond Italia, dosar nr. 220/1955, f. 2
[10] Idem, *Situația problemelor intervenite între MAE și Legația RPR Roma în anul 1956. Audiențe ale ministrului Lo Faro la București. Informări asupra situației politico-diplomatice a Italiei.*

Pe lângă evenimentele petrecute în plan extern, așadar din postura unei Italii care parea să urmeze o direcție mai degrabă occidentală, situația politică tensionată de la vremea respectiv poate fi înțeleasă și în contextual apropierii alegerilor administrative (27 mai 1956)[11]. Această perioadă a însemnat pentru Italia un proces de dezvoltare internă și externă printr-o politică de colaborare cu Statele Unite ale Americii și cu alte state occidentale, ceea ce a determinat, totodată, limitarea parteneriatelor economice, culturale, comerciale dintre Italia și alte state din răsăritul Europei.

Cu toate acestea o destindere parțială între Est și Vest și, implicit, între Italia și România a putut fi observată ulterior conferinței de la Geneva care a dus la aceeași masa cele patru mari puteri: URSS, SUA, Franța și Marea Britanie. Guvernul român s-a adresat mai insistent și mai des către statele occidentale înaintând propuneri de dezvoltare a colaborări în diverse domenii, inclusiv în sfera politică. Ca manifestare a acestei colaborări politice, se poate menționa momentul în care, la încetarea din viață a președintele Prezidiului Marii Adunări Naționale a României, și anume Petru Groza, în ianuarie 1958, pe clădirile publice din Roma a fost arborat drapelul de stat al României.

Perioada cuprinsă între anii 1957–1958 a însemnat pentru relațiile româno-italiene începutul relațiilor bazate pe o „coexistență pașnică" venită din partea Guvernului R.P.R care a încercat să aducă o îmbunătățire în toate domeniile, dar și să determine cercurile italiene să renunțe la poziția lor de rezervă față de România, acceptând o oficializare a acțiunilor de relații reciproce.

Guvernul italian a declarat că va aduce o îmbunătățire asupra acestor relații (Declarație care vine chiar de la Alberto Folchi, subsecretar de stat al MAS italian) în data de „12 februarie 1957, care răspunzând interpelării unui deputat socialist, a arătat că Italia dorește intensificarea schimburilor comerciale și culturale cu România[12]".

Personalități oficiale italiene au arătat un real sprijin în ceea ce privește unele acțiuni culturale române. Una dintre aceste propuneri a fost aceea de a stabili, atât românii cât și italienii, de comun acord, un program de acțiuni culturale oficiale, pe întreg anul 1957.

În vara aceluiași an s-a înființat un grup italo-român, ca parte a grupului Italian UIP, acțiune la care Pisanelli se angajase încă din anul anterior, dar care a suferit

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Participări la recepții, întâlniri cu diplomați ai altor misiuni la Roma. Informare asupra activității politico-diplomatice în perioada dintre 15 februarie–20 martie, Fond Italia, dosar nr. 20/1956, f. 2.

[11] *Ibid., f. 1.*

[12] Idem, *Referat asupra relațiilor româno-italiene în anii 1957–1958 și a perspectivelor apropiate*, Fond Italia, dosar nr. 220/1958, f. 1.

amânare în urma revoluției din Ungaria. Ca prime activități ale acestui grup nou înființat pot fi amintite trimiterea unei delegații de parlamentari italieni în țara noastră, acesta reprezentând un răspuns pozitiv invitației trimise de către MAN, dar și participarea reprezentanților grupului la festivitățile Ovidiu din RPR, organizate în luna septembrie a anului 1957 „Guvernul R.P.R sprijină această acțiune și apreciază că participarea unei delegații culturale italiene... la nivel corespunzător interesului pe care evenimentul îl prezintă pentru popoarele noastre va contribui la accentuarea climatului favorabil dezvoltării relațiilor dintre R.P.R și Italia"[13].

Trebuie subliniat totuși faptul că guvernul italian a refuzat invitația României de a trimite o delegație culturală guvernamentală în România, alegând varianta unei delegații formate din oamenii de cultură fără funcții oficiale. Această decizie de ultim moment se explică prin reluarea unei delegații parlamentare, iar două delegații politice într-un singur an nu reprezenta tocmai un deziderat al italienilor. Cu această ocazie s-au stabilit contacte politice cu rezultate propagandistice foarte bune, datorită prezenței în România a trei politicieni italieni, creștin-democratul G. Sibille, comunistul M. Palermo și monarhistul O. Condorelli. Vizita pe care Sibille și Palermo au efectuat-o președintelui Prezidiului RPR și MAN le-a permis să conștientizeze dorința românilor de a dezvolta legături de prietenie cu Italia. Rezultatele favorabile ale acestor vizite au fost încununate prin intervenția în Senatul italian a lui O. Condorelli, tot în scopul de a sprijini dezvoltarea ulterioară a relațiilor bilaterale.

Un alt moment important în decursul anului 1957 a fost reprezentat de invitarea în RPR de către Sfaturile populare București, Ploiești, Stalin și Cluj a unui grup de primari și consilieri italieni. La insistențele Legației RPR la Roma s-au stabilit contacte cu Asociația Primarilor Italieni, dar și cu primari din orașele Milano, Florența și Bologna.

În ciuda demersurilor declarate ale guvernului României de menținere și dezvoltare a relațiilor cu partenerii italieni în diferite domenii și pe durata anului 1958, cercurile oficiale italiene au avut o atitudine rezervată față de această propunere, astfel că refuzau, de regulă, asocierea în cadrul unor acțiuni ce vizau contactele culturale sau politice la nivel guvernamental.

Cercurile oficial italiene a continuat să îi sprijine pe dizidenții români în demersurile lor împotriva R.P.R. Astfel, ca semn de sprijin, postul de radio „Radio Roma" a difuzat emisiuni în limba română dedicate acestora, continuând campania inițiată

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[13] Idem, *Acțiuni principale de relații româno-italiene realizate în anii 1957–1958*, Fond Italia, dosar nr. 220/1958, f. 1.

anterior împotriva României. Dizidenții au fost invitați să participe la manifestările ovidiene din Italia, la diverse conferințe, congrese etc.

Problemele litigioase între R.P.R și Italia, au continuat. Legația Italiei de la București „n-a arătat nici un interes pentru dezvoltarea relațiilor româno-italiene"[14]. Obiectivul legației era de a împiedica italienii din țara noastră de a intra în posesia cetățeniei române. Totodată, Legația Italiei a stimulat împotrivirile autorităților române din sfera coloniei italiene ca măsură de răspuns la deciziile luate de partea română privind controlul cetățenilor străini, în septembrie 1958.

În anul 1958, autoritățile române au expulzat doi italieni, E. Cleva și R.J. Cesare, care ar fi încălcat legile R.P.R. Această decizie a fost contestată de către guvernul italian, iar ca semn de protest a interzis acordarea pentru cetățenii români de vize de intrare în Italia. Interdicția a fost anulată în octombrie 1958, în urma implicării lui Mario Grandi (funcționar al Legației Italiene) într-un proces penal. M.A.E a făcut un gest de bunăvoință, în 28 noiembrie, recunoscând calitatea diplomatică a lui Grandi, ceea ce a dus la închiderea procesului. Ca urmare al acestui gest, M.A.E italian și-a exprimat aprecierea față de guvernul roman și a susținut desfășurarea în limite acceptabile a relațiilor dintre România și Italia.

Mai amintim aici că legația Italiei acuza autoritățile române deoarece românii nu ofereau informații oficiale cu privire la arestarea cetățenilor italieni. „Giovanni Lupi, student, condamnat la 15 ani muncă silită, pentru crimă de complot împotriva ordinei sociale din RPR; Angelo de Simon, proprietar al unei fabrici de cherestea din Drăgășani și Guerrino Anzelin din Craiova (arestat pentru delapidare), deținuți în preveție"[15]. Acuzau autoritățile române că încălcau uzanțele internaționale. Cu toate că Italia solicita de nenumărate ori la M.A.E informații despre arestarea și condamnarea cetățenilor italieni, dar și informații despre motivul arestării, locul și data procesului etc.[16], nu primeau informațiile necesare. În 2 februarie 1958, M.A.E a comunicat Legației Italiei faptul că nu există o regulă internațională prin care să fie obligați să dea informații despre arestarea cetățenilor și că „...dacă M.A.E dă informații cu privire la unii cetățeni arestați, face aceasta nu pentru că ar fi obligat de vreo uzanță internațională, ci din curtoazie"[17].

Deși perioadele de criză și de neînțelegeri între cele două state au continuat, se pot observa încercările de colaborare și normalizare a relațiilor dintre cele două state.

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[14] Idem, *Situația relațiilor dintre RPR și Italia*, Fond Italia, dosar nr. 220/1958, f. 1.
[15] Idem, *Probleme de relații româno-italiene*, Fond Italia, dosar nr. 220/1958 , f. 1.
[16] Idem, *Situația relațiilor dintre RPR și Italia*, Fond Italia, dosar nr. 220/1958, f. 1–2.
[17] Idem, *Probleme de relații româno-italiene*, Fond Italia, dosar nr. 220/1958, f. 1.

Vizitele făcute între partide și parlamentari, sau ajutorul în diverse situații au condus la colaborări politice benefice atât pentru Italia cât și pentru România.

CONCLUZII

Politica externă italiană în perioada de după cel de-al Doilea Război Mondial a reflectat acțiunile de reconstrucție ale unei țări puternic afectate și traumatizate de pe urma conflagrației, expuse vizibil din punct de vedere geopolitic.

Integrarea țării în structurile NATO și, respectiv, în Comunitățile Europene, a constituit o strategie de regăsire a Italiei în cadrul noii ordini politice internaționale, strategie susținută mai cu seamă de facțiunea creștin-democrată de la vremea respectivă[18]. Fostul ambasadorul italian la Moscova, Pietro Quaroni, remarcase la un moment dat: „Italia, probabil singura țară cu adevărat pro-europeană din cele șase (de atunci), refuză să urmeze o politică europeană care ar putea fi privită drept anti-atlanticistă sau anti-americană."[19]

Această tendință în materie de politică externă este interesant a fi urmărită în perioada supusă analizei în prezentul articol, în contextul desfășurării relațiilor bilaterale româno-italiene. Analiza acestor relații la nivel politico-diplomatic, dar și în contextele unor manifestări culturale specifice surprinde particularitățile unei relații deja cu tradiție, întrucât raporturile diplomatice la nivel de Legație între România și Italia s-au stabilit încă din decembrie 1879, atunci când Italia a recunoscut statutul de stat independent al României. Aceste particularități evidențiază alternanța unei apropieri la nivelul contactelor politico-diplomatice mai degrabă formale, a implicării în sporirea legăturilor culturale (semi-oficiale), cu reticența din partea guvernului catolic de la Roma (urmărind cu o anume senzitivitate linia directoare americană) în a se angaja pe deplin în a întreprinde acțiuni politice semnificative în vederea dezvoltării relației la nivel oficial.

În ciuda faptului că dialogul politic bilateral nu a atins anvergura care se dorea în cercurile guvernamentale de la București, în asentimentul eforturilor depuse de partea română, relația cu partenerii italieni a înregistrat un anumit progres, îndeosebi în domeniul cultural (și în cel economic), progres care a condus la rezultate pozitive pentru țara noastră, luând în calcul și faptul că Italia adoptase o strategie de detașare

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[18] Guido Lenzi, Diplomats, Politicians and Foreign Policy in Post-War Italy, în *UNISCI Discussion Papers,* Nº 25, ianuarie 2011, https://www.ucm.es/data/cont/media/www/pag-72500/UNISCI %20DP%2025%20-%20LENZI.pdf.

[19] Pietro Quaroni „Problemi della politica del nostro tempo", (Milano:Garzanti 1966): 154.

față de statele est-europene. Diverse acțiuni de diplomație culturală (vitizele făcute de membrii Legației RPR la Roma sau de către personalități marcante ale culturii române, cu diverse ocazii, reprezentațiile susținute de artiști de marcă – G. Georgescu, V. Gheorghiu, de către Teatrul Național I.L. Caragiale, Ansamblul de cântece și dansuri al Sfatului Popular al Capitalei) au reușit să atragă simpatia părții italiene și chiar să atenueze încleștarea politică vizibilă de-o parte și de alta a Cortinei de Fier, cu instrumentele mass-media aferente Războiului Rece și a oferit oportunități în tatonarea terenului privind poziționarea Italiei vizavi de spațiul românesc.[20]

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[20] Idem*., Referat asupra relațiilor româno-italiene în anii 1957–1958 și a perspectivelor apropiate,* Fond Italia, dosar 220/1958.

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IRAN'S GEOPOLITICAL STRATEGY AND GOALS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Cătălin-Boris BADEA[*]

ABSTRACT

Following the 1979 Islamic Revolution that toppled the Pahlavi monarchy and installed the theocratic authoritarian regime of the Ayatollahs in Tehran, Iran has been ostracized from the international community. The bitter rivalry with the U.S. was a constant barrier in Iran's plans to re-emerge as an important regional and global player but the apparent conclusion of the conflict with the signing of the JCPOA (2015) seemed to bring a new dawn for Iran. The election of Donald Trump in 2016 as U.S. President and his reinstatement of the sanctions regime on Tehran threatened to quickly roll back the status-quo. However, the situation of today is quite different from that of 1979 or even that of the 2000's and at first glance it seems that the renewed pressure placed on Iran by the U.S. is not widely accepted by the international community as the way forward. This article focuses on the motives behind the U.S.–Iranian rivalry, Iranian actions at the regional level and the future of Iran. The main arguments developed in this article are that the U.S.–Iranian rivalry and Iran's motives behind the rejection of the status quo imposed by the U.S. are driven more by a strategic reasoning based on the Iranian national identity that has been shaped by the last couple of centuries, especially the 20th century, than by religious ideology and irrationality.

Keywords: *Iran, JCPOA, U.S.–Iran relation, Ayatollahs, strategic reasoning*

INTRODUCTION

The 1979 Islamic Revolution was a turning point in the history of the ancient Persian world, a point that changed the very essence of Iran, not just the political make-up of the country. But one aspect has remained to a certain amount unchanged by the fires of the revolution and the tumultuous decades that followed. What remained constant was the foreign policy goal of Iran to become a regional power with global aspirations that wouldn't be pushed around by anyone above it. New religious rhetoric was abundant after the Revolution, but past the inflammatory

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rhetoric of the early years of the regime, it is quite clear that the main objective of Iran, from a foreign policy point of view, was to assert itself as a major regional power, if not the regional hegemon. Of course, if a country from such a crucially strategic region as the Middle East aspires to gain the title of regional power or hegemon it must either acquire approval from the superpower or try and carve its place against systemic opposition. The easiest path would be to acquire approval, but in our case, Iran after the revolution did not only have zero chances of such approval from the U.S., but it actively rejected any such ideas.

In short the reasons behind the Iranian hatred of the U.S. in the early stages of the theocratic regime are rooted in events prior to 1979 that fundamentally shaped and brought about the revolution. The main such events are the 1953 coup in which the U.S. and UK brought down the elected government of Mossadeq, the 1963–64 revolts against the so called "capitulation laws" by which U.S. military personnel were exempt from Iranian law while they were on Iranian soil[1], the continuous support that the U.S. provided to Israel, henceforth the use of the pejoratives "Great Satan" for the U.S. and "Little Satan" for Israel in the ayatollahs rhetoric and the U.S. support of Iraq in the Iraq-Iran war of the 1980's. In addition to this, a deeprooted historical sense of injustice was formed by the last few centuries in Iran, as Iranians created the image of the great Persian state that was conquered from East and West and humiliated time after time.

However, Iran has come a long way from the rhetoric of the revolution and the chants of "Death to America". So long in fact that even the more radical president Ahmadinejad said:" We are still ready for an exchange, even with America"[2]
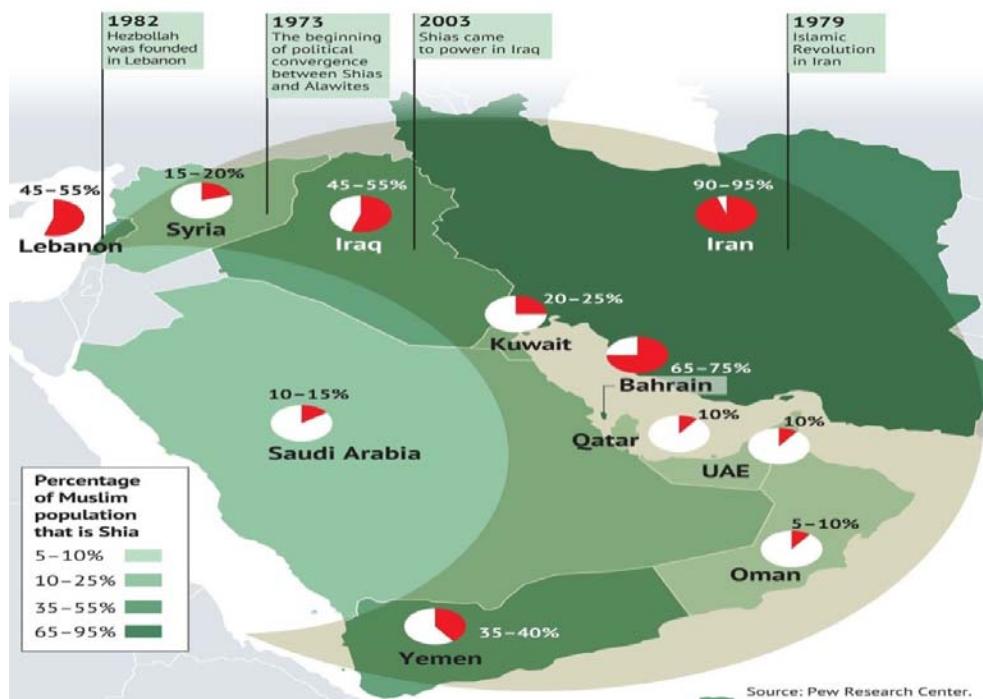
1. THE STRUGGLE

In the pursuit of its goal of regional dominance, Iran has created what is known as the Shi'a Crescent. From Lebanon on the coast of the Mediterranean through Syria and Iraq to Iran, and from Iran through Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Yemen and even Saudi Arabia, Iran has built a network of allies based on their shared religious faith and on the portrayal of Iran as the champion of Shi'a Islam, in stark opposition

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[1] Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution, Iran and the World in the Age of the Ayatolalhs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 14

[2] Parisa Hafezi and Reza Derakhshi, "Iran says will respond to any new sanctions" in *Reuters*, February 16, 2010, available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran/iran-says-will-respond-to-any-new-sanctions-idUSTRE61F2Z920100217, (accessed April 10, 2019)

to Saudi Arabia's Wahhabism[3]. Through cunning and able maneuvering but also through funding and arming of terrorist or paramilitary organizations such as Hezbollah[4], Hamas, PLA or the Houthis[5], Iran has maintained and in recent years, most notably after the toppling of the Baathist regime in Iraq and the onset of the civil/proxy war in Yemen, greatly increased its influence across the Middle East, stamping its mark as a crucial player in the region.

Figure 1. *Iran's Shi'a Crescent in the Middle East*
Source: Pew Research Center

The most impressive victory for the Islamic Republic, though it did not come as a result of direct Iranian activities but rather as a spectacular gift from Iran's arch-nemesis, was the toppling of the Baathist regime of Saddam Hussein, the most

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3 Fabrice Balanche, "From the Iranian Corridor to the Shia Crescent" in *Hoover Institution,* August 17, 2018, available at: https://www.hoover.org/research/iranian-corridor-shia-crescent, (accessed 12 April 2019)

4 Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution, Iran and the World in the Age of the Ayatolalhs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 47

5 *Outlaw Regime: A Chronicle of Iran's Destructive Activities*, Washington: Iranian Action Group – U.S. Department of State, 2018, available at: https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Iran-Report.pdf, (accessed April 17, 2019)

important regional rival to Iran, and its replacement with a regime that is very much influenced by Tehran. The Iraqi-Iranian relations have changed so drastically that today Iraq is willing to support U.S. pressure in order to help Iran by-pass the newly imposed sanctions.[6] Iran's road, or as it is sometimes called the "land bridge", to the Mediterranean continues through Syria, a country that has been an Iranian ally even before the 1979 Revolution[7]. Iran has traditionally looked at Syria as an ally to counter-balance the Iraqi threat, but after 2003 and the removal of Saddam Hussein the role of Syria has been somewhat neglected. However, the 2011 Arab Spring wave of revolts and the subsequent horrendous Syrian Civil War has put Syria high on the Iranian agenda. Throughout the conflict Iran has shown it is willing to generously support the Assad regime, so much that U.S. General James Mattis, former Commander of U.S. Central Command and former Secretary of Defense argued in 2013 that without Iranian aid the Assad regime would have crumbled[8]. However, Syria is not the most important element of the "land bridge", that position being held by Lebanon, or better said by Hezbollah, the Lebanese Shi'a paramilitary/political party supported directly by Iran. Lebanon is the lynchpin of the Iranian Middle East strategy, not only for its access to the Mediterranean Sea, but also due to its border with Israel, the proclaimed enemy of the Ayatollahs. Hezbollah has been, ever since its inception in 1982, a crucial ally of Iran and has received upwards of $200 million in funding per year from Tehran[9].

In the southern region of the Gulf, Iran has not been so successful, as Saudi and U.S. influence is much stronger there. However, several countries in this area have important ties to Iran, the most notable being Bahrain, which has a Shi'a majority, the UAE and Yemen. Bahrain, similarly with Syria, is ruled by an elite family that has a different faith than the majority of the population, the difference being that in Bahrain the ruling elite are Sunni and the population Shi'a. This simple fact makes Bahrain a prime target for Iranian influence, as Iran is the "champion of

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[6] "Iran's President Rouhani seeks Iraqi help to mitigate US sanctions" in *BBC News,* March 11, 2019, available at: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-47524688, (accessed April 15, 2019)

[7] Mohsen Milani, "Why Tehran Won't Abandon Assad(ism)" in *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 4, (2013), 79–80, DOI: 10.1080/0163660X.2013.861715, (accessed April 10, 2019)

[8] Dexter Filkins, "The Shadow Commander" in *The New Yorker*, September 23, 2013, available at: https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/09/30/the-shadow-commander, (accessed April 17, 2019)

[9] Matthew Levitt, "Hezbollah Finances: Funding the Party of God" in *The Washington Institute*, February 2005, available at: https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/hezbollah-finances-funding-the-party-of-god, (accessed April 18, 2019)

Shi'a Islam" and is keen on furthering sectarian conflicts as it seeks to undermine the Arab world. However, again similarly to Syria, the ruling minority elite has remained in power despite mounting pressure, thanks to outside help[10]. The case of the United Arab Emirates is even more interesting, as the UAE have traditionally been a strong U.S. ally but at the same time maintained strong economic and cultural ties with Iran. Iranian influence in the UAE has a powerful historic component, as the current territory of the Emirates has been for long periods of time under Iranian control or influence. Another important factor in the Iranian-UAE relation is the significant Iranian diaspora that has formed in the Arab country in the second part of the 20th century, as Iran was rocked by political and economic instability, as well as the 8 year long war with Iraq in the 1980's. Some 450.000 Iranians, or people with Iranian origins, live in the UAE, which make up about 10% of the total population of the country, and the second largest Iranian diaspora in the world, after the U.S.[11]. Despite officially being a strong U.S. ally in the region, the UAE acted as the most important trade hub for Iran during the pre-JCPOA years of the sanctions regime, as emirates like Dubai have a very relaxed trade policy but maintain a modern infrastructure[12]. Another factor of the UAE relevance in Iran's strategy is the fact that the UAE acts as the U.S. most important diplomatic channel to Iran, in absence of any official relationship between the two countries[13].

The last country on the southern flank of the Shi'a Crescent is, as shown in Figure 1, Yemen. Unfortunately, in recent years, the Shi'a Uprising, or the Yemeni civil war, that started in 2015 turned more and more brutal in Yemen, as according to the UN, more than 24 million people, close to 80% of the population of Yemen, are in need of humanitarian assistance and the death toll of civilians since 2015 has rose above 17,000[14]. Iran's role in the conflict is important, though perhaps less than Saudi and U.S. rhetoric claims to be, as Iran is weary of a prolonged conflict in Yemen that would drain on its resources[15].

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[10] Simon Mabon, "The Battle for Bahrain: Iranian-Saudi Rivalry" in *Middle East Policy,* Vol. XIX, No. 2, (2012) DOI: 10.1111/j.1475–4967.2012.00537.x

[11] Karim Sadjadpour, "The Battle Of Dubai, The United Arab Emirates and the U.S.-Iran Cold War" in *The Carnegie Papers*, 2011, available at: https://carnegieendowment.org/files/dubai_iran.pdf, (accessed April 16, 2019): 5

[12] *Ibid.,* 7–9

[13] *Ibid.,* 14

[14] "Humanitarian crisis in Yemen remains the worst in the world, warns UN" in *UN News*, February 14, 2019, available at: https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/02/1032811, (accessed April 16, 2019)

[15] Alex Vatanka, "Iran's Yemen Play" in *Foreign Affairs*, March 4, 2015, available at: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iran/2015-03-04/irans-yemen-play (accessed April 17, 2019).

Looking beyond the Middle East, Iran's foreign policy is also focused on Central Asia and the Caucasus regions, as Iran has historically played an active and important role in shaping the destinies of these areas.

In the Central Asian and Caspian region, Iran has tried ever since the 1980's to portray itself as a regional leader and has proposed various forms of regional cooperation, the most notable being the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) that has 10 members from the region, but with limited success[16]. Iran has also tried to portray itself as Central Asia's gateway to the world market through Iran's access to the world ocean, but again with limited success because of Iran's international statute of a pariah state, at least until 2015[17]. Iran has found however, a higher degree of success in bi-lateral relation, especially in terms of security, Iran showing a constructive attitude in the Tajikistan Civil War conflict, in which it acted as a mediator and its role in the Afghanistan conflict, where it cooperated even with the U.S.[18].

The Caucasus region proved more fertile ground for Iranian foreign policy. Though the region was riddled with conflicts ever since the break-up of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the 3 newly formed states of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, Iran has been quick to re-establish ties with the 3 countries and to try and bring them into Tehran's sphere of influence. Similar to its role in the Tajik Civil War, Iran has also been an important mediator in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict from the beginning[19]. Iranian relations with Georgia have also been friendly and constructive, as Iran never recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and Tehran even offered to supply gas at a low cost in 2006 when Russia cut Georgia's access to Russian gas, on which the small country is dependent.[20]

Other key areas for Iran's foreign policy and geopolitics in both Central Asia and the Caucasus are related to energy (gas and oil) and transport. After 2015 Iran unveiled plans for a railway link to Armenia, and the already operational Iran–Turkmenistan–Kazakhstan railway assures connectivity with the greater Central Asian region. In terms of energy, Iran's focus is on pushing for pipeline projects that would allow it to access the European market such as the Southern Gas Corridor, Georgia and more recently India[21].

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[16] Edward Wastnidge, "Central Asia in the Iranian geopolitical imagination," *Cambridge Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 1 (2017) https://doi.org/10.22261/1YRJ04, 6–7.

[17] *Ibid.*, 4

[18] Noemi M. Rocca, "Iran's geopolitics in Eurasia after the nuclear deal," *Cambridge Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 1, (2017) https://doi.org/10.22261/ZHTK8T, 5–6.

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *Ibid.,* 7

2. U.S.–IRAN RIVALRY

The 1979 Revolution transformed Iran not only internally, as the country ended the millennial tradition of monarchy, but also externally, as Revolutionary Iran lost almost all of its external credibility and was treated as a pariah state. The early years of the Revolution are far gone and the situation has changed completely as nowadays Iran is a regional power with great influence in the Middle East, especially in the northern part of that region, in the so-called "land bridge" that consists of Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. Significant progress, as shown above, was also made by Iran in the southern part of the Middle East, though not nearly as much as in the northern part, largely thanks to a stronger U.S. and Saudi influence in countries such as UAE, Qatar or Bahrain. The conflict between the two emerging blocs divided mostly along sectarian lines but with a strategic element at heart has been called by various authors as a new, regional Cold War between the Shi'a Iran and the Sunni and U.S.-backed Saudi Arabia[22].

The most significant and perhaps the only obstacle to Iran's strategy of becoming a regional hegemon is its positioning ever since 1979 as an enemy, or at least rival in times of moderation, of the United States. As the sole superpower after the end of the Cold War, the U.S. has done everything in its power, bar actual direct military intervention or confrontation, to contain and staple Iran with the brand of international pariah. From economic sanctions, to posturing, to calls of regime change, the diplomatic and economic arsenal at the disposal of the U.S. is diverse and Washington hasn't shied away from using it. This was not always the case however. For the most part of their relationship, the two countries were in fact close allies, with Iranians celebrating and looking up to the "American way", indeed even after 40 years of antagonism and fiery rhetoric, most Iranians wish to live in a society similar to that of the U.S.[23].

The relationship began to break apart in 1953 with the CIA-backed coup against Mossadeq, a very popular Prime-Minister. It was the first time that the U.S. was

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[22] Ruth Hanau Santini, "A New Regional Cold War in the Middle East and North Africa: Regional Security Complex Theory Revisited" in *The International Spectator*, Vol. 52, No. 4, (2017): 93–111, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2017.1371487, see as well Flynt Leverett and Hillary Mann Leverett, "The United States, Iran and the Middle East's New "Cold War*."* in *The International Spectator,* Vol. 45, No. 1, (2017): 75–87, DOI: 10.1080/03932721003661624

[23] Christopher Thornton, "The Iran We Don't See: A Tour of the Country Where People Love Americans" in *The Atlantic*, 6 June, 2012, available at: https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/06/the-iran-we-dont-see-a-tour-of-the-country-where-people-love-americans/258166/, (accessed April 19, 2019)

beginning to be seen in Iran in a similar fashion to the UK and Tsarist Russia, as an imperialistic power that dictates what happens in Iran. The 1963–64 revolts against the infamous laws granting immunity to U.S. military personnel in Iran exacerbated the nascent conflict to a whole new level and it gave birth and a platform of anti-imperialism to the movement that brought the 1979 Revolution and the diplomatic disaster that was the taking of American diplomats as hostages for over a year. From that point onwards, we can barely speak about a relation between the two countries, the only example of such a thing being the cooperation in the Afghanistan invasion and the fight against the Islamic State. Of course the signing of the JCPOA in 2015 was seen as the long-awaited thaw in Iran–U.S. relations, but with the advent of the Trump presidency, it is clear that at least for now that is not the case.

U.S. support for Iraq in the Iran-Iraq war is also a factor for animosity, but perhaps the biggest ideological thorn in the relationship between the two countries is the U.S. close relationship with Israel, from which the infamous nick-names that Iranian radicals use to describe the two : "Big Satan" and "Little Satan".

Leaving political rhetoric, nick-names and ideology behind, a strong argument can be made that the true nature of the rivalry is not an ideological one, but rather it is one based on strategic reasoning and geopolitical grounds[24]. In essence, the rivalry can be explained as the inevitable collision, despite initial friendliness, of the two countries core strategies. The U.S. has pursued ever since WWII a strategy in which American hegemony in the Middle East is paramount, and after 1989 it has pursued that strategy much more freely and aggressively, in absence of any potential rival to match its superpower status. On the other hand, Iran has since the 19th century developed an internal narrative based on external imperial aggression that demanded the Iranian state to strive for complete independence combined with a historic narrative of Iran as a regional power, if not a global one. Superimposed on these two irreconcilable strategies came all the fiery rhetoric and the United States balance of power security arrangements that constantly shifted U.S. support in the Middle East[25] which did not help by any means to resolve the conflict.

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[24] Reza Sanati, "Beyond the domestic picture: the geopolitical factors that have formed contemporary Iran–US relations" in *Global Change, Peace & Security: formerly Pacifica Review: Peace, Security & Global Change*, Vol. 26, No. 2, (2014): 125–140, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14781158.2014.905525

[25] Kayhan Barzegar, "Balance of Power in the Persian Gulf: An Iranian View" in *Middle East Policy*, Vol. XVII, No.3 (2010): 74–87, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4967.2010.00452.x

3. JCPOA AND IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), better known as it appeared in the media as the "Iran Nuclear Deal", was the long awaited and much anticipated and debated thawing of U.S., and Western, relations with Iran and at the same time the resolution to the heated problem regarding Iran's troublesome nuclear program.

Iran's said nuclear program was not a recent development in the country's strategic ambitions, its origins going back to the years of the Shah, who signed in 1957 a nuclear cooperation agreement with the U.S., under which the U.S. would provide Iran with nuclear technology and training with the requirement that Iran would not pursue the development of nuclear weapons[26]. In the next two decades Iran signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty and obtained various deals with Western countries like Germany, France and the U.S. that would see Iran developing 22 nuclear reactors and the complete cycle of fuel production and spent fuel processing. Even before the fall of the Shah in 1979, the West, especially the U.S. started to doubt Iran's commitment to not pursue the development of nuclear weapons, a fact that caused significant delays in the transfer of nuclear technology to Tehran.[27] Such fears grew exponentially once the extremist theocratic regime was installed, but perhaps contrary to most expectations, the new regime almost abandoned the program at first, as it didn't have the necessary resources to develop it any further without Western help. It wasn't until the 1990's that Iran started to refocus its efforts in this domain with renewed ambition[28]. The reasons for Iran's renewed push for a nuclear programme is ambivalent: on one side economically it would be a very important factor that would allow Iran not only to develop more reliable infrastructure and industry but also to maximize its oil profits, as the country would not need it to generate electricity, on the other hand, the possibility to acquire nuclear weapons seemed quite attractive for policy-makers in Tehran, as it would guarantee the achievement of the long desired role of regional and ever global power of Iran, as well as ensuring a much more equal footing in the rivalry with the United States.

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[26] Saira Khan, *Iran and nuclear weapons: protracted conflict and proliferation*, (New York: Routledge, 2010): 47

[27] *Ibid.,* 47–50

[28] *Ibid.,* 77–83

During the 1990's progress was very slow however, as U.S. maintained a policy of maximum pressure on Iran and on any countries that would seek to enter into any sort of nuclear agreements with Tehran, mainly China and Russia[29].

The 2000's started surprisingly promising, as after 9/11 there was a period of collaboration between U.S. and Iran in the fight against the Taliban in Afghanistan, but the inclusion of Iran in the famous "Axis of Evil" concept of President Bush destroyed any resemblance of hope for better relations. It was this moment that started a period of aggressive push from Iran towards the nuclear weapon that was riddled with ambiguity, discoveries of secret nuclear facilities in Iran and international pressure[30] that culminated in the UN Security Council resolution 1969 from July 2006 in which the UNSC: "Demands, in this context, that Iran shall suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development"[31]. In the next years a series of resolutions, such as resolution 1737 and 1747, from the UN Security Councils came to made binding resolution 1696 and completed an arms embargo and a complex web of economic sanctions on Iran.[32]

The JCPOA came to solve what was by then called the "Nuclear impasse" in 2015, but negotiations started much earlier. The first attempts were made by Iran as early as 2003, but they were met with a stark rejection from the West. Another attempt was made in 2005, in which Iran, still under the reformist president Khatami was willing to compromise significantly, in fact their 2005 proposal being very similar to the 2015 deal[33].

Significant progress was not achieved however until the 2010's, and especially after the election of current President Rouhani, who ran on a platform that was centered around striking a deal on the nuclear question. And finally, in July 2015, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was signed by Iran and the P5+1 (United States, Russia, China, France, UK and Germany)[34].

In a nutshell, under the JCPOA the key commitments of Iran are to decrease its stockpile of enriched uranium by 98%, from 10.000 kg to 300 kg, to limit all uranium

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[29] Daniel H. Joyner, *Iran's Nuclear Program and International Law, From Confrontation to Accord* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016): 19–20

[30] *Ibid.,* 20–28

[31] Full text of resolution 1696 is available at : https://www.un.org/press/en/2006/sc8792.doc.htm, (accessed April 17, 2019)

[32] Daniel H. Joyner, *op. cit.,* 34–39

[33] Noemi M. Rocca, *op. cit.,* 4–5

[34] Text of the plan is available at: http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/statements-eeas/docs/iran_agreement/iran_joint-comprehensive-plan-of-action_en.pdf, (accessed April 18, 2019)

enrichment activities, to place over two-thirds of its centrifuges in storage, reducing the number of active centrifuges from 19,000 to 6,104, to redesign and rebuild the heavy-water facility at Arak and to implement an additional protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)[35]. It is important to note that these agreements under the JCPOA are not permanent, as they represent only a temporary solution for the next 10 to 15 years. In response to all these concessions from Iran, the P5+1 agreed to lift all economic sanctions and in the case of a successful implementation of the JCPOA, the international community will recognize as legitimate Iran's civil nuclear program[36].

The signing of the JCPOA was celebrated as a historic moment and as a new dawn for US-Iran relations. Optimism was through the roof. But as a Romanian saying goes: "every miracle lasts only 3 days". To be fair, this particular miracle lasted a bit more than 3 days, approximately 3 years. The first signs of trouble for the JCPOA were the 2016 election of Donald Trump as U.S. President, Trump repeatedly calling the JCPOA a "bad deal" during his campaign and promised to pull the U.S. out of it.

True to his words, in May 2018 Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of the JCPOA, calling it "decaying and rotten"[37]. Furthermore, in November 2018, all economic sanctions that were lifted under the JCPOA and the lifting of which helped the Iranian economy reach a double-digit growth[38], were reimposed by the U.S.[39].

CONCLUSIONS

The impact of the 2018 actions of the U.S. on Iran and its geopolitical goals and strategy is not fully clear yet. However, we can draw a few conclusions from what transpired until now.

The first assumption when the sanctions were reimposed was that the economy of Iran would suffer. That part turned out to be true, even more than expected, but

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[35] Daniel H. Joyner, *op. cit.*, 223–224

[36] *Ibid.*, 226

[37] "Iran nuclear deal: Trump pulls US out in break with Europe allies" in *BBC News*, May 9, 2018, available at: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-44045957, (accessed April 21, 2019)

[38] Amir Paivar, "Nuclear deal: Is Iran's economy better off now?" in *BBC News*, May 4, 2018, available at: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43975498, (accessed April 21, 2019)

[39] Lesley Wroughton and Parisa Hafezi, "U.S. reimposes Iran sanctions, Tehran decries 'bullying'" in *Reuters*, November 5, 2018, available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-sanctions/u-s-reimposes-tough-curbs-on-iran-tehran-hits-at-bullying-idUSKCN1NA0ZR, (accessed April 21, 2019)

Iran is by now accustomed to life under sanctions and the regime has developed tools to manage this scenario from past experiences[40].

What was perhaps not expected was the international response to the actions of the U.S. What many analysts expected to happen was that, as usual, some European allies of the U.S. would follow the example of Washington, and perhaps that rivals like China and Russia would not. What actually happened was that the European allies defied Washington and sided with Iran and not only did not impose any sanctions but created a special mechanism to avoid them[41]. It is in fact China, the new rival of the U.S., which seems to be the one that actually acquiesces to the desires of Donald Trump and is severely cutting its trade with Iran, much to the surprise and despair of Tehran[42].

How much will the new sanctions achieve the goals of Washington it is unclear, just as even those goals are unclear. Currently it seems the goal is somewhere between a new deal and regime change, both of which are extremely unlikely if not completely impossible under current conditions.

For Iran, the JCPOA was a huge victory, and the fact that the U.S. pulled out of it was a huge blow, but one that Iran is prepared to mitigate, though the cost will be high. For the moment, Iran seems to be waiting with patience, especially as the Europeans seem willing to defy Washington and maintain the deal and trade. Iran will not exit the deal for now, as Tehran is still supported by the rest of the P5+1 and it will wait and hope for a change in the White House in 2020[43]. Predictions on what happens after 2020 are pretty much without base, as everything depends on who will win the U.S. Presidential elections. If Donald Trump secures a second term at the White House, the JCPOA will probably be abandoned, as Trump will act much more freely on foreign policy and will perhaps antagonize Iran even further, at which point Tehran will see little reasons in obeying the concessions it made in 2015.

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[40] Keith Johnson, "Iran's Economy Is Crumbling, but Collapse Is a Long Way Off" in *Foreign Policy*, February 13, 2019, available at: https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/02/13/irans-economy-is-crumbling-but-collapse-is-a-long-way-off-jcpoa-waivers-sanctions/, (accessed April 22, 2019)

[41] "UK, France and Germany create payments system to trade with Iran" in *BBC News*, January 31, 2019, available at: https://www.bbc.com/news/business-47072020, (accessed April 22, 2019)

[42] Esfandyar Batmanghelidj, "Why China Isn't Standing By Iran" in *Bloomberg*, March 27, 2019, available at: https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2019-03-27/spooked-by-u-s-sanctions-china-isn-t-standing-by-iran, (accessed April 22, 2019)

[43] Henry Rome, "Why Iran Waits" in *Foreign Affairs*, January 10 2019, available at: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iran/2019-01-10/why-iran-waits, (accessed 22 April 2019)

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THE FAILURES OF THE BOLIVARIAN REVOLUTION AND PERSPECTIVES TOWARDS TRANSITION IN VENEZUELA

Federico CAPRARI[*]

ABSTRACT

When Hugo Chavez came to power in 1999 a substantial change in Venezuela's economic, political and social life took place known as the Bolivarian Revolution. After Nicolas Maduro continued this process, the country's life standards have worsened over the recent years. A comprehensive analysis of the main structural problems of the Revolution will be conducted, starting with the strong presence of the military in the economic and political power of the country, the long-lasting economic stagnation and recession due to massive fiscal deficit and external debt, hyperinflation, corruption and economic mismanagement, as well as the restriction of political rights. In the end, a conclusion is provided on whether the country can move towards a transition to repair the structural damages caused by the Revolution, considering other transition cases and addressing the different paths the country may take.

Keywords: *Venezuela, Economic Crisis, Geopolitics, Latin America*

INTRODUCTION

During the last years, Venezuela has been in the crosshairs of the world, due to the serious economic and humanitarian crisis that the country has suffered. There are several images of protests, shortages, stacks of bills without value, civilians fleeing the country, among many others. The seriousness of the situation becomes even more paradoxical since the country has the largest oil reserves in the world, along with a multitude of mineral and agricultural resources, as well of tourist exploitation possibilities.

There are several causes that have led the country to such a situation. There is a tendency to adopt affirmations of an ideological nature with respect to them, in order to justify a certain political drift that the country can acquire. The objective

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of this paper is to present, based on verifiable facts, an overview of the situation in Venezuela, with the least possible ideological tinge, analyzing the perspectives of different authors and extracting technical data. To this end, an innocuous analysis is rejected, since the complexity of Venezuelan politics and economy requires a certain complexity, in order to offer better future projections for the country.

In the first place, what have been the origins of the failure of the Bolivarian revolutionary model, if they were really a consequence of external actions of constant attack, according to the rhetoric of the ruling government, or if it was rather a consequence of political and economic malpractice, or if both factors are present.

Regarding the political drift that the country can follow, it is worth asking whether the alternative of new opposition leaders such as Juan Guaidó is viable and how likely they are to succeed. On the other hand, it is necessary to understand the different mechanisms that the Bolivarian government can adopt, both to adapt to a possible political change or to continue maintaining power. In this sense, there are various uncertainties about the direction the country can take, based on the different proposals of the entities with interests in the country. So a conclusion is offered on the different paths that the country can take based on the elements analyzed, with comparisons on cases of countries that have experienced similar transformative processes, and which are the options with the greatest possibilities, their benefits, and their risks.

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
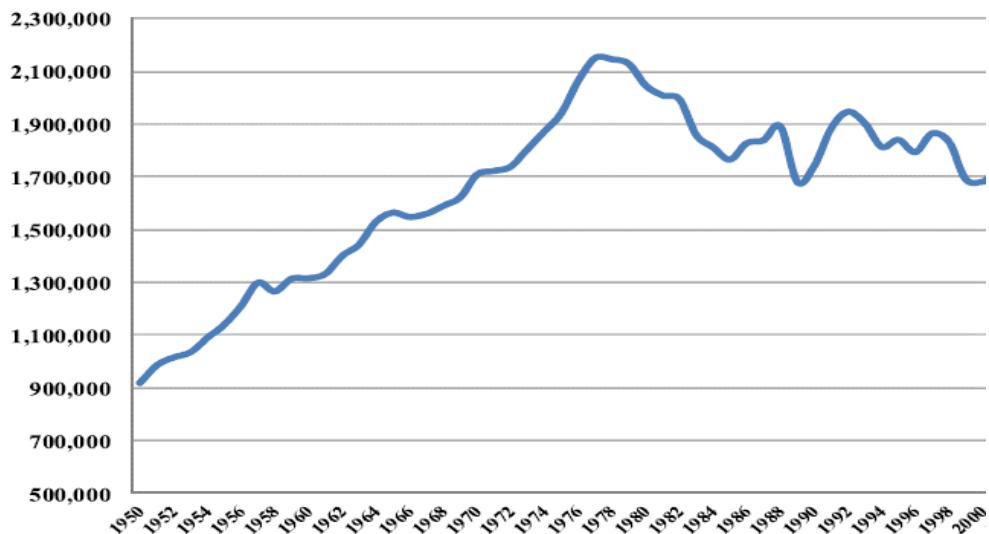
Historically, the pattern of Venezuelan development had few inclusive capacities towards a broad sector of the population. This was mainly due to the lack of development of the country's infrastructure to boost domestic trade, as well as the lack of active investment in effective agricultural production methods, with the agricultural sector being the main economic factor during most of the country's history. With the development of the petroleum industry since the 1920s, the State's income increases, generating in the successive decades an economic bonanza that places the country among the richest by GDP per capita in the world (see Figure 1).

However, despite the collective idea of redistributing the income from the new source of wealth to the rest of the economic sectors[1], there is an important lack of

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[1] See the concept of „Sembrar el petróleo" ("sowing oil"), an idea developed by Arturo Uslar Pietri in the 1930s, where petroleum resources were understood as perennial and there was a

economic diversification. In addition, a rentier state is gradually developed, which moves away from the usual financing based on taxes and fees (among others), to focus on the resources generated through the acquisition of foreign exchange for the exported raw materials, in the Venezuelan case, oil. [2] The separation of the citizens influence in state finances produces government methods less consistent with the needs of the population, as well as greater facilities for the proliferation of corruption and lack of financial responsibility in state investments.[3]

Figure 1. *Evolution of GDP per Capita in Purchasing Power Parity, at 1997 prices*
Source: Gutiérrez S., A. (2017). Venezuela's Economic and Social Development
in the Era of Chavism. Latin American Policy, 162.

This situation has been dragging on during the last decades in the country. By the 1980s, the State acquires high levels of external debt as a result of the accumulation of decades of inefficient public management in relation to the wealth produced by the oil exploitation of the country, combined with the international drop of oil's price.[4]

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need to reinvest them in agricultural development, which in the long run would generate greater economic sustenance.

[2] Alejandro S. Gutiérrez, "Venezuela's Economic and Social Development in the Era of Chavism", *Latin American Policy*, (2017): 163.

[3] Asdrúbal Baptista, *Teoría Económica el capitalismo rentista*, (Caracas: Banco Central de Venezuela. 2010).

[4] Diego Restuccia, *The Monetary and Fiscal History of Venezuela (1960–2016)*, (University of Toronto, 2018): 11–12.

The new policy of Carlos Andrés Pérez based on the reduction of state action in the economy through privatization and the lifting of different exchange controls, together with monetary devaluation and economic austerity packages such as price liberalization, generated severe political tension and social discontent, with revolts and episodes of violence such as the *Caracazo*[5]. The increase in poverty, economic instability, and episodes of corruption precipitate the end of Andrés Pérez's government.

Later, Rafael Caldera is sworn in as president, and propels a modification of the previously applied economic policy, increasing the state's role in the economy. However, it continues to deal with a drop in the price of crude oil, which ends up diminishing the available resources of the State, generating greater instability in the country.

Based on the economic situation resulting from the structural problems that afflicted the country, the figure of Hugo Chávez emerges, first leading a failed coup d'état in 1992. Later, he is postulated as a politician capable of agglutinating social discontent in the presidential elections of 1998, with the promise of solving the ills that afflicted the country, such as poverty, low economic diversification, corruption and lack of investment.

Thanks to the 1999 Constituent Assembly, the new government implements a political project with clear ideological components at all institutional levels. It is within the framework of this institutional change that the main characteristics of the Bolivarian Revolution emerge:

In the first place, the role of the armed forces and their relations with the Venezuelan institutions is modified. Hugo Chavez, coming from the military professional field, confers more relevance to this sector, granting greater privileges to the military through the Constitution of 1999. Among these, they are allowed to vote in elections, an issue that increases the political relevance of the armed forces for the State, and, in turn, for the Bolivarian National Armed Forces (FANB) itself, because according to what is established in article 236.6 of the Constitution, the president has the power to promote military officers to higher positions.[6]

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[5] Series of protests occurred from February 27 to March 8, 1989, which left an official data of 276 deaths.

[6] Article 236 of the Constitution: About the powers and obligations of the President of the Republic: [...] 6. Exercise the supreme command of the National Armed Forces, promote their officers from the rank of colonel or colonel or captain or navy captain, and appoint them for the positions that are exclusive to them.

In addition to the new legislative measures adopted, new concepts of an ideological nature arise to justify the normative changes, with the following being particularly relevant:

– Integral defense of the nation;
– Civic-military union;
– Communal power;
– Links with criminal organizations and irregular funding.

1.1. Integral defense of the nation

At a structural level, the military officers ideologically aligned with the government acquire superior hierarchical positions and are assigned to the control of ministries and state enterprises. This measure was born under the justification that they are of great strategic importance for the nation, as ministries directly affect the population, and state companies provide important economic resources for the State[7].

In this sense, members of the FANB have control, among others, of: the Bolivarian National Police, Bolivarian National Intelligence Service, Ministry of Popular Power for Food (in charge of food distribution in the country), Ministry of Popular Power for Interior Relations, Justice and Peace.

In addition, they have management positions in state-owned companies such as PDVSA, CORPOELEC (State-owned energy supplier company), *Compañía Anónima Militar de Industrias Mineras, Petrolíferas y de Gas* (mining industry) among several others.

In order to implement state-sponsored social action plans from different *Misiones*, the participation of other contracted companies is required. These companies are, at the same time, property of businessmen who are followers of the ruling party or political and military members. This situation is similiar to other areas of economic activity of the State, such as the suppliers of ministries and large state-owned companies, which are owned by the same military officer in charge of controlling them. This situation limits the transparency of bids and public tenders, generating different cases of corruption that reduce the available resources of the State.

In response, the mechanisms of civil control over military action are scarce. In the first place, the legislative power can not carry out surveillance actions on the activities of the intelligence or public security sector, nor take measures to correct

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7   Francesca Ramos Pismataro, "Los militares y el deterioro democrático en Venezuela", *Estudios Políticos*, (2018): 260–282. http://doi.org/10.17533/udea.espo.n53a12

dysfunction or bad management in state companies and ministries. These functions are relegated to the military hierarchy, which has the President of the Republic at its head, according to the Constitution.

1.2. Civic-military union

The concept of the "integral defense of the nation" not only refers to the military control of resources and strategic entities for the State but also the ability to respond at all levels to any type of threat. Therefore, it works as a defense mechanism of the State on any type of attack or limitation to its capacity of action, since it is capable of mobilizing resources at any level to avoid any kind of rupture of the ideological precept or state power.[8]

In order to carry out these actions, it is required that in addition to the professional military personnel, the subjects capable of carrying out the defense of the State at any social level need to be expanded. As such a fifth branch of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces arises: the Bolivarian National Militia.

In line with the concept of integral defense of the nation, the Bolivarian national militia is constituted to "... maximize the operational readiness of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces, through the incorporation of the organized people, under the constitutional principle of co-responsibility between the State and the society...".[9] In its organizational base are various elements of civil society (especially workers) that receive training and military weapons, under the premise of ensuring the defense of the nation against possible external attacks, and ensure the proper functioning of the institutional apparatus in the face of possible internal "sabotage". In addition, they collaborate in the management of the different *Misiones* (social plans), implementing them at different levels[10].

Although these militias guarantee the power of the State over local institutions and different areas of the population, through their mere presence or through coercion

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[8] PSUV. Unión cívico-militar se consagró como ecuación perfecta para derrotar el golpe de abril. 2016 http://www.psuv.org.ve/temas/noticias/union-civico-militar-se-consagro-como-ecuacion-perfecta-para-derrotar-golpe-abril/#.XNS18Y4zZPZ.

[9] Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Defensa, Milicia Bolivariana. Visión: Milicia Bolivariana 2019 http://www.milicia.mil.ve/web/?page_id=414

[10] President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Commander in Chief of the FANB, Nicolás Maduro Moros [...] ordered the Popular Units of Integral Defense of the Bolivarian Militia to assume the tasks of food production ..." Comando Estratégico Operacional, Gobierno de Venezuela. Conmemoración del décimo aniversario de la creación de la Milicia Bolivariana. 2019 https://ceofanb.mil.ve/donde-el-pueblo-puede-la-patria-se-crece-2/

since they are an armed force, there is a need to have other entities at a local level with a greater projection on the population. In order to ensure the achievement of the objectives and set the ideological precepts of the state, the concept of "communal power" emerges.

1.3. Communal power

Outside the strictly institutional sphere, the Venezuelan State promoted the creation of different associations and non-governmental organizations with assembly organization, ideologically adept and endowed with state resources[11] as well as institutional responsibilities and government functions. [12]

Officially, these organizations carry out social assistance work in marginal areas or with low economic development, distributing goods from different *Misiones* and taking an active role in their development and achievement. However, the delivery of these goods (usually of first necessity) is done by applying political and ideological criteria, according to which the voters and members of the ruling party have a greater advantage in these assistance plans. [13]

On the other hand, some communal and *colectivos* entities adopt attitudes close to paramilitary organizations. This attitude is mainly developed by the possession and use of weapons for criminal and political purposes, where they act as mechanisms of repression of riots and population control, through violent actions or coercion of prominent elements of the opposition. [14]

In this sense, both the Bolivarian national militia and the organizations within the communal power carry out political work for the State, having a marked ideological component and reinforcing the control of the military apparatus (previously mentioned at the structural level) on the social bases. These organizations, being increasingly endowed with more political weight, fulfill the function of eroding the local and

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[11] Regarding financing methods, see the Organic Law of Public Popular Planning, Section VI. Asamblea Nacional de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela. Ley Orgánica de Planificación Pública y Popular. Gaceta Oficial de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela. 2010

[12] Asamblea Nacional de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela. Ley Orgánica de las Comunas. 2010
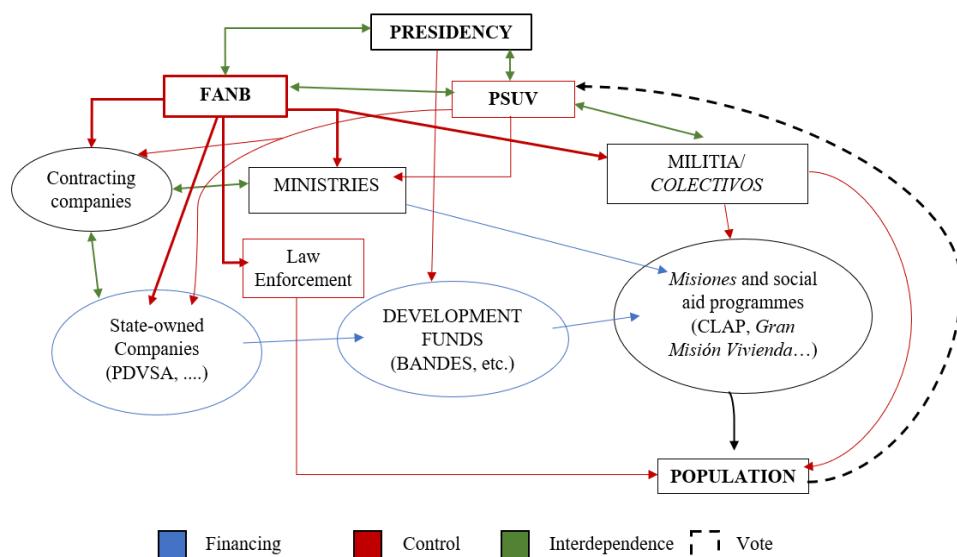
[13] Rosángel Álvarez. "Contraloría social y clientelismo: la praxis de los consejos comunales en Venezuela". *Revista Politeia*, Volume 34, Number 46, (2011)

[14] Observatorio Venezolano de Conflictividad Social. Manifestantes en la mira de Colectivos Paramilitares. 2015 https://www.observatoriodeconflictos.org.ve/oc/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Informe-Manifestantes-en-la-mira-de-paramilitares.pdf

autonomic power of the different provinces of the country, guaranteeing that the central will of the State can be applied throughout the territory.[15]

Combining all this systems, it should be noted that the delivery of important strategic economic sectors to the military, on the basis that it is an entity without political militancy, generates a convenience of this sector with the government. Thus, the will of the presidency has immediate consequences at all state and civilian levels, by the implementation at the institutional level of concepts such as the "civic-military union" and the "integral defense of the nation".

In summary, we can perceive the following scheme of institutional capture by the State at all levels during the Bolivarian Revolution process:

1.4. Links with criminal organizations and irregular funding

Within the organizations of the communal power, the State developed relations of connivance with entities cataloged as criminal or terrorist groups by other States. In this regard, it is noted that groups such as the National Liberation Army (ELN), of Colombian origin, carry out various actions in Venezuelan territory with the

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[15] For more details on institutional erosion, see the report on „Democratic Institutionality, Rule of Law and Human Rights in Venezuela" Organización de Estados Americanos, Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos. Institucionalidad democrática, Estado de derecho y derechos humanos en Venezuela. 2018

complicity of military authorities, as well as local political authorities[16]. The ELN even provides food from the Local Supply and Production Committee (CLAP)[17], among other actions from the local government.

On this line, the Venezuelan state allegedly developed links with global drug trafficking networks, installing the *Cartel de los Soles* (Cartel of the Suns) at the institutional level.[18] According to its operational methods, the benefits obtained from the transport of narcotics financed government policies and increased its international alliances, as well as delivering economic benefits for its members.[19]

These parallel power structures provided constant funding to the state, eroding institutions and increasing the authoritarian drift of the government. It generated a greater interrelation of these criminal groups and the state, which because of their economic interests, are provided each other with mutual political support.

2. ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

Although Chávez placed special emphasis on the lack of diversification and investment in the country when he participated in the 1999 elections, the subsequent management of his government failed to develop a sustainable economic policy. Thus, despite the return to the discourse of redistributing oil revenues to increase and diversify the productive tissue of the country, different events have jeopardized this objective.

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[16] „... the guerrillas exercise a strong social control in some areas of Apure, acting as a de facto state power to resolve disputes among citizens and maintain some kind of order ..." Report on the ELN presence in Venezuela. InsightCrime. ELN en Venezuela. 2019 https://es.insightcrime.org/venezuela-crimen-organizado/eln-en-venezuela/

[17] In this regard, in the report *El negocio redondo con las CLAP en Venezuela (*The business with the CLAP in Venezuela) you can see explicitly images of CLAP products stamped with the ELN logo and distributed by its members. Testigo Directo. El negocio redondo con las CLAP en Venezuela. 2018 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=267rugWgrlY

[18] Insight Crime. Narcotráfico en el régimen venezolano: El "Cartel de los Soles". 2018 https://es.insightcrime.org/investigaciones/narcotrafico-en-el-regimen-venezolano-el-cartel-de-los-soles/

[19] Some journalists explain the presence of armed groups such as the ELN in border areas with Colombia to guarantee the passage of narcotics, which, once in Venezuelan territory, are transported by the FANB or state-owned companies abroad. With the income obtained, electoral campaigns from regional allies were financed, as well as from the PSUV itself, it also served to bribe state officials in Venezuela and abroad. Coutinho, L. Hugo Chavez: o espectro. Como o presidente venezuelano alimentou o narcotráfico, financiou o terrorismo e promoveu a desordem global. Sao Paulo: Vestigio. 2018

2.1. Private companies during Bolivarian governments

In the first place, the State adopted a great policy of expropriation and nationalization of companies. This policy was based on the concept of "integral defense of the nation", where an essential variable was economic security in terms of income to the state.

However, these measures were applied demagogically, often with President Chávez appearing on television carrying out one of his famous *regaños* (scoldings), where he criticized the benefits obtained by large companies in the country and threatened them with expropriation[20]. These criticisms made special emphasis on the accumulation of capital of the Venezuelan business class, along with their lack of commitment to the problems that afflicted the most disadvantaged population. Through these scoldings and expropriations, the President could position himself as a defender of the popular classes, by reflecting an explicit "redistribution" of the economic resources from the wealthier classes.

This type of arbitrary measures generated uncertainty in the Venezuelan and international markets. Many companies with important economic interests in the productive activities of the country, and that consequently had made important investments, suffered considerable losses. Consequently, many productive areas remained in the hands of the State; such as oil production, mining, construction, food distribution, agricultural production, telecommunications, banking system, among others.[21]

On the other hand, a price control system was established in the markets, in order to facilitate the access of traded goods to low-income part of society.
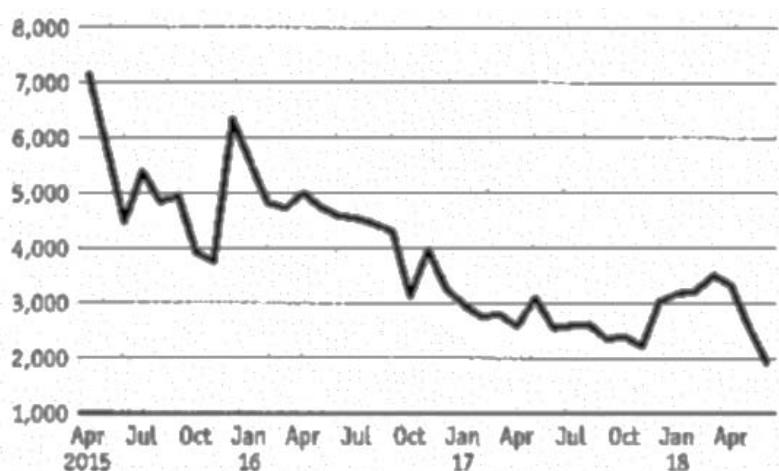
These two measures combined were the basis of the scarcity of essential goods and the inflation suffered years later: The continuous expropriation reduces the number of companies in the market due to the uncertainty generated, and the companies that still operated privately, were forced to sell their products at a price lower than the production costs because of price control. Ergo, an unsustainability in business balances is generated, forcing the private company to suspend its activities, further decreasing the range of available products. Consequently, those goods that

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[20] In this regard, see the video <<*Chávez al presidente del Banco Provincial: „Se lo puedo expropiar ya inmediatamente si quiero"*>> (Chávez to the president of the Banco Provincial: „I can expropriate it immediately if I want to") https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFOJzqEwFwg

[21] Redacción Internacional, EFE. Cronología de nacionalizaciones y expropiaciones en Venezuela desde 2007. El Confidencial. 2015 https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2009-05-14/cronologia-de-nacionalizaciones-y-expropiaciones-en-venezuela-desde-2007_1000565/

are still produced acquire a higher price (on the black market) due to the population's demand for consumption and the low supply, generated by the lack of production companies. All this ends up generating an important inflationary cycle, in addition to a high scarcity of products of first necessity.

Given the lack of supply of domestic products, the state is forced to consume its foreign exchange reserve for the acquisition of imports. This makes the model for satisfying the population's demand for goods economically unsustainable, due to the volatility of the state revenues, excessively dependent on the oil industry[22]:

Figure 2. *Evolution of currency reserves, in millions US $*
Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit, Venezuela Country Report December 2018

On the other hand, the labor market is saturated by the lack of hiring from private companies. Given this, the active population, in order to guarantee its subsistence, tends to the development of economic activities in the underground economy. This fact ends up generating that the State diminishes its source of tax revenue and depends to a greater degree on those incomes generated by the exports of natural resources, thus harming the diversification of state incomes.

2.2. State-owned companies

During the years of the government of Hugo Chávez and Nicolás Maduro, the State applied a large policy of public spending with social purposes in order to

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[22] CEPAL Informe macroeconómico República Bolivariana de Venezuela. 2018 https://repositorio. cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/43964/105/EEE2018_Venezuela_es.pdf

correct the high poverty rates that afflicted the country during practically all its history. Although this objective was partially met, improving the human development indexes[23], a deeper analysis of the measures adopted reveals severe irregularities that limited the sustainability of such a policy.

Of the state companies that generated a significant amount of foreign currency (such as PDVSA or those related to mining), a certain amount of this income was transferred to the country's development funds.

These funds, which include the Economic and Social Development Bank of Venezuela (BANDES), used these resources to finance *Misiones* and social projects[24]. The decision of the projects to be financed and the use to which the resources of the funds were to be allocated were at the discretion of the presidency, generating a parallel financing method for the state.

The constant transfer of resources from state companies to development funds and banks did not allow these companies to reinvest their profits in their productive capacities, which is why their production ended up being reduced. This situation can be appreciated by adopting PDVSA as a paradigmatic case, where the daily production of barrels of oil was gradually reduced over the years due to the lack of reinvestings. However, this drop in production did not cause serious damage to state budgets, since the price of crude oil remained on the rise. Therefore, the state revenues remained stable, thus allowing the financing of many works and social projects.
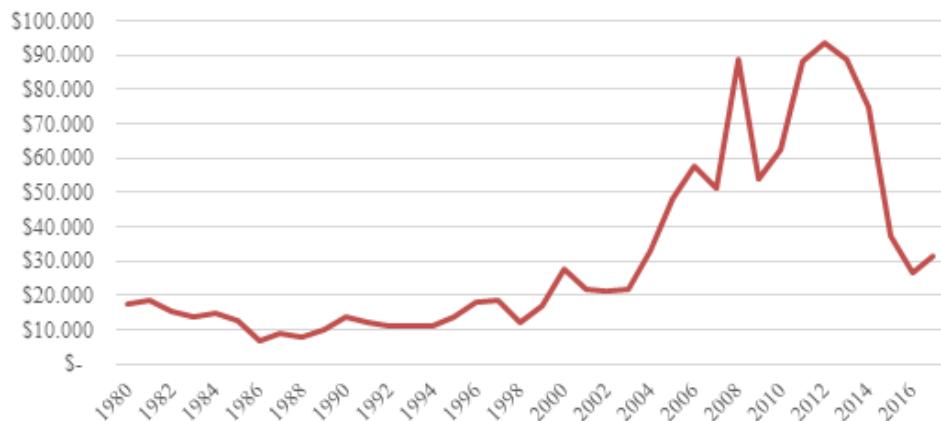
On the other hand, the Venezuelan State entered into the financing of various international projects with the objective of developing an international multipolar community. In this line, the creation of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America[25] (ALBA) was encouraged. In addition, the PETROCARIBE program was developed, where the Venezuelan State exported oil to other member states under very advantageous conditions. These include the exchange of food products, fractionated payment methods at low-interest rates, among other conditions[26].

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[23] The HDI went from 0.670 in 1999 to 0.776 in 2013, meaning an increase of 13.65%. United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Indices and Indicators. 2018 http://hdr. undp.org/sites/default/files/2018_human_development_statistical_update.pdf

[24] Adam Kott. "Assessing Whether Oil Dependency in Venezuela Contributes to National Instability", *Journal of Strategic Security* (2012)
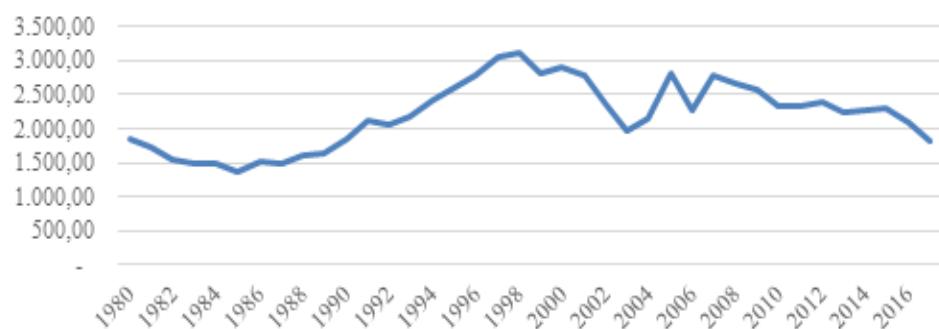
[25] "We, from Venezuela several years ago began to make a proposal [...] our idea, our proposal: the ALBA, Bolivarian Alternative for the peoples of America." Speech by Hugo Chávez in Mar del Plata, Argentina, at the closure of the Third Summit of the Peoples of America. 2005

[26] "Nicaragua provides us with meat and milk, as well as El Salvador and the Dominican Republic provide us different other foods. Soon, Jamaica will provide us cement. These are achievements under Petrocaribe ... „Asdrúbal Chávez, Vice President of refining, trade and supply of PDVSA

Figure 3. *Value of oil exports (US $ millions)*
Source: OPEC Annual Statistical Bulletin, 2017

Figure 4. *Exports of crude oil and petroleum products (barrels/day)*
Source: OPEC Annual Statistical Bulletin, 2017

Selling an internationally valued resource below the market price followed a political and not an economic criterion. In the long term, it meant an increase in costs for the Venezuelan production companies, which, in addition to allocating most of their income to the financing of social projects, were prevented from selling their products at the competitive price of the market, much greater than the purchase price of the member countries of PETROCARIBE[27]

These types of measures were based on a false economic boom situation without a solid productive base. This led to the state companies and institutions, excessively

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in 2011 https://web.archive.org/web/20140111200746/ http://www.lapatilla.com/site/2011/ 06/15/el-nuevo-logro-de-petrocaribe-importaran-cemento-de-jamaica/

[27] Transparencia Venezuela. Venezuela con Petrocaribe aporta más de lo que recibe. 2014 https:// transparencia.org.ve/project/venezuela-con-petrocaribe-aporta-mas-de-lo-que-recibe/

dependent mainly on oil production, having a negative balance after the drop in the price of oil in international markets. In order to face the costs of the productive operational costs and social projects, the financing of the Venezuelan banking institutions was requested. With the goal of satisfying the demand for credit to cover the budget gap left by the constant transfer of state revenues to development funds, the Central Bank of Venezuela injected Bolivares. Consequently, there is a greater circulation of the national currency in the economy, which, combined with the lack of productivity of private companies due to the control of prices and expropriations, generates a serious inflationary process.

After years of poor economic management, and faced with the effects of the price drop in international oil markets, the Venezuelan Government decided to increase its ideological rhetoric. In this sense, special emphasis was placed on the "economic war driven from the Empire", leaving in the background the serious structural problems sponsored during the Bolivarian years of government.

CONCLUSIONS

As it has been observed throughout the present work about the main causes of the Venezuelan collapse and its responsibilities, the political process initiated by Hugo Chávez known as the Bolivarian Revolution has led to the institutionalization of the presidential will, based on different supports such as the armed forces and paramilitary groups, among others.

In order to avoid the removal from power, the government begins a process of institutional cleansing, increasing the number of high-ranking military officers loyal to the presidency, and showing itself more and more united and dependent of the armed forces.

Therefore, it is necessary to analyze more deeply the own responsibility of the Bolivarian process in the current Venezuelan situation. Technically, it is perceived that the distortions in the market already mentioned did not ensure the sustainability of the economic model, making the long-term collapse of the country inevitable.

In order to make an approach to the possible solution of the current conflict, we must take into account several factors:

First, as the armed forces (FANB) are a fundamental element in the support of Maduro's government, the opposition has made many appeals for the abandonment of such support, guaranteeing amnesty for those officials who refuse to continue

with the Bolivarian system. In this sense, the military hierarchy of the FANB must have the perspective of being able to maintain a part of its privileges and benefits (either by directing ministries or by the owning companies) in order to abandon the Maduro government and accept a transitional government. In similar regimes sustained by a large military component, such as that of Ceaușescu in Romania, at a given moment, and given the high pressure for the change of government, the internal elements with positions of power abandon their support of the president. This change of loyalty is carried out with the fear that a sudden change of government may affect their benefits and privileges, which is why the ruling elite opts for a political transition that eliminates the main elements that generate discord, in the Romanian case, the figure of Ceaușescu.

These types of transitions have also been shown in other countries of the former Soviet Union. However, the problem remains that the dominant political elite becomes an economic elite, with great power of influence in the decision-making process in the country. For these purposes, it is preferable to apply a gradual process of democratic improvement, accepting the presence of these elements of oligarchic connotations, rather than the abrupt change of government through coups d'état or military interventions. Direct actions for seizing power generate significant damage to a government's legitimacy and opens the door to successive attempts with brusque methods for conquering power. For this reason, a special effort should be made to project a long-term transition that has the capacity to assimilate the elements of the previous Bolivarian system and ensure at the same time the sustainability of a democratic model.

If this perspective is achieved, a confrontation can be expected between the institutional forces against the different civil and paramilitary elements, of greater ideological component, that will still defend the Bolivarian revolution. Thus, it can be foreseen that in the event of militias and *colectivos* losing effective government power, these will end up being diluted into criminal groups that, lacking state funding, will require other means of illegal financing. This can lead to an important problem for the democratic stability and public security of the country (currently quite damaged) since these groups are armed and have territorial control. It will, therefore, be the task of an eventual transitional government to deal with both the necessary economic adjustments and the presence of armed groups that undermine their power. In this sense, the FANB and law-enforcement agencies will have an essential role, which can give them long-term legitimacy if they manage to defeat these parastatal groups.

The recent actions at the political stage, aimed at demonstrating the lack of power of President Maduro, must be carried out gradually and without violent calls, since the repression methods established during the years of the Bolivarian government continue to have sufficient capacity to maintain the presidency safe.

On the other hand, other possible scenarios must also be considered. Although the current government of Nicolás Maduro has severe financing limitations, the rise in oil production along with the increase in the price of crude oil may lengthen the transitional process. If the government of Maduro manages to partially rebuild its finances, it can be expected a longer persistence of Bolivarian rule, as long as it is able to maintain the entire institutional apparatus that supports it. If we consider that a Bolivarian government can remain in power, the best alternative to project a political change would be to wait for a different Bolivarian president that approaches the opposition's positions, which could end up being an important transition element, as well as it was, within its own characteristics, Gorbachev for the USSR in the 80s.

On the other hand, and following with less-likely scenarios, an entire opposition government could be expected, which will take an active role in the elimination of Bolivarian institutional elements. This option, although it has the capacity to make profound changes in a short time, has severe limitations to guarantee the democratic stability of the country. Since many elements of the FANB have clear interests with the Bolivarian government, the prospect of being removed from these interests in an abrupt manner generates tension and increases the possibilities of new military uprisings, which can put at risk the democratic projections of the country.

As it has been appreciated, many are the options on the table for the resolution of the Venezuelan conflict. An important element to keep in mind is that all political changes, due to the convoluted system of institutional interdependencies, must go through the FANB, which will have a primary role in an eventual government change. If the political process does not take into account the interests of the military hierarchy, it will doom to fail any attempt to establish a democratic and legal state with future prospects.

In the economic sphere, in addition to the usual financing that a possible government of an entirely Bolivarian character may receive, it is worth noting that other political options will have international support for the implementation of reforms in the country. It is interesting to see what development the Venezuelan oil industry may have, since one of the best chances is that it will remain nationalized, although increasing its cooperation with private oil companies in order to increase the country's

oil production. It is unlikely that the oil industry will be one of the firsts to be privatized, due to the high dependence that a transitional government would have on oil revenues, caused by the low economic diversification resulting from the gradual destruction of the productive tissue of the country. However, an opposition government would place special emphasis on the privatization of secondary state enterprises, along with the reduction of the weight of the state in the economy in terms of exchange control and prices, liberalizing a significant part of the country's economy.

All these paths can be considered on the present date. However, history shows us that sudden events can change the forecasts already made. Therefore, although the different perspectives and solutions on the Venezuelan conflict have been taken into account, unpredicted future events could be expected.

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EU ON THE GLOBAL TECH STAGE.
THE ROLE OF INNOVATION IN FOSTERING
EUROPEAN COMPETITIVENESS AND GROWTH

Ioana CICEO[*]

ABSTRACT

Technology and research are among the main drivers of economic growth and of particular importance for maintaining high levels of competitiveness in a global market marked by increasingly fierce competition. In order to turn technological progress and research results into new and better services and products an innovation policy becomes necessary. As such it refers to a set of actions "intended to raise the quantity and efficiency" of those activities meant to create, adapt and adopt "new or improved products, processes, or services" for increasing "productivity, profits or market share, with the ultimate goal to increase their competitiveness in the long run"[1]. Innovation policy lies at the intersection between research and technological development policy, on the one hand, and industrial policy, on the other, and aims to create a conducive framework for bringing ideas to market. This article aims to analyse how the European Union supports innovation by means of public policy and at the same time reinforces Member States' undertakings in this area. Given the limitations imposed on this contribution, attention will be focused on the main boosters for policy intervention in the EU context and how these in return have helped EU in increasing its competitivity on the global tech stage.

Key words: *European Union, innovation policy, technology, competitivity, economic growth*

The relationship between innovation and economic growth was first highlighted by the Austrian economist Joseph A. Schumpeter in his fundamental work *Theorie der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung* (1934) and later expanded into a concept of creative destruction, whereby the "process of industrial mutation […] incessantly revolutionizes the economic structures from within, destroying the old and creating new ones"[2]. In other words, innovation and new discoveries trigger a continuous process of product

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[1] Robin Cowan; Gert van de Paal, *Innovation policy in a knowledge-based economy. A merit study commissioned by the European Commission Enterprise Directorate General*, Brussels: European Commission (2000): 9.
[2] Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (London, New York: Routledge, [1942]/2003), 83.

transformation by which changes in technology and business models make obsolete the skills and the economic conditions that contributed to the competitive advantage of successful organisations. According to his opinion, innovation as the "fundamental impulse that sets and keeps the capitalist engine in motion comes from the new consumers' goods, the new methods of production or transportation, the new markets, the new forms of industrial organisation that capitalist enterprise creates"[3]. This means that innovation policies need to cover a broad range of issues from putting new inventions into practice to carrying out any new combination of productive resources that amounts to the setting of new forms and means of production.

Ever since the relationship between innovation and economic growth had been revealed it has become the subject of numerous theoretical and empirical studies. The highest recognition of this extremely close relationship came last year with the awarding of the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, commonly referred to as the Nobel Prize in Economics, to Paul M. Romer for "integrating technological innovations into long-run macroeconomic analysis"[4], a theory that he had developed since 1986 and later specifically focused on the endogenous role of technological change[5]. Almost at the time when Romer presented for the first time his idea on the relationship between innovation and economic development, Robert Solow, a distinguished American economist from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology received the Nobel Prize for Economics for his theory on long term economic growth in which technological advance although important played only an exogenous role[6]. Romer's theory was in fact a reaction to this already established theory on economic development. In effect, Romer and Solow have become the exponents of two highly influential schools of thought on the relationship between innovation and growth.

For long the innovation was considered to be specific to the company, paving the way to a constant process of "differentiation among firms, based on their different abilities to innovate because of different internal routines and competencies"[7].

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3   *Ibid*., 82–83.
4   Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, *Scientific Background on the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2018: Economic Growth, Technological Change, and Climate Change*. (Stockholm: Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences), 45.
5   Paul M. Romer, "Endogenous Technological Change" *Journal of Political Economy* 98, no. 5 (1990): 71–102.
6   Robert M. Solow, "A Contribution to the Theory of Economic Growth" *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 70, no. 1 (1956): 65–94.
7   Mariana Mazzucato, *The Entrepreneurial State. Debunking Public vs. Private Sector Myths* (London, New York: Anthem Press, 2013), 56.

Nevertheless, in order to be able to successfully compete, companies needed access to technological capabilities and knowledge. From this perspective, competition not only constantly fosters differences between firms, but at the same time pays a key role in the selection of those firms that are capable to survive and further develop from those that are doomed to disappear from the market due to their inability to come up with something new. Still, as Arrow has demonstrated "There is really no need for the firm to be the fundamental unit of organisation in invention[…] other forms of organisation, such as research institutes financed by industries, the government, and private philanthropy, could be made to play an even livelier role than they now do"[8]. The "evolutionary" and Schumpeterian approach to the study of firm behaviour and competition has led to a "systems of innovation" perspective of the policy in which what matters is the understanding of how companies of different types are incorporated into a system at sectoral, regional, national and European level.

The research questions the present paper tries to answer refer first to the identification of the rationale offered by the European Union for its efforts to stimulate innovation and to create an enabling environment for the technological transfer. Next, this research will explore the relationship between the European Union and the Member States in terms of innovation policy in order to identify whether the aim is to create an innovation system at European level in the sense described by Borras[9] or to reinforce the national systems of innovation conceived as networks of institutions in the public and private sectors whose activities and interactions initiate, import, modify and diffuse technologies[10]. In connection with this second research question, a number of issues will need to be clarified regarding the objectives of the European-wide strategies. Thus, we shall see if what is being pursued is a convergence of national innovation systems or just a gradual erosion of them until their complete dissolution. Then, in any of the two situations considered, that is, both in the situation where the objective is to create a European innovation system and in the case where the aim is to strengthen the national innovation systems while ensuring their

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[8] Kenneth J. Arrow, "Economic Welfare and the Allocation of Resources for Invention" National Bureau of Economic Committee for Economic Research, Committee on Economic Growth of the Social Science Research Council, *The Rate and Direction of Inventive Activity: Economic and Social Factors*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, (1962): 624–625.

[9] Susana Borrás, "Introduction to special issue on a European system of innovation" *Science and Public Policy* 31, no. 6 (2004): 422–424.

[10] Bengt-Åke Lundvall(ed.), *National Systems of Innovation: Towards a Theory of Innovation and Interactive Learning*, (London: Pinter, 1992). and Nelson, R.R. (ed.), *National Innovation Systems. A Comparative Analysis*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

convergence, the manner in which internal coherence at European level will be secured given the divergent economic and innovation performances of the Member States must be ascertained.

In order to address these questions a number of relevant policy documents will be studied. That is why for the purpose of the current research, the chosen method is that of content analysis understood in the sense of a "careful, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body of material in an effort to identify patterns, themes, biases and meanings"[11]. In the effort to analyse the path towards economic growth and competitiveness by means of innovation in the European context, we are aware that policy analysis has always been a problematic issue[12] since it is difficult to establish whether in order to consider a policy we have to examine documents (both governmental as well as studies, reports, etc.), the actions undertaken by decision-makers and last but not least statements made by policy makers. Nevertheless, for the purpose of this analysis we intend to focus on EU documents relevant for the topic of the present investigation and conduct the research in the form of a qualitative research analysis based on the method put forward by Mayring[13]. Accordingly, we will organise the research proceeding from identification of relevant documents, then explaining the context in which the respective documents were drafted, the aims pursued and their defining elements, in order to move on to identifying the categories subject to analysis and interpreting them taking into account previous research on the proposed topic and of the most suitable investigation techniques – summarizing content analysis, explicative content analysis, structuring content analysis.

In view of the considerations listed above, the present research will be organised in three main parts. In the first stage, an overview of the specialized literature will be carried out in order to establish what are the main motivations that justify the public intervention in the field of innovation. Then, the public policy measures aimed at fostering innovation and technology transfer at European level will be evaluated in order to identify the motivations offered for a public intervention in this area. In the last part, we will attempt to establish which are the parameters in which it is intended to configure the relationship between the European level and the Member States in terms of innovation.

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[11] Lindsay Prior, "Content Analysis" in: *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Patricia Leavy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 349.

[12] *Ibid*., 366.

[13] Philipp Mayring, *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse. Grundlagen und Techniken*, 12th ed., (Weinheim, Basel: Beltz, 2015).

1. PUBLIC INTERVENTION
FOR THE SAKE OF INNOVATION?

The perception on innovation understood in the sense of "production of knowledge"[14] has come to change increasingly over the years especially after the publication of remarkable works as those of Arrow[15], Boulding[16] and Buchanan[17]. It became clear that innovation is a key element in the transformation of the economy influencing the quality of life, distribution of power and wealth within a society, expansion of the infrastructure, increase in employment and last but not least global competitivity. Consequently, it needs to be regarded as a public good that abets spill over and dissemination among different actors in the economic system. In line with the New Growth Theory[18] investment in knowledge accumulation plays a more decisive role than investment in physical capital. It is true that firms need to maintain a high level of innovativeness and entrepreneurial creativity in order to maintain their competitivity, but it is all the same true that they need to rely on external sources of R&D in order to sustain their innovation activities. The experience has shown that the long-term competitiveness depends on (1) the access of the local companies to knowledge and (2) a system that supports the innovation processes[19]. According to Porter, the academic literature identifies different ways of spill over and dissemination of knowledge towards the business sector – directly, thus leading to new market opportunities for companies or the creation of new ones, or indirectly via codified knowledge (published in academic journals or communicated in conferences and seminars), tacit knowledge (transferred through face-to-face communication) or as

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[14] Kenneth J. Arrow, "Economic Welfare and the Allocation of Resources for Invention" in: National Bureau of Economic Committee for Economic Research, Committee on Economic Growth of the Social Science Research Council, *The Rate and Direction of Inventive Activity: Economic and Social Factors*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, (1962): 609.

[15] *Ibid*., 609–626.

[16] Kenneth E. Boulding, "The Economics of Knowledge and the Knowledge of Economics" *American Economic Review* 56, no.2 (1966): 1–13.

[17] James M. Buchanan, *The Demand and Supply of Public Goods*, (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1968).

[18] Paul M. Romer, "Increasing returns and long-run growth" *Journal of Political Economy* 94, no. 5 (1986): 1002–1037. Philippe Aghion; Peter Howitt, "A model of growth through creative destruction" *Econometrica* 60, (1992): 323–351. and Charles I. Jones, "Sources of U.S. economic growth in a world of ideas" *American Economic Review* 92, no. 1 (2002): 220–239.

[19] Ben Vermeulen, "Innovation Networks for Regional Development. Overview and Contributions" in: *Innovation Networks for Regional Development Concepts, Case Studies, and Agent-Based Models*, ed. Vermeulen, Ben and Praid, Manfred (Springer, 2017), 4.

a result of labour mobility[20]. Given the limits imposed on this research in the subsequent sections we shall focus strictly on the institutions and policy structures that help creating a technology-intensive infrastructure that contribute to the dissemination of knowledge, proceeding from the assumption that increased competitiveness and economic growth will only be fully realized in an environment that favours the interaction in 'the production, diffusion and use of new, and economically useful, knowledge'[21] also known as a system of innovation.

Systems of innovation are defined as 'the network of institutions in the public and private sectors whose activities and interactions initiate, import, modify and diffuse new technologies'[22]. From this perspective, the focus is laid on how knowledge is distributed throughout the economy, often reflecting the crucial role of the state in influencing this distribution. Innovation processes take place within national[23] and regional[24] innovation systems. An innovation system fosters research and development activities. Facilities such as public research institutes, industrial cooperatives, research services industry and education institutes affect the transfer, absorption, imitation, exploitation and recombination of new technological knowledge. Financing agencies, intellectual property protection, market creation mechanisms, etc. indirectly stimulates research and development. All these actors take an active role in modelling the innovation systems in which they participate.

Policy instruments to stimulate competitiveness and economic development can seek to create an innovation system, modify the industry knowledge base (on specialization versus diversification debate), or increase the dynamic efficiency of innovation networks. The rate of adoption for an emerging technology is influenced by how well it is understood and trusted. Potential adopters may feel anxious or at

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[20] Lucio Cassia; Alessandra Colombelli; Stefano Paleari, "Firms' growth: Does the innovation system matter?" in: *Structural Change and Economic Dynamics* 20, (2009): 213.

[21] Bengt-Åke Lundvall (ed.), *National Systems of Innovation: Towards a Theory of Innovation and Interactive Learning*, (London: Pinter, 1992), 2.

[22] Chris Freeman, "The 'National System of Innovation' in historical perspective" *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 19, (1995): 5–24.

[23] Chris Freeman, "The 'National System of Innovation' in historical perspective" in: *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 19, (1995): 5–24. Bengt-Åke Lundvall. (ed.), *National Systems of Innovation: Towards a Theory of Innovation and Interactive Learning*, (London: Pinter, 1992). Richard R. Nelson (ed.), *National Innovation Systems. A Comparative Analysis*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). and Charles Edquist, *Systems of Innovation: Technologies, Institutions and Organizations, (*Pinter, 1997).

[24] Philip Cooke, "Regional innovation systems: Competitive regulation in the new Europe" *Geoforum* 23, no. 3, (1992): 365–382. and Philip Cooke, "Regional Innovation Systems, Clusters, and the Knowledge Economy" *Industrial and Corporate Change* 10, no. 4 (01.12.2001): 945–974.

least sceptical about embracing a wholly new system – in particular, one that requires companies to rethink traditional ways of managing and sharing their data.

Bearing in mind the above-mentioned considerations, the following section of this research will try to address the questions on how the European Union has come to develop its own innovation policy and what were the specific stumbling blocks in establishing this policy. It attempts to identify how the European Union's preference for certain policy instruments has come to change over the years in response to the need to remove the most important hurdles to its ambition to become a relevant player on the global tech stage. In doing so, we will overview the most important documents that accompanied the evolution of this policy but bearing in mind that in the process input had been brought from various official advisory and different other lobby groups.

2. AN EVERLASTING QUEST FOR A EUROPEAN INNOVATION STRATEGY?

At EU level, it is widely acknowledged that "[f]inding ways to steer economic growth, and the European policy agenda, is difficult but necessary"[25]. Although not specifically enshrined in the original treaties of the European Union as a common policy, cooperation in the field research was mentioned several times both in the Euratom Treaty and in the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC). Nevertheless, an embryonic common research policy came into existence in 1973 following a Council decision based on Article 235 of the EEC Treaty that gave the then European Community implicit competences to "take the appropriate measures" in those cases when "action by the Community should prove necessary" for attaining those objectives for which the "Community Treaty has not provided the necessary powers." Ever since 1984, European Community research and technological development activities have been defined and implemented by a series of multi-annual Framework Programmes (FP) – FP1 (1984–87), FP2 (1987–91), FP3 (1990–94), FP4 (1994–98), FP5 (1998–2002), FP6 (2002–06), FP7 (2007–13) and, currently, Horizon 2020 (H2020, 2014–20) – which have been the main financial tools through which the European Union has supported research and development in almost all scientific disciplines.

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[25] Mariana Mazzucato, *Mission-Oriented Research & Innovation in the European Union. A problem-solving approach to fuel innovation-led growth* (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2018), 4.

By comparison, innovation policy is still young. The EU itself started pondering about an innovation policy only in the beginning of the 1990s. The European Commission's *White Paper on Growth, competitiveness, and employment* approved by the European Council on 11 December 1993 and considered to be the "political legacy" of Jacques Delors, at that time still president of the European Commission[26], accepted that Europe needs to reinforce its knowledge base and to invest in information infrastructures[27]. The document also rendered it mandatory to speed-up "the incorporation of the results of basic research into marketable innovations" and that in order to achieve this objective, "a consistent set of pragmatic incentives" needed to be developed for "economic agents considering investments related to the new products and production processes, including new and innovative forms of work organisation". It was determined that this would "create a 'virtuous' circle of confidence among consumers and investors in a plan for society that is conducive to a sustainable economic future." A number of policy instruments at macroeconomic level, as tax regulations, and in particular tax-deduction schemes as well as sector-specific policy measures would be conducive to a favourable climate for the innovative activities and their further dissemination[28]. These first reflections on the necessity of a fully-fledged European innovation policy were extensively elaborated in a Green Paper on innovation (1995) and paved the way for the First Action Plan on Innovation in Europe (1996). They played an important role in the formulation of the Lisbon Strategy whose aim was to make Europe "to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" within a time frame of just ten years[29]. Further elaborated at subsequent European summits, the Lisbon Strategy established "investing more in knowledge and innovation" as an area for priority action[30] with the goal to increase the level of expenditure on R&D to 3% of GDP with 2/3 financed by business[31] and laid the foundations for the European Research Area as a system of scientific research programs integrating the scientific resources of the European Union (EU). The framework programs were adjusted to support

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[26] Henriette Müller, "Setting Europe's agenda: the Commission presidents and political leadership" *Journal of European Integration* 39, no. 2 (2017): 136–137.

[27] European Commission, *Growth, competitiveness, and employment. The challenges and ways forward into the 21st century*, White Paper COM (93) 700 final, (Brussels, 05.12.1993): 10.

[28] *Ibid.*, 167

[29] European Council, *Presidency Conclusions*, (Lisbon, 23–24.03.2000).

[30] European Council, *Presidency Conclusions*, (Brussels, 23–24.03.2006): 4.

[31] European Council, *Presidency Conclusions*, (Barcelona, 15–16.03.2002): 20.

these ambitious goals, whereas the Open Method Coordination was adopted in order to provide a common framework for coordinating actions to be taken at the Member states level.

Nevertheless, despite helping to "build broad consensus on the reforms that the EU needs" and expanding the "scope for mutual learning and spreading good practices, taking account of national contexts and traditions"[32], the "EU has failed to close the productivity growth gap with leading industrialized countries" and "total R&D expenditure in the EU expressed as a percentage of GDP only improved marginally (from 1.82% in 2000 to 1.9% in 2008). The Commission decided, however, that it would "be too simplistic to conclude that the strategy has failed because these targets were not met"[33]. Finally, the Lisbon Strategy was replaced by Europe 2020 Strategy. Innovation was laid at the core of this new Strategy[34] and Innovation Union was made one of its flagship initiatives[35]. Its over 34 commitments have included pioneering proposals like the European Innovation Partnerships, to tackle major societal challenges and give the EU enough momentum for major breakthroughs. The Partnerships were regarded as a new way of bringing together actors at EU, national and regional levels and of combining supply and demand-side tools for innovation. The Innovation Union also introduced the strategic use of public procurement budgets to finance innovation, comprehensive indicators clustered in Innovation Union Scoreboard, the Regional Innovation Scoreboard and the Innovation Output Indicator, and a European knowledge market for patents and licensing. It included a reinforced Risk Sharing Finance Facility that better supported public procurement for innovative ideas and successfully supplemented the financing through the framework programmes. Moreover, if in FP6 and FP7 the emphasis was mainly laid on technological research, starting with H2020 the focus gradually shifted towards innovation, delivering faster growth and identification of solutions for end users.

Proceeding from this brief overview of the most important milestones in the development of an European innovation policy, in the last section of this research we will try to assess how the balance between national and European level of governance has shifted over the years. For this purpose, we shall employ the method of content

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[32] European Commission (a), *Lisbon Strategy evaluation document*, Commission Staff Working Document SEC(2010) 114 final, (02.02.2010): 3.

[33] *Ibid.*, 3–7.

[34] European Commission (b), *Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*, COM(2010) 2020 final, (03.03.2010).

[35] European Commission (c), *Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative. Innovation Union*, Communication SEC(2010) 1161, COM(2010) 546 final, (06.10.2010).

analysis and apply this on a number of four Commission communications that dealt with the role of an innovation policy for boosting EU position on the global tech stage – the document from 1993 in which the first references to the need for an innovation policy were made, then the one from 2010 on Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative on an Innovation Union, subsequently the 2015 State of the Innovation Union and last the 2018 document on a Renewed European agenda for research and innovation. As the purpose is to assess the interplay between national and supranational intervention in terms of innovation policy, we will complement the content analysis with a comparative analysis in order to better evaluate the evolution of a policy considered essential for the international competitiveness of the European Union.

3. EUROPEAN INNOVATION POLICY – NATIONAL, SUPRANATIONAL OR BOTH?

All the documents mentioned above identify numerous obstacles and pitfalls in the path of a full and cogent innovation policy for the European Union – expensive patenting, market fragmentation, slow standard-setting, skills shortages etc. Our research will start exactly from these specific hindrances and the way they were perceived in order to design the relationship between the European level and the national level of governance in such a way as to allow the release of the positive energies that facilitate the innovation. The hypothesis from which we start is that although the effort to remove these stumbling blocks for innovation played a major role in fostering the synergies between the Member States and the European Union and adjusting and readjusting their relations in order to create those "networks of institutions in the public and private sectors whose activities and interactions" were deemed as necessary for improved conditions for the launching, import, adaptation and diffusion of technologies, the barriers identified 25 years ago at that time when innovation made its first inroads into the policy process, continue to be present and create problems regarding the transfer of innovative knowledge.

Ever since 1993 it was considered that it was necessary to mobilize resources and channel endeavours at European level in a partnership between the public and private sectors in order to stamp out market fragmentation and the lack of major interoperable links. Back then the vital challenge was related to the drawing of maximum benefit from the single market. Fragmentation had to be overcome through interconnection and increased interoperability, by streamlining and rationalizing rules and

regulations. The joint efforts of the European Union and the Member States governments had to impart impetus for making the most of the single market; for creating the strategic trans-European networks for transport infrastructure, energy and telecommunications; for supporting the development and adaptation of small and medium-sized enterprises; for pursuing the social dialogue between the two sides of industry and for laying the foundations of the information society[36]. Although the idea was reckoned as controversial for some Member States, a common industrial policy was also regarded as a goal worthy of consideration but without undermining competition policy. According to the document, most of the work had to be done at national level. Aware of the differing situations of the Member States, it was considered important not to formulate possible solutions in "unduly concise terms". Member States were to have the freedom to choose from the document those elements which they consider to be able to make a positive contribution to their own action. As far as it was concerned, the European Union was to act as a catalyst. On the one hand, its assumed task was to facilitate cooperation between Member States while ensuring a broad consensus between political and economic circles on the need for an innovation policy and a broad partnership between all concerned – public authorities at all appropriate levels and various stakeholders alike[37]. On the other hand, it had to ensure that the principle of subsidiarity was fully applied between Union authorities and national administrations, between the private sector and the public authorities[38].

A little over 15 years later, in 2010, innovation came again at the heart of another major policy initiative – Europe 2020. As already mentioned, it was meant to become a flagship initiative in a comprehensive strategy for boosting European competitiveness until 2020. This time round, the idea was to address a number of weaknesses that were identified. They stemmed partially from the limited impact of previous policy measures since again the Commission document made ample references to fragmentation and costly duplication, unsatisfactory framework conditions and under-investment in knowledge foundation, but added to these new sources of concern as public budget concerns as a result of the financial crisis, major demographic changes and increasing global competition[39]. The attempt was to take collective responsibility for a bold,

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[36] European Commission, *Growth, competitiveness, and employment. The challenges and ways forward into the 21st century*, White Paper COM (93) 700 final, (Brussels, 05.12.1993): 20.

[37] *Ibid.* 90.

[38] *Ibid.* 111.

[39] European Commission (a), *Lisbon Strategy evaluation document*, Commission Staff Working Document SEC(2010) 114 final, (02.02.2010): 3–4.

integrated, strategic approach to innovation by promising to deliver a European Research Area by 2014 for facilitating the free movement of knowledge, better access to financing, affordable Intellectual Property Rights, smarter regulations and European Innovation Partnerships to better pool expertise and resources. This Innovation Union had to complement other flagship initiatives – Digital Agenda, Youth on the Move, Agenda for New Skills and Jobs or an Industrial Policy for a Globalization Era. Innovation had to become an integral part of all common policies and in conjunction with these to help the European Union to confront old and new challenges[40]. This time the roles were better assigned and spelled out. The European Council should provide a steer and a political impetus, the Council should assume a leading role in adopting the necessary measures to improve the EU's framework conditions, The European Parliament should give priority to Innovation Union proposals and initiatives, including the identification and success of the European Innovation Partnerships, whereas the European Commission should develop initiatives, assist Member States with the reform of their systems and take initiatives to promote the exchange of good practice at all levels. As far as the Member States were concerned, they had to ensure that the necessary governance structure was put into place, that the cooperation among them is adequately fostered and that they allocate sufficient resources to research and innovation through their operational programmes co-financed by the Structural Funds.

Unfortunately, neither the evaluation of the European Commission in 2015[41] nor that of 2018[42] could confirm the ability of the measures taken to solve the problems that impede the innovation policy to produce the expected results. Is it true that we can assume a collective responsibility for a strategic, inclusive and business-oriented research and innovation policy, but when it comes to the specific measures undertaken at both European and national level there is still enough room for further improvement.

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[40] *Ibid*., 6

[41] European Commission, *State of the Innovation Union*, (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015).

[42] European Commission*, A renewed European Agenda for Research and Innovation – Europe's chance to shape its future. The European Commission's contribution to the Informal EU Leaders' meeting on innovation in Sofia on 16 May 2018*, Communication COM(2018) 306 final, (05.05.2018)

CONCLUSIONS – A DEMAND-SIDE EUROPEAN INNOVATION POLICY TO SUPPORT COMPETITIVENESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH?

The brief outline of the evolution of the European innovation policy highlighted its transition from a linear approach, to a focus on networks and clusters, then to the mainstreaming of innovation into sectorial policies, and later to an Innovation Union strategy so designed as to help improving EU research and innovation performance. The core idea was to bring public and private sector to work together and better link up EU and national research & innovation systems in order to make Europe a world-class science performer. As already mentioned, innovation was at the core of EU 2020 Strategy, being regarded as the main ingredient for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The goals for a comprehensive research and innovation policy were included in the Innovation Union initiative launched in 2010[43], organised in six blocks each meant to address specific challenges – strengthening the knowledge base and reducing fragmentation, getting ideas to market, maximising social and territorial cohesion, pooling forces to achieve breakthroughs, leveraging policies externally and fostering the necessary reforms of the research and innovation systems. From here a number of policy initiatives designed to give substance to the ambition to create an Innovation Union were derived. As pointed out in the previous section, they dealt to a large extent with the role of the public sector in boosting innovation by setting the right framework conditions while removing obstacles which currently prevent ideas getting quickly to market – expensive patenting, market fragmentation, slow standard-setting and skills shortages. Over the years a number of policy measures were taken with the aim to closely align European and national policies in order to make them mutually reinforcing for facilitating a smooth access to innovative ideas and technologies. Nevertheless, despite the slow and steady progress, their capacity to address the roots of the problems remains limited and so long as these impediments to the diffusion and transfer of knowledge remain, the promise of economic growth and competitivity on the global tech stage will remain unfulfilled.

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[43] European Commission (c), *Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative. Innovation Union*, Communication SEC(2010) 1161, COM(2010) 546 final, (06.10.2010)

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ONLINE BAD HABITS:
FAKE NEWS AND CLICK BAIT

Claudia-Ioana COSTE[*]

ABSTRACT

In the recent years, media has been going through a significant change due to easy access users have to any type of information. In the online world, anyone can say anything because social media sites and some news platforms do not verify the authenticity of the information shared. This leads consumers to creating, believing and then spreading fake news. As a consequence to this global phenomenon generated by fake news, the information presented in media influences and manipulates the public opinion. Fake news becomes viral and shareable by the use of click bait, which can be considered as a concrete type of fake news that has especially financial implications. Online content providers use click bait to increase their page views, trapping the user as long as they can on their web domain. From the online readers' perspective, click bait makes use of the curiosity gap, promising something from the title and deceiving the user's expectations with the content.

As outcomes to these online bad habits, political events such as the results of the Brexit UK referendum and Trump's election in the USA shocked most people because statistics and well documented articles predicted something else. Situations like this were blamed on the social media sites because they create, without wanting to, a friendly environment to low-quality news spreading.

The present paper proposes to give a complete analysis on what features makes an article to be click bait or not based on a detection algorithm. Moreover, this study wants to include the mechanisms that click bait providers use to catch the user attention and how they help spreading fake news in the online world.

INTRODUCTION

In the third millennium, most information is spread through online environments such as social media or search engines. Even though, they allow low-cost and fast transmission of information, facilitating people's access to news, they are, also, favorable ecosystems for fake news spreading. So, journalism and media industry can be seen as "double-edged swords".

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Online world influences people's decisions, beliefs, values and sooner or later, their behavior. Political events that took place in 2016, like Trump's election in the United States of America and the Brexit UK referendum were strongly influenced by online media, the popularity each campaign had and the number of shares received from social networks. The most distributed article in 2016 was a blog entry entitled "Why I am Voting For Donald Trump",[1] written by a well-known conservative woman. In addition, in the United Kingdom during the time the European Union referendum was organized, the campaign against EU had more followers and was more often shared than the one for EU.[2]

There are studies saying that 62% of American adults were using social media platforms for news reading in 2016, in contrast to 2012, when just 49% of adults used social media sites in this way.[3] Most people live by the idea that "news will find me", believing that this way they will be kept informed. This is not a good practice because certain types of news are online promoted with chances to become viral. Moreover, feelings for someone who distributes a post affect the articles people read in general and they tend to read news that was shared by a person they like.[4] This way, they become easy targets for false information spread and click bait.

When talking about social networks sites we need to mention the concept of filter bubble or "echo chamber". There is a predicting intelligent algorithm behind all articles and posts suggestions based on our past preferences. The knowledge base is formed from the users' likes, their assessments, the types of articles they have shared, the advertisements they have clicked. The main purpose of this artificial intelligence algorithm is to promote certain types of online content that the user might enjoy, trapping him to spend more time into the online world. This way, it is created a bubble which contains just the user's personal values, ideals, his thoughts are "bounced back" and he may develop individualist beliefs. Users need to "burst their bubble", to have an overview about the events and to keep well informed about everything shared in the media.[5]

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[1] Dominic James Difranzo and Kristine Gloria-Garcia. "Filter bubbles and fake news." *XRDS: Crossroads, The ACM Magazine for Students* 23, no. 3 (2017): 33.
[2] *Ibid*., 33.
[3] Kai Shu, et al. "Fake News Detection on Social Media: A Data Mining Perspective." *ACM SIGKDD Explorations Newletter* 19, no. 1 (2017): 22.
[4] Veronika Karnowski, et al. "From incidental news exposure to news engagement. How perceptions of news post and news usage patterns influence engagement with news articles encountered on Facebook." *Computers in Human Behavior* 7, no. 76 (2017): 10.
[5] Dominic Spohr. "Fake news and ideological polarization: Filter bubbles and selective exposure on social media." *Business Information Review* 34, no. 34 (2017): 153.

Present paper is structured into five more sections: "Fake news", "Click bait", "Previous work", "Click bait detection" and "Conclusions and future work". The first section, named "Fake news" will present characteristics of fake news, what they are used for and the way fake news becomes viral. The second one, entitled "Click bait" will discuss what click bait is and what its main features are and will give suggestive examples. The third one, "Previous work" will make a short review of the intelligent solutions found by the literature in click bait detection. Next one, "Click bait detection", will present our click bait classification model and what were the most important features used. The last section will draw the conclusions and will propose future work to be done in this field.

FAKE NEWS

There is a lot of controversy when it comes to the definition of fake news. In current paper, we will consider the following definition, which is the closest to our personal beliefs. Fake news defines articles that present false information, which can be scientifically proven to be so, and are created with the purpose to mislead the readers. So, fake news has two major components: one is authenticity and the other one is intention.[6] What needs to be mentioned is that we do not include in the fake news category, satire, caricatures, journalistic pranks, conspiracy theories, gossip and erroneous information that was unintentional created so. Usually, fake news exposes up to date topics, controversial that weren't yet carefully verified or investigated and it usually reports too much incomplete, unstructured and noisy information.

The scientific literature calls today's media as being in a "fake news crisis" because of the new technologies that have emerged and intelligent algorithms are now used by social media, search engines and most websites. Moreover, the word "fake news" was declared the word of the year in 2016 by the Macquarie dictionary, rising awareness of its ideological and economic implications.[7]

When talking about solutions, in Italy, in February 2017, there was submitted a fake news law to Parliament, that imposes up to 5000 Euros for those found responsible for fake news creation or dissemination. This is not a viable solution, taking into consideration that this law is constraining the freedom of speech right. In China, during 2013 and 2014, authorities deleted several news suspected to be fake from

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6   Shu et al., "Fake News Detection on Social Media: A Data Mining Perspective," 23.
7   *Ibid*., 22.

their social media platform, Wechat. This solution is altering the online web content which, again, is not consistent with the freedom of speech right.[8]

Taking into consideration what was presented, we can surely affirm that click bait is a strong indicator for fake news.[9] Behind the bait text there can be hidden fake news, with the purpose of being read, believed and finally shared. The way in which fake news is spread is thoroughly presented in the following sentences. The viral mechanism has five steps. Firstly, you create websites that will host the news and it is recommended to look as credible as they can, very similar to the high-quality journalistic online pages. On the second step, you need to create several anonymous accounts on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram, through which the fake news will be shared. Thirdly, we identify in the social media sites, the influential users that may believe the news and have the ability to share it and influence other users. On the fourth step, we follow these users, we like, appreciate and reply to their posts, including in the comments the fake news' link. Finally, we wait for the news to spread and become viral.[10]

Fake news has two major purposes: one is economic and the other one is ideological. Economic benefits are obtained from publicity and the views number. The ideological target is referring more to the mass manipulation in order to create an ideological homogeneity. By doing this, online editors exposed consumers to false information and most of them don't know the difference between fake news and authentic ones.

According to a psychology studies, it's demonstrated that once a false perception is formed in the human brain, it is hardly corrected afterward.[11] This is a human vulnerability exploited by the online news providers. Baruch Spinoza's principle affirms that any information received by our brain from the senses is first perceived as truth. Just on the second step, the brain starts asking questions if the information received was authentic. But because of some extern or intern factors such as: tiredness, stress, noise or the source's credibility we missed this second step. So, psychological

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8   Tambini, Damian. "Fake news: public policy responses." *London: Media Policy Project* 20, March 2017, 13.

9   Shu et al., "Fake News Detection on Social Media: A Data Mining Perspective," 28.

10 Alina Campan, Alfredo Cuzzocrea, and Traian M. Truta. "Fighting fake news spread in online social networks: Actual trends and future research directions." *IEEE International Conference on Big Data*, (2017): 4453.

11 Daniel T. Gilbert, Douglas S. Krull, and Patrick S. Malone. "Unbelieving the unbelievable: Some problems in the rejection of false information."*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 59, no. 4 (1990): 601.

contamination with fake information has serious consequences on human's mental health, influencing decisions, behavior and personal beliefs.

CLICK BAIT

"Click bait" is an old-media term used to define articles with exaggerated ambiguous confusing titles and low-quality content. According to Oxford dictionary, click bait is text content presented in online world whose main purpose is to draw attention and encourage visitors to click to a certain web page. Because, nowadays, most news sites don't take money from subscriptions, most of their incomes are obtained from advertising. So, what online editors are trying to do is to trap the users on their web domains as long as they can in order to increase their page visits and their earnings, as well.

Click bait targets its audience by making use of the "curiosity gap". The term comes from psychology and represents the difference between the actual level of knowledge and the desired one. When the difference is too high or too low, it can lead to demotivation, but if it is moderate, the individual is motivated and he will likely act to fill the gap.

There are some click bait strategies, online content editors used to share an idea, but without giving all the details away. Researchers classified click bait into eight categories.[12] The first one contains click baits that uses exaggerated words and plenty of superlatives such as "Find the Best Location for a City Break". The second category is about teasing and it is characterized by details omission in the title, as example we could take into consideration the following title: "This Is What Happens When You Eat an Egg a Day". The third category of click bait contains vulgar or inappropriate words, internet slang or swears words. An example to the third category is "Here Is Why 50 Shades of Grey Sucks". The fourth category stands for formatting, for the abusive use of uppercase and punctuation, especially exclamation mark or question mark. As examples we could take into consideration the following: "ALERT: You Won't Believe What Happened Next!!!", "EXCLUSIVE: The First Pictures of Harry and Meghan's Child!!!", "What Character from FRIENDS Are You Based on You Birth Month?". The fifth category is named "Graphic", presents unbelievable and noisy topics such as: "Donatella Versace Plastic Surgery: Waxy

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[12] Prakhar Biyani, Kostas Tsioutsiouliklis, and John Blackmer. "'8 Amazing Secrets for Getting More Clicks': Detecting Clickbaits in News Streams Using Article Informality." *AAAI'16 Proceedings of the Thirtieth AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence,* (2016): 95–96.

Face Resembles Melting Candle". "Bait-and-switch" is the sixth category and is characterized by content splitting between multiple pages, so the user must click again to see the rest of the information. An example to this category could be: "TOP 10 Vacation Destination", "10 Dresses to Wear to the Prom", "The Best 10 Outfits from the VMAs". The seventh category represents titles created intentionally to be ambiguous and confusing in order to spur the reader's curiosity. An example could be: "They Said She Had Cancer. You Won't Believe What Happened Next". The last category is fake news that intentionally presents wrong information in the article and an example could be "She Fight Cancer with Sodium Bicarbonate. The Results Were Unexpectedly Good", "If You Eat This Every Day You Will Lose 15 kg in a Week!!!". More examples of click bait with images are presented below, in Table 1:

Table 1. *Click bait examples*
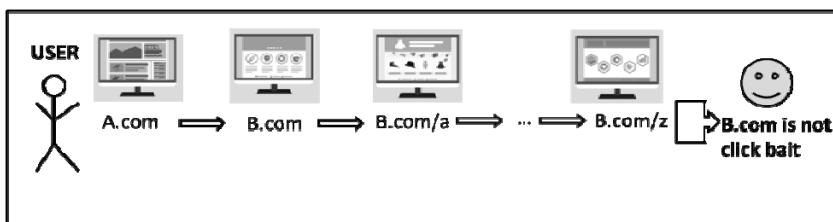
Click bait	What appears after the click

Studies have shown us that click bait is a complex, subjective phenomenon.[13] What some consider being click bait; others may quite enjoy and even find the information interesting. From now on, click bait shouldn't be regarded as a binary phenomenon, because it is influenced by previous experiences, interests and the personal set of values.

PREVIOUS WORK

Browser extensions were developed in order to help users to explicitly report click bait and several other details will be saved in a centralized database. The main purpose of this Chrome plugin is to create a database populated by online users, which will be later used as input for a machine learning algorithm. [14]

Other articles propose to complete the centralized database by adding non-click bait records and other relevant information about them collected at a later time.[15] One proposal uses Squid logs to determinate navigation patterns and from them to deduce, based on a heuristic, which link is non-click bait.[16] Squid is a web proxy server used mostly for cache, security and fast file transfer. Squid logs each HTTP request made in the local network where it is installed.[17] The non-bait heuristic is presented in Figure 1 and if a user is in A domain, then he suddenly goes to B domain and in B domain it's recording more HTTP request than B might not be a click bait.

Figure 1. *Non-click bait heuristic*[18]

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[13] Martin Potthast, et al. "The Clickbait Challenge 2017: Towards a Regression Model for Clickbait Strength." *CoRR* abs/1812.10847, (2018): 2.

[14] Darius Bufnea and Diana Șotropa. "A community driven approach for click bait reporting." *Proceedings of the 26th International Conference on Software, Telecommunications and Computer Networks (SoftCOM)*, (2018): 1.

[15] Claudia I. Coste, "Controlling the click bait." *Proceedings of the International Student Conference StudMath-IT*, (2018): 11.

[16] *Ibid*.

[17] SquidCache. *Squid: Optimising Web Delivery.* 2013. http://www.squid-cache.org/ (accessed May 15, 2019).

[18] Coste, "Controlling the click bait.", 14.

A scientific paper detects click bait with a decision tree and the accuracy is about 77.2% for training and 74.9% for testing.[19] The data set included news collected from Yahoo page, news written by The Post, The New York Times, CBS, Forbes, The Huffington etc. It contained 1349 click bait records and 2724 non-click baits.[20] The features found to be the most relevant were formality features: fmeasure, Coleman-Liau score, LIX and RIX indexes. [21]

Another article uses a data set consisting of tweets, 2992 of them being annotated to be non-click bait and 767 click bait.[22] Each sample was labeled by three different volunteers and the tweets were containing news from multiple journalistic streams such as: BBC News, New York Times, ABC News, CNN, The Guardian, The Huffington Post, Business Insider, Buzzfeed.[23] The best accuracy, around 79%, is obtained from a Random Forest Classifier with a classification model containing 215 features. [24]

In an other scientific paper there it is proposed a click bait classifier based on the article title and a plugin whose main purpose is to block click bait taking into consideration users past preferences.[25] For the classifier, authors use a database consisting of 18,513 Wikinews articles collected by NewsReader.[26] NewsReader is an application that reads articles from Usenet, a distributive discussion system that splits the content in a hierarchy of groups based on certain topics and each group is containing a set of discussions.[27] Knowing that Wikinews is a news platform that verifies the articles posted and have strict rules regarding how events should be presented, the news posted here were considered non-click bait. For the bait data set, around 8069 articles were selected from news sites like: BuzzFeed, Upworthy, ViralNova, Scoopwhoop and ViralStories, the samples were, then, annotated by six volunteers. Finally, 7500 articles were selected from each category.[28] Concerning the features

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[19] Prakhar Biyani, Kostas Tsioutsiouliklis, and John Blackmer. "'8 Amazing Secrets for Getting More Clicks': Detecting Clickbaits in News Streams Using Article Informality." *AAAI'16 Proceedings of the Thirtieth AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence*, (2016): 94.

[20] *Ibid*., 96.

[21] *Ibid*., 99.

[22] Martin Potthast, et al. "Clickbait detection." *European Conference on Information Retrieval*, (2016): 1.

[23] *Ibid*., 2.

[24] *Ibid*., 1.

[25] Abhijnan Chakraborty, et al. "Stop Clickbait: Detecting and Preventing Clickbaits in Online News Media." *IEEE/ACM International Conference on Advances in Social Networks Analysis and Mining (ASONAM)*, (2016): 9.

[26] *Ibid*., 10.

[27] Google Play. *News Reader*. https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.bionicapps. newsreader &hl=en_US (accessed March 20, 2019).

[28] Chakraborty, et al. "Stop Clickbait: Detecting and Preventing Clickbaits in Online News Media.", 10.

used for modeling, the authors conducted a linguistic analysis based on Stanford NLPCore,[29] a tool used for natural language processor to identify part of speech tags. The model has an accuracy of 94% in detecting the click bait when using the support vector machine.[30] Support-vector machine or SVM is an intelligent algorithm used for supervised learning, solving both classification and regression problems.[31] Moreover, the browser extension obtained an accuracy of 89% in blocking the click baits.[32]

The initiators of The Clickbait Challenge have written a paper, explaining the data collection mechanism. They have the biggest click bait database and they expressed their idea as seeing click bait as a subjective, non-binary phenomenon. Thirteen of the teams signed into the challenge, completed the task given and succeed in having a good accuracy. The best solution is named "zingel", having 85.6% accuracy and was implemented with a bidirectional neural network.[33] Neural network is a machine learning algorithm inspired by biological neural networks.[34]

CLICKBAIT DETECTION

In this section, we propose to classify links as being click bait or not by using a machine learning algorithm. Also, we will analyze the reliability of building a language independent classification model. We will do this by using the database made available by The Clickbait Challenge and a natural language processor, named Stanford NLPCore, available in 53 languages. As concerning the intelligent algorithm, we will use a Random Forest Classifier, already implemented in Python package "scikit-learn" version 0.21. A random forest classifier is composed from multiple decision trees, and the final output is computed as a result of a voting system. Each decision tree computes a class as output and the majority class is chosen. A decision tree is an intelligent structure that works after the next mechanism: it applies successive decisions on the data collection splitting it and the initial data set is divided into smaller collections. An example of a decision tree is presented in Figure 2.

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[29] Christopher D Manning, et al. "The Stanford CoreNLP Natural Language Processing Toolkit." *ACL – Proceedings of 52nd Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics: System Demonstrations* 52, (2014): 55.
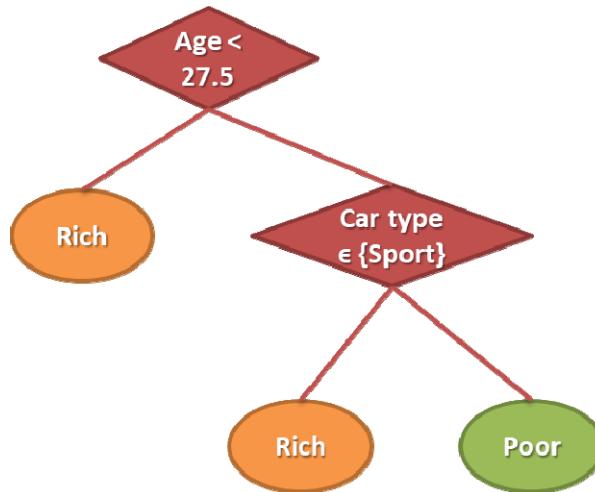
[30] Chakraborty, et al. "Stop Clickbait: Detecting and Preventing Clickbaits in Online News Media.", 14.

[31] Bernhard Scholkopf, and Alexander J. Smola. *Learning with Kernels: Support Vector Machines, Regularization, Optimization, and Beyond*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001, 15.

[32] Chakraborty, et al. "Stop Clickbait: Detecting and Preventing Clickbaits in Online News Media.", 15.

[33] Martin Potthast, et al. "The Clickbait Challenge 2017: Towards a Regression Model for Clickbait Strength." *CoRR* abs/1812.10847, (2018).

[34] Stuart J Russell, and Norvig, Peter. *Artificial Intelligence, A Modern Approach*. 3rd ed. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 1995, 727.

Figure 2. *Example of decision tree*

The database used is made available by The Clickbait Challenge, it's free and it contains tweets annotated by five volunteers. The database it composed from two JSONL files and a photo folder for the tweets that included images. The "instances.jsonl" file contains the bait text, the images attached and their captions, the article title, the description tags of the article, the keywords and the article paragraphs. The "truth.jsonl" file contains the annotated scores of each volunteer, the mean of these scores and the truth class: "clickbait" or "no-clickbait". The input data distribution is presented in Table 2. The number of instances from each class must be equal in order to perform an appropriate training. Moreover, the data must be verified first and the "noisy" samples, containing wrong information, need to be deleted.

Table 2. *Data distribution*

Database	Number of click bait articles	Number of non-click bait articles	Deleted samples that contained "noise"
The Clickbait Challenge	5523	16474	997
Total number of correct samples	4988	16012	-
Samples used in classification	4988	4988	-

As concerning the features used, we selected them based on the review done in the section "Previous Work" and we computed a total of 41 characteristics. All the features used are excerpted from the bait content and the article title. The characteristics used are the following: word count from the title; the average length of words from the title; punctuation patterns occurrence such as "!?", "…", "***", "!!!", "???", "(,, ")", "$"; common and proper nouns count with or without the syntactic function of a subject from the title and message; count and occurrence of question mark and exclamation mark in the title and bait content; uppercase word count in title and in bait text; occurrence of demonstrative, personal or possessive pronouns in title; if the title starts with an adverb or a numeral; acronym (considered to be an uppercase word formed from at least five characters)count in the title; the average number of words per sentence in the bait content; numerals count in the title. Moreover, we used some formality measures, such as Fmeasure for title, LIX and RIX indexes for message and title and CLScore for message. Fmeasure is a formality measure computed after the Equation 1. LIX and RIX indexes are computed by the Equation 2 and CLScore or Coleman-Liau score is obtained with the Equation 3.

$$fmeasure = (nounsFreq + adjectivesFreq + prepositionsFreq + articlesFreq)/2$$
$$(-pronounsFreq - verbsFreq - adverbsFreq - interjectionsFreq + 100)/2$$

Equation 1. *The computation equation for fmeasure*[35]

$$RIX = \frac{LW}{S}; LIX = \frac{W}{S} + \frac{100 * LW}{W},$$

where *W* is the total number of words, *S* is thenumber of sentences
"and" *LW* is the number of long words words with more then 7 characters

Equation 2. *RIX and LIX indexes*[36]

$$CLScore = 5.88 * L - 29.6 * S - 15.8,$$

where *L* is the average number of letters per 100 characters,
S is the average number of sentences per 100 words

Equation 3. *Coleman–Liau score*[37]

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[35] Francis Heylighen, J. Dewaele and Léo Apostel. Formality of Language: definition, measurement and behavioral determinants. (1999).

[36] Jonathan Anderson. "Lix and Rix: Variations on a Little-known Readability Index." *Journal of Reading 26*, no. 6 (1983): 495.

[37] Coleman, Meri and T.L. Liau. "A computer readability formula designed for machine scoring." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 60, no. 2 (1975): 283.

From all the 41 features, we have selected just the ones that obtained according to our intelligent algorithm an importance score over 1%. So, the final 17 characteristics with their importance score are presented in Table 3 which was split into three main sections: the first one containing features with a level of importance of over 10%; the second one includes characteristics with an importance score between 10% and 5%; the last category containing 8 features with a score between 5% and 1%.

Table 3. *Features importance*

No.	Feature	Importance Score
1	Number of proper nouns from the message	13,74%
2	CLScore from message	12.05%
3	Fmeasure from title	10.38%
4	Average length of the words from the title	10.10%
5	Average words per sentence from message	8.09%
6	Number of common nouns from the message	6.63%
7	Number of proper nouns from the title	5.92%
8	RIX computed from the message	5.36%
9	Number of common nouns from the title	5.16%
10	RIX computed for the title	4.48%
11	Number of uppercase words found in bait content	3.96%
12	Number of acronyms found in the bait content	3.78%
13	LIX for message	3.09%
14	LIX for title	3.01%
15	If the title starts with a numeral	1.51%
16	Presence of personal pronouns in the title	1.48%
17	If the title starts with an adverb	1.18%

Taking into consideration the results obtained from Table 3, it can be noted that the most important feature is the number of proper nouns used in the bait content. This result confirms scientific literature, which affirms that quality news are objective and usually uses proper nouns in order to give details about the event presented. In contrast, click bait news omit details, not saying where, how, with whom the event

took place. Moreover, the formality measures: RIX indexes, CLScore and fmeasure are relevant features, too, they are ranked in the first ten features after their importance. The formality characteristics are, also, used in other articles, where all of them are in the first ten most important features for the classification model.[38] Is proven that click bait uses most informal language in order to attract as many visitors as it can. But, news with a higher journalistic quality is expressing a more formal, objective language, even with technical and journalistic words. Also, there are papers that mention that the average length of words from the title is quite a notable feature, in our case being ranked as the fourth. The average length of words for non-click bait is around 10, and for click bait is approximately 7.[39] This happens because low-quality news prefers to use plenty of acronyms, shortcuts and to keep a low formality degree, already containing several short words and phrases.

Concerning the accuracy, computed from the correct outputs divided by the total number of samples, present algorithm has an accuracy of over 75%. Comparing the results with The Clickbait Challenge, we will be ranked on the 14th place after this accuracy.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK

As conclusions, it is important to say that click bait and fake news are complex phenomena having both ideological and financial implications and they still remain open problems. Not many people are being aware that they are widely manipulated by the use of click bait and fake news. The results of influencing people's opinion are quite great because once thoughts are changed, behavior is changed accordingly. Just now, researchers, academic stuff and IT developers are trying to find ways to fight click bait and protect users' online experiences. A possible solution will come from an interdisciplinary collaboration between artificial intelligence and web developers, social networks specialists, journalists, psychologists, law and public opinion experts.

As concerning future work, we will improve the intelligent algorithm accuracy, by using image processing and extracting features from images and videos. Next, we propose to build a plugin that will help online users in click bait detection.

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[38] Biyani, Tsioutsiouliklis, and Blackmer. "'8 Amazing Secrets for Getting More Clicks': Detecting Clickbaits in News Streams Using Article Informality.", 99.

[39] Chakraborty, et al. "Stop Clickbait: Detecting and Preventing Clickbaits in Online News Media.", 10.

Moreover, we want to develop a tool integrated with the classification algorithm that could be used by social media sites and search engines to detect click bait and separate it from the online experience in a folder just like the spam folder from email[40]. This separate folder is used because we don't want to create a filter bubble that will alter the web content by deleting news; we propose to let the user choose freely between what he wants to read. In addition to all this, we promote using a regression algorithm instead of a classification one because click bait is very subjective and is not a binary phenomenon.

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ISLAMOFASCISM: DOES THE PRESENT-DAY ARAB JUDEOPHOBIA HAVE THE SAME CHARACTER, SCOPE AND POSSIBLE EFFECTS AS THE ANTI-SEMITISM OF THE NAZI'S?

Mayuri DANG[*]

ABSTRACT

The term Islamofascism is often being used by the western politicians, media and scholars like Christopher Hitchens ever since the "War on Terror" in 2001 and the U.S invasion of Iraq in 2003. This paper tries to defend that the Political Islam (which is often metioned as Islamofacism) should not be associated with the Real Islam (as in the religion) itself. And the use of such labels that were being applied to Arab movements is invalid. The term itself being a Western creation that violates one's belief's and interests by attacking a certain type of religion. Although, the Arab world shows Anti-Jewish attitudes and expressions that resemble the European Anti-semitism those of the Nazi's, they are essentially two very different things considering the context within which they arose. Farther beyond the Near and Middle East, this concept could become generally accepted as a culture code that could be used as a rhetorical device to deligitimize one whole religion. Even if, there are still barbarous regimes in the world today but we must try and find other labels for them without hurting any specific religious groups' sentiments. Drawing this analogy between ideological characteristics of specific Islamist movements with the neofascist movements or totalitarianism can be malign.

Keywords: *Islam, Fascism, Anti-Semitism, Arab movements, Jews, Media, Propaganda*

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Definition of fascism is nearly as old as the phenomenon itself. It had its origins in fascist Italy and then at least in academic circles and the term was applied to German National Socialism. The word in itself stands for something that has a bad connotation and is loathsome. Another misleading understanding and labeling of fascism as Islamofascism can be seen in the political arena, especially since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, and is directly related to the threats posed

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by al-Qaida and other radical Islamist groups. Interestingly, this claim of a historic bond between Islam and fascism has been voiced from the political Left as well as by neo-conservative groups in a bid to prop up what are seen as "Western values".

The term fascism has been used to link different forms of militant Islamic fundamentalism with the cult of violence, radical nationalism, and those anti-Jewish policies characteristic of a number of authoritarian movements in the early 20th century. This has led to the frequently voiced opinion that people in the Arab World and especially Muslims generally lack the positive effects of secularization that they easily accommodate to Anti-Semitism and are ideologically predisposed to thinking in terms of authoritarian and "fascist" rule. The term "Islamofascism" has not been developed in full; it remains at the level of a declaration. It is used mainly as a pro-paganda term that links Muslims with Fascists and Islam with National Socialism. Such terms are always seen in a negative sense by the Arab press in the 1960's and 70's because this terminology is an attempt to relate the Nazi genocidal extermination policy toward Jews with the Islamic policy of ridding Israelis out of Palestinian territories.

Anti-Semitism is widespread throughout the Arab and Muslim world, manifested in many segments of society. The Anti-Defamation League monitors and documents contain Anti-Semitic cartoons and articles, which appear daily in the Arab media. The Anti-Semitic cartoons appearing over the six months (Jan.–June 2012) relate to a number of issues including Israeli settlements, Iran's nuclear ambitions, the Palestinian prisoners' hunger strike and the newly minted relations between Israel

As-Sabil, February 24, 2012
On the blanket: "Peace."

and South Sudan, with a particular focus on South Sudan's president Salva Kiir. Newspapers across the Arab world still continue to feature anti-Semitic caricatures and themes, with demonic depictions of Jews that include big noses, black coats and hats,

large skull caps, and many promoting age-old global Judaization conspiracy theories, including blood libel themes, Nazi symbols and the use of animal references – snakes, octopuses and scorpions – to sinisterly portray Israel.[1] Arab newspapers routinely published cartoons portraying President Obama and the Democratic and Republican parties as subservient to Israeli interests and subjected to whims of the Israel/Jewish Lobby.

Filastin, March 7, 2012
Headline: "Netanyahu-Obama meeting."

Filastin, March 2, 2012
The Jew is saying: "Bow your head down so that you can enter." On the top: The emblem of the State of Israel.

[2]Arab Media Review January-June (2012):13
[3]Arab Media Review January-June (2012):18

The construction of a fascistic image of Islam demonstrates two very important points. First, that Islam is still a major force in the formation of European and Western identity. Secondly, Islam is mired in a great tug of war within the self-identity of the West itself. The perception of Islam is in a state of flux simply

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[1] Anti-Defamation League, "Arab Media Review January-June 2012", United States of America, https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/assets/pdf/anti-semitism/Arab-Media-Review-January-June-2012.pdf (accessed Mar. 16, 2016).

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

because the perception of religion in the West is in a state of flux. The fascistic image of Islam is maintained through myopic use of language and gross ignorance of the Islamic faith. It is commonly argued that "Islamofascism" on the one hand is political Islam, and Islam is simply a personal faith. If the manifestation of "Islamofascism" are 9/11 and 7/7 then it simply has no connection with Islam. It is gravely inappropriate and misleading to suggest that the roots of such calamitous violence lie at the door of Islam. Political Islam has been labeled as Islamofascism and the real Islam (religion) has no association with it.

Even if Arab world anti-Jewish attitudes and expressions resemble European Anti-Semitism, they are essentially different because of the context in which they arose. ***Some reflections on "Islamofascism" and Arab Anti-Semitism"*** critically analyzes three of the more alarmist sort of books on the issue, two of them originally in German, all of them concentrating on the Arab World. All three hold that present-day Arabs' Anti-Jewish attitudes are essentially the same as the eliminatory Anti-Semitism of the Nazi's a cornerstone of "Islamofascism". Anti-Jewish attitudes, frequently vicious ones, do exist in the Arab World. But the Palestinians, many of them dispersed dispossessed and/or under occupation face in Israel a superior and very powerful enemy who took their land. There are anti-Jewish currents in modern Arab discourse, some of them vicious. They emerged in the framework of European hegemony over Middle East and the gradual realization of the Zionist undertaking; they developed under the continued impact of these factors. The oppressive and aggressive policies of Israel, its privileged place in the world and the role of non-Israeli Jews in furthering Israel's standing and power contributed to a deepening and broadening of the phenomenon.[4]

The old (Nazi's) and New (Arab's) Anti-Semitism are radically different phenomena, although perhaps not from the point of view of the victims. Violence, after all is violence and the concerns of Europe's Jewish communities should give one pause regardless of the source of the threat. What separates the new from old anti-Semitism is its overarching project. The traditional modern form of anti-Semitism was designed to affect the exclusion of Jews from the national body. This could take a range of forms, from the polemical assertion of Jews fundamental incompatibility with the nation to their genocidal eradication. In all the variants of this old anti-Semitism

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[4] Flores, Alexander. "The Arabs as Nazis? Some reflections on Islamofascism and Arab Anti-Semitism." *Die welt des Islams 52*, no.3/4 (2012): 450–470.

Jews were construed as intrinsic outsiders to Europe's nation states, interlopers in a fantasy of ethnic purity.[5]

When one approaches the phenomenon from its Islamic component one sees a wholly different project. When young disenfranchised Muslims attack French Jews, they don't do so in the interest of creating an ethnically pure France. Nor are they asserting that French Jews do not belong in Europe. On the contrary, they are attacking Jews precisely because they see them as a part of a European hegemony that not only marginalizes Muslims in France but from their point of view also accounts for the suffering of the Palestinians. In the Arab World, Israel, after all, is understood first and foremost as European colony. To explain Muslim violence against Europe's Jews as the extension of an anticolonial struggle is no defense of the phenomenon. But it makes clear how radically different old and new anti-Semitisms really are.

Rene Wildangel in his article concentrates on the efficiency and impact of Nazi propaganda in Palestine during World War Two. Here as elsewhere, radio broadcasts became the most important instrument of Axis propaganda. The second most important propaganda was the German newspaper Barid Al Sharq ('Orient Post') which was distributed in Arabic throughout the whole Middle East, including Palestine. It also printed the broadcasts from Berlin. A document that allows some rare insights into how Arab Palestinians perceived the German and Italian propaganda broadcasts is a scientific wartime radio poll by Stuart C. Dodd, a professor of the American University in Beirut, which was published in September 1943. While it shows that 63% of 1,516 listeners interviewed in Palestine listened to the radio at least three times daily, the Berlin station was tuned in only by 13% of the listeners (8% listened only once a month, 4% daily, 1% listened twice a day, none listened three times). It was among the least popular stations among Arabs in Palestine, who preferred the stations in Cairo (listened to by 98%), Jerusalem (98%), London (87%), *Sharq al-Adnd* (93%), Beirut (66%) and Ankara (32%).[6] Since the Nazi propaganda did not captivate many listeners from the Arab world through their radio broadcasts, we can assume that the Arabs were never brainwashed and their anti-Jewish attitudes were not something that were transmitted and absorbed into their mindsets by the Nazis. These broadcasts didn't have any influence over that part of the World.

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[5]   Ahmed, Naseem. "Islamofascism and the Chimera of Neutrality.". *Arches Quarterly 2*, no.1 (2008):48–50.
[6]   Wildangel, Rene. "The Invention of "Islamofascism". Nazi propaganda to the Arab World and Perceptions from Palestine."*Die welt des Islams 52*, no.3/4 (2012): 526–543.

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Middle Eastern movements were overall fascistic, merely mimicking fascist style (discipline, uniforms, a discourse of violence) but did not meet the core criterion of fascism to be based on revolutionary expectations and a radical rejection of the Enlightenment – at least during the interwar period, if not beyond. – Wien, P. (2012). "Arabs and Fascism: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives". *Die welt des Islams.*

Peter Wien in his article "***Arabs and Fascism: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives"*** outlines two methodological ways to interpret Arab responses to fascism between 1930 and the end of World War Two. The first sets Arabic reactions to fascism within the local and chronological context of the overriding challenge to achieve decolonization. Fascism could be seen as an instrument of social disciplining. The second interprets pro-fascist trends in the Arab World's manifestations of a global answer to capitalist and Marxist ideologies. Here an anti-enlightenment impulse may have served as a major factor. It had little if any link with Islam.[7]In looking at certain Middle Eastern movements from the 1930s and1940s and comparing them with the fascist and National Socialist regimes and their underlying ideologies, we can perceive "striking similarities, and also striking differences". The Arab movements emphasized power, national rebirth, military order and efficiency and therefore had been called "semi fascist". But Hitler achieved totalitarian rule with genocidal consequences by constructing a highly centralized state and using those bureaucratic institutions which were the backbone of modern German society. Those centralized and bureaucratic conditions were nonexistent in the Middle East. So, how can we link these movements to German nationalism in the absence of such circumstances?

Stanley Payne claims that the full characteristics of European fascism could not be reproduced on a significant scale outside Europe, as these movements lacked the experience and culture of liberal and democratic systems of the nineteenth century and the cultural reorientation, which took place between 1890 and 1914. Islam has been instrumental in splitting off ideological and cultural traditions considered adversarial from one's own social, political, or cultural context. The current usage of Islamofascism reverses this mechanism, as now fascism has become instrumental in splitting off Islam from the Western context. [8] While Reinhard Schulze in his article

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[7]　Wien, Peter. „Arabs and Fascism: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives." *Die welt des Islams 52,* no.3/4 (2012): 331–350.

[8]　Wild, Stefan. „Islamofascism? Introduction." *Die welt des Islams 52,* no.3/4 (2012): 225–241.

"***Islamofascism: Four Avenues to the Use of an Epithet***" argues that showing a rich and largely ignored tradition of multi-faceted European and North American polemics is relating Islam to Fascism and Fascism to Islam since the 19th Century. The journalistic view of the term "Islamofascism" peaked in the period of August to October 2006, when President George W. Bush used it to explain that U.S policy "is the beginning of fascism". But he also visited a mosque shortly after 9/11 and stated that real Islam was 'a peaceful religion'.[9]

<center>*</center>

With the postulation of an "Islamofascism", if one wants to claim that this phenomenon, like fascism, is a cult around a monolithic ideology, then one must also be able to grapple with the simple fact that Islamic fundamentalism is theoretically driven, whereas fascism tended to be and act non-religiously. – Zuckermann, M. (2012). "Islamofascism. Remarks on a Current Ideologeme". *Die welt des Islams.*

Moshe Zuckermann bases his critique of the term "Islamofascism" on three main points. Firstly, hementions that the European models of Fascism and National Socialism were non-religious or even anti-religious, whereas the Islamic movements are driven by religious motives. Secondly, for fascism the central idea was the state. Muslim movements do not care much about statehood. And lastly, the Nazi concept of citizenship was based on the idea of a human community held together by racially and biologically imagined 'Blood'. Islamic movements have a purely religious image of their Muslim Community (Ummah) and they abhor racism.[10]

Finally, the opaqueness of the loose concepts "fascism" and "Islam" makes the term "Islamofascism" hopelessly vague from the start. Moreover, the political charge and bias of the term not only outweighs any conceivable analytical value but renders its analytical value nil. Yet, it must be feared that the term "Islamofascism" outside the Near and Middle East could become a generally accepted "cultural code", a snappy, yet seemingly respectable rhetorical device to delegitimize a whole religion and with it a culture. The use of this term has an adverse effect on Islamic communities presenting their religion as a dubious one. The term in itself being completely a Western creation, when utilized should be considered as attacking another's beliefs

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[9] Schulze, Reinhard. "Islamofascism: Four Avenues to the Use of an Epithet." *Die welt des Islams 52,* no.3/4 (2012): 290–330.

[10] Zuckermann, Moshe. "Islamofascism. Remarks on a Current Ideologeme." *Die welt des Islams 52,* no.3/4(2012): 351–369.

and interests. Therefore, as the term is politically used to show the evilness of Islamic movements while comparing it to Nazi Germany. The concept in itself has no meaning, it is just a label applied by Westerners to these Islamic movements pointing to their Judeophobic attitudes which had not much similarity, whatsoever or relation with the harsh anti-Semitism of the Nazis. Both had one resemblance that of attacking the Jews but the aim of the violence in both the cases differed immensely. It is consequently doubtful that a typology derived from European fascism can be applied to non-European movements or regimes with full accuracy or specificity. Even though, there are still barbarous regimes and radical groups in the world today and, also exists within this framework signs of aggressiveness and populism portraying anti-Jewish and anti-Western attitudes, which recalls on one of the darkest periods of European history. For these modern-day dictatorships and extremist groups, we must try and find other labels.

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ASSOCIATIVE DEMOCRACY IN ACTION – INCREASING THE SCALE OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN POLICY MAKING

Alin-Gabriel DIACONU[*]

ABSTRACT

The paper attempts to analyze the possible implications of associationalism in EU governance. Evidently, acknowledging the fact that associative democracy is a relatively unknown socio-political theory, the paper will start by defining and describing the concept from the perspective of its core principles, emphasizing its centrist approach (which may fit very well on the current European political apparatus) and the participative model of decentralization that it aims to promote.

The article will proceed by examining, as models for implementation of associative democracy, a limited reform of the British health and social care system, as well as the broader, historic example of the involvement of the Danish civil society in policy-making, which stands as a enduring case for a particular, organically-developed, bottom-up (albeit supported politically), demos-driven participative democracy, which is nothing less than a unequivocal success story.

From there, the paper will try to undertake the task of showing the possible advantages of attaching an associative component to the European decision-making and policy mechanisms (enhancing public participation in the decision-making process and fostering self-governance), especially as a way of diminishing its deep legitimacy crisis.

This effort must be understood as one of the first steps in the application (or even consideration) of an associationalist perspective for the future of the EU. While it might seem shy at times, the endeavour is an adventurous one nonetheless – taking into account hot and deeply-analyzed issues such as deresponsibilization and the alienation of citizens in relation to the decisional bodies without resorting to reductive explanations.

INTRODUCTION

The associationalist principle developed in the 19th century as an alternative to excessively individualist liberalism, but also to socialist collectivism. It often came near to utopianism, due to the fact that its advocates argued in favour of the creation

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of a 'new society'[1]. It should be mentioned that, among its supporters, some sought to replace either representative with functional democracy or market economy with a non-collectivistic socialist system.

Nevertheless, the associative democracy model that will be illustrated in this sub-chapter rejects such revolutionary attitudes. The approach developed by Paul Hirst, albeit still fairly idealistic, acknowledges that "modern associative democracy can only be a more or less extensive supplement to liberal representative democracy".

Associationalism is equally concerned with individual liberty and human welfare. Regarding the former, the theory contends that freedom is defined as the capacity of an individual to control their affairs and, thus, attain their goals. From this perspective, a society based solely on competition is less free than one in which a person can join its peers in groups which hold actual decision-making powers. Simultaneously, societal pluralism guarantees the failure of uniform welfare measures, while placing them under the management of directly accountable groups composed of their actual beneficiaries ensure the ultimate level of effectiveness[2].

The theory's name stems from the idea that these principles are served best when citizens are involved in self-governance through voluntary and democratic *associations*. Three core principles summarize the Hirstian interpretation of associationalism, namely, as an addition to the current political system based on centralized administration and representative democracy:

(1) voluntary self-governing associations becoming, in a gradual fashion, the main means of democratic governance

(2) extensive distribution of state powers to different fields of authority (either territorial or functional), according to the principle of subsidiarity

(3) democratic governance understood as continuous flow of information between those who govern and those who are governed, the former permanently seeking the consent and cooperation of the latter[3]

Thus, his opposition to the top-down system of public services administration is not simply a classical liberal critique of the massiveness of the modern state. Instead, Hirst urges for a democratization of the welfare-providing mechanisms which would bring the citizens from the status of mere customers to the position of policy-makers. This would be done by means of non-profit associations.

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[1] Paul Hirst, *Associative Democracy. New Forms of Economic and Social Governance* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 15–19.
[2] *Ibid*., 19–20.
[3] *Ibid*., 20.

Before touching upon the two principles explicitly laid out by Hirst, it is important to clarify the idea of plurality of associations. The need for this is legitimate: even within the same field, say, health, the existence of more associations is justified in terms of the various preferences and values of the beneficiaries (e.g. an operation could have different implications depending on one's religious view)[4]. Furthermore, this plurality would allow for the development of a multi-layered civil society centered on common principles, making public services more responsive to the diverse interests of the demos.

Returning to the core principles of associative democracy, voluntarism is a crucial one, as it defends the liberty of the individual by allowing it to choose its preferred public service provider, instead of a singular one imposed from atop. Thus, citizens can adhere to any association that matches their objective and subjective preferences. However, as associationalism does not mean privatization, the principle of voluntarism does not imply that the citizens can opt out of paying certain taxes: they can only act voluntarily in the sense that they can choose which association (from a multitude) would provide them with a particular service. Nevertheless, the citizens would have a greater range of public service choices than currently; hence, taking into account that private services (healthcare, pensions, education etc.) would still exist, associationalism does not present any disadvantages from the perspective of individual freedom.

Another key element of the theory is the democratic self-governance of associations. This is, perhaps, the most important characteristic: indeed, the whole point of adding to (and, inevitably, complicating) the current form of representative governance is to make it more democratic, more accountable and more legitimate. If citizens can decide for themselves on the functioning and allocation of funds within associations, not only will public services be more responsive to popular needs and more adaptable to the changes in the social environment, but the people will also become more responsible, active and proactive. Due to the fact that decision-making becomes decentralized, citizens are accountable for managing a small policy area, a close(r) community being more knowledgeable of its issues than any external authority. Moreover, the long-term effect is not at all negligible: when decisions affect people directly and it is in their power to make positive changes, there is simply no one else

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[4] Stuart White, "Associational welfare: too much pluralism?", in *Revisiting Associative Democracy: how to get more co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration into our economy, our democracy, our public services, and our lives*, ed. Andrea Westall (London:Lawrence & Wishart, 2011), 50.

to blame. Hence, the associative model would kick-start the 21st century democracy and the lethargy which accompanies it and it would enhance the creation of a powerful civil society with actual power, responsibility and a high-level of involvement.

Hirst's alternative form of welfare governance simultaneously endorses the demos with two powers that are mutually exclusive within the left-right paradigm: the power of voice and the power of exit. The name of the former might be misleading, but it goes beyond the "making one's voice heard" cliché and refers to actively partaking in the decision-making process. This would be achieved through the democratic structures of association, as previously explained. The latter stems from voluntarism: a citizen can, at any time, exit an association and become member of another[5].

There is one more important element of the associational apparatus that we did not elaborate on: the state. In this pluralist arrangement, the role of the state is important, yet minimal. Due to the fact that many policy areas are to be decentralized, Hirst points to a type of state other than the *sovereign state* ("a state claiming the exclusive control of power, asserting its primacy in every social domain, and imposing itself through a single centralized hierarchy")[6]. Building on the writings of political thinkers such as Figgis, Cole and Laski, he views the pluralist state as a solution for the dilemma regarding the extent of its authority: it should recognize the plural nature of social organization and ensure the necessary autonomy of the associations (both territorially and functionally specific).

However, the state should be powerful enough to ensure law and order, to regulate and protect the activity of the competing associations, as well as to secure the adequate funding (according to size) for their endeavours[7]. Consequently, the state could have more availability for handling issues that cannot be included in the associationalist arrangement, such as foreign policy, internal security, quality assurance, copyright protection etc. In addition, the social rejection of state/government/politicians/ politics in general is avoided because welfare is moved within the jurisdiction of the demos. Thus, instead of civic and political apathy, societies would be characterized by interest, involvement and responsibility.

Furthermore, because of the pluralism of this system and its chiefly majoritarian rule, the state needs to ensure the protection of minorities, to safeguard human rights

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5 Graham Smith and SimonTeasdale, "Associative democracy and the social economy: exploring the regulatory challenge", *Economy and Society*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2012), 153.
6 Paul Hirst, *From Statism to Pluralism: Democracy, Civil Society and Global Politics* (London: Routledge, 2011), 64.
7 *Ibid*.

and to protect the intra-associational democracy through checks-and-balances. In other words, at a time when liberal democracy is the desired and expected form of governance, fostering only the second half of the concept through subsidiarity and plurality is not enough: liberalism should also be preserved by not permitting the tyranny of the majority or any kind of abuse against the individual and its freedom to happen.

Regarding the matter of how these associations would be organized, there is no consensus among scholars about the actual extent of state intervention. While Hirst embraces a bottom-up approach, claiming that their creation and organization should be natural processes, driven by self-interest and rationality of citizens, and that the central government should have little control over these matters (except ensuring that associations meet certain minimal liberal democratic requirements)[8], Cohen and Rogers support a more robust governmental intervention (through taxation, subsidies and even legal sanctions) in "tuning" the internal structure and the external behavior of the bodies[9]. Schmitter's approach seems to be the middle-ground between the two and refers to the creation of a set of *general provisions* according to which all groups should be created and function (as long as they want to preserve their semi-public status), among which ensuring internal democracy, fully and publicly disclosing the revenues and expenditures, as well as the guarantee that the state will not intervene in the choices and internal affairs of the association[10].

In short, associative democracy is a model based on the decentralization of the nation-state through delegating welfare-providing power to associations. These are non-profit, democratically self-governing and voluntary bodies which can be created either based on a certain policy-area or a territorial level. Associations receive funding from the state according to their size and, thus, compete within the same field to provide the most appealing public services. In this arrangement, the state has the minimal role of ensuring the rights and freedoms of people and regulating the functioning of these bodies, as well as governing in the areas where powers cannot be delegated.

It must be mentioned that the theory of associative democracy presented in this chapter is incomplete. Due to the nature of the problem that this paper focuses on,

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[8] Hirst, *Associative Democracy*, 33–47.

[9] Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers, "Secondary Associations and Democratic Governance" in *Associations and Democracy*, ed. Erik Olin Wright, (London: Verso, 1995), 44–49.

[10] Philippe C. Schmitter, "The Irony of Modern Democracy and the Viability of Efforts to Reform its Practice" in *Associations and Democracy*, ed. Wright,175.

all the parts regarding economic governance or the reform of the economic system have been intentionally left out. Associationalism is viewed, in this case, only as a different way of organizing the political sphere by partially merging it with the civil society in order to emphasize the responsiveness, accountability and responsibility of the governance process.

1. USER ENGAGEMENT
IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PROVISION

An interesting, albeit rather small-scale example of inclusion of associative principles is the development of social policy which occurred in the UK after the decision of the 2010 Coalition government to reform the NHS with the purpose of allowing users to have a broader range of choices regarding their providers, as well as offering them a more important role in policy-shaping. While not applying an associative model *per se*, the government committed itself to fostering the following principles:

- "greater involvement of mutuals, co-operatives, charities and social enterprises in running public services;
- public sector workers having a right to form employee-owned co-operatives and bid to take over services;
- extending the roll-out of personal budgets to give people and their carers more control and purchasing power."[11]
- fostering shared decision-making[12]

In other words, the government fostered ideas which clearly overlap with those particular to associationalism, by allowing other type of organizations apart from state-owned ones to deliver public services and granting citizens the right to choose their provider, as well as by giving beneficiaries a say in how public money is spent.

Perhaps the most radical reform implied giving individual budgets to people receiving social care, rather than providing a state-established standard model. Hence, they could either purchase services themselves or hire companies in this regard, encouraging citizens to choose their preferred type of care.

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[11] Sam Mauger, "User engagement in social policy and older people's care", in*Revisiting Associative Democracyi*, ed. Westwall, 60.

[12] UK Department of Health, *Liberating the NHS: No decision about me, without me – Further consultation on proposals to secure shared decision-making* (2012), 12.

The results of this socioeconomic experiment are relevant for our endeavor. The beneficiaries of the reform, mostly elderly people, reacted positively, liking the idea of being able to customize their services according to their wishes and needs in a decentralized manner. However, they conditioned their involvement in the decision-making process to actual changes in the policy outcomes. Moreover, they asked for more transparent access to information regarding the services, as well as a real sense of conversation between users and commissioners, in order to address real issues with realistic solutions ("We are grown-ups and we need to be informed about realities rather than pretending that it is really about choice and development"; "We can be sensible and make useful contributions − but it's important not to patronise us by pretence"[13]).

2. ASSOCIATIONALISM
IN DENMARK – 150 YEARS OF TRADITION

Elements of associative democracy have been present in the Danish political system ever since the 19th century and developed simultaneously with a society based on private property, independence and self-reliance. After 1810, the privately-owned *sparekasser* (saving banks) offered solutions to the social issues triggered by the transition from feudalism, with peasants tied to their landowners, to a system with freeholders, capable of owning and buying land themselves. These banks offered relief, while also attempting to educate and teach the peasants and the poor good morals, protestant ethic, individualism – more generally, the spirit of capitalism.

By the 1830s, sick-benefit organizations emerged as guarantors of a certain degree of social security for artisans, replacing the guild. This principle then spread to other societal strata, becoming a key element for a large part of the population. Due to the fact that these associations lightened the burden of the central political-administrative apparatus and fostered self-governance and reliance, the Danish state embraced them, offering legal recognition and even financial support according to their size.

The Constitution of 1849 safeguarded the existence and functioning of associational structures in Denmark. Two clauses are especially relevant in this regard:

"§92: Citizens shall, without previous permission, be free to form associations for any lawful purpose.

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[13] Mauger, *User engagement in social policy and older people's care*, 61.

§93: Citizens shall, without previous permission, be at liberty to assemble unarmed. The police shall be entitled to be present at public meetings. Open-air meetings may be prohibited when it is feared that they may constitute a danger to the public peace."[14]

The role of the public sphere enhanced in the period between the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the First World War, when the Danish state was threatened by changes in the political life that favored big landowners and civil servants at the expense of the other socioeconomic groups. In this case, the contribution of associations to Danish democracy was twofold: firstly, they pressured the central government into redemocratizing the Constitution after some harmful amendments and, secondly, they fostered political education by employing democratic governance internally.

The Danish model of associational organization closely resembles that of associative democracy theoreticians such as Hirst or Schmitter. Initially, the organizations developed organically with an inherent internal democratic governance (e.g. clauses and main principles laid out in a constitutional document agreed on by a constituting meeting with all the members, an annual general meeting in which a new executive committee is elected, the right to leave etc.), corresponding with the view of the former. However, nowadays, these principles are explicit conditions that any association must respect in order to function under the Danish law, which is closer to what Schmitter considered the correct approach[15].

One policy area in which associationalism was particularly successful is education. The case of the *friskole*, or free schools, is relevant as example of state-funded but independently-run institutions. Initially developed with the purpose of serving children from rural areas, *friskole* grew in popularity: in 1995, 12% of children attending basic school level studied in this type of institutions.

These educational institutions are only lightly regulated by the state: the results of their pupils need to be comparable to those of municipal schools, they need to meet minimum quality standards and they may not violate the Constitution. In the other regards, the *friskole* are administrated by associations of teachers and parents, being internally accountable to their members.

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[14] Lars Bo Kaspersen, *Associationalism for A Hundred and Fifty Years – and still alive and kicking: Some reflections on the Danish civil society*, ECPR Joint Session, (Torino, March 2002), 7–8.

[15] *Ibid*., 9.

The Danish civil society was also successful in pushing for recognition and support for adult education and evening schools, functioning under the same conditions as regular schools. Continuous lobbying, favored by permissive legislation, allowed these schools to be eligible for government funding even in more controversial fields such as cooking, sewing, knitting, gymnastics, dancing and singing, as long as they serve the interest of a meaningful number of interested people[16].

Hence, the Danish model is a powerful example of a tradition in including elements of associative democracy in a political system based chiefly on representation. In over 150 years of functioning, this model has proved its sustainability and efficiency in ensuring welfare without burdening the citizens' lives with a large, statist structure. Instead, the decentralization of some of the public service providers was beneficial for the responsabilization of Danish citizens, as well as for the country's level of social cohesion.

3. ASSOCIATIONALISM IN THE EU – A SOLUTION FOR THE SOCIAL LEGITIMACY CRISIS

After presenting two successful examples of practical implementation of associationalist principles in the decision-making process, we shall analyze the possible implications of applying similar solutions in order to tackle the EU's democratic deficit.

The responses of the citizens that were involved in the implementation of the British reform of the social care and healthcare system point to associationalism as a possible solution to the problems identified. Initially, users were reticent to any transfer of power and taking full responsibility for their decisions. They were also concerned about assuming power for others, fearing that their views might not be representative for those who did not explicitly present theirs. Moreover, they recognized the importance of language in fields with a high degree of specialization (here, health and social care), where technical terms, notions and phrases can make beneficiaries feel disempowered[17].

The former problem is, essentially, an effect of the decades of statism which deresponsibilized the citizens and led them to expect rather than try to find solutions themselves. Furthermore, it shows that the decisions of the involved group would

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[16] *Ibid.*, 17.
[17] Mauger, *User engagement in social policy and older people's care*, 61–62.

have more legitimacy if more people participated. Associationalism could provide the solution for this issue by fostering self-governance and responsibility, as well as by involving all the directly interested people in the decision-making process.

Regarding the latter, associations could, as presented previously, liaison between public authorities and beneficiaries and ensure that the citizens have access to all the relevant information in an open and transparent way, including an accessible vocabulary, with less technical and specialized terminology. The success of associations in embracing this role is shown, in the presented example, by Age Concern, a network of organizations involved in the field of active ageing that managed to act as translators, facilitating, for the users, the understanding of the rights and the implications of certain decisions.

Both issues are very relevant for the condition of the EU governance system, often criticized for its inability to effectively target issues of great importance for its citizens, for its lack of legitimacy and transparency. While the former problem will be developed in the next paragraphs, the Danish example making a more compelling argument, the latter clearly shows both the need expressed by citizens to be able to communicate in an understanding manner and the usefulness of associations' involvement in clarifying the points expressed by both sides.

The example of associational social and legal tradition in Denmark offers an even deeper insight into the kind of advantages that the EU could gain by implementing a similar model, due to the complexity and great extent to which associative democracy was carried.

Firstly, the Danish model prides itself on the level of social cohesion that it fosters. In a Union often criticized for its elitism and inaccessibility for the "common man", encouraging organizations that transcend socioeconomic classes and focus on common goals and interests could be a solution for diminishing the social legitimacy crisis. Just as in Denmark the wealthy lawyer plays football with the unskilled worker[18], so can European citizens leave their differences aside in order to become stronger actors in an improved representative-cum-associative political system. Furthermore, in the Single Market, the interests of ordinary citizens often transcend state borders: associations could provide real opportunities for uniting various social groups and, thus, diminish the effects of nationalist policy and discourse in Europe.

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[18] Peter Gundelach and Lars Torpe, "Befolkningens fornemmelse for demokrati: foreninger, politisk engagement og demokratisk kultur", in *Den demokratiske udfordring*, eds. Jørgen Goul Andersen et. al.,.(Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag, 1999) 76.

Secondly, as shown in the first chapter of this paper, the EU values liberalism and the protection of citizens as individuals above democracy understood simply as majority rule. The issue of "insulation" (protecting certain areas from political contestation and majoritarian rule) is an important aspect of the European democratic apparatus and does not represent a problem in and of itself (especially since it is common practice even among states), albeit the manner in which the concept is applied could be greatly improved by adopting associationalist elements. In other words, what is called the (problematic!) European *demos* is the product of a highly diverse and heterogeneous environment with a great number of "minorities" and only a few, mostly volatile and policy area-specific "majorities". This being the case, preventing a "dictatorship of the majority" is a key duty for an EU that wants to maintain a liberal-democratic system. Simultaneously, however, insulation implies that citizens (even organized in interest groups or other type of associations) have difficulties in shaping policies that might directly affect their lives – as open as (at least some of) the EU institutions are to direct and indirect input from its citizens through consultations, lobbying opportunities and a large number of communication channels, there is no substitute for real decision-making power, hence the liberalism-democracy trade-off. In this situation, the associationalist principles of self-governance and decentralization eliminate the need for a trade-off. Voluntary and democratic associations provide a best-of-both-worlds situation: a medium through which people can benefit from a democratic system while avoiding the risk of drifting into majority dictatorship, simply because both majorities and minorities will be, to a certain degree, responsible for their own welfare.

Thirdly, the Danish example is proof of an idea that, in my opinion, has been insufficiently explored as a real solution for the Union's social legitimacy and its inability to generate emotional attachment among its citizens. The *friskole* and, in general, the self-governing associations that grew in popularity in the 19th century were, initially, allowed to function, and, eventually, even encouraged by the Danish state (through public funding, favorable legislation etc.) not due to a particularly enlightened, liberal-individualist political leadership, but, rather, as a result of simple calculations. In times of severe socio-economic crisis triggered by the agrarian reform, associations did not only assume a key role in poverty relief and mass education (thus lightening the burden of the state system), but also fostered cohesion and nationalism[19] (in a time when the term had the rather positive connotation of nation-state building).

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[19] Kaspersen, *Associationalism for A Hundred and Fifty Years*, 14.

Simply put, the Danish nation developed through an affirmative and inclusive impetus, by consolidating the "us" rather than rejecting the "others". In a time of destructive and aggressive nationalism, the nationalism in Denmark seemed to reflect the idea that "we can survive as a nation and a people if we develop strong national welfare institutions, such as a national health or a national education system"[20].

CONCLUSIONS

Currently, the EU is faced with a deep legitimacy crisis that was, judging by the results, improperly addressed. Its identity was built, to some extent, on efficiency and tangible advantages that the polity could provide for its people. However, by adopting the associative model, much like in the case of Denmark, the citizens will be at least partly responsible for their own and each other's welfare. The Commission has repeatedly stressed the importance of "active participation"[21]: developing an associational thinking has the potential to strengthen the citizens' self-determination-oriented attitude, as well as their level of cohesion and sociopolitical belongingness, leading to a development of a European identity based on affirmative values and constructive attitudes.

There is another reason to believe in the realization of this assumption: the supranational representatives of the EU have been prompt to show their opposition to the nationalist, exclusive tendencies of some European politicians. At least through speeches and public declarations, they have aimed to cultivate an image of the polity based on cosmopolitanism and liberal values, which could support the efforts of the citizens to create a veritable European citizenship through a bottom-up approach, ameliorating the social legitimacy and, hence, what is commonly called the "democratic deficit" of the Union.

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[20] *Ibid*., 24.
[21] European Commission, *EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027* (2018)

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KIM JONG UN'S BUDDING DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION WITH SOUTH KOREA: THE POSSIBLE REUNIFICATION OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA?

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ABSTRACT

North Korea has always been of geopolitical and geostrategic importance for major actors, such as South Korea, but because of its hostile behaviour towards them, the DPRK has been generally portrayed, for decades, as a 'nuisance' for the global arena. This portrayal is also due to its unique political system, which compelled the international actors to have a good understanding of North Korea's Supreme Leader's foreign interests, in order to be able to establish any type of communication with the country. Kim Jong Un, since the beginning of his rule, started differentiating himself from his father and grandfather by adopting an even more isolationist and hostile regime, and by pursuing the development of nuclear weapons and conducting far more frequent and aggressive tests than the previous leaders. However, in 2018 his approach to international relations took a drastic turn towards opening diplomatic channels of communication with its former enemy, South Korea. By taking this into consideration, this paper aims to analyse the reasons why the Supreme Leader took such a decision and pinpoint whether it comes only from the position of strength (being able to use its developed nuclear capabilities, as well as its geopolitical importance as part of the Korea Peninsula, as a bargaining chip with the other actors) or also from that of necessity, as a result of his intention to kick start the economic development of the country. Moreover, it will present one scenario of the future impact of the continuance of this diplomatic communication: the reunification of the Korean Peninsula.

Keywords: *North Korea, South Korea, diplomatic communication, reunification*

1. DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Although there are a plethora of definitions offered by various experts regarding the concept of *diplomatic communication*, the most suitable one, from the perspective

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of illustrating the extent to which communication is a fundamental aspect of diplomacy, is the one proposed by Tran Von Dinh, according to whom: *'Communication is to diplomacy as blood is to the human body. Whenever communication ceases, the body of international politics, the process of diplomacy, is dead, and the result is atrophy and violent conflict[1]*. This proves that communication is the essence of diplomacy and must be used as the means through which common grounds are met, links are created and relationships between states are strengthened, as the alternative, conflict or war, would be disadvantageous for all parties involved.

Regarding the very nature of the process of communication (be it diplomatic or not) we can observe that there are various ways to describe it, for instance, it might be considered as being an active process, that involves all the elements at play, both historical and contemporary, and which might generate along the way the possibility of misunderstandings, miscommunication and inaccurate implications and responses, whilst concurrently creating the potential for correcting these miscues. Another way to perceive it is as an intricate process, especially the diplomatic one, as it occurs in the international system, which encompasses various nations (meaning different cultures, traditions and religions) and non-state actors, making it less likely for the interactions between them to be direct and straightforward. Additionally, there is a hierarchy in the international system, and each actor has their distinctive interests, proving that communication is also transactional, since to achieve their goals, said actors need to abide by some rules or conditions. For instance: if state A had something to gain by interacting with state B, and state A knows that state B and state C are hostile towards each other, state A might choose to avoid forming relations with state C, that is, if it would not benefit more from interacting with state C than with state B. Thus, all three assumptions indicate that diplomatic communication is contextual, as the context has a high impact on the outcome and explains why inconsistencies can be observed in the behaviour of actors at the international level towards others based purely on their objectives.[2]

Consequently the complexity of the process of diplomatic communication renders it almost impossible for just one theory/model/strategy to be efficient in explaining all the aspects, so in this paper three distinctive models will be presented, starting with

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[1] Tran Von Dinh, '*Communication and Diplomacy in a Changing World'*, (Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1987): 8

[2] Gilles Rouet, and Luciana Radut-Gaghi, 'Communication et Diplomatie Plurielle: Introduction Générale', in *Hermes, La Revue,* Vol. 2, Issue 81, (2018): 16–18 and François Verrières, 'Communiquer la diplomatie', in *Hermes, La Revue,* Vol. 2, Issue 81, (2018) : 27–30

the one proposed by Claudio Cioffy-Revilla in his paper on *Diplomatic Communication Theory: Signals, Channels and Networks,* in which he coined a systematic analysis of diplomatic communication on two levels: channels and networks.[3] The author claims that the first level, the channels, are mostly linked to topics pertaining to international negotiation and should be analysed from the perspective of foreign policy decision-making. He also explains the difference between the foreign policy decision-making of a single political actor and that of a two-actor dyad, the former draws '*upon information inputs in order to produce policy outputs in the form of decisions, including the decision not to act*'[4], whilst for the latter, an actor's policy output might become the other's information input, and vice-versa, so we can deduce that their foreign policy decision-making is interconnected, as any choice made by one of the actors, will have an impact on the other's behaviour.[5] When it comes to the second level proposed by Cioffy, that of diplomatic networks, he emphasises on the fact that communication takes place in the international system, between the various actors, as such, besides the *1 to 1* communication structure proposed by the first level, the networks are also comprised of two other such structures, that of *1 to group* communication (referring to those instances where one actor had to communicate with organizations such as the United Nations) and that of *1 to subgroup* communication (between one actor and regional groups).[6]

Whilst Cioffy's theory revolves around the number of actors who can be involved in the process of diplomatic communication in the international system, the second strategy, coined by Cecil Blake in his article on *'Developing Diplomatic Communication Strategies and Models for Africa; Some Key Issues'* is focused on the hierarchy between the actors taking part in said process. Thus we have the following two models, the *vertical model of communication* and the *horizontal model of communication.* The former operates under the presumption that there are senior and junior members in the international system whose relationships run vertically. This assumptions comes from the fact that: a) the junior members need the senior members in order to maintain their status or strengthen it; b) most likely the communication between the two types is only possible due to the solicitation from the senior members; c) even when the junior members are the ones to initiate the communication, it is based on

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[3] Claudio A. Cioffi-Revilla, 'Diplomatic Communication Theory: Signals, Channels, Networks', in *International Interactions,* Vol. 6, Issue 3, (1979) : 209

[4] *Ibid.,* 212

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Ibid.,* 243

mutual concerns.[7] This suggests a near-absolute reliance of the junior members towards the senior members for everything from institutional development to policy decision making, making it seem that the communication between them is not only restricted but suppressed.[8]

As such, are there any benefits for such a diplomatic relationship? Considering the fact that the negative aspects are quite obvious, one of them being the possibility of those states which are perceived to be junior ones to express themselves freely, to take decisions which are not mutually beneficial is breached, are there any benefits for the long run? To answer this question, an advantage is the predictability of the communication strategies, eliminating the element of surprise, and ruling out the need for a continuous process of negotiation and compromise for the long run. Additionally, the leader of the smaller country can use this type of alliance (since the dependency on such a state is a given need) to develop his entire nation by taking advantage of what it was that made the larger state gain interest in starting the communication/relationship.

The latter model proposed by Blake is the horizontal one, which as opposed to the one explained before, tackles the development of a relationship and the strategies of diplomatic communication between members who are equal at the international level. From this perspective the horizontal relationship proves that: a) the junior members depend on each other for leadership; b) the junior members help each other's societies to develop economically, politically and socially; c) the commitment and alliance between states of equal standing is more important than each's commitment to senior members in the international system; d) communication is encouraged to start by either member. The author believes that for the long term this type of relationship is the most beneficial as the lack of power-play will help the states involved to develop more freely and rapidly, as well as to strengthen their position internationally.[9] For example, if we take into consideration two neighbouring developing countries which share the same natural resources and both want to enter the international market and compete in selling their product of equal quality. If they are of the same calibre, the method of differentiation used by the market, in this case, would be the relationship between the seller countries and the buyer ones. Thus, a good example would be the following: if developing country A has strong vertical ties to large country B, and

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7 Cecil A. Blake, 'Developing Diplomatic Models and Strategies for Africa: Some Key Issues', in *Journal of Black Studies,* Vol.14, Issue 3, (1984): 283
8 *Ibid.,* 283–284
9 *Ibid.,* 285–286

developing country C has links to major country B which are recognized of being not as strong as those of the former country, naturally the other members of the market will buy from country A. However if neighbouring countries A and C form a powerful horizontal relationship, they would be able to merge their product and sell it in bulk without it being necessary for either of them to have a secure vertical connection with any given state in the international system. By forming a strong horizontal alliance, the developing countries can surpass the vertical partnership with an already developed nation.

2. COMMUNICATION WITH SOUTH KOREA

Ever since the Korean War from the 1950s, the Republic of Korean and the DPRK have formed a rather complex relationship, in which they are never thoroughly antagonistic towards each other, nor are they entirely close to one another. Virginie Grzelczyk defined this type of interaction as that of a *'significant other'*[10] because having this significant other allows two actors who share historical and cultural traditions, as well as experiences, to develop their discrete identity concerning one another. The two Koreas have related to one another with regards to three topics: *'how to resolve the conflict derived from the partition; how to resolve markedly different ideologies; and how to manage a state of tension born out of foreign influences'*[11] One could say that at the core of their relationship, from the beginning, was the constant need to negotiate for their peace. However, since they find themselves on the opposite political spectrum, one cultivating democracy and capitalism and the other cultivating tools of popular control amidst a controlled economy, there have been plenty of cases when the leader of North Korea and the President of South Korea could not form an at least neutral connection.

That was the case between Kim Jong Un, who had just become the ruler of the DPRK at the time, and the former president of South Korea, Park Geun Hye, who was in office between 2012 and 2017. At the time Park Geun Hye was inaugurated the United Nations imposed various sanctions on North Korea, including a *'blacklist of North Korean goods, companies and individuals connected to that country's nuclear and missile programs after the latter tried to launch a ballistic missile, and had*

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[10] Virginie Grzelczyk, *'North Korea's New Diplomacy: Challenging Political Isolation in the 21st Century'*, (London:Palgrave Macmillan, 2018): 51
[11] *Ibid.*

failed'.[12] Kim Jong Un's response to the sanctions was the announcement of another nuclear test and long-range missile launch.[13] In order to counter him, the United Nations decided to implement another sanction, in which it was forbidden to offer aid, to halt North Korea's military tests.[14] As part of the United Nations, South Korea had to enforce the sanction, and from then on, the interactions between the two became tense.

Moreover, in 2013, two months precisely after the sanction was imposed, Kim Jong Un invented a crisis at the Kaesong Industrial Zone (KIZ), which operated as a collaborative economic development with South Korea, and withdrew the North Korean employees for a period of four months, because during that time the ROK-US annual military drills took place at the DMZ. The last interaction of President Park GeunHye with the DPRK was in 2016 when the latter conducted their fourth nuclear test, claiming that it was a hydrogen bomb and not late after that launched another rocket. As retaliation, the South Korean president halted the collective activities at the KIZ and recalled all her staff, being mostly motivated by the frustration that North Korea refused to stop developing its nuclear weapons and technology.[15]

An important aspect relating to the chain of events described above is the fact that the Kaesong Industrial Park was a means of inter-Korean communication through which, both countries worked to improve their relationship. The main purpose of the industrial park was to assist the North Korean and to provide impetuous to improve the North Korean Society.[16] During 2013, when he withdrew the workers, Kim Jong Un also declared that he would no longer abide by the Armistice Agreement (signed in 1953) and also claimed that he planned to disregard all non-aggression pacts with South Korea, threatening that he was preparing for a nuclear attack. Park Geun Hye claimed that if Kim Jong Un continued to prepare a nuclear attack, his government would be erased from the earth. Nevertheless, not long afterwards, Kim Jong Un

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[12] Sang-Hun Choe, 'U.N. Council to Expand North Korea Sanctions'*, in The New York Times, 16.04.2012,* Section: Asia Pacific, Available at:https://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/17/world/asia/north-korea-sanctions-expanded-by-united-nations.html (accessed on: 25.08.2019)

[13] David Straub, 'Salvaging the Sunshine Policy', in Korea Economic Institute of America, Available at: http://www.keia.org/category/authors/david-straub (accessed on: 26.08.2019): 21–22.

[14] Hy-sang Lee, 'South Korea's Limited Options for Engaging Pyongyang', 22.08.2014, Section: Diplomacy, East Asia, South Korea, Available at: https://thediplomat.com/2014/08/south-koreas-limited-options-for-engaging-pyongyang/ (accessed: 26.08.2019)

[15] Straub, *op.cit* , 22

[16] Gayathri Anuradha, 'Park Geun-Hye Unilaterally Closed Kaesong Industrial Complex On North Korean Border: Report', in *International Business Times,* Section: World, 28.12.2017, Available at: https://www.ibtimes.com/park-geun-hye-unilaterally-closed-kaesong-industrial-complex-north-korean-border-2634001 (accessed on: 26/08/2019)

wanted to start talks for a peace treaty, to replace the armistice agreement. Likewise in 2016 due to the nuclear drill made by Kim Jong Un, Park Geun Hye decided to recall the South Korean staff from the KIZ and to close the industrial park because she believed that the millions of dollars gained from the park should have been used by Kim Jong Un for the unification, not nuclear weapons development.[17]

If we were to analyse the type of strategy that appears in the communication between the leader of DPRK and the South Korean President we can observe that the best model is Cioffy's 1 to 1 communication. We begin from the premise that both actors have a strong will to fight, the issue being that of North Korea's nuclear tests. The signaller, in this case, is Park Geun Hye who demands a full concession regarding the denuclearisation of North Korea. The target, Kim Jong Un, refuses to make a concession, so the only option for the President of South Korea is to fight, and does so, by unilaterally closing the Kaesong Industrial Zone which had brought North Korea a revenue of approximately 500 million dollars,[18] which should have been used towards the unification, not development of nuclear weapons and military technology. Another example is the one in which Kim Jong Un is the signaller, having demanded that the ROK army stop having military drills with the US army at the border, but was ignored by Park Geun Hye, so Kim Jong Un withdrew all his works from the factory and declared that he wats to break the armistice, and will disregard any non -aggression pact with South Korea. This decision resulted in the breach of relations between the two.

Nonetheless, the relationship between the two states started improving after the 2017 election of the new President of the Republic of Korea, Moon Jae In because he started militating for the re-adoption of the *Sunshine Policy[19],* which is South Korea's foreign policy towards North Korea. The main goal of this policy is to improve the behaviour of North Korea towards the South by encouraging interaction and economic assistance. However, there are a few conditions which must be met: first of all, no armed provocation from the North will be accepted; second of all, South Korea will not try to absorb the North in any way, and the last one is the aim of South Korea to actively seek cooperation and reconciliation with the North.[20]

As a response to the foreign policy adopted by Moon Jae In, Kim Jong Un proposed he would send a delegation to the 2018 Winter Olympics, and the North

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[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Ibid.*
[19] Straub*, op. cit.,* 21
[20] *Ibid.,* 23

and South Korea hotline telephone was reopened. Afterwards, the first inter-Korean Summit between the two of them took place at Panmunjom, in April 2018, and it was the first time since the Korean War, that a leader of North Korea stepped foot on the South Korean territory. At this Summit the two signed the 'Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula[21], meaning the end of the Korean War and Korean Conflict.

The main points of the Panmunjom Declaration are the following: 1. working towards complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula; 2. eliminating the military tensions, establishing a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula; 3. promoting the re-unification of the Korean Peninsula through the improvement of the communication between the two parties. First, in the Panmunjon Declaration, the two leaders agreed on improving the inter-Korea relations and that the future of both countries, including their unification, would depend solely upon the two Koreas, without interference from other states. The inter-Korea talks should continue and should revolve around the denuclearisation and humanitarian engagement.[22] Second, it tackles the issue of alleviating military tensions, since these are still high because the two countries are technically still at war with each other.However, achieving this will take time and effort. To alleviate these tensions, President Moon and Chairman Kim agreed to end all hostile acts, establish a maritime peace zone, and hold frequent military talks.[23] Third, the two agreed on establishing a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula, mostly given North Korea's status as a threat for the international community, due to its nuclear tests. In order to achieve this, the two leaders agreed to a prohibition on the use of force, disarmament on the Korean Peninsula, the necessity of multilateral talks and a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula.[24]

Nevertheless, this declaration should not be considered as being a legally binding one, but merely a political one. It does not have a legal effect on the ongoing Korean War since this is an official armed conflict, which is governed by international law,

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[21] Aidan Foster-Carter 'Inter Korean Summit. Third Time Lucky?', in *Comparative Connections; Honolulu*, Vol. 20, Issue 1 (2018): 7

[22] Angela Semee Kim, 'An End to the Korean War: The Legal Character of the 2018 Summit Declarations and Implications of an Official Korean Peace Treaty', in *Asian Journal of International Law,* Vol. 9, Issue 1 (2019): 207

[23] 'Agreement on the Implementation of the Historic Panmunjom Declaration in the Military Domain', in *The National Committee of North Korea,* 19.09.2018 Available at: https://www.ncnk.org/sites/default/files/Agreement%20on%20the%20Implementation%20of%20the%20Historic%20Panmunjom%20Declaration%20in%20the%20Military%20Domain.pdf (accessed on: 28.08.2019)

[24] *Ibid.*

and only a peace treaty governed by the international law will be able to end it officially. However, just because the declaration is not ratified, it does not mean that it can be disregarded entirely, seeing that it was mutually agreed upon and signed, so it should be carried out in good faith.[25] The signing of this declaration meant, for President Moon Jae In, the fulfilment of the first step of his *policy of appeasement* towards North Korea (that emphasises dialogue and cooperation.)[26], which he outlined in his Berlin Initiative. This policy was based on the completion of five steps: achieving peace; denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula; institutionalisation of the peace process to ensure its longevity; direct inter-Korean economic cooperation aimed at establishing an economic community through connectivity projects and the separation of non-political exchange between the two Korea from military and political issues.[27]

Another important aspect of President Moon Jae In's foreign policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is his desire for South Korea to take the lead role in solving all issues of the Korean Peninsula, including the North Korea nuclear issues. This determination of the Republic of Korea's President is possible because he gained the support of the progressivists and nationalists, at the national level and because these groups advocate adopting the policy of self-reliance in the external situation and have a particular interest for the inter-Korean relationship.[28]

The following inter-Korean Summit, from May 2018 was held in order to discuss the upcoming summit between the DPRK and the United States of America, as well as the talks concerning the military, which resulted in the reconnecting of two terrestrial military hotlines, one across the western and eastern sectors of the DMZ and one across the Yellow Sea.[29] Another issue discussed is that of opening the permanent liaison office at the Kaesong Industrial Zone, which will be open around the clock, enabling instant communication between the two sides, as such restarting the economic cooperation between the two Koreas.[30] The third inter-Korean Summit, between Chairman Kin Jong Un and President Moon Jae In, took place on September

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[25] Kim, *op. cit.,*211

[26] Kwang KyuNam, 'The Moon Jae In administration's North Korea policy and Korea–US relations', in *Asian Education and Development Studies,* Vol. 8, Issue 1 (2019): 60

[27] Hyun-Jung Bae, 'Full text of Moon's speech at the Korber Foundation', in *The Korean Herald,* 07.07.2017, Available at :http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20170707000032 (accessed on: 28.08.2019)

[28] Kwang Kyu Nam, *op. cit,* 62

[29] Aidan Foster-Carter*,* 'Sunshine 2.0 Good Start – But How Far Can It Go?', in *Comparative Connections*, Vol. 20, Issue 2, 76

[30] *Ibid.*

2018, in Pyongyang, North Korea. During this summit the leaders signed the '*Pyongyang Joint Declaration of September 2018',* in which they reaffirmed: '*the principle of independence and self-determination of the Korean nation, and agreed to consistently and continuously develop inter-Korean relations for national reconciliation and cooperation, and firm peace and co-prosperity.*'[31] Likewise, this declaration led to future demilitarisation of the DMZ, by destroying the guard posts located along the frontlines of the border, as well as the disarmament of the Joint Security Area.[32] Additionally, concerning the denuclearisation process, North Korea permanently dismantled the Dongchang-ri missile engine test site and launch platform under the observation of experts from South Korea's National Intelligence team. The latter also included under their observations the Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site and the Sohae Satellite Launching Station.[33]

With regards to the communication strategies used by the two leaders, Chairman Kim Jong Un and President Moon Jae In, in their interactions with each other, during the Summits mentioned above, we can observe Cecil A. Blake's *Horizontal model*. In this type of communication, the actors involved help each other's societies to develop economically, politically and socially, which can be proved in the case of the two Korean leaders by their signing of not only the Panmunjom Declaration of Peace but also of the Pyongyang Joint Declaration of September. The members also depend on each other for leadership; the two leaders agreed when signing the Panmunjom Declaration that the future of the two Koreas, including unification, depends solely upon the two Koreas, without any interference from third-party states.

3. REUNIFICATION OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA

As was explained above, one of the main conditions of the 'Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula' was promoting the reunification of the Korean Peninsula through the improvement of the communication between the two parties. Thus, an interesting case study would be an analysis of the various scenarios through which this merger could be possible, by describing the context in which it could occur, the various challenges and obstacles that might appear and determining the feasibility and probability of each scenario.

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[31] 'Pyongyang Joint Declaration of September 2018', in *The National Committee on North Korea, 19.09.2018.* Available at: https://www.ncnk.org/node/1633 (accessed on 28.08.2019)
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] *Ibid.*

The unification or reunification of the Korea Peninsula has always been of interest for not only the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, but also for major powers such as the United States of America and China. Still, it is also detrimental to determine exactly what the concept of unification may refer to, for example: if the two actors involved (ROK and DPRK) will be able to come to a mutual understanding, then, the notion would indicate a single integrated government or a confederate government where there will be separate governments, but the decision-making regarding some areas, such as trade, foreign policy and national security will be shared. Another important aspect is the fact that the unification might be the result of a forceful takeover by the combined forces of South Korea and the US, and as such it might not be an instantaneous process, as some areas such as the Korean Demilitarized Zone are brought immediately under the unified Korea, and the other areas would be added once they were freed or captured. By taking this under consideration, the concept can also be observed from a geographical standpoint, in the sense that it can be full or partial unification. In the first case presented above, that of mutual understanding, it would be a full geographical unification, but in the second case and in case that the combined forces of North Korea and China are the ones establishing control over some parts of Korea, it would be geographically partial.[34] Consequently, an essential factor is also the way through which the Korean Peninsula would be reunited since there are various paths including the peaceful one, the reunification through war, and last, but not least, the reunification in the case of the collapse of the North Korean political regime.

3.1. PEACEFUL UNIFICATION

It is a well-known fact that both Koreas wish for the unification of the Peninsula, but the content of the unification is different for each country, the only similarity being both their belief that once united 'the Korea' would become a major state. Nevertheless, the differences in governing style and society would make a peaceful unification quite difficult to achieve. The most they would accomplish, before realising that one of them is going to lose, is a confederation. Due to the extreme differences, a win-win situation would be impossible. By taking into consideration both similarities and differences between the two countries, there are three possibilities of peaceful

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[34] Bruce W. Bennett, *'Alternative Paths to Korean Unification'*, Published by RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, 2018. Available at: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2808.html (accessed on: 21.08.2019): 2–3

unification: the one in which the Democratic People's Party Korea is the one in charge (the power was obtained peacefully), the Republic of Korea (power was obtained peacefully) and the peaceful cooperation path.

For the DPRK to be able to gain the necessary power to become in charge in a nonviolent manner by undermining the South Korea government in such a way the ROK would willingly politically surrender to their Northern counterparts. This would happen if, for example, the political alliance between the United States and the South will stop existing since this is the primary goal of the North for their plan for a quiet to become possible. Since his speech in 2018, Kim Jong Un has always spoken about the topic of unification and has claimed his desire for the two Koreas to sign a peace treaty, this might be because he is under the impression that if the peace treaty is signed, the alliance between the US and the South will immediately dissolve itself afterwards.[35] So, let's say that indeed the DPRK gains control over ROK, Kim Jong Un might realise that it will not be his ideal consolidation: once in power he would need to gain complete control over the South so he will have to draw upon the security service personnel os the South, who is not as experienced or loyal. The next logical step would be to remove all threats starting with all the elites: by assassinating them and absorbing all their wealth and connections, the latter in order to stop the flow of information to the South. Secondly, he would need to bring people he can trust to run the large business left behind by the elite, and since they might not know how to do so, bankruptcy would be inevitable. By stoping the flow of information, the South which heavily relies on exports will take a significant economic hit, and once the public opinion would turn their hatred towards the main culprit, it might be too late to solve every problem.[36]

The next path, that of the peaceful takeover in which ROK is the one in charge might turn out to be just as unlikely, like the one described above. The reason for this is that it would prove to be quite difficult for the South to have the ability to start the merger because first of all, North Korea has the WMD at its disposal; second of all, every time the Supreme Leader leaves the country it is places under a heavy lockdown to prevent similar situations; and third of all, Kim Jong Un would never

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[35] *Ibid.,* 59–64

[36] Jonathan Cheng and Andrew Jeong, "'The Unification That North Korea Wants Will Never Happen,' South Says," *Wall Street Journal*, 16.09.2017. Available at: https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-unification-that-north-korea-wants-will-never-happen-south-korea-says-1510830991 (accessed on: 21.08.2019)

accept due to the fact that he will be probably prosecuted for at the very least human rights violations, and countless other charges.[37]

The cooperation path seems to be the most likely to be possible out of all of them, that is because it proposes that the two countries transition towards a confederation. In such a system, the majority of governmental functions (especially local government) remain separate, but some degree of coordination or integration is arranged between the North and South.[38] The obstacle towards a confederation is the stark difference between the two societies. The South Korean society is based on democracy, a free market and free flow of information, but in contrast, North Korea is an extreme dictatorship which allowed markets to develop illegally under its socialist regime only as a measure to prevent starvation and famine.[39] Also, the regime has restricted the free flow of information to counter any possibility for their rule to be in jeopardy. However, if the confederate state is approved, then Kim Jong Un's regime might be in danger because the North Korean society and the elite might choose to dispose of him, in favour of the communication with the ROK government.

Nevertheless, in order to fight such fears, the president of South Korea, Moon Jae In, included solutions in the Panmunjom Agreement, which would move the DPRK culture towards the ROK culture. Some of them are inspired from the 1991 Basic Agreement: *'interactions would encompass high-level diplomacy; economic exchanges; inter-Korean trade; exchanges in science, technology, education, arts, and sports; free intra-Korean travel and contacts; free correspondence, reunions, and visits; humanitarian issue resolution; railroad and road reconnections; opening of South-North sea and air routes; linking of postal and telecommunication services; joint economic and cultural undertakings abroad; and establishment of joint commissions.*[40] It is crucial to mention that these solutions are viable only if Kim Jong Un is willing to make changes to his regime, and while at the beginning he might be open to,

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[37] Yoon Ah Ha, "Regime Tightened Control over Key Personnel Prior to US-NK Summit," *DailyNK,* 22.06. 2018, Accessible at: https://www.dailynk.com/english/regime-tightened-control-over-key-personnel-prior-to-us-nk-summit/, Accessed on:21.08.2019

[38] Tae-Hwan Kwak and Seung-Ho Joo, 'The Future of the Korean Peninsula: Unification and Security Options for the 21st Century', in *Asian Perspective,* Vol.23, Issue 2 (1999): 169

[39] Jun-Suk Yeo, 'Two Koreas need to learn from China's 'one country, two systems'", *The Korean Herald,* 14.08.2018,Available at: http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20180814000728 (accessed on: 21.08.2019)

[40] "Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation Between South and North Korea", in the *United Nations Department of Political Affairs*, 13.12.1991, Available at: https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/KR%20KP_911213_Agreement %20on%20reconciliation%20non%20aggression%20and%20exchangespdf.pdf (accessed on: 23.08.2019)

there is a significant possibility that if he at some point develops the impression that a confederate system is more advantageous for the South, rather than himself (this system would be extremely beneficial for the North Korean society), he will stop cooperating.

3.2. UNIFICATION THROUGH WAR

The second path that might lead to the unification of the Korean Peninsula is the one through war which, unfortunately, is still a possibility if we take into consideration North Korea's continuous development of nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles, and their conducting of nuclear and missile tests even now, when the diplomatic communication between the two Korea is at its highest compared with their interactions in the past. So, for this course of action, there are two outcomes: a) DPRK conquest and b) ROK-US conquest.

The first result of unification through conflict is the one in which North Korea proves to be victorious. As we all know the North has developed along the years its weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological) and these coupled with its military, special forces and cyber capabilities, turned the DPRK into South Koreas greatest threat, since the latter has no such weapons of its own and must depend only on the protection offered by the United States and their ability to deter and counter an attack of such magnitude. Nonetheless, it is unclear whether Kim Jong Un will be willing to use these weapons since, disregarding the millions of casualties, in the aftermath, there might not be anything left for him to gain. Thus, he might decide to keep the WMD as the last measure and choose to rely on the military and somehow win. The aftermath will not be positive, besides the similarities with the peaceful takeover path, this newly reunited Korea will be under constant armed interventions by the United States and its allies and receive more significant sanctions by the international organisations, and all in all, fail in achieving its desired outcome, proving that a unification through force is not viable.

The alternative to the situation presented above is the one in which the war ends with the victory of the ROK-US alliance. We will start from the premise that the one who initiated the conflict was North Korea because it is rather disadvantageous for South Korea to be the initiator since in contrast to the North, an extreme dictatorship whose development was focused on its military capabilities, the South, a democracy, focused on its economic development, relies on the help of the United States of America for the deterrence of WMD attacks. If the war started it means

that all channels of communication failed, so the next strategy for the alliance would be to neutralise the DPRK army, destroy the regime, conquer the full territory of North Korea and unify it under ROK governance.[41] Achieving all goals might be difficult since if North Korea uses its entire military capabilities, the ROK-US forces, as well as the South Korean society, will suffer tremendous losses. In the aftermath of conflict, the allied forces might not be able to conquer all the territories if China decides to get involved, as such the unification under South Korean conquest will be partial. The economic and social loses will be significant, and this can further prove that total unification through violent means is impossible.

3.3. UNIFICATION IN THE CASE
OF THE COLLAPSE OF THE DPRK REGIME

For decades there have been various speculations regarding a possible collapse of the regime in North Korea due to the instability of the economy and the excessive disregard of human rights. In this case there are two viable scenarios that lead to a collapse: 1) Kim Jong Un dies, and since there is no decision towards his successor, a power vacuum is created, and due to this the DPRK government and military will be divided between factions; 2) The Kim family is removed from power through a coup d'état.[42] With regards to the power vacuum narrative, the best decision for South Korea is to intervene in order for the unification to be possible. However, the ROK-US army will not be the only one to intervene because China will also be affected in case of a power vacuum. The problem that arises is the fact that the DMZ, the border between the two Koreas is more heavily guarded than the North Korean-China border, so China will have the advantage to act faster than the ROK-US forces and the only probability for the latter to take full control of the North Korean territory would be to engage the Chinese army, which would be improbable. So the only feasible option is the partial unification, but even here, there might be various challenges because of the presence of the various DPRK military groups, since there is also the possibility of insurgency[43], especially if the North Korean elites will be expelled from their positions in the government.

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[41] Bennett, *op. cit.*, 38

[42] *Ibid.,* 51

[43] Phil. W Reynolds, 'What Happens If North Korea Collapses? If Kim Jong-un's regime collapses, how will China, the U.S., and South Korea react?', in *The Diplomat,* 03.09.2016, Available at: https://thediplomat.com/2016/09/what-happens-if-north-korea-collapses/ (accessed on: 24.08.2019)

In the second scenario, in the aftermath of a coup d'état, the best solution for South Korea is to establish communication channels with those who are newly in power and, as there might be a possibility for a regime change, the South could start the collaboration with some favourable policies for the inter-Korea communication. The Republic of Korea should start by building a trust-based relationship with the new government focused on offering humanitarian aid, on infrastructure development and capital investment.[44] In turn, the North might respond by adopting national policies that protect the activities and cut down on the production of nuclear weapons and missiles. Afterwards, the following step is the creation of a confederation in which they would share responsibility on aspects regarding trade and foreign policy but maintain autonomy on the domestic ones. Also, in this period the main requirement would be the development of the North Korean economy and the adoption of a variety of welfare policies in order to avoid the mass migration of the North Koreans to the South due to these issues. Eventually, the DPRK will be stable and developed enough for a full unification to be possible.

3.4. OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS

By comparing all three narratives, we can observe that there are some common challenges to be found in the path towards unification. The most severe threat is North Korea's weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological), missiles and military force. The WMD, if employed, will cause so much damage, to both countries, that in their aftermath there will be a lack of resources, lack of stabilisation and, if the two do merge, the most probable outcome will be a collapse of the Korean Peninsula. A possible solution for this problem is continuous negotiations during inter-Korean, DPRK-USA and ROK-DPRK-USA Summits, during which the United States and South Korea should offer to negotiate on behalf of North Korea with the United Nations in order for the organisation to possibly lift some of the sanctions.

Another obstacle to the possibility of full unification is China because due to its Agreements with North Korea and its alliance with the latter, in some circumstance has the permission to intervene with its military. The problem is that in the case of a war starting or the collapse of the DPRK'S regime, China will intervene, and seeing that the border with China is not as heavily guarded as the DMZ, the Chinese forces will reach the capital of North Korea faster than ROK could. Additionally,

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[44] Jun-Suk Yeo, *op. cit.* Available at: http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20180814000728 (accessed on: 24.08.2019)

North Korea is seen as being the territory of the Republic of Korea, and this is written in its Constitution[45], meaning that Chinese armed forces on the Korean Peninsula might start an unnecessary conflict between the ROK-US alliance and China and the outcome of such a conflict would be worse than one between the two Koreas. South Korea's only way to prevent interference by the powerful state is to try to avoid the worsening of its relationship with the North and to strengthen its relationship with China.

Lastly, there is the inadequate preparation of ROK with regards to a new government for North Korea in the case of a regime collapse. The common feeling between the DPRK at the moment for South Korea is a negative one. They might resist a unification because they are left unaware of whether they will be able to keep their status, and whether they will be prosecuted for the disregard for the fundamental human rights[46]. In order to achieve the Two Korea's consolidation into one state, the ROK should establish communication channels with each DPRK's elite in order to form alliances with the factions, instead of gaining enemies by threatening them. With the support of the elites, it will be easier for the South to strengthen its position within the DPRK government.

CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this article was to determine why Kim Jong Undecided to change his approach regarding his communication with South Korea and to depict the possibility of the reunification of the Korean Peninsula. Throughout we could observe that at the basis of every international connection's successful outcome was a good relationship between the individuals involved. Thus, Kim Jong Un saw that it possible to change his approach to diplomatic communication, because the external factors were beneficial for such a move. This was seen in the case of South Korea, as the presence of President Moon Jae In was crucial for Kim Jong Un, in order to achieve peace with the South. Moreover, the bilateral relations between them were beneficial from an economic standpoint because Kim Jong Un's willingness in participating at the various summits and choosing to dispose of some of its nuclear weapons had, as a result, the lifting of some economic sanctions. The other benefit, besides the economic one,

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[45] Republic of Korea, "Constitution of the Republic of Korea," *National Assembly of the Republic of Korea*, 29.10 1987, Article 3, Available at: https://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/kr/kr061en.pdf (accessed on 25.08.2019)

[46] Bennett, *op. cit,* 23

was the fact that South Korea would rely on the unstable and premature peace agreement, giving Kim Jong Un legitimacy in the international arena, and especially it would also legitimise his status and nuclear capabilities.

Concerning the possibility of the Reunification of the Korean Peninsula this research has shown that in the case of the Korean peninsula unification, desired by both the South and North, there were three possible paths towards it: peace, regime collapse and war. However, in every case, disregarding the idealist one, a full unification would not be possible in either short or long-term and the only instance when it would be, the process would finalise after at least fifty years have passed. Hence, a partial unification proved to be the most viable option because it was the only one that did not have even the slightest possible way to lead to a regime collapse for either country.

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POLICIES AND REFORMS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR – A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE ON THE GOVERNANCE IN ROMANIA

George-Cristian GAVRILOAIA[*]

ABSTRACT

The paper examines the general reform framework as well as the impact of the managerial reform measures – transition from the bureaucratic professional model of public administration to the New Public Management (NPM) in the field of public policy. Two features of managerial reform are identified: the linear nature of reforms and poor management. The former is historically complex due, in part, to the justification of a lack of vision in modeling strategies. These factors require and allow central control with public administration models a key mechanism to achieve this. In addition, because the government's perspective was not appropriate in the interest of modernization, its attempts to control labor management (wage increases in the public sector) is a second key factor in the management reform. And public administration models again represent a major mechanism for achieving central control. The analysis is based on a brief historical analysis of last developments and policy examples that look at more recent developments to illustrate the general case. Empirical findings indicate the resilience and the difficulty of implementing certain changes. They also indicate lack of motivation and an organizational yet hierarchical culture obsolete. Another important finding is that the NPM was just a modern, but not necessarily practical concept.

Keywords: *public administration, public policy, public sector reform*

INTRODUCTION

The way in which countries are governed around the world is reflected in an ensemble of institutions, public decisions, participation and cohesion. From this perspective, but also because of the big changes in the field of public management, we are discussing how the countries managed to implement such reforms that affected the political and administrative system, which were the elements of the reform, the

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big problems but also the challenges. Some EU countries[1] have consistently made conscious efforts to boost the performance of their own administrations, here being eloquent examples of countries where innovation has been the factor of change (Belgium, Australia, Estonia) other countries need to reconsider the bases of their administrative system. The current rhythm of social, technological and economic changes requires that all public administrations get involved adapting to the new realities, that's why this challenge to reform the public sector[2].

1. KEY CHALLENGES
AND GENERAL FRAMEWORK FOR REFORM

Public administration meets the needs of society and works based on organizational structures, processes, roles, relationships, policies and programs. Its activity, as we understand from the literature, influences a number of key concepts such as sustainable development, economic prosperity and citizens' quality of life. At the same time, public administration influences social trust and determines the conditions for value creation, this is a result of all the resource allocation decisions adopted by the major state actors[3].

The bureaucratic phenomenon is not a contemporary issue of modern society, which has been studied and analyzed for a long time by specialists. They wanted to observe the main features of bureaucracy, but they also analyzed the positive and negative effects it can generate. The main specialists who came with relevant analyzes, studies and observations in this area (e.g. G. Mosca, R. Michels, M. Weber and others) have made an essential contribution from a temporary perspective, but have also left room for some criticisms that we will see are sufficiently customized and analyzed in the case of Romania. We are talking about efficiency, replacing the classic bureaucracy concept, becoming the umbrella concept, we want to make a parallel between bureaucracy and post-bureaucracy to see the overall reform framework, how can they improve the public sector by delivering absolutely indispensable public services

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[1] OECD, *Embracing Innovation in Government: Global Trends 2018*, 2018, Retrieved from: https://www.oecd.org/gov/innovative-government/embracing-innovation-in-government-2018.pdf [accesed in May 16, 2019].

[2] Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay and Pablo Zoido-Lobatón, *Governance Matters*, Policy Research Working Paper, No. 2196, (1999): 1.

[3] European Commission, *European Semester: Thematic factsheet – Quality of public administration*, 2017, retrieved from:https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester/thematic-factsheets/public-administration_ro [accessed in May 04, 2019].

and a certain level of costs. Some authors, such as Maija Halonen-Akatwijuka and Carol Propper, consider that privatization is not the only solution that governments can adopt increases the efficiency of the public sector. Many politicians have attempted governmental reforms in the field of social services such as health and education. The solution found by them would be that agencies can be created, whose sole purpose is to administer a single well-defined program[4].

At present, through studies and analyzes dealing with the reform of the public sector, one can see a tendency to search for pertinent solutions through which the harmful effects of the bureaucratic system are removed and possibly a change or even a replacement of the rules and regulations after which it guides the current bureaucratic system so that it becomes more efficient than it is today. The first concept involving an analysis of the public system reform is the New Public Management (NPM), the argument being offered by the most well-known theoretician of the concept, C. Politt. He assumes that the NPM is a two level phenomenon[5]: at the higher level it is a general theory or doctrine that the public sector can be improved by the importation of business concepts, techniques and values, while at the more mundane level it is a bundle of specific concepts and practices, including an emphasis on performance, especially through the measurement of outputs, a preference for lean, flat, small, specialized (disaggregated) organizational forms over large, a widespread substitution of contracts for hierarchical relations as the principal coordinating device, a widespread injection of market-type mechanisms (MTMs) including competitive tendering, public sector league tables and performance-related pay and an emphasis on treating service users as customers and on the application of generic quality improvement techniques.
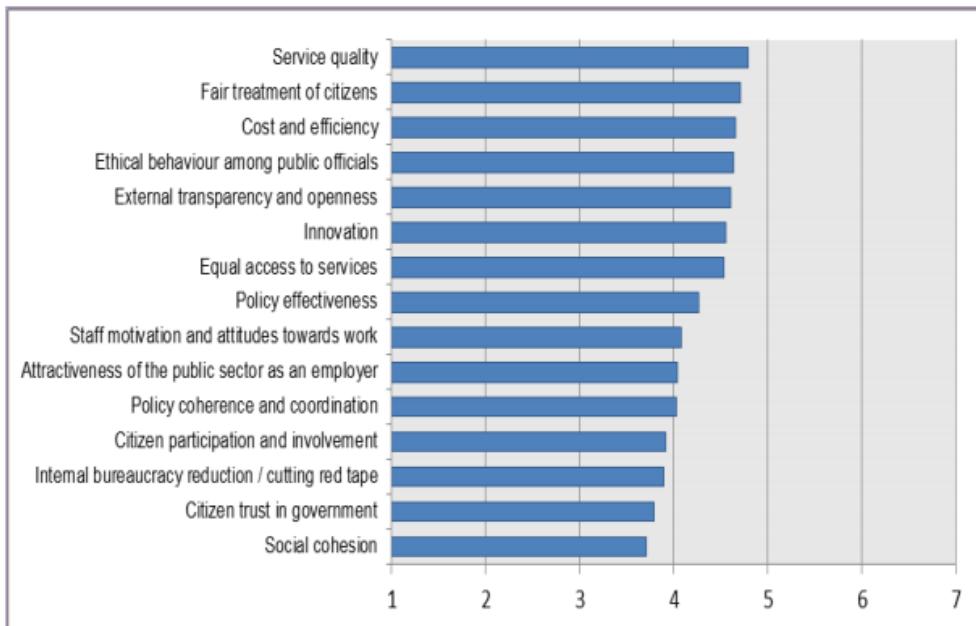
Romania is recognized as a country where bureaucracy is still present in most areas of activity (health system, legal system, education system, financial-banking system, etc.). In addition to the problems faced by both employees of public institutions in certain moments of their work, organizational problems can also arise which only induce bureaucracy. Regarding the activity with the external environment, the administrative system within the public institutions leads to a lack of cooperation between the public institutions and the external environment (investors, organizations, other public institutions), therefore bureaucracy is no longer a solution for modern administrations.

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[4] Maija Halonen-Akatwijuka and Carol Propper, "Competition and descentralization in government bureaucracies", *Journal of Economic Behaviour& Organization*, (Elsevier, 2007): 1.

[5] Christopher Pollitt, *Chapter 2* in *The essential public manager, Buckingham and Philadelphia*, Christopher Pollitt, (Open University Press/McGraw-Hill, 2003): 15–19.

Some organizations[6] show that in the last two decades of reforms that have taken place in the Member States of the Union have somehow improved the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of public administration as indicators. In general, institutions have become more open and transparent, increased access to services, and their quality has improved. However, the challenge remained active also in Romania, citizens' trust in the public administration, social cohesion and the attractiveness of the public sector as an employer have deteriorated.

Figure 1. *Reform achievements*
(From 1 = strong deterioration, to 7 = strong improvement)[7]

Although many reform initiatives are focused on modifying formal structures and procedures, as can be seen from the graph, these reforms are often initiated from top to bottom, reflecting a linear, political logic and sometimes neglecting issues such as the development of human potential, reconsidering government action, or changing administrative culture. Public administrators often face low levels of autonomy. Institutions are rarely encouraged to develop their capacity for internal reflection, to

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[6] European Commission, *European Semester: Thematic factsheet – Quality of public administration.*
[7] Gerhard Hammerschmid *et al.*, *Trends and Impact of Public Administration Reforms in Europe: Views and Experiences from Senior Public Sector Executives*, COCOPS European Policy Brief (2013)

learn from failures or to innovate. In many countries, prolonged and intensive formal restructuring has led to a general slowdown in reform progress, as we will see in Romania.

However, in Romania and most of the countries in the communist bloc, the initial blow has been lost in many of these countries. A 2009 OECD[8] report points out that many aspects of changes in administration have remained fragile and fragmented. Sustainability has often been compromised by the lack of political consensus on substance and direction, the failure to combat underlying politicization and weakness, and the instability of the grassroots institutions of public administration. The key factor contributing to this direction was the absence of a higher professional leadership, impartial, guiding the process of modernization, an organizational culture based on trust and collaboration, but the result has been seen in numerous legislative changes that have not been followed by working practices.

Pollitt and Bouckaert classify those post-bureaucratic reform movements in three major categories – New Public Management (NPM), Neo-Weberian State (NWS), and New Public Governance (NPG)[9]. If the NPM outlines several implementation and evaluation directions, for the other two reforms, the measure of impact on public sector policies was difficult to assess, primarily due to macroeconomic factors, such as the 2009–2011 economic crisis, and produced under-dimensioning of the public sector and a faulty management of the implementation of European projects, initially for a relatively new country as a member of the European Union[10].

Modernizing the public sector is no longer an option but a necessity. This will help governments respond to changing societal needs and maintain their competitiveness in an international environment that is uncertain and quite politically tending.

Based on a project initiated in 2002 by the OECD Governance Board, various reports and reference books on public sector modernization in OECD countries were published. They identify reform levers to modernize the public sector and define different policy paths with common goals to make the public sector more responsive, transparent and efficient.

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[8] Meyer-Sahling and Jan-Hinrik,*The Sustainability of Civil Service Reform in Central and Eastern Europe Five Years after Accession"*, SIGMA Document SIGMA nr. 44. OCDE, (2009)

[9] Donald Savoie, "Christopher Pollitt and Geert Bouckaert Public Management Reform: A Comparative Analysis – New Public Management, Governance, and the Neo–Weberian State"*, International Review of Administrative Sciences* 78, no. 1, (2011): 180–82.

[10] Călin Emilian Hintea,"Reform and Management in Romania. Strategy and structural change" in *Revista de cercetare si interventie sociala*. No. 34 (2011): 186.

2. REFORM COHERENCE
AND EXECUTIVE CAPACITY IN ROMANIA

The Sustainable Governance Indicators look at governments' capacity to deliver sound policies as well as the participatory and oversight competencies of social actors. They reveal the existence of large differences within the EU in terms of executive capacity and accountability. A significant number of countries still scarcely use in practice their formal arrangements for better policy making.

With a number of notable deficiencies, Romania ranks at the bottom (rank 40) in terms of executive capacity. Its score for this measure decreased by 0.1 points compared to 2014. (reported in 2018). Policymaking suffered from a lack of strategic planning. The repeated reorganization of the Government Office has undermined its capacity for policy assessment, an essential key to maximizing results and, in particular, for future policies. Informal co-ordination involved the political control of the leader of the ruling political party, which has permanently government. This undermined official government coordination measures.
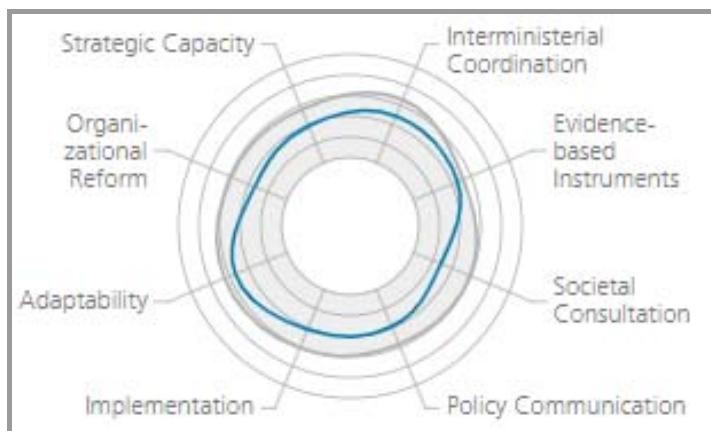
Regulatory Impact Assessment are required, although the quality and actual use are very uneven. Civil society has often been perceived as an enemy, rather than an ally. Thus, a ministry in charge of public dialogue was little used. An approach to decentralized communications has led to frequent contradictions. The Government of Grindeanu[11] has succeeded in implementing a number of campaign promises. However, the resulting budget strain meant that others had to be abandoned. Ministerial turnover was high. Political turmoil has hampered efforts to adapt to international developments. The absorption rate of EU funds is relatively low, as presented.

While EU membership has forced the Romanian government to produce regular strategic documents, policymaking in Romania continues to suffer from a lack of strategic planning. As can be seen from the chart above, it records the lowest average. The most important strategic planning unit within the government is the Secretary General of the Government[12], which was set up in 2001. However, its planning capabilities and role in government have been limited, with its structure being changed many times. In 2017, the Romanian government approved a new strategy for regional development.

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[11] The government of Sorin Grindeanu ruled Romania from January 4 until June 29, 2017.

[12] The Policy Coordination and Priorities Coordination (DCPP), initially called the Public Policy Unit, was established in November 2003, by Prime Minister's Decision no. 258. The Policy and Priority Coordination Directorate functions within the General Secretary of the Government and has the mission to improve the system of policy development, coordination and planning at central government level.

In the wider European context, it included an assessment and a plan for all aspects of national and EU budget exercises and their impact on Romanian territories within the broader European context.

Figure 2. *Romania's executive capacity with an average score of 4.3, in 2018. The gray area marks the EU average*
Source: SGI, 2018.

Cooperation between the Romanian government and non-governmental academic experts has traditionally been poorly institutionalized. However, we can ask ourselves whether we are talking about a reinvention of public administration[13] in terms of customer orientation, but by meeting customer needs and not necessarily bureaucracy. Previous steps did not exist. From November 2015, the newly created Ministry of Public Consultation and Civic Dialogue was responsible for facilitating communication between governmental and non-governmental experts and wider society for major political projects.

Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) procedures were introduced in Romania in 2005. At least theoretically, legislative proposals cannot enter the legislative process without the approval of the RIA from the Public Policy Unit of the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG). In practice, the use and quality of RIAs are very uneven, and many RIAs are superficial. Capacity remains a key obstacle to effective implementation of RIA procedures and requirements. Other issues arose from the complex division of monitoring and evaluation responsibilities between the GSG and the Chancellery of the Prime Minister.

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[13] David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, *Reinventing Government* (New York: NY Penguin Press, 1992): 390–405.

The legislation explicitly states that the RIA process should integrate other impact assessment methodologies, especially those related to the assessment of the economic or environmental impact. While most RIA processes involve stakeholders or transparent methodologies, such as public hearings, polls or debates to a small extent, it should be noted that legislation on access to public information stipulating that results must be sent for 30 days on the site. In addition, in practice, RIA exists in many areas, mainly on paper, and primarily aims at assessing the potential legal conflicts arising from new proposals rather than focusing on the impact of their policies. However, in some areas (such as environmental policy), more progress has been made towards a true policy-based RIA.[14]

Because this executive capacity is also taken into account by local governments (city halls, local councils and county councils), it can be noticed that it has been undermined by the growing uncertainty about the stability of government programs and the expansion of clientelism in financial allocations. The public sector is the largest "sector" of the EU. It employs about 75 million people or about 25% of the workforce. Public spending amounts to almost 50% of GDP.[15]

As part of a broader wage package in the public sector, mayors and advisers have successfully lobbied up a few months earlier when their compensation packages increased by 30% in 2017. These wage increases are unprecedented and put pressure on the budgets of small and medium-sized localities at a time when the absorption of EU funds has remained low. Another source of local government funding was the National Local Development Program (in Romanian is called Programul Național de Dezvoltare Locală), a system for the distribution of national funds. For half of the 5,000 projects that are currently being implemented, contracts are won discretionary, fragmentary. This amplifies the negative political impact of PNDL: institutional un-certainties or resources cannot be anticipated or planned[16].

Institutional reforms within the governments of Grindeanu and Tudose have been largely limited to changes in the portfolios of ministries. The government of Grindeanu has increased the number of ministers from 21 to 26. The Tudose government has even started with 27 ministers. None of the governments addressed issues such as lack of strategic planning or poor quality of RIA. Local government reforms have not been implemented.

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[14] Christof Schiller, Sustainable Governance Indicators, Retrieved from: http://www.sginetwork. org/2018/Romania/Executive_Capacity., [accessed in May 04, 2019]

[15] European Comission, *European Semester: Thematic factsheet – Quality of public administration.*

[16] Christof Schiller, Sustainable Governance Indicators.

3. PARTICULARITIES IN ROMANIA

Romania's accession to NATO and the EU were somewhat key elements in the implementation of "must do" structural reforms. Romanian governments have supported international efforts to provide global public goods. This is the case for the major reforms that took place during the EU accession period (1999–2007), which involved the adoption of the *acquis communautaire* and changes to meet the conditions; the case is similar to NATO membership, in which case the reforms have been narrower, involving in particular the defense and information area. Another example[17] of the need for structural reforms is the major financial changes that took place between 2009 and 2012 as a reaction to the financial crisis – their main pressure coming from international organizations such as the FMI and the European Union.

Because we speak public sector employees, it is necessary to identify that organizational culture with its particularities. It is necessary to implement effective strategies for attracting competent people to ensure the transfer of knowledge and provide opportunities for career development.

Client recruitment is a major problem in Romania and may prevent any rational effort to build a more professional public administration. Understanding the cultural component, and especially the specificity of national and administrative culture, is essential to the reform process, as it is directly linked to the success of the reform and its motivation[18]. Trust between citizens and public authorities, as well as between the institutions of the state itselfis a specific cultural factor. In Romania, the relationship is characterized by a decrease in public confidence in the state's ability to resolve citizens' needs[19], while the administration does not see citizens as partners, but rather as "administered" beneficiaries, a problem that cannot be solved only through regulation. Lack of trust translates into a bad communication and specific behavioral changes where the rules of bending, gaps, or non-compliant rules become acceptable on the basis ofwidely. An example in this respect[20] is the constitution of invalidity pensions – their number exploded from 208,000 in 1990 to 892,000 in 2008 (430%). In addition, in some counties 30% of the pensions were granted as

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[17] Mantas Bileišis *et al.*, *Public Administration Reforms in Eastern European Union Member States. Post-Accession Convergence and Divergence*, (2017): 398.

[18] James March and Johan Olsen, *Democratic Governance*, (New York: Free Press, 1995): 16–20.
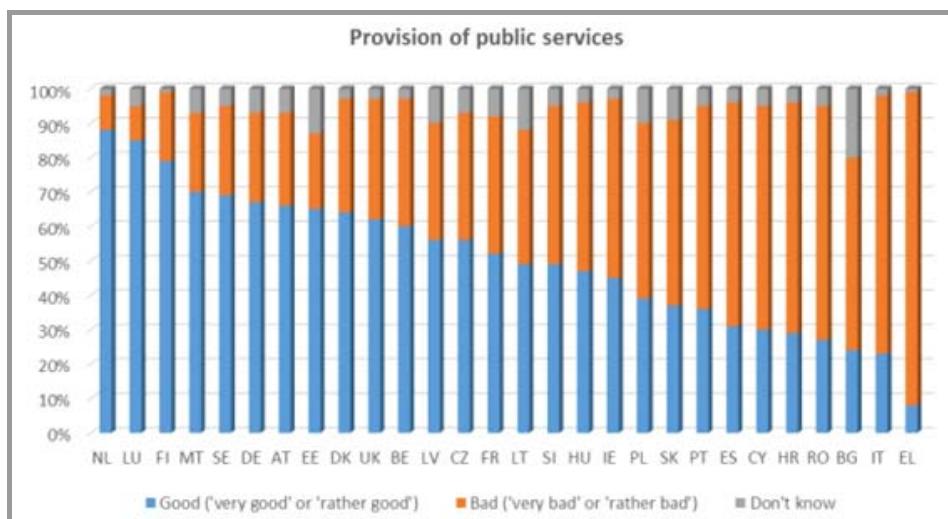
[19] IRES, *România – societate cu încrederelimitată. Raport de cercetare*, 2016, retrieved from: http://www.ires.com.ro/uploads/articole/ires_criza-de-incredere-perceptii-si-reprezentari_sinteza_ianuarie-2016.pdf., [accessed in May 05, 2019]

[20] Marian Preda and VasileGrigoraș, 'The Public Pension System in Romania: Myths and Facts', *Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences*, No. 32 E/2011 (2011): 235−251.

invalidity pensions, while in other states their percentage was much lower, is between 6% and 8%.This indicates some systemic problem or rather a percentage of the lack of decisional transparency.

According to the surveys conducted[21], the quality of public services of a country correlates with the level of trust in the public administration, which would lead to the hypothesis that citizens' welfare is closely linked to the decision to migrate to countries with another quality standard. The quality of public services is also a good indicator of good functioning of public institutions.

Figure 3 shows that there are important differences in the way public service perceptions are at EU level and justifies the significant number of Romanian migrants.
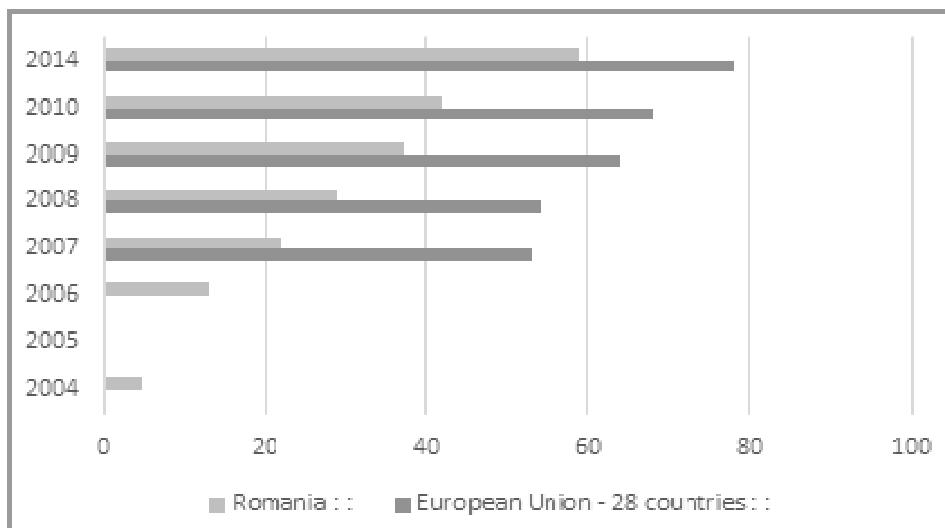
Figure 3. *Perceived quality of public services, Eurobarometer 2016*

At the same time, technology is the factor that puts a certain emphasis on reform. According to Eurostat, the evolution of technology is inevitable if we relate to the percentage of households connected to the Internet (Figure 4.) By default, public services in this way would become much more accessible and much faster.

The 2017 comparative analysis report on e-Government highlights, however, the existence of wide variations in the level of e-Government performance in Romania, as part of the weakest group along with the countries of Southeastern Europe. Performance is measured as the average score for the four top-level benchmarks: user-centered approach, transparency, cross-border mobility, determinants.

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[21] See Standard Eurobarometer 85, 2016 data volume A. Results from Romania.

Figure 4. *Percentage of households with internet services*
Source: Eurostat, online
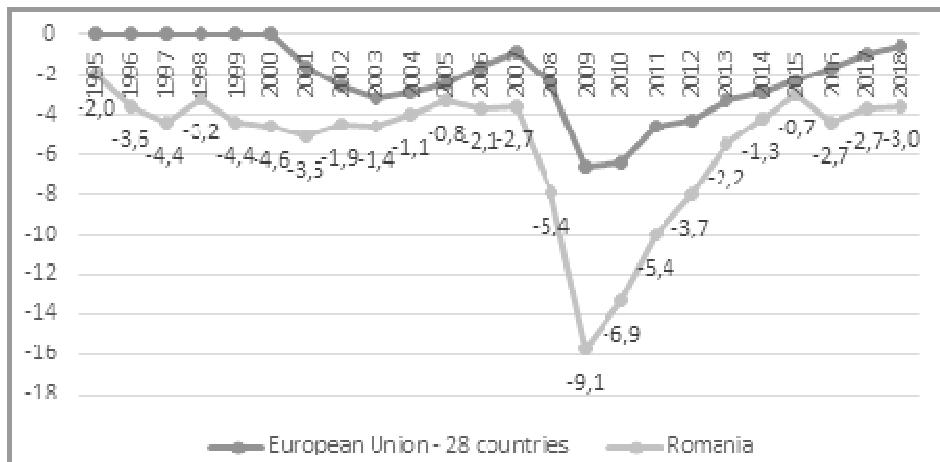
Throughout the public debate on transparency in the career of civil servants, an online job platform has been created for the first time since 2014. *posturi.gov.ro* represents the unification in a unique portal of information about vacancies within the Romanian public authorities and institutions. It is also a way of respecting the principle of transparency towards citizens and civil society. The goal of the *posturi.gov.ro portal* (part of The General Secretary of Government) is to inform the public interested in finding a job within the central and local government in Romania. It benefits from a number of functionalities that allow precise searching and filtering of the stations.

The reforming system takes into account the assessment of civil servants, where laws in 1999 are still in force (Statute of Civil Servants) and quite obsolete legal provisions. While in Western countries (USA, UK, Netherlands) the main focus is on counseling and support, in Romania the main focus is on regular monitoring and reporting. The NACS is mostly responsible for collecting complaints about ethical and legal issues, along with the Prefect. A unitary reporting method has been adopted since 2008 – NACS President Order No. 4500/2008.

In general, job intensity and stress have increased in public administration due to a stable organizational culture. We have not seen an observable increase in unethical behaviors, which is why we cannot say that a new organizational culture is present among the civil servants public, yet there is a hierarchical culture. Hier-archical organizational culture is characterized by control, formalism, structuring

and predictability, "procedures govern what people do, and leaders are good coordinators and organizers"[22].

We are talking about reinventing government, but from the perspective of the government having to be entrepreneur, spend less than it wins, reforms in Romania have not shown that direction, but the opposite.

Figure 5. *Government deficit/surplus, debt and associated data, percentages of GDP*
Source: Eurostat

Government policies have been heavily affected by the 2009–2011 crisis but have continued to maintain a downward trend. Value-added tax, tax policies, guaranteed minimum wages have changed the structure of functional and economic spending, social spending has been rising in recent years.

The decentralization and autonomy of the administrative and territorial units (financial and administrative) has been a constant topic of the reforms, being established as priorities in all the official reform initiatives of the last 18 years and started with the adoption of Law no. 215/2001 and continued with the adoption of the first framework law on decentralization no. 339/2004 (replaced by the Law No. 195/2006).

It is clear that the core value was in the spirit of the public sector, including decentralization as a separate concept. Adopting this strategy has also led to the creation of a new unit. Since 2004, reform strategies have been mainly focused on features of the NPM reform. Rational roots and based on public choice, focused on organizations and a market orientation (effectiveness, cost-cutting, de-bureaucratization).

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[22] Cameron De Kim and Robert Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture Based on the Competing Values Framework*, 3rd edition, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011): 42.

State nature seems to have given a pluralistic feature to the latter strategy, with a fairly scattered and disputed base value.[23]

Romania has been receiving funding for public management reform under the Operational Program for Administrative Capacity Development in order to build up "a more efficient and effective public administration" – an important objective of the National Development Plan 2007–2013 and of the National Strategic Reference Framework 2007–2013 (NSRF). The NSRF further set out the goal of "improve policy formulation and public management decision making processes, to develop a modern, flexible and responsive civil service system and to improve the quality and efficiency standards in the delivery of public services" [24]

If we were to include a parallel on change, the European tradition of bureaucracy (Weber) is obviously replaced by us managerial paradigms such as New Public Management (NPM), "Reinventing Government"[25], with private sector management techniques such as total quality management or benchmarking have been lent to public sector managers will consider improving service quality and delivering more efficient administration. Last but not least, outsourcing in the public sector, defined as "Contracting" and the service traditionally provided by public employees is one approaches increasingly used by (neo) liberal governments, after the US and the UK pioneered the practice of the 1980s.

A measure by which this goal can be achieved was both result-orientation and a competitive government, facilitating competition in the public services delivery[26]. Public Private Partnership (PPP) has become a popular concept lately, especially among modern administrations, increasingly concerned with service efficiency, resource economy, and the integration of good practice models, though sometimes difficult to solve a problem from the perspective of this model. This concept is mainly based on the idea of the administration's cooperation with the private sector in order to achieve better results in providing public services.

Linder and Pollitt outlined some of the main reasons why these public-private partnerships are being built and which I will analyze from a comparative practice perspective: management reform and modernization (the public manager can learn

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[23] David Osborne, 'The New Public Governance?', *Public Management Review*, Volume 8, Number 30, (2006): 377–88.

[24] Ministry of European Funds, *National Strategic Reference Framework*, 2007–2013, Retrieved from:http://old.fonduri-ue.ro/res/filepicker_users/cd25a597fd-62/Doc_prog/CSNR/1_CSNR_2007-2013_(eng.).pdf, [accessed in May 05, 2019]

[25] David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, *Reinventing Government,* 405.

[26] *Ibid.*

to apply a more flexible approach to public programs), attracting private funding (public organizations getting additional financial resources), legitimacy (shows the administration's capacity to attract different types of organizations in the fight for the common good), risk transfer/sharing (the private partners assume a part of the financial risks of certain investments), the limitation of the public sector (this is another way to reduce the excessive dimensions of bureaucracy) and the division of power (partnership is a way to promote more flexible and friendly relations with the community).

The main issues[27] arising concern the finality (is there really something done or it is just about endless meetings and discussions?), the role of partners (who holds what kind of power and influence?) and responsabilities (who takes responsability for actions that go wrong?).

Governments worldwide have sought to increase the investment of the private sector in the delivery of public services. These initiatives have taken many forms, such as the outright of previously state-owned industries, contracting out of services, such as refuse collection or cleaning to private firms and the use of private financing in the provision of social infrastructure. The concept of PPP in the United States and Europe has existed for centuries, but has become more prominent in recent decades in local economic development[28]. As we see at Akintoye[29], PPP offers some features such as:

- Implies two or more actors, out of which at least one belongs to the public sector and at least one belongs to the private sector;
- Each actor involved represents a "*principal"* that has the capacity to negotiate and pursue its interest;
- It is a long-term an stable relationship;
- Each partner participate with certain resources;
- The responsibilities for results are shared;

Today the UK Government claims eight types of PPP models for public services such as[30]: *asset sale* (the sale of surplus of public sector assets), *wider markets* (introducing skills and financing from public sector), *sales of business (or trade sale)*, *partnership companies* (where public remains majoritarian) and *partnership*

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[27] Călin Emilian Hintea, *Reform and Management in Romania. Strategy and structural change,* 38.

[28] Akintola Akintoye, Matthias Beck and Cliff Hardcastle, Public-private partnership. Managing risks and opportunities, (Glasgow:School of the Built and Natural Environment, 2003): 231–39.

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] *Ibid.*

companies (private becomes majoritarian), *private finance initiative; joint ventures* (deliver long-term growth in value for both partners)*, partnership investment* (public investment in private companies), *partnership investment* (private investment in public sector); *policy partnership* (for implementation or development of policy).

The essence of the public-private partnership is that by using the skills, know-how and private sector management and sharing the risks between partners, the principles of efficiency, effectiveness and economy in the use of public funds are respected.

The first regulation that legislated PPP and which basically constituted the starting point for the development of public-private partnerships was Government Ordinance no. 16/2002 regarding the public-private partnership contracts. In 2010 appeared the Public-Private Partnership Law no. 178/2010, which regulated the imple-mentation of a PPP project aimed at the design, financing, construction, rehabilitation, modernization, operation, maintenance, development and transfer of a public good or service, as the case may be. Soon a new normative act appeared, Law no. 233/2016 on public-private partnership, which regulates this type of partnership and which are still expected to apply.

Public-private partnership is a segment of activity still in its infancy. Even the PPP legislation is not finalized in Romania. If we look at PPP just as an indication coming from the European Commission, then things are not right. The state does not have enough money for research. As a result, it allocates less than 0.5 percent of GDP for research while the global average is 2 percent, given the degree of poverty[31]. Private R&D engagement has the role of attracting private money for research.

The Central Public Private Partnership Coordination Unit (UCCPPP in Romania) identified and used four stages in analyzing and evaluating the implementation of PPP in Romania, namely (Moldovan, 2017, p. 70):
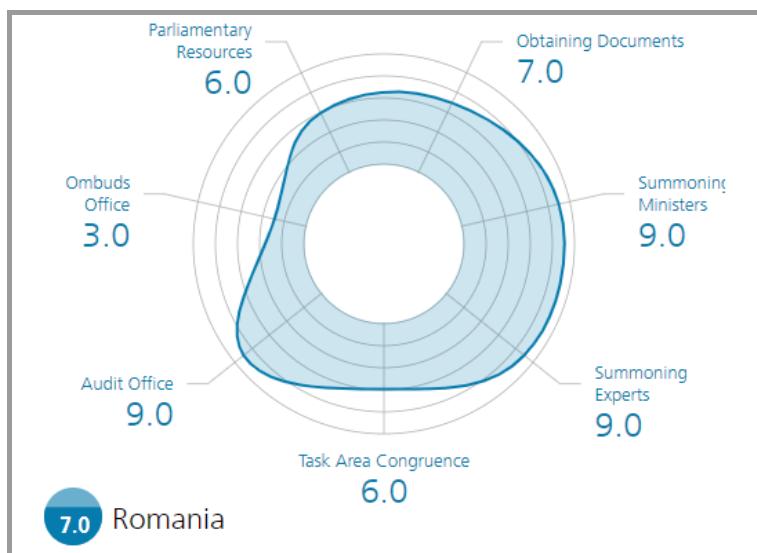
1. Initiative: A public institution (public partner) has the intention to start a PPP; the start of the PPP project is the next stage of the intention to achieve a PPP project.
2. The decision to launch PPP projects taken by the public partner is concretized by the approval by UCCPPP of the opportunity to start a project;
3. Launching the project by publishing in SEAP and JOUE to attract private bodies;
4. Contracting of the project (signing the contract and setting up the project company).

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[31] UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Research and development expenditure (% of GDP),* Retrieved from: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/GB.XPD.RSDV.GD.ZS, [accessed in May 07, 2019].

According to the official data from the UCCPPP in 2010 (the year of adoption of Law no. 178/2010) until June 2013, even if there are intentions to use PPP, no such project has been officially launched or contracted.

The neo-liberal argument is in favor of PPPs and private regimes claiming that "state failure" in providing public goods and services is at least as relevant as "market failure" in international life and, thus, that private actors are better suited to regulate their affairs and coordinate their activities. Hence, PPPs satisfy the plea for an increased role of "epistemic" or "knowledge communities."

Figure 6. *Governance accountability score for Romania*
Source: GSI, 2018, online

With only a few bright spots in this area, Romania falls into the bottom ranks internationally (rank 36) with regard to executive accountability. Its score represents a gain of 0.3 points relative to 2014. Individual parliamentarians have minimal resources, but fairly broad formal oversight powers. The appointment of a new audit-court president has raised concern regarding its continued independence. The ombudsman has been criticized for ignoring ordinary citizens' concerns and championing those of politicians. Despite a wave of citizen activism and protest, the general level of policy knowledge beyond this area remains low. The largest media organizations are highly partisan, though some media brands provide in-depth information.

Political-party decision-making is quite centralized. Business associations and unions play only a minor role in proposing concrete policy measures. Despite a de-

pendence on international financing, a number of NGOs have significant analytical capacities. [32]

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation of the successful implementation of the reforms takes into account a cross-sectional, but mostly longitudinal analysis. What is the perception of reform priorities in the field of public management? It is widely accepted that digital services or e-government dominate the agenda, while improving cooperation and public-sector cooperation. We can still see that reforms in Romania should address the issue of transparency. Measures of restructuring is still important, as does the improvement of results and reduce bureaucracy in order of importance as reform priorities. In measuring performance, the emphasis gradually shifts from "indicator-based responsibility" to "learning based on indicators"

Elements of NPM have been absorbed as the normal way of thinking by a generation of public officials in the core states. By the standards of previous administrative tendencies – even by comparison with the spread of Weberian bureaucracy itself – NPM must be accounted a winning species in terms of its international spread. Even if it has been successful – even its own terms – is quite another question, and one to which we may never have an entirely satisfactory answer. Certainly it seems to have little relevance to the problems which sit at the top of the public sector agenda today-global warming, population movements, corruption or terrorism. The management of such issues call for quite different ways of thinking about public sector management. "Modernizing Government is of immense value to practitioners who want to know what countries are doing to upgrade public management, as well as to scholars who want a conceptual understanding of contemporary reform. It is a highly useful reference for countries that have embraced new public management and countries that have traditional forms of public administration."[33]

The expert's perspective is one to be considered for the next few years. If we relate to the past twenty years, we have witnessed an influx of new ideas and initiatives. Do these new ideas work in practice? Can governments assume this implementation and ownership capacity?

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[32] Christof Schiller, Sustainable Governance Indicators.

[33] Michael Butler and Peter Allen, `Understanding Policy Implementation Processes as Self-Organizing Systems' in *Public Management Review*, 10:3, (2008): 421–40

Allen's speech is perfect in the context of Romania. Public managers should practically seek solutions for modernization, to look for how to ensure consistent, managerial and calibrated policies on national circumscriptions. Romania can be helped to further develop.

First of all, in order to remove from the problems already existing in the bureaucratic system in Romania, a modern document management system should be implemented through which to reduce the expenditures from the state budget and reduce the waiting time for citizens, legal entities and investors to obtain information. Second, there must be a high degree of transparency regarding the provision of public interest information by public institutions.

Although much of the Strategies had been designed ahead of some very important stages, two key dimensions of the process – achieving a vision on public management in Romania and a proposal on prioritizing strategic objectives – were lacking when outsourced. However, a team of external experts came up with a prioritization model, giving today a future perspective on modernizing the administration.

Table 1. *The 5 highest ranking objectives*
by "priority" – the product between "importance" and "progress"[34]

	Objective	Present level of achievement (A)	The importance of the objective (B)	Estimated level of achievement in 2020 (C)	Progress (D=C–A)	Importance *Progress (B*D)
1	Good technology solutions for the effectiveness of public administration	2.27	4.52	3.51	1.24	**5.62**
2	Promoting good practices and innovation through networking and experience exchanges between public and private	1.9	4.08	3,13	1.23	**5.03**
3	Developing performance oriented policies to motivate human resources	1.78	4.51	2.89	1.11	**5.01**

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[34] Zulean, M. *et al.*, Romanian public administration reform 2.0: using innovative foresight methodologies to engage stakeholders and the public. *Foresight*. No. 19., (2017): 25.

	Objective	Present level of achievement (A)	The importance of the objective (B)	Estimated level of achievement in 2020 (C)	Progress (D=C–A)	Importance *Progress (B*D)
4	Simplifying and reducing the administrative procedures applicable to citizens	2.21	4.53	3.28	1.07	**4.84**
5	Simplifying legislation	1.97	4.47	3.03	1.06	**4.73**

Some of these examples could convey a conclusion about the expertise and character of the reforms that eventually turned out to be a need, and not necessarily a thoroughly analyzed and sustained desire. However, features of Weber's bureaucracy will work at the same time as NPM, lacking a clear vision being essential.

As has been shown, some indicators and the pressure of international organizations have been taken into account. The acceleration process has been much more visible in Romania lately and due to a fairly stable framework, so I believe that managerial reform will bring new results comparable to the past, in some ways, if there is some openness and a focus on collaboration and trust. The university environment will come with the necessary expertise to foster change in this respect.

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CHALLENGES IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE TRANSATLANTIC STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP IN DONALD TRUMP'S ERA

Iulia-Anamaria GHIDIU[*]

ABSTRACT

Traditionally, the transatlantic alliance has been a role model for cooperation and a joint pole of power in the balancing game with other international actors.

Washington's focus on Europe after 9/11 was shifted towards the Middle East and to the war on terror, or even to a rising China on the Asian continent, while the EU was, in more recent days, debated about its rather insufficient financial upholding of the transatlantic defense mechanisms within NATO. The paradigm shift exploited by US President Donald Trump paves the route for an uncertain future of the Euro-Atlantic strategic community.

How can the current challenges impact on and distort a secure and functional transatlantic relation, a prerequisite for a liberal, democratic world order? is a topic investigated by the present research paper.

PRELIMINARY FACTS

"It's time for the United States to embrace the European Union", Max Bergmann's final argument goes, in a Foreign Policy article from July, 17, 2019. Discussing the "fairness" of the current trade deal being negotiated between Americans and Europeans, after the collapse of the overly ambitious TTIP, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, while on a trip to The Hague, the Netherlands, stressed that the common values the transatlantic alliance preserves as guideline principles will always find a way to push through, as the "overall relationship" is unquestionably a success: "there are always … disagreements, there's spats, there's trade disputes … but it's always the case that our shared value sets … those always prevail and they will here again too. There's a long history of the United States and Europe having places where we

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disagree, I'm sure that will continue but the overall relationship? I must say I think it is excellent."[1]

It is nevertheless true that the US is facing now a distinct Europe, a more challenging Europe, a Europe that, from the 1900s onwards, has undergone an undeniable process of integration and has developed an individual status in global affairs, partly because of worrying signals from abroad imposing to seize the (internal) reform momentum, acting as a unified trade block and a significant (perhaps, to a certain extent, counterbalancing) international actor in various negotiation processes with global impact (despite, of course, separate bilateral arrangements between third parties and single EU countries or EU business sectors), setting global standards (see, for instance, the establishment of data privacy standards for U.S. technology companies in 2018), though it still has a number of issues to manage better world-wide (sometimes resorting not only to soft power tools, some would argue) and to deliver itself more convincing to its member states, facing a number of internal challenges too, while non-European actors (China, Russia) strive to cast their particular influence and dominance, much to prevent the liberal, democratic values, as advocated by the EU (and the US, in spite of any recent contested nuances coming from President Donald Trump) dominate the international system.

Interestingly enough, when reassessing Europe's power and assertiveness geostrategic ally, the US focus on its European partners should not be strictly or mainly from the NATO point of view, scholars suggest, but rather from an EU, integrative perspective, rethinking the transatlantic relation in a new paradigm, while on the long term, as a foreign policy objective, supporting and facilitating a stronger, more cohesive, more integrated "potentially rising star" EU at global level and engaging deeper in addressing common challenges worldwide, such as terrorism, in its all forms of manifestation, the migration issue, corruption, various democratic trends in decline.[2]

The *Transatlantic Declaration on EC–US Relations*, dating from 1990, has officially marked the moment when the two parts, "mindful of their common heritage and of their close historical, political, economic and cultural ties, guided by their faith in the values of human dignity, intellectual freedom and civil liberties,

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[1] Darren McCaffrey, Alastair Jamieson, "Pompeo says current US-Europe trade deal is 'not fair'", *Euronews*, June 3, 2019, https://www.euronews.com/2019/06/03/pompeo-says-current-us-europe-trade-deal-is-not-fair (accessed July 31, 2019).

[2] Max Bergmann, "Europe is Back", *Foreign Policy*, July 17, 2019, https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/07/17/europe-is-back/ (accessed July 31, 2019).

and in the democratic institutions on both sides of the Atlantic, and aware of their shared responsibility, not only to further common interests but also to face transnational challenges affecting the well-being of all mankind", have decided to offer their partnership long-term perspectives.

Acknowledging the importance of transatlantic solidarity as a warrant of preserving peace and liberty and of reconstructing a post-war divided Europe, the Declaration's principles stipulate mutual consultations on matters of common interest and what I have previously mentioned as promoted in political analysts' circles, that the two partners are (were) "determined to help consolidate the new Europe, undivided and democratic". Thus, the United States is automatically included in the new (and old) paradigm of being a fair supporter of Europe's (ideological and political) development.

In "*Growing Apart? America and Europe in the Twenty First Century*", Kopstein and Steinmo argue that, as multilateral commercial negotiations began to extend from goods and services to international economic regulations, Brussels and Washington have developed a series of divergences at policy level.[3]

Melania-Gabriela Ciot, in *"Idiosyncracies and Interculturalism in Foreign Policy Decision-Making"*, mentions the trend of globalization was really beneficial for the European Union and this will remain constant, enabling member states to converge towards American standards, even if we can detect some costs of this transition.[4]

Nevertheless, the negative attitudes displayed by President Donald Trump towards the European Union (with a declared fear or uncomfortability of being outrun in the global competition), whose representatives are his country's haters and foes ("friends") rather than real friends, seeking to "take advantage of the United States" while not paying an equal share for the NATO defense budget, attempting to develop a controversial PESCO pillar with the aim of reaching "strategic autonomy" and, perhaps, prompting a buy European Act doctrine, detrimental to American arms manufacturers, or opening antitrust lawsuits against major US companies to investigate upon the fairness versus violation of specific practices were all factors of mistrust and worry for Europe, much more convinced of the need to rethink its American partners' availability to engage.

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[3] Jeffrey Kopstein and Sven Steinmo, *Growing Apart? America and Europe in the Twenty First Century*, (Cambridge University Press), 217.

[4] Melania-Gabriela Ciot, *Idiosyncracies and Interculturalism in Foreign Policy Decision-Making*, (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Academy, Center for Transylvanian Studies, 2015).

To these, we add the US' withdrawal from several international forums/organizations and international or mega regional commercial agreements, or the (re)negotiation of others, significantly impacting on Europe's behavior towards their American partner: the Paris Agreement on climate change (a prerequisite for trade deals, according with the European Parliament resolution 20172272(INI) adopted on July 3, 2018); the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) – "a rape of our country" – President Trump; threats to quit World Trade Organization (WTO), posing a serious prospect of a full scale global trade war, *"unless it treats America better",* with reference to the WTO's system of settling disputes between member states, to which he proposed as an alternative a two-stage procedure; the renegotiation of the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement-NAFTA (in the current form of USMCA).

Many opinion leaders and media representatives worldwide attribute the coldness and tensions in the Euro-Atlantic relations to the revisionist messages and policies that president Trump put forward. But equally true is the fact that the very premises of the current transatlantic crisis were established in the post-Cold War era, thus before Donald Trump became president, with the disagreement over the American intervention in the Iraqi war (2003), the scandalous event of NSA telephonic interceptions in Germany (2013) by the American secret services as well as the stalemate in the TTIP negotiation rounds.[5]

1. CONSOLIDATING TRADE PROSPECTS WITHIN THE EURO-ATLANTIC COMMUNITY

After the negotiating directives for the TTIP (sometimes coined as an economic form of NATO) were officially labeled obsolete and no longer relevant within the transatlantic framework of strategic cooperation[6], a new form of trade deal has emerged, with the more limited commercial agreement, (though from Brussels with a mandate not backed by the European Parliament) encompassing solely industrial goods and eliminating talks on agricultural products – as the US is no longer part of the Paris Agreement, a prerequisite for the Europeans to be able to pursue negotiations

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[5] Valentin Naumescu, *Politica Marilor Puter iîn Europa Centrală şi de Est-30 de ani de la sfârşitul Războiului Rece*, (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2019), 125–127.

[6] Council of the European Union, *COUNCIL DECISION authorizing the opening of negotiations with the United States of America for an agreement on the elimination of tariffs for industrial goods*, 9 April, 2019, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39180/st06052-en19.pdf (accessed July 31, 2019).

on this matter –, except for the soya beans, massively imported in Europe from the United States.

In July 2018, Jean-Claude Junker, then President of the European Commission, and Donald Trump have raised prospects about a free-trade deal, delivering a Joint Statement to announce publicly "the launch of a new phase in the relationship between the United States and the European Union – a phase of close friendship, of strong trade relations in which both of us will win, of working better together for global security and prosperity, and of fighting jointly against terrorism".[7]In spite of the enthusiasm of the moment, the reality nowadays shows distinct features, as the trade barriers in form of the US (and EU) imposed tariffs are still in place (from the imposed duties on European steel and aluminum products, to which Brussels has retaliated with rebalancing countermeasures, imposing tariffs on products like crops, cranberries, cigarettes, bourbon whiskey, motorcycles, articles from iron and stainless steel and even playing cards), with a growing concern of being strengthened by new ones, especially as Washington (Trump), called a "trade warrior", seemed willing to impose retaliatory tariffs of 11 billion dollars (or even more; this is the minimum, damage-retribution level) on EU goods, in response to the much contested Airbus subsidies, as soon as the final decision comes from the WTO arbitrator. EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström has warned trade officials about this during a meeting in May 2019, expecting a serious negative impact targeting iconic European brands, such as Dutch Gouda or Edam cheese, French wine and Spanish olive oil, but also supply chains for Airbus investments in the United States. Overall, the economic impact will be doubled by a psychological one, experts say, considering the long lasting, pressurizing threats and US tariffs on European products, an attitude nevertheless legal according to WTO rules. On the other hand, the EU case at the WTO comes with the disadvantage of being not so advanced compared to their counterpart's one.[8]

Car import tariffs (though not very much supported by US senior officials) announced to be cast upon the EU had it does not address the issue of autos and

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[7] European Commission, *Joint EU-US Statement following President Juncker's visit to the White House,* 25 June, 2018, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1898 (accessed July 31, 2019).

[8] Hansvor der Burchard, Jakob Hanke and Maxime Schlee, *EU told to brace for multibillion Trump tariffs,* May 31, 2019, https://www.politico.eu/pro/eu-told-to-brace-for-multi-billion-trump-tariffs-this-summer/ (accessed July 31, 2019).

auto parts "threatening to impair the national security of the United States", as President Trump stated, would fragilize further the traditional transatlantic relation.

There are voices arguing this new trade arrangement between Europeans and Americans is doomed to fail from its very inception, as the exclusion of agriculture from the negotiations makes it again difficult for the US to compromise. Brussels is very keen on avoiding this sensitive topic, as long as the American standards are not being revised, thus potentially harming European consumers, one of the aspects largely contested in the previous TTIP debate. France has particularly displayed an opposition towards a comprehensive transatlantic agreement on trade, as it has traditionally supported the impossibility to resume TTIP talks. In the German business sector feelings are that "the United States is the most important export destination for the German economy. Continued trade tensions not only endanger trade flows but jobs in Germany and the U.S.[9] The German auto industry would obviously like to see more flexibility is US decisions.

With the new head of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, on board, hopes are that a golden opportunity for both sides to reengage would appear on the horizon, in US ambassador to the EU Gordon Sondland's words, in an interview with Politico.[10] This vision is shared by other scholars too, realist when arguing about the imperative to forge a new lasting partnership between America and the EU, faced with the challenges of a rapidly evolving international environment, with a number of threats currently not able to deal with on their own, as they employ a transnational dimension. Also the shift of perspective as with the last 2019 EP elections towards a "Common Sense Europe", with a visible (but how temporary, if so?) dissolution of the far-right populism vocal influence in Brussels, must be taken into account as a fertile soil to build upon.

Awaiting to be seen if the two partners would find a reasonable middle ground, mutually compromising on the trade war incentives that characterize the current negotiation square and seeking for fair reciprocal gains, a distinct commercial agreement seems to be in the coming. The actors are not the same, for better or for worse.

9   Meyer, D. (2019), "Why the new US-EU trade talks may be doomed before they even start", *Fortune*, 9 March, http://fortune.com/2019/05/07/us-eu-trade-talks-agriculture/ (accessed July 31, 2019).

10 Hans von der Burchard, *Europe braces for Trump trade war*, July 21, 2019, https://www. politico.eu/article/europe-braces-for-trump-trade-war/ (accessed July 31, 2019).

2. ANGLO-AMERICAN AMBITIONS:
A TALE OF HISTORICAL BROTHERHOOD?

A substantial post-Brexit UK–US trade deal, with "unlimited potential", increasing trade "four or five times" – in President Trump's feeling – , was assessed as possibly impacting upon the overall transatlantic relation just like other factors, as the focus would mainly be on the United Kingdom aligning itself with US standards, a major trade and investment partner for the islanders. This will trigger significant implications, since it will move the UK away from the EU standards it currently has to comply with until exiting, affecting trade conditions with its most important commercial partner and generating potential hurdles in a future deal with the EU.

During the session of remarks by President Trump and Irish Taoiseach Leo Varadkar of Ireland Border before their bilateral encounter for the Friends of Ireland Luncheon at US Capitol, the American leader has pointed out that he would like "to see that whole situation with Brexit work out. I'd like to see – so, you know, we're talking to them about trade. And we can do a very big trade deal with the UK. We're also renegotiating our trade deal with the European groups and, you know, literally, individual nations, and also with the whole".[11]

As it was optimistically perceived and upheld by President Donald Trump and former British Prime Minister Theresa May, it is the same case with Eurosceptic Boris Johnson ("a British Trump" as named by the real Trump) on 10 Downing Street for the record-breaking Anglo-American commercial agreement, with a declared willingness to already start, being worked on its design, informally speaking. But the impediment of this being blocked by Republicans and Democrats in the US Congress (who also support the Irish Americans' cause), provided the deal would jeopardize the 1998 Good Friday Agreement in the event of a hard Brexit, with no guarantees at all for Northern Irelanders, remains steadfast, as previously prompted by the US Speaker of the House, Democrat Nancy Pelosi, when delivering her speech before the Irish assembly.[12]

Former British Trade Secretary Liam Fox remarked the valuable trade expertise of his department, delivering at Policy Exchange in London a speech on a global

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[11] White House, *Remarks by President Trump and Prime Minister Varadkar of Ireland before bilateral meeting,* March14, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-prime-minister-varadkar-ireland-bilateral-meeting-2/ (accessed July 30, 2019).
[12] Euronews, *No UK-US trade deal if Brexit risks Good Friday Agreement, Pelosi tells Irish lawmakers,* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WubhZOrxgsc (accessed July 30, 2019).

Britain, said to "maintain and champion free trade, and working with growing powers around the world to build a stronger and more resilient global economy". However, the Americans might prove unexpectedly tough on trade requirements, even towards their Anglophiles, as senior trade advisors of former US administrations wisely observed that President Trump's shift of paradigm in economic foreign policy poses a risk to global trading system by mercantilist and populist aims of putting America first and make it great again.

3. A PERMANENT STRUCTURED COOPERATION: WITH WHOM?

Even though formally saluting the enhancing of EU defense capabilities, as a fragile European ally would be rather risky for the North Atlantic Alliance, controversies around the PESCO initiative posing a challenge to NATO's mission and activity and, particularly, to arms industries by creating the premises of "buying European" have been another pillar shaking the once fearless transatlantic alliance. With a membership of 25 out of 28 EU states, PESCO was born as Articles 42 and 46 of the Lisbon Treaty and Protocol No 10 to the Treaty enshrined the possibility of a Permanent Structured Cooperation in the area of defense security and defense policy, where a number of EU member states could join their forces on a voluntary basis within a permanent framework, under the auspices of EU Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS), reaching for the undeniably ambitious objective of what is denominated as European "strategic autonomy".

The new Coordinated Annual Review on Defense (CARD), run by the European Defense Agency, was decided as the suitable source to identify opportunities for new collaborative initiatives, whereas the European Defense Fund's (EDF) mission was set to providing the necessary financial instruments.

France and Germany have been the first to engage in common military and defense projects (Defense Union) so far within PESCO, with the symbolic ambition to challenge the American domination, as professor Valentin Naumescu argues[13]. Nonetheless, the future of a European army might seem quite far at the moment, even impossible to design, in the view of many political scientists. Federica Mogherini, former High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security

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[13] Naumescu, *Politica Marilor Puteri în Europa Centrală și de Est – 30 de ani de la sfârșitul Războiului Rece*, 123, 129–130.

Policy, responding to a joint letter of two senior US defence officials, Ellen Lord and Andrea Thompson, from May 1st 2019, (fearing "EDF and PESCO would produce duplication, non-interoperable military systems, diversion of scarce defence resources and unnecessary competition between NATO and the EU" and thus threatening to sanction European arms firms if US companies were taken out of the game in terms of military procurement), affirmed that "Pesco projects are an additional element that comes on top of everything we have already in place when it comes to [US] cooperation, including on defence, industrial and research projects". She added that "joint EU military projects will not hurt US arms firms". Then German defence minister, Ursula von der Leyen, took a stance to defend the EU initiative arguing it was " doing what our American friends have been demanding we do for years. Our task now is to convince our allies that NATO will only profit from the efforts to create a European Defence Union".[14]

Interestingly, the issue of duplication becomes of serious concern as a European Parliament info graphic showed that an estimated €26.4 billion are wasted every year due to already existing duplication, overcapacity and barriers to procurement. As a result, more than six times as many defense systems are used in Europe than in the United States. And this is precisely where the EU can provide the conditions for countries to collaborate more, as facilitated by PESCO arrangements. For the European Union to be a global competitor, the integration of its best capabilities is deemed as crucial, as estimates show that by 2025 China will take the second place in defense spending records, closely following on the US' footsteps.[15]

To be more precise in this analysis, if Western Europe has developed the kind of response focused primarily on designing a European Defense Union, the ex-communist states like Romania, Poland and the Baltic states, severely worried about the degradation of the transatlantic relation, openly support the alternative of NATO boosting its capabilities on the Eastern flank of the Alliance, combined with the overarching goal of consolidating the partnership with the United States. Despite this general trend, the underlying geopolitical interest of Central and Eastern European states in preserving their ties with Washington diverge, according to multiple historical,

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[14] Andrew Rettman, *EU urges US to back off on arms firms sanctions*, May 15, 2019, https://euobserver.com/foreign/144898?utm_source=euobs&utm_medium=email(accessed July 29, 2019).

[15] European Parliament, *Defence: is the EU creating a European army?* June 24, 2019, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/security/20190612STO54310/eu-army-myth-what-is-europe-really-doing-to-boost-defence(accessed July 31, 2019).

political or cultural patterns factors. Basically, the positioning of these actors is defined by a strategic combination of three forces (poles of power and decision-making), in other words, the relation with Washington, Brussels and Moscow.[16]

When we talk about China, a very interesting triangle pops up, as the European Union and the United States alike have developed unilateral strategies for bilateral cooperation with the Asian partner, sometimes this tendency of (geostrategic) friend-liness prevailing over the transatlantic relation, with consequences on the long term.

4. ASIA'S SUPER TIGER ON THE RISE

Beijing's rising economic (and, potentially, ideological) influence is nothing new for everyone nowadays. EU–CHINA relations started to rejoice increased strategic importance in the last period, also paving the route for the new SILK ROAD diplomacy, an initiative that reflects the Chinese readiness to "share practices of development with other countries without the intention to interfere in other countries' internal affairs, (…) release the growth potential of various countries and achieve economic integration and interconnected development".[17]

Although engaged in their own conflictual, enduring trade war, Americans and Chinese have also opened up the route for a commercial agreement, with the twelfth round of consultations in Shanghai ending on reasonable terms, though not reaching a particular, comprehensive decision. Talks are to be resumed, encompassing a range of topics, from technology transfer, intellectual-property rights, services, non-tariff barriers, and agriculture. At the latest encounters, the atmosphere has been charac-terized by "candid, efficient, constructive and in-depth exchanges on major issues of common concern in the economic and trade field", as noted by the state-run news agency China Xinhua News.[18]

It is worth mentioning that the US–China trade battle was suspected to potentially become the most aggressive confrontation of this kind in economic history, provided the mutual hostilities continue to develop in the future. So far, the US has imposed

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[16] Naumescu, *Politica Marilor Puteriîn Europa Centrală și de Est – 30 de ani de la sfârşitul Războiului Rece*, 123–124.

[17] European Parliament, *Research for TRAN Committee, 2018,* http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/585907/IPOL_STU(2018)585907_EN.pdf(accessed July 30, 2019).

[18] China-U.S. trade consultations: The two sides conduct candid, efficient, constructive and in-depth exchanges on major issues of common concern in the economic and trade field, *Xinhua,* July 31, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-07/31/c_138273002.htm (accessed July 31, 2019).

tariffs of a total of $250 billion on Chinese products, and has threatened with others of $325 billion. China has retaliated with its amount of $110 billion worth sanctions on US goods, while also threatening qualitative measures, with an impact on American businesses currently operating in China.[19]

Romanian and foreign political scientists have shared their vision warning that China has also undisclosed intentions behind its expansion of economic prosperity models, with the ambition to assert itself as the new power emerging in the global competition, possibly attempting to infuse its own ideology and cultural patterns onto the European continent, which could be of primary alert if the liberal order is to be distorted in such a way, after decades of dominance, even with contested dimensions or the lack to satisfy anyone. The same political and ideological sickness could be triggered by handshaking with other representatives of the illiberal trend, such as Russia or North Korea.

5. PAVING GROUND
FOR AN ILLIBERAL DEMOCRACY?

The United States' shifting behavior towards powers like Russia and North Korea has made the European partners wonder about the persistent American commitment to liberal, democratic values, as President Donald Trump discussed his special bond with Kim Jong Un, even though no agreement was signed following the second friendly summit between the two leaders in Hanoi, Vietnam *("Sometimes you have to walk, and this was just one of those times"* – Trump; *"I'm sure all of them will be watching the moment we are sitting together, side by side, as if they are watching a fantasy movie"* – Kim about people's skepticism regarding the summit). President Trump's friendly and somehow relaxed attitude, as with the latest North Korean testing of provocative submarines (since they are not actually missiles or nuclear threats!?) added to its skeptics' audience reservations when it comes to Washington's readiness for the primacy of liberal values.

Behind the controversial attacks on Moscow's interference on US presidential elections, Trump's new relation with Kremlin also raised concerns, even amid Americans, not only Europeans, as the topics of his encounters with President Vladimir Putin remained mainly unknown for the wider public.

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[19] Dorcas Wong and Alexander Chipman Koty, *The US-China Trade War: A Timeline*, July 25, 2019, https://www.china-briefing.com/news/the-us-china-trade-war-a-timeline/ (accessed July 30, 2019).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Considering the multiple sources of erosion and doubt for the persistent engagement on upholding the transatlantic relation viable and effective, we can say that the traditional EU–US partnership on various fields and issues of common interest has reached a new stage in its evolution, a stage where the need for a genuine reform becomes an imperative to preserve its practical existence, not just formally.

American professor and former ambassador Nicholas Burns emphasized in a speech in 2018 that "Trump has launched a radical revolution in American foreign policy that is dangerous for the USA and the world. (…) First, he views the European Union as a strategic competitor rather than the strategic partner all other American Presidents have valued. He seems to judge the EU only on the issue of trade balances (…) He is, at best, ambivalent about NATO. (…) Second, he has disavowed many of the multilateral trade regimes vital to the global economy. (…) Third, the U.S. is slashing our acceptance of immigrants. (...) And, fourth, he has embraced authoritarian leaders in Hungary, Poland and Italy while openly seeking to undermine German Chancellor Angela Merkel at a time of difficulty inside her governing coalition."[20]

Trying to offer an answer to Kopstein and Steinmo open paradigm, where Europe and North America are growing apart in the same globalized system, accounts for a challenging enterprise, even if many signs might lead to this sad and discouraging conclusion, as many referential names in international politics share this opinion and the present article has shown the same in the exposed argumentation.

We are obviously facing an ideological divide within the transatlantic partnership, but the safest way to engage in the future remains the general collaborative approach between Europeans and Americans, even though no one ignores the individual interests of each bloc with their particular (psychological and historical) traits, passed on by generations and designing their very specificity, actually.

Officially, Romania remains a strong advocate for both pro-Europeanism and pro-Atlanticism (as respected contributors to its democratic progress, it is true), delivering the message that the transatlantic relation, in its quality of the warrant for Euro-Atlantic democracies, represents one of the basic pillars for a proper security and defense of the whole European Union.[21]

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[20] Nicholas Burns, *The Transatlantic Relationship in Crisis*, July 6, 2018Madrid, https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/transatlantic-relationship-crisis(accessed August 18, 2019).

[21] Klaus Johannis, *EU RO-Un dialog deschisdespre Europa*, (Bucharest: CurteaVeche, 2019), 208–209.

If the Euro-Atlantic community continue to be eroded in the future, the opportunity of the geopolitical power vacuum has the chances to be explored by other emergent, international, non-Occidental actors, and thus commuting the traditional Western hegemony to other geostrategic regions.

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THE UNITED STATES, ISRAEL AND BLACK SWAN EVENTS. A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE BUSH AND OBAMA ADMINISTRATIONS

Anda GHILESCU[*]

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to trace American foreign policy towards Israel in the highly specific context of "black swan events", drawing on Nassim Nicholas Taleb's 2001 and 2007 theoretization. Taleb asserts that the world consists of a multitude of black swan events, which together dictate the course of history that we deem, in retrospect, inevitable. Those events have an immense impact, they are irregular and unpredictable. The reason why Taleb's concept is relevant to the issue of foreign policy is because "black swan logic makes what you don't know far more important than what you do know." In other words, black swan events allow the researcher the privilege to get a glimpse into the raw instincts with which an administration responds to the outside world when the unexpected occurs. The reason for choosing to study the United States' foreign policy towards Israel is due to the particular nature of their relation. In the midst of so many regional dynamics, the relation with Israel stands out as one of the strongest alliances that the U.S. has perpetuated throughout decades. While keeping that constant in mind, what becomes interesting, from an analytical point of view, are rather the subtle changes that occur in the terms of that alliance – how each presidency defines it, and the manner and extent to which external factors are capable of shaping it. Therefore, two U.S. administrations will be examined based on their behavior prior to and as a result of two corresponding black swan events. The Bush administration's policy stance on Israel and Palestine will be analyzed in the context of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, while the Obama administration will be considered before and during/after the Arab Spring protests of 2010–11.

Keywords: *United States, Israel, Bush, Obama, Black Swan Theory, 9/11, Arab Spring*

INTRODUCTION

The study of foreign policy is indispensable to understanding international relations. Beyond systemic constraints, international organizations, laws and customs, foreign

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policy remains the foundation upon which any relation between sovereign states is established and maintained throughout consecutive governments. Its nature makes it susceptible to a multitude of external factors, but it is first and foremost sensitive to changes in leadership and elite perceptions; American foreign policy is an especially intriguing model in this regard, due to the idiosyncrasies that each new administration brings to foreign policy decision-making. With every new presidential administration, American foreign policy undergoes a change of personnel drastic enough to necessitate the outline of some new directions or interests, usually to correct the perceived imbalances or deficiencies of their precursors. Amongst the most influential changes are the members of the National Security Council, the Secretary of State, and, indisputably, the President himself.

Because of this, there is an unavoidable connection between a preceding and a forthcoming administration – generally, many of the positions adopted by the new President and their cabinet members reflect a departure (meaningful or symbolic) from those upheld by previous state officials. Typically, there is an expected challenge to the most long-lasting policies of a previous administration, and, sometimes, upcoming presidents may define their approach in categorically opposing terms to what has been attempted (or achieved) by the former President.

This feature of American politics allows for a noteworthy comparison between two successive administrations in terms of the foreign policy adopted towards a certain state. The choice of tracing the policy towards Israel reflects my own interest in the relations that the United States has developed with the Middle East in general. In the midst of so many regional dynamics, the relation with Israel stands out as one of the strongest alliances that the United States has perpetuated throughout the years. In fact, some authors go as far as denouncing the alliance as being detrimental to the global interests of the United States; Tony Judt wrote in 2003 that "Washington's unconditional support for Israel even in spite of (silent) misgivings is the main reason why most of the rest of the world no longer credits our good faith."[1] Keeping that constant in mind, what becomes intriguing, from an analytical point of view, are rather the subtle changes that occur in the terms of that alliance – how each presidency defines it, and the manner and extent to which external factors are capable of shaping it. Therefore, this paper seeks to examine those fluctuations throughout the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations and compare how each has reacted to

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[1] Tony Judt, "Israel: The Alternative", in *The New York Review of Books*, October 23, 2003, http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2003/10/23/israel-the-alternative/, (accessed on 28.06.2019)

external factors in their approach to Israel. The focus here is rather to isolate some key instances that are insightful precisely for revealing the most essential impulses and judgments of those in charge of constructing the policy towards Israel. In order to do this, this study will address the following research question: "how do black swan events influence American foreign policy towards Israel?"

The research question makes reference to Nassim Nicholas Taleb's black swan theory, first proposed in 2001 and further developed in 2007. Taleb asserts that the world consists of a multitude of black swan events, which together, dictate the course of history that we deem, in retrospect, inevitable. Those events are characterized by their immense impact (both at the time of their occurrence and in the longer run), irregularity (there is no fixed historical pattern for their manifestation) and un-predictability.[2]

The reason why Taleb's concept is relevant in this context is because "black swan logic makes what you don't know far more relevant than what you do know."[3] In other words, black swan events allow the researcher the privilege to get a glimpse into the raw instincts with which an administration responds to the outside world when the unexpected occurs. Therefore, this paper will focus on two episodes: the first will be the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, oftentimes used as a model of Taleb's theory, while the second will be the Arab Spring protests of late 2010–early 2011.

1. BEFORE THE BLACK SWAN EVENT

Let us first examine the Bush administration's timeframe of less than one year until the 9/11 attacks. Upon entering into office, President Bush had surrounded himself with individuals who expressed strong convictions about the most appropriate ways to deal with the Middle East, and by implication, to engage with Israel. The factions were torn over the level and shape of U.S. involvement due to a profoundly different understanding of the Middle East and its issues. Those in the State Department viewed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the backbone of any other American policy in the region, and therefore the centerpiece of a president's Middle Eastern agenda. An active diplomatic role that considered both Israeli and Palestinian needs was the preferred approach of ensuring that American interests would remain unharmed and that Arab

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[2] Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable,* Second edition, (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2010): 15, EPUB format.
[3] *Ibid.*, 17

allies would not feel alienated.[4] More specifically for Israel, this meant that American support was conditioned by Israel's own behavior; there would not be much reluctance to criticize any Israeli actions that could impede a peace process.

However, the main voices in the Pentagon, the Vice President and important members of Congress strongly disputed this perspective. For them, the Middle East was a complex web of dynamics, and a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was not a prerequisite to pursue other interests. Quite the reverse – before any peace process could successfully commence between the two parties, there was a need to democratize the Arab world through American military might and to provide Israel with a democratic partner in negotiations.[5] Yasser Arafat, despite being a legitimate leader of the Palestinians, was not seen as a viable voice to negotiate with. In terms of American relations with Israel, this position implied a commitment to the state of Israel and a general acceptance of Israel's actions against Palestinians as a means of necessary self-defense in the context of the Intifada.

Such contrasting views inside the administration would have benefitted from a particularly strong presidential voice to balance them out and to design a robust strategy of approaching the Arab-Israeli conflict. It may be argued that the first seven months of his presidency were not enough time for Bush to put forward such an initiative, but the reality is that there was very clearly no intention to engage directly with the Israelis or the Palestinians on pushing peace talks forward. On the backdrop of the Second Intifada, President Bush had decidedly distanced himself from the conflict and adopted, instead, a policy of no political involvement that contrasted heavily with that of his predecessor, President Clinton, which is also why it has often been called the ABC ("anything but Clinton") approach.[6] The focus of action, when present, was primarily security-oriented, most evidently expressed through the dispatch of CIA director George Tenet in June 2001 to arrange a cease-fire between the parties, known as the Tenet Plan.

Moreover, despite an initial wish of reacting more favorably towards Israel, expressed by the President during the first meeting of the National Security Council in January[7], the Bush administration appeared to have been predominantly led by

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[4] Daniel E. Zoughbie, *Indecision Points: George W. Bush and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict*, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2014): 145

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Ibid.*, 6

[7] Ron Suskind, *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004) :71, *apud* Dennis Ross, *Doomed to succeed:*

voices inside the State Department, such as Secretary Powell, who would not shy away from criticizing Israel for its conduct in the midst of the conflict. However, the President himself showed little interest in strengthening the messages conveyed by the State Department, being, instead, more responsive to straightforward threats from other regional allies, such as Saudi Arabia.

The episode in question happened a few months after the reveal of the Tenet Plan, when Saudi Arabia, a long-time ally of the U.S. who had been condemning the hands-off approach of the administration, sent a letter to the White House in which the future of U.S.–Saudi Arabia relations were questioned unless there were decisive signs of American efforts to stop the violence against the Palestinians. The response to the letter is illustrative of President Bush's oscillation between contrasting approaches, and the manner in which it was prepared reveals a great deal about the functioning of the administration itself. Bush replied to the Crown Prince by noting, for the first time, a commitment to the Palestinian cause: "I firmly believe the Palestinian people have a right to self-determination and to live peacefully and securely in their own state."[8] By unconditionally recognizing the right of Palestinians to live within their own state, Bush was not only departing from previous administrations that had not explicitly acknowledged the formation of a Palestinian state as a foreign policy objective[9], but he was also distancing himself from the language of his own hands-off approach.

Faced with the risk of alienating a key Arab ally such as Saudi Arabia, Bush's solution to the threat tacitly endorsed the view held by the many voices inside the State Department and not only – a group that Daniel Zoughbie calls the "moderates"[10]: that engaging in the Israel-Palestinian conflict on a diplomatic level was a primordial step for maintaining close relations in the Arab world. As a matter of fact, the response to the Crown Prince was drafted by National Security Council Senior Director Bruce Riedel and William J. Burns[11], two individuals who were part of the aforementioned

the U.S.–Israel relationship from Truman to Obama, First edition, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015): 308, EPUB format.

8 Bob Woodward, *State of Denial: Bush at War, Part III,* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006): 76, *apud* Dennis Ross, *Doomed to succeed: the U.S.–Israel relationship from Truman to Obama*, First edition, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015): 312, EPUB format.

9 Dennis Ross, *Doomed to succeed: the U.S.–Israel relationship from Truman to Obama*, First edition, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015): 312, EPUB format.

10 Daniel E. Zoughbie, *Indecision Points: George W. Bush and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2014): 20

11 Elliott Abrams, *Tested By Zion: The Bush Administration and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 34, EPUB format.

'camp.' Therefore, it is even more significant that Palestinian statehood was addressed in such a direct way by officials who sought to gain a legitimation of their position, first privately to Riyadh, and later publicly to the world – which did indeed occur at Bush's first address to the United Nations General Assembly in November. When addressing the question of whether President Bush was aware of the historic nature of his reply, former Deputy National Security Advisor Elliott Abrams entertains the possibility that "the State Department played down the novelty in an effort to get the new approach approved – and the Saudis mollified."[12]

Immediately following this episode, the U.S. became more vocal in its criticism of Israeli actions, especially after the August 28 attack which resulted in the death of Mustafa Zubari, a top-ranking leader of the P.L.O. At this point of the Intifada, it was the first time in the eleven months of violence that Israel had killed a head figure of the Palestinian faction, which incited its fair share of demonstrations by Palestinians in the streets.[13] The response from the Bush administration came promptly on the same day – State Department spokesman, Richard L. Boucher, declared that such actions undertaken by Israel have no other effect than "inflaming an already volatile situation" and that Israel "must also take the economic and security steps that are necessary to alleviate the pressure, the hardship and the humiliations of the Palestinian population."[14] President Bush himself had asked Israel to show "restraint,"[15] although in a considerably milder tone.

The administration's position during those first seven months exposed two major aspects of the Bush presidency. First, it explicitly refrained from committing to the political resolution of the Second Intifada, and thus, had a narrower scope in terms of international responsibilities than that of the previous American presidency. Secondly, the internal composition of the administration itself had not reached a level of cohesion that could allow the pursuit of a precise policy towards Israel, particularly because of a lack of assertiveness on the part of the President himself.

Turning to President Obama's first two years of tenure, there is evidently much more to examine. However, that is not only because of the longer period of time

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[12] *Ibid.,* 36

[13] Joel Greenberg, "Widening Hostilities, Israel Kills Chief of P.L.O. Faction", in *The New York Times*, August 28, 2001, https://www.nytimes.com/2001/08/28/world/widening-hostilities-israel-kills-chief-of-plo-faction.html (accessed on 28.06.2019)

[14] Jane Perlez, "U.S. SAYS KILLINGS BY ISRAEL INFLAME MIDEAST CONFLICT", in *The New York Times*, August 28, 2001, http://www.nytimes.com/2001/08/28/world/us-says-killings-by-israel-inflame-mideast- conflict.html (accessed on 28.06.2019)

[15] *Ibid.*

that the Obama administration enjoyed to delineate its policy towards Israel, but also due to the fact that the President had entered into office with comparatively different priorities and expectations. The tone that Obama had set from the very beginning was that of serious involvement in foreign affairs, and indeed, the White House proved much more vocal on the international arena during 2009–10 than it did in 2001.

Given President Obama's concern with re-defining the United States' relationship with the Muslim world following Bush's post-9/11 policies, a new approach to Israel was implicit. The Cairo speech of June 2009 revealed not only the President's sincere outreach to the Muslim community around the world, but also his tougher stance on Israel and what the new administration would consider the principal obstacle in any future peace attempt: the Israeli settlements. Obama made a significant assertion that the U.S. represented by the new administration "does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements."[16] Viewing the settlements as obstacles to peace was not new criticism, and calling for a freeze of further settlement construction was not unheard of – the President had already called for one ahead of the speech, which Benjamin Netanyahu rejected as "unreasonable."[17] However, the terminology of the Cairo speech was decidedly different. Making reference to the legitimacy of the settlements was an entirely different approach to the issue, as Dennis Ross explains: "[It] ran the risk of turning it into a legal problem, which would complicate any political process we were trying to pursue."[18]

Mounting pressures on the settlements issue, originating not only from the U.S., but also from the Quartet on the Middle East,[19] eventually provoked some flexibility in the Netanyahu government. Not even a month after the Cairo speech, George Mitchell met with Minister of Defense Ehud Barak twice in a week to push for peace efforts and reduce existing tensions between the U.S. and Israel on the settlements. The proposal that came from Ehud Barak was a settlement freeze of up to six

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[16] Barack Obama, "Text: Obama's Speech in Cairo" (speech, Cairo, Egypt, June 4, 2009), in *The New York Times*, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/04/us/politics/04obama.text.html (accessed on 30.06.2019)

[17] Alan Cowell and Helene Cooper, "Obama Plays Down Divide With Israel", in *The New York Times*, June 2, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/03/world/middleeast/03prexy.html, (accessed on 29.06.2019)

[18] Dennis Ross, *Doomed to succeed: the U.S.–Israel relationship from Truman to Obama*, First edition, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015): 356, EPUB format.

[19] Isabel Kershner, "Resisting Calls, Israel Insists on Building in the West Bank", in *The New York Times*, June 26, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/27/world/middleeast/27mideast.html, (accessed on 29.06.2019)

months "on new building in all settlements outside Jerusalem"[20], as long as it were part of a larger framework of action that included Palestinian efforts to end the conflict.

Fast-forward to September, some mixture between authorized construction in the West Bank and a forthcoming settlement freeze was deemed to be the solution to satisfy both sides, namely the pro-settlement voices and the international community. Hundreds of new building plans were approved by the Israeli government to begin in the West Bank, in expectation of a moratorium being declared in the upcoming weeks.[21] Indeed, a ten-month freeze on new construction in the West Bank approved by the cabinet was announced on November 25 by Prime Minister Netanyahu.[22] The plan explicitly refused to cover construction in East Jerusalem, the explanation given being that "we do not put any restrictions on building in our sovereign capital."[23]

The moratorium was meant to be a gesture of goodwill offered to the Palestinians – and to a large extent, to the Obama administration – to encourage a new round of peace talks. However, the ensuing ten months revealed anything but. One problem was that various efforts to stop construction in the West Bank, including arrests made in the very first days[24], were somewhat undermined by continued growth in East Jerusalem, with close to 700 buildings authorized by the Housing Ministry at the end of 2009.[25] This would constitute another challenge to U.S.–Israel relations come Vice-President Joe Biden's visit to Israel in March 2010.

The planned visit to the Middle East occurred against the backdrop of an agreement to hold indirect talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis, mediated by the U.S. Although the Palestinian acceptance did not promise much, it was still a development from the original stance that no peace talks would begin until Israel

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[20] Ethan Bronner, "Israel and U.S. to Hold Second Meeting", in *The New York Times*, July 3, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/04/world/middleeast/04mideast.html, (accessed on 29.06.2019)

[21] Ethan Bronner, "U.S. Rebukes Israel Over Settlement Plan", in *The New York Times*, September 4, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/05/world/middleeast/05mideast.html, (accessed on 29.06.2019)

[22] Barak Ravid and Agencies, "Netanyahu Declares 10-month Settlement Freeze 'To Restart Peace Talks'", in *Haaretz*, November 25, 2009, https://www.haaretz.com/1.5122924, (accessed on 29.06.2019)

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] Isabel Kershner, "Israel Arrests Settlers Fighting Freeze", in *The New York Times*, December 2, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/03/world/middleeast/03mideast.html, (accessed on 29.06.2019)

[25] Ethan Bronner, "Israel Plans Homes in East Jerusalem", in *The New York Times*, December 28, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/29/world/middleeast/29mideast.html, (accessed on 29.06.2019)

froze construction in East Jerusalem as well.[26] It was all the more significant as it sent a message to the United States that the Palestinian leadership recognized Israel's offer of reconciliation and accepted the parameters under which it would be negotiated, even if only formally. In the context of the Palestinian Authority's step forward and Vice President Biden's visit to the area, it was in Israel's best interest to act with great caution.

Yet, on the same day that Biden reaffirmed America's commitment to its security, an announcement came from Israel's Interior Ministry regarding "1,600 new housing units for Jews in East Jerusalem."[27] The possibility that Netanyahu might have not been informed on time and had been irritated by the move as well[28] was entirely beside the point for the United States. For such a plan to be revealed during the first high-level visit made by an Obama administration official in the territories, was not merely untimely but it also caused the Vice President and the rest of the American delegation great embarrassment.

Biden portrayed the action as "precisely the kind of step that undermines the trust we need right now"[29] and, somewhat surprisingly, chose to *condemn* it, language which Ross describes as "normally reserved for acts of terror."[30] Netanyahu's apology did not seem to be enough either – President Obama had reportedly instructed the Secretary of State to use an even tougher tone in a phone call to the Israeli Prime Minister.[31] Secretary Clinton did just so, claiming that the new housing project had not only sent "a deeply negative signal" but also impaired "the bilateral relationship" between the U.S. and Israel.[32]

The Obama administration, however, had raised expectations of what could be achieved through the Cairo address and overall condemnation of settlement activity, to the point that even a 10-month moratorium, despite being an opportunity for

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[26] The Associated Press, "Palestinians, Skeptical, Agree to Talks With Israel", in *The New York Times*, March 7, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/08/world/middleeast/08mideast.html, (accessed on 29.06.2019)

[27] Ethan Bronner, "As Biden Visits, Israel Unveils Plan for New Settlements", in *The New York Times*, March 9, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/10/world/middleeast/10biden.html, (accessed on 29.06.2019)

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] Dennis Ross, *Doomed to succeed: the U.S.-Israel relationship from Truman to Obama*, First edition (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015): 376, EPUB format.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] Mark Landler, "Clinton Rebukes Israel on Housing Announcement", in *The New York Times*, March 12, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/13/world/middleeast/13diplo.html, (accessed on 29.06.2019)

conversation, was deemed by the Palestinians to be too little incentive to move forward. While modest signs of encouragement of talks were attempted, it was the East Jerusalem construction incident during Vice-President Biden's visit that truly pushed Barack Obama to demand more of Israel, namely an extension of the moratorium, which, for domestic political reasons, Prime Minister Netanyahu could not grant.

President Obama's mistake was to ask for too much, too early. In an endeavor to convey firmness and strength to Israel, as well as receptivity and commitment to the Muslim states, Obama failed to take into account how setting the bar high on settlement activity would counter-productively discourage the Palestinians from conceding to Israel. His position on Israeli settlements and his new openness to the Muslim world placed more pressure on Israel to concede – which it did – but did not extend that pressure enough towards the Palestinians to proportionally respond.

We have, so far, reviewed the policies that each administration directed towards Israel during the available time before being confronted with their own black swan event. To conclude, George Bush's inclination from the outset was to dissociate himself from a conflict that he deemed unsolvable unless the two parties involved could be seen to make progress on their own, which resulted in an unbalanced position of the administration towards Israel. The sporadic reactions from state officials in regards to developments of the Second Intifada were feebly and exceptionally accompanied by the President, who remained a largely absent figure from foreign policy-making towards Israel. In contrast, President Obama had proclaimed a much more visible and pronounced vision for the Middle East in general, which inherently required a transformation of U.S.–Israel relations to accommodate it. The leading actor in the foreign policy executive was the President himself, as many of the interactions between the U.S. and Israel, as well as the public reactions to Israeli behavior had President Obama at the forefront.

2. AFTER THE BLACK SWAN EVENT

Advancing our analysis to the time immediately after the black swan event, it would seem that for President Bush, the shock of the terrorist attacks on American territory did not prompt an immediate re-examination of U.S.–Israel relations. At the domestic level, American sympathy for Israel did grow noticeably[33], and we

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[33] Jeffrey M. Jones, "Americans Show Increased Support for Israel Following Terrorist Attacks", in *Gallup*, September 19, 2001, http://news.gallup.com/poll/4915/americans-show-increased-support-israel-following-terrorist- attacks.aspx, (accessed on 29.06.2019)

may attribute the change to a heightened state of collective black-and-white perception of the world caused by the attacks, in which Israel inevitably corresponded to the "good camp." Inside the administration, too, a similarly magnifying effect took hold of the existing internal divisions, as the strong voices for particular visions of the Middle East grew stronger still.

The camps remained approximately the same, but each found its own vision to have been reinforced by what had happened. On the one hand, the rhetoric among those in the State Department – Secretary Powell and Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage, for example – was that a special relationship with Israel bred, in time, hatred and resentment inside the Arab world against the United States, as the suffering of the Palestinian people grew under the American-backed Israeli regime. Therefore, the preferred response was that of revisiting long-standing U.S. policies in the Middle East, particularly in regards to the unrelenting support to Israel, which was prone to spark more enmity. As Elliott Abrams described the position of the State Department, "the problem was not Muslim extremism but Muslim anti-Americanism, and the antidote might be changes in American conduct, not least in America's 'one-sided' support for Israel."[34]

On the other hand, the opposing side understood the attacks in considerably different terms. For those like Vice President Dick Cheney or Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, the "undemocratic nature of Muslim society"[35] was the root cause of the brutality of 9/11, and the only rational solution that the U.S. should engage in was to "democratize the Middle East forcibly."[36] This implied that Israel, who was unarguably the most democratic of the Middle Eastern states, remained a key ally that the United States should not distance itself from. On the contrary, Ehud Barak's infamous "no partner for peace" axiom was more relevant than ever, as the world – and the U.S. in particular – could finally see that trying to negotiate with terrorists was beyond reason.

Nevertheless, President Bush held back – he did not yet identify strongly with either side of his administration, although he did waver towards Secretary Powell's approach. Immediately after the attacks, he called on Israeli Prime Minister Sharon to allow his Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to meet with Yasser Arafat, a request

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[34] Elliott Abrams, *Tested By Zion: The Bush Administration and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 39–40, EPUB format.

[35] Daniel E. Zoughbie, *Indecision Points: George W. Bush and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2014): 20

[36] *Ibid.*

which was declined on the presumption that it "would legitimize Arafat as a good guy."[37]

In November, at his first address to the United Nations General Assembly, President Bush publicly and explicitly referred to a Palestinian state that would one day "live peacefully together [with Israel] within secure and recognizable borders as called for by the Security Council resolutions."[38] This move, in particular, had a huge effect on Israel; Condoleezza Rice recalls, in a later interview, that the use of "Palestine" prompted "a really big fight" not just inside the administration, but also with the Israelis.[39]

These are by no means actions without some form of strategy behind. The principal objective on President Bush's mind was not the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and understandably so, but rather the "war on terror." By demonstrating to the Arab nations an American willingness both to push a peace process forward, and to consider a recognized Palestinian state living alongside Israel, Bush was essentially seeking to win over the Arab states' support for his war on terrorism. This is especially evident when we consider what the majority of the speech given at the U.N. in November focused on, namely the war in Afghanistan and the appeal to a global commitment against terrorism; Bruce Riedel, Special Assistant to the President at the time, concurs that "it was, from the beginning of October until the middle of December, all Afghanistan."[40] The appeal to Palestine's right of self-determination, then, would seem to be part of a bigger strategy.

The infamous Rose Garden speech of June, 2002 was the first clearly expressed view on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict of this administration, pushed, once again, by the pressure of the "war on terror." The speech was rich in content that purposefully separated between the responsibilities of Palestine and Israel in ways that echoed the United States' own declared fight against terrorism. Palestinians were expected

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[37] James Bennet, "Israel Wants Cease-Fire to Precede Truce Talks", in *The New York Times*, September 17, 2001, http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/17/world/israel-wants-cease-fire-to-precede-truce-talks.html (accessed on 29.06.2019)

[38] George W. Bush, "President Bush Speech to the United Nations", *C-SPAN* video, 00:20:07, November 10, 2001, https://www.c-span.org/video/?167220-2/president-bush-speech-united-nations&start=1207 (accessed on 29.06.2019)

[39] Condoleezza Rice, interview by Daniel Zoughbie, December 2009, a*pud* Daniel E. Zoughbie, *Indecision Points: George W. Bush and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2014): 23

[40] Bruce Riedel, interview *apud* Elliott Abrams, *Tested By Zion: The Bush Administration and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 39, EPUB format.

not only to act in the face of terrorism, but also to rebuild their governmental structure to allow for more democratic representation, transparency and accountability.[41] Mentions of Israel were considerably fewer than those of the Palestinians, but the manner in which Israel was considered revealed the new perceptions that President Bush held of the world: occupation was undesirable primarily because it threatened Israel's identity and democracy, not because it could impede the peace process.

Thus, in the short-term, the attacks of 9/11 only pushed the President to entertain a broader framework of action, but the immediate calculations, despite signaling out a stricter distinction between enemies and allies, did not reflect a substantial change of policy towards Israel, because the new foreign policy focus was to gain support for a "war on terror" by appealing to Arab states. Therefore, the pattern to be observed was that of continued hesitation in the face of U.S.-Israeli relations, interrupted only to display resolve when broader interests were at stake. In the upcoming year, however, as President Bush's perception of the Middle East would become clearer and more precise as a calculated response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, so too would his perception of Israel and the approach the U.S. should have towards it.

In the end, the Arab-Israeli conflict was given much more attention after 9/11, particularly as the momentum for the Iraq War grew considerably in the months leading up to March 2003. The obstacles to the resolution of the conflict were now viewed in terms of the Palestinians' efforts to become an equal partner for peace, which put Israel in a privileged position of not being the first to concede. While Israel was plainly advantaged by the Bush administration's new judgments and priorities, it was not necessarily regarded individually from the broader interests of the United States. Instead, the policy towards Israel merely followed on the path set out by the increasing conviction of the dangers posed by Iraq and the need to remove its terrorist-supporting leader.

Turning our attention to President Obama's policy during the escalation of the Arab Spring revolts, his approach towards Israel remained, largely, consistent with pre-Arab Spring calculations. Considering Obama's established priority of making amends with the Muslim world, the unanticipated wave of social protests in predominantly Muslim countries came as a test to the Obama administration to respond appropriately and in conformity with its foreign affairs interests. Two examples are worth examining.

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[41] George W. Bush, "President Bush Calls for New Palestinian Leadership", *The White House*, June 24, 2002, https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020624-3.html (accessed on 29.06.2019)

The first case study concerns the protests that erupted in Egypt, right after those in Tunisia, which, as Marc Lynch explains, "moved the challenge from the periphery to the core of the Arab world, striking at the heart of the American and Saudi-led regional order."[42]The Obama administration focused first on the "rights of the Egyptian people,"[43] then on political reform without yet calling for Mubarak's resignation[44], and finally, on "orderly transition" of power that "must begin now."[45] The latter came after Mubarak himself had already agreed to step down in September – which was too late for the U.S. The insistence that Mubarak should step down as soon as possible, despite his close relationship to America that went back more than thirty years, sent a worrisome message. Michael B. Oren, Israel's ambassador to the United States at the time, grasped the historic nature of the moment in his memoirs: "in all of modern Middle East history, no single English word has reverberated more thunderously than President Obama's 'now.'"[46]

Even though this foreign policy decision was not outright directed at Israel, it was reflective of how the Obama administration balanced different American interests in the region and what the general intuition on handling the Arab revolts in relation to Israel was. Immediately after Mubarak's resignation, the White House issued a statement in which Obama had declared that the "transition must bring all of Egypt's voices to the table."[47] Such "voices" were, according to Michael Oren, bound to be understood by Israel as the voices of the Muslim Brotherhood,[48] considering they were most likely to win at the polls. Adding this to the rapid abandonment of a long-time ally such as Mubarak called into question the American commitment to its other allies, especially Israel.

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[42] Marc Lynch, *The New Arab Wars: Uprisings and Anarchy in the Middle East*, (New York: PublicAffairs, 2016): 59, EPUB format.

[43] Mark Landler, "Obama Cautions Embattled Ally Against Violence", in *The New York Times*, January 28, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/29/world/middleeast/29diplo.html (accessed on 30.06.2019)

[44] David E. Sanger and Helene Cooper, "Obama Presses for Change but Not a New Face at the Top", in *The New York Times*, January 29, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/30/world/middleeast/30diplo.html (accessed on 30.06.2019)

[45] Anthony Shadid, "Obama Urges Faster Shift of Power in Egypt", in *The New York Times*, February 1, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/02/world/middleeast/02egypt.html, (accessed on 30.06.2019)

[46] Michael B. Oren, *Ally: My Journey Across the American-Israeli Divide*, (New York: Random House, 2015): 213, EPUB format.

[47] Barack Obama, "Obama's Remarks on the Resignation of Mubarak", in *The New York Times*, February 11, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/12/world/middleeast/12diplo-text.html, (accessed on 30.06.2019)

[48] Michael B. Oren, *op. cit.*

In this context, the administration once again emphasized that the pursuit of closeness to Arab states came at the expense of Israel's interests taking priority in U.S. calculations of policy. Considering Israel's dependence on the peace treaty with Egypt, a "linchpin of [Israel's] strategic force posture and doctrine"[49], long upheld by President Mubarak, as well as its fears of an Islamist political leadership in Egypt in post-revolutionary elections, the U.S. had done little to assuage Israel's anxieties.

A second case study is that of President Obama seeking Congress authorization to strike Syria, which reinforced the concern about American commitments. Since the civil war erupted in Syria, the Israeli leadership had been divided in its judgment. While the security establishment saw the potential fall of the Assad regime as an advantage to Israel in the fight against Hezbollah, Dennis Ross discloses that, in private discussions with Prime Minister Netanyahu, that view was not universal.[50] Netanyahu's principal concern was "the danger of Syria's chemical weapons (CW) stocks falling into the hands of jihadis or Hezbollah if Syria collapsed."[51] This interest was shared by the Obama administration, which is what prompted the President to declare in August 2012 that the U.S. would be ready to use military force if Syria's "arsenal of unconventional weapons was being moved or prepared for use."[52] Almost exactly one year later, President Obama would be faced with responding to such a challenge.

On August 21, 2013, reports of hundreds of Syrians killed without any visible injuries strongly suggested that a chemical attack had been carried out by government forces in the Eastern and Western parts of Ghouta.[53] A few days later, Secretary of State Kerry declared it undeniable that chemical weapons had been used in the attack by the Syrian government in an "indiscriminate slaughter of civilians."[54] The situation enhanced the pressure on the United States and its allies to respond militarily

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[49] Dennis Ross, *Doomed to succeed: the U.S.-Israel relationship from Truman to Obama*, First edition, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015): 360, EPUB format.

[50] *Ibid,* 362

[51] *Ibid.*

[52] Mark Landler, "Obama Threatens Force Against Syria", in *The New York Times*, August 20, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/21/world/middleeast/obama-threatens-force-against-syria.html (accessed on 30.06.2019)

[53] Ben Hubbard and HwaidaSaad, "Images of Death in Syria, but No Proof of Chemical Attack", in *The New York Times*, August 21, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/22/world/middleeast/syria.html, (accessed on 30.06.2019)

[54] Michael R. Gordon and Mark Landler, "Kerry Cites Clear Evidence of Chemical Weapon Use in Syria", in *The New York Times*, August 26, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/27/world/middleeast/syria-assad.html, (accessed on 30.06.2019)

in Syria, prompting Iranian lawmakers and commanders to threaten a "retaliatory attack on Israel."[55]

As debates on whether and how to attack were ongoing inside the administration, a letter signed by more than 100 members of the House of Representatives was directed towards President Obama, asking for him to "consult and receive authorization from Congress before ordering the use of U.S. military force in Syria."[56] The likeliness of such a decision being taken by Obama began to fade as the United Kingdom, ally in the expected coalition, voted against the operation,[57] and the Department of Defense warned that it lacked sufficient funding for the military strikes.[58] The latter meant that the President would have to request more money from Congress, a delicate matter given the context.

However, in an unexpected turn, President Obama, declared that he would seek authorization from Congress, so that "any new war would command full national consent."[59] The announcement was particularly disconcerting to Israel, as Dennis Ross explains through a phone call he had received from a senior Israeli official after the statement: "[…] America cannot draw a line and then pull back. This is a disaster – and particularly for those of us who say we can count on the U.S."[60] Much like in Egypt two years before, the United States had conveyed a message that Israel translated as untrustworthiness, by observing its behavior towards long-time allies and the "red lines" set by the President himself.

In this example, the behavioral change was much more particular to the Obama administration, since it represented a sudden shift from an initial policy announcement made by Obama himself, instead of a historically stable relation with a regional ally. Because of this, the Syria situation was perhaps even more successful than Egypt in

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[55] Thomas Erdbrink, "Strike on Syria Would Lead to Retaliation on Israel, Iran Warns", in *The New York Times*, August 28, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/29/world/middleeast/ syria-iran-israel.html (accessed on 30.06.2019)

[56] Ashley Parker, "Legislators Push for Vote Before Strike", in *The New York Times*, August 28, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/29/world/middleeast/legislators-push-for-vote-before-strike.html (accessed on 30.06.2019)

[57] Mark Landler, David E. Sanger and Thom Shanker, "Obama Set for Limited Strike on Syria as British Vote No", in *The New York Times*, August 29, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/30/ us/politics/obama-syria.html (accessed on 30.06.2019)

[58] Jonathan Weisman, "Congress Points Out the Cost of War", in *The New York Times*, August 30, 2013 https://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/08/30/congress-points-out-the-cost-of-war/ (accessed on 30.06.2019)

[59] Marc Lynch, *The New Arab Wars: Uprisings and Anarchy in the Middle East, (*New York: PublicAffairs, 2016): 192, EPUB format.

[60] Dennis Ross, *Doomed to succeed: the U.S.–Israel relationship from Truman to Obama*, First edition, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015): 363, EPUB format.

highlighting an American administration who could not guarantee predictability in its foreign relations. As far as Israel was concerned, predictability in American conduct had been mostly favorable for the good relations between the two states. The Syria situation, much like the Egyptian one, failed to give Israel the chance to correctly predict the changes in U.S. behavior, which is why many of the initial anxieties that Israel had felt – closeness to the Muslim world that could affect relations with Israel, or rapprochement with Iran – were being augmented during the tumultuous events of the Arab Spring.

Therefore, in the immediate aftermath of the two black swan events, each administration found a new context in which new foreign policy options had to be pondered. Interestingly, what those brought about in each administration was as different from one another as it was similar. As we have observed, the Bush administration was affected by the attacks in its overall view of the Middle East and the level of priority that the region should have in American foreign policy thinking. While the policy towards Israel remained, initially, imprecise and contextually defined, it would grow alongside Bush's reconceptualization of the Middle East. In the case of the Obama administration, the black swan event pushed it towards actions that undermined Israeli trust in American faithfulness to its allies and its own promises.

The major difference between the two administrations is that, while 9/11 pushed President Bush to engage with a region that had been largely out of his priorities until that moment, President Obama was pressured further into engagements he had already shown interest in. Inevitably, an explicit policy towards Israel, especially in the context of the conflict with Palestine, was intrinsically needed. The main contrast lies in the fact that President Bush had to articulate a precise position for the first time, while President Obama had already sent strong messages about the expectations of Israel and the ways in which relations with other regional states would affect Israel.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Throughout this paper, we have sought to examine the peculiarities of the Bush and Obama administrations in their foreign policies towards Israel. The driving force behind this study has been to observe a selection of key instances which revealed the most fundamental instincts and judgments when it comes to the policy towards Israel. As has been established in the introduction, the United States and Israel have enjoyed a powerful alliance for decades; however, the tendency is to view the good

relations maintained throughout time as an implicit part of U.S. conduct in foreign affairs. The purpose of this paper has been to prove that, in spite of the general, favorable relations between the two states, the United States pursuing broader interests in the Middle East can and have affected the terms of the alliance.

Therefore, in answer to research question proposed at the beginning of this paper, *how do black swan events influence American foreign policy towards Israel?,* we have observed the policy of the Bush administration before and after 9/11, as well as that of the Obama administration before and after/during the Arab Spring. The conclusion we have drawn is that each corresponding black swan event had pressured both administrations to engage with the Middle East much more directly than they had done in the past. Because of this, the relation with Israel was indirectly affected, each time, to reflect the intensity of the black swan event – and, each time, the two administrations changed their perspectives of Israel to fit their broader regional frameworks post-black swan event.The primary difference between them was that, while for Bush, it meant that Israel could not be overlooked anymore and a position towards it and the conflict with Palestine had to be defined in the near future, for Obama, it meant that interests towards other regional states took precedence to the detriment of Israel.

Extending the argument further, we may argue that the very nature of a black swan event makes it inevitable for the United States to respond proportionally, due to domestic expectations and geopolitical interests. The United States' dominant position on the international stage would be impaired were it to maintain an attitude of neutrality, indifference or to limit its state scope once a black swan event has occurred. Thus, the United States' foreign policy is highly sensitive to, as well as restricted by black swan events.

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TOWARDS A MORE DEMOCRATIC UNION: DIGITAL PARTICIPATION TOOLS AND THE CASE OF THE 5 STAR MOVEMENT

Mario PEDRONCELLI[*]

ABSTRACT

The democratic deficit is one of the long lasting issues affecting the European Union, preventing the progress of the European integration process. This article identifies in the development and implementation of e-democratic tools a solution to make the EU more democratic. A possible example is recognized in the 5 Star Movement, successful populist and Eurosceptic Italian party, which has developed Rousseau, an online platform with the aim of increasing the involvement of the people in the decision-making process. Can Rousseau be considered a best practice that the EU should follow to reduce its democratic deficit? A series of limits – of participation, transparency, interaction and democracy – make Rousseau unable to perform this role. Nevertheless, the EU, through its newly elected Parliament, has now the chance to strengthen the existing instruments and develop new ones in order to enhance the participation of its citizens.

INTRODUCTION

Announced as the most Eurosceptic elections since 1979, the predicted populist wave did not probably occur as expected on the eve of the 2019 European elections – with exceptions, for instance, in the UK, France, Poland, Hungary and Italy. Nevertheless, the success of populist parties in several EU Member States and the crisis of traditional representative democracy indicate how the democratic deficit still affects the European Union, despite its efforts to tackle this issue by progressively empowering the European Parliament (EP) and by introducing new democratic tools – i.e. the European Citizens' Initiative.

In the present article I argue that the development of instruments of digital democracy, aiming at strengthening the participation of people in the decision-making process, can become an opportunity for the EU to reduce the distance from

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the European citizens. Paradoxically, an incentive for a more democratic Europe could come from the populist parties – usually advocating for direct and participatory democracy and building their success also through the use of the Internet.

Therefore, in the first part of this article, I will define the democratic deficit affecting the European Union. In the second section, I will analyze the main aspects concerning the digital democracy as well as the currently implemented EU tools in this field. In the final part, I will focus on the 5 Star Movement – the populist governing party in Italy – in particular on the Rousseau platform, the party's online platform for direct democracy through which members can draft legislative initiatives, vote for candidates and decide on the structure of the party.

In conclusion, an analysis of the functioning and grey areas concerning this instrument, shows that digital participation did not yet result in significant changes in Italy – due especially to security issues. Nevertheless, the EU has the possibility to act as a forerunner in the field of digital democracy by implementing an agenda that would gradually strengthen the currently implemented instruments, and introduce new e-democratic tools.

1. THE DEMOCRATIC DEFICIT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Decisions shall be taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen[1]

In the first section of this article, I will focus on providing a definition of democratic deficit based on the existing literature and I will identify the main measures taken by the European Union in order to solve this issue.

Democracy is one of the fundamental values of the European Union[2]. The EU itself promotes democracy throughout the world with several instruments – for instance, through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. Nevertheless, the EU is often accused of democratic deficit, an issue that contributes in hindering further steps of the European integration process and in negatively influencing the image that the citizens have of the EU.

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[1] European Union. *Consolidated Versions of the Treaty on European Union and of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*. Office for Official publications of the European Communities, 2010.

[2] Article 2 TEU: *"The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail"*.

The term democratic deficit was firstly employed in 1977 on the Young European Federalists Manifesto, drafted by Richard Corbett. This concept was reaffirmed two years later by David Marquand in relation to the European Economic Community. Marquand believed that the European Parliament lacked of democracy, not being elected by the citizens, but being named, on the contrary, by the national parliaments.

Hence, how can we define the democratic deficit affecting the European Union? Follesdal and Hix[3] recognize five elements composing a standard definition of democratic deficit. Firstly, the diminishment of parliamentary control in the Member States and an increase of executive power at European level; secondly, the weakness of the EP compared to the Council and to the Commission. The third factor concerns the elections held in the EU, considered 'second order national elections'[4] – focusing on domestic issues rather than European ones. The fourth feature is the perceived distance of the European Parliament from the citizens. This distance is caused by the fact that the EP functions in a different way from the domestic Parliaments, making it difficult for the people to understand its activities; additionally, the control of the citizens on the EU institutions is too detached. The last element is identified in the fact that the EU legislates in fields that are not backed by the majority of the European people.

Therefore, the democratic deficit can be described by lack of transparency, accountability and by the distance between citizens and institutions that result in lack of participation.[5]

Several measures, taken from Maastricht to Lisbon, have been implemented at European level in order to contrast the democratic deficit, for instance, by strengthening the role of the European Parliament, from Common Assembly – created in 1952 within the European Coal and Steel Community – with mere consultative powers, to parliament acting as co-legislator together with the Council.

In particular, the Treaty of Lisbon seemed to give a – partial – answer to the issues raised by Follesdal and Hix, through the enhancement of the role of the European Parliament in the EU decision-making process – by increasing budgetary and legislative powers and making the European Commission more accountable to the EP.

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[3] Andreas Follesdal and Simon Hix. „Why there is a democratic deficit in the EU: A response to Majone and Moravcsik." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 44, no. 3 (2006): 533–562.

[4] Sara B. Hobolt. „A vote for the President? The role of Spitzenkandidaten in the 2014 European Parliament elections." *Journal of European Public Policy* 21, no. 10 (2014): 1528–1540.

[5] Giandomenico Majone. „Europe's 'democratic deficit': The question of standards." *European law journal* 4, no. 1 (1998): 5–28.

As a matter of fact, the Treaty of Lisbon directly refers to the improvement of institutional democracy in the Preamble of the Treaty[6] and clearly bonds the pursuit of democratic principles to the European Parliament in the art. 10 of the Treaty on European Union, by considering the EP the institution that directly represents citizens at European level and, at the same time, identifying representative democracy as the basis for the functioning of the EU. Hence, according to Mayoral,[7] the Treaty of Lisbon fulfils its democracy related aims by empowering the European Parliament and through a series of other initiatives – i.e. the European Citizen initiative. Decreasing the democratic deficit can be identified as the rationale behind the reform of the European Parliament occurred with the Lisbon Treaty. Nevertheless, did the democratic deficit decrease following the Treaty of Lisbon? The rise of populist parties and movements in most of the EU Member States and events like Brexit cannot be taken as signals of a reconciliation between citizens and European institutions.

Hence, what are the possible solutions in order to enhance the democracy within the Union? An opportunity can be found in the development of tools of digital democracy. Therefore, in the next section of this article, I will focus on defining what digital democracy is, and what are the instruments that the European Union has already developed in this field.

2. DEFINING DIGITAL DEMOCRACY: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

> No one can imagine a state that can be governed via continuous appeals to the people: taking into account the approximate number of laws which are drafted in Italy every year, we would have to call a referendum on average once a day. That is unless we take seriously the science-fiction scenario whereby citizens could transmit their vote to an electronic brain just by pressing a button in the comfort of their own homes.[8]

In the first part of the article I focused on an analysis of the democratic deficit of the EU. In the second part, I will move my attention to one of the possible solutions to the perceived lack of democracy at European level: the digital democracy. Therefore, I will define the concept of e-democracy, by highlighting both its opportunities and

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6   Mark Bevir and Ryan Phillips. „EU democracy and the Treaty of Lisbon." *Comparative European Politics* 15, no. 5 (2017): 705–728.
7   Juan Mayoral. *Democratic improvements in the European Union under the Lisbon Treaty.* 2011.
8   Norberto Bobbio. *The future of democracy: a defence of the rules of the game.* U of Minnesota Press, 1987.

challenges, and I will present the main current implemented strategies of the European Union that involve the use of digital democratic instruments.

In 1987 – unaware of the development of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) instruments – Norberto Bobbio disregarded as 'science fiction' the idea of the citizens directly participating in the decision-making system through technology. Nevertheless, the current technological evolution has made possible the availability of increasingly powerful tools of ICT, allowing public and private organizations to be profoundly transformed. Hence, these technologies have become extraordinary instruments in the hands of national governments to improve the quality, speed and reliability of services provided by public administrations to private citizens and businesses, and to improve, at the same time, the active participation of citizens in the decisions and actions promoted by the public authorities. Consequently, with the advancement of the ICT, also the expectations towards a better functioning democracy increased, especially in an historical period signed by the global crisis of representative democracy.

What do we mean as digital democracy? Digital democracy consists in the pursuit of a direct type of democracy not limited by physical, temporal or spatial elements, through the use of digital instruments.[9] Moreover, we can identify three main objectives concerning digital democracy:[10] information, which refers to the access of information provided by the government to the citizens; consultation, with the organization of online public consultations through which citizens can give feedbacks to the government; active participation, by providing tools through which individuals can actively participate in the decision-making process. Additionally, Kneuer[11] recognizes that guaranteeing freedom and equality in accessing the Internet is one of the fundamental dimensions of digital democracy.

In the debate concerning the impact of ICT tools on democracy and society we can recognize both optimistic and pessimistic approaches. The former focuses on two main perspectives: the potential role of digital democracy in overcoming the current crisis of representative democracy – signed by a constant decrease in civic participation – by enhancing the engagement of citizens in the decision-making process and the communication possibilities provided by the Internet, for instance

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[9] Jan Van Dijk. *The network society*. Sage Publications, 2012.

[10] Ismael Peña-López. „Promise and Problems of E-Democracy. Challenges of Online Citizen Engagement." (2003).

[11] Marianne Kneue. „E-democracy: A new challenge for measuring democracy." *International Political Science Review* 37, no. 5 (2016): 666–678.

the use of multimedia files.[12] The latter, instead, underlines the failed promises of digital democracy, due to the fact that the hopes and expectations for fast and effective changes concerning the role of the people in the decision-making process were not completely respected.

Hence, we can identify three major issues hindering the development of digital democracy: participatory, security and political barriers. Firstly, the participatory limits refer to the inequalities in the access to ICT tools. For instance, the digital divide, which causes the exclusion of certain portions of the population due to 'the consequences of unequal access, lack of proper infrastructure and low adoption of technology'.[13] Secondly, the challenges related to security, in particular to privacy and safety of ICT systems. An example is the case of Cambridge Analytica, where this company obtained data related to millions of Facebook members without their consent with the potential to influence the outcome of the 2016 US elections.[14] Moreover, another important issue concerning the security of e-democratic tools concerns how to ensure the secrecy of voting, avoiding cases of coercion. Lastly, the political limits to digital democracy are related to the fact that at political and institutional level, e-democratic instruments are seen as potentially disruptive and difficult to control,[15] therefore their development and implementation are usually not considered a priority in the political agenda.

Digital Democracy in the European Union

What is the EU role in relation to e-democracy? Article 10 (3) of the Treaty on European Union prescribes that 'Every citizen shall have the right to participate in the democratic life of the Union. Decisions shall be taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen'. Therefore, an effective way to concretely put into practice this provision, and at the same time reducing the distance between the EU institutions and the citizens, can be identified in the introduction and development of ICT tools at European level, aiming at enhancing democracy within the European Union by strengthening the involvement of the people in the decision-making process.

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[12] Ralf Lindner, Georg Aichholzer and Leonhard Hennen. „Electronic Democracy in Europe: An Introduction." In *Electronic Democracy in Europe*, pp. 1–17. Springer, Cham, 2016.

[13] Peña-López. „Promise and Problems of E-Democracy. Challenges of Online Citizen Engagement.", 60.

[14] Leif Sundberg. „Electronic government: Towards e-democracy or democracy at risk?." *Safety Science* 118 (2019): 22–32.

[15] Stephen Coleman and Donald F. Norris. „A new agenda for e-democracy." *OII Forum Discussion Paper*, 2005.

The EU has currently implemented different e-democratic tools, with the most important being: the Online EU Public Consultations, the petitions to the European Parliament and the European Citizens' Initiative.[16] The Online EU Public Consultations are an instrument through which the European Commission seeks the opinion of the stakeholders on specific issues; nevertheless these consultations are non-binding and it is not clear in which way they are taken into account by the Commission. The petitions to the European Parliament, on the other hand, can be initiated by any EU citizen or resident – individually or in groups –, companies and organizations, with the objective of raising concern about already implemented EU policies. However, in order to make this tool more efficient and effective, the duration of the process for submitting a petition needs to be reduced, as well as the time that occurs before a petition is examined by the appropriate committee.[17] Finally, the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI), the most important among the instrument implemented by the EU to increase the participation of the citizen in the decision-making process. The ECI was introduced in 2012 and provides the citizens with the opportunity to propose legislation to the European Commission in fields where the Union has the competence to legislate. The proposal, after being registered on the official website by a citizens' committee, needs to obtain at least one million signatures from at least seven Member States. If successful, the Commission examinesit and decides whether to accept it – by proposing legislation – or reject it. Although the ECI was launched with great expectations concerning its potential to improve democracy at European level, its results after seven years of activity can be described as unsatisfactory. Only few initiatives reached the required signatures and in each of these cases the Commission did not put forward any legislative proposal, resulting in the decline of ECI proposed.[18] Currently, a discussion to improve the European Citizens' Initiative is taking place at European level in order to overcome the limits of this tool.

Hence, the role of the European Union concerning e-democracy has been in-sufficient until now, with the already implemented instruments having only a limited effect in empowering the citizens and, at the same time, reducing the democratic deficit affecting the Union.

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[16] Elisa Lironi. „Potential and Challenges of E-participation in the European Union." *Study for the AFCO Committee, Director General of Internal Policies* (2016).

[17] *Ibid*.

[18] Manès Weisskircher. "The European Citizens' Initiative is five years old – and it has been no step forward for EU democracy."*EUROPP,* April 7, 2017. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2017/04/07/european-citizens-initiative-five-years-old/#Author (accessed 24 July, 2019).

3. DIGITAL DEMOCRACY:
THE CASE OF THE 5 STAR MOVEMENT

In the first section of this article I addressed the issue of the democratic deficit which affects the relation between the European Union and its citizens. Then, in the second section, I defined the concept of digital democracy, briefly analyzing the opportunities and challenges that derive from it, identifying it as a possible solution to reduce this deficit. Nevertheless, it resulted how the European Union did not implement until now effective and efficient measures concerning e-democracy. In this part of the article, I will focus on Rousseau – the online platform for direct democracy of the 5 Star Movement – as a possible example of successful instrument of digital democracy that could inspire new reforms also at European level.

The 5 Star Movement (M5S) is an Italian political movement founded in September 2009 by Beppe Grillo – a comedian, who however addressed political issues already since the end of the 80s in TV and theatres – and Gianroberto Casaleggio, an entrepreneur and IT expert, who died in 2016. The M5S was born following the severe effects of the economic crisis in Italy and as a response to the several corruption cases affecting the Italian political class. The movement can be defined as populist, due to the fact that its political message focuses on the two core elements of populism: the people and the anti-elitism,[19] with the people addressed as both the entire nation and the common/ordinary people and the elite – the corrupt establishment – identified in the traditional political parties, in the European Union and in the traditional media.

The success of this movement arrived fast, in particular with the 2013 national elections, where it reached 25.56% of votes and with the 2018 national elections, becoming – with the new leadership of Luigi Di Maio and Davide Casaleggio, son of Gianroberto – the most voted Italian party with 32.68 %. Following the 2018 elections, the 5 Star Movement formed "The Government of Change" with The League of Matteo Salvini based on a political contract combining the main elements of their programs. Nevertheless, after one year of government the M5S halved its votes, while The League doubled them: as a matter of fact, the at 2019 European elections, the movement reached 17.07%, gaining less votes than the Democratic Party, while The League obtained 34.33%. On the one hand, these results were the consequence of Salvini's media overexposure, his continuous electoral campaign and his management of the migration issue, and, on the other hand, the M5S initiated an institutionalization process by renouncing to some of its fundamental principles –

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[19] Margaret Canovan. *Populism*. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt P, 1981).

for instance, the refusal to form alliances with traditional parties[20] and to participate in TV programs, but also the two terms limit for city council members.

One of the main characteristics of the 5 Star Movement is the fundamental role given to the Internet, considered as a 'technology of freedom whose impact is not mediated by social, political, and cultural contexts', moreover it is 'presented as a progressive technology in its natural essence, generating social change, an emancipatory force of liberation and empowerment'.[21] Furthermore, the Internet has an important role also in relation with the structure of the M5S, that is mainly online based, unlike the traditional political parties that are organized physically on the territory.

The ultimate goal to be reached through the Web is the direct democracy, the only way to give power to the people – victims, according to the M5S, of the corruption of Italian institutions and parties – seen as the only repository of the good and the only capable of governing. For instance, Beppe Grillo[22]described the art of governing as a job that did not require any specific competence but which any person accustomed to the difficulties of life would be able to perform. Moreover, until direct democracy is not reached, the role of the elected representatives of the M5S is simply of being spokespersons of the citizens – one of the main slogan of the movement is "Uno vale uno", indicating the equality of each member, from the simple voter to a minister, in the decision-making process of the movement. Hence, direct democracy retains a central role in the political discourse of the M5S, where 'the idea of direct democracy is strictly intertwined with digital democracy'.[23]

The Rousseau Platform

> 'The popular will is continuously bypassed and humiliated. We want the tools in the hands of citizens. I dream of my son voting yes or not on a computer from his home, whether to go to Afghanistan or not, whether staying in Europe or not, if leaving the euro or not. Is that clear? This is what I want'[24]

The M5S tried to transform Beppe Grillo's dream in reality through Rousseau[25], an online platform for direct democracy, aiming at becoming the main instrument

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[20] The alliance with The League led to the decision of the M5S to vote in favor of the Salvini's parliamentary immunity concerning his management of immigration flows.

[21] Lorenzo Mosca. „Democratic vision and online participatory spaces in the Italian Movimento 5 Stelle." *Acta politica* (2018): 8–9.

[22] Beppe Grillo. "Comunicato Politico numero trentadue." *beppegrillo.*it, March 19, 2010. https://www.beppegrillo.it/comunicato-politico-numero-trentadue/ (accessed 10 July, 2019).

[23] Mosca. „Democratic vision and online participatory spaces in the Italian Movimento 5 Stelle", 8.

[24] Beppe Grillo, Pomezia, interview 23 January 2013, quoted in *Ibid*., 10

[25] Its name derives from Jean-Jacques Rousseau, political philosopher considered by part of the scholars as the father of direct democracy.

for managing the 5 Star Movement and the participation of the members in the decision-making process – until the launch of Rousseau M5S members could interact, vote and contribute to the decision of the Movement on the blog of Grillo.

Rousseau reached 140,000 registered members in 2017 and it is composed of nine main sections: Lex Region, Lex Parliament and Lex Europe, these three functions allow the members of the platform to contribute to the drafting of legislative proposals at regional, national and European level; Vote, which allows the members to choose candidates or express opinions on specific issues; Lex Members, through which any member of Rousseau can submit his/her own proposal for legislation to be later presented by the M5S elected representatives in the Parliament; Shield of the Net, which allows M5S members to receive legal assistance and to raise donations for this purpose; Fund Raising, through which donations can be made for supporting the functioning of Rousseau; E-learning, which provides training support to the members; and Activism, that collects, on the one hand, the most significant stories, events and battles of the M5S and, on the other, allows everyone to learn about future initiatives.

Nevertheless, four typologies of limits can be identified in the functioning of the Rousseau platform. Firstly, lack of participation: by looking at the data concerning Rousseau, it is possible to notice a decline in the vote turnout, from 64.1% of members in 2012 – on beppegrillo.it and Lex, previous versions of the Rousseau platform – to 14.7% in 2016, while, at the same time, the M5S increased its vote in the national elections. Additionally, it occurred also a decline in the discussions on draft laws, with the average number of feedbacks in 2014 being 446 while in 2017 only 63 – in this period of time the members of the platform increased from 50.000 to more 140.000.[26]

Secondly, lack of transparency: 'the source code of Rousseau is not available for public inspection',[27] therefore creating the 'suspicion that the code might hide algorithms that may be used for data mining or marketing purposes',[28] increasing the chances of having bugs in the software and possible hacker attacks. As a matter of fact, the Casaleggio Associati – company that developed Rousseau, managed by Davide Casaleggio – 'has exclusive access to the database of registered voters as

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[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Marco Deseriis. „Direct Parliamentarianism: An Analysis of the Political Values Embedded in Rousseau, the" Operating System" of the Five STAR Movement." In *2017 Conference for E-Democracy and Open Government (CeDEM)*, pp. 15–25. IEEE, 2017: 54

[28] Marco Canestrari and Nicola Biondo. „Supernova: Com'è stato ucciso il MoVimento 5 Stelle." *Szerzői magánkiadás* (2017), quoted in *Ibid.*

well as to the voting records, raising questions on the regularity of the voting process of the platform'.[29]

The third issue of the platform is related to the lack of interaction: we can recognize an absence of horizontal relationship, with members that cannot communicate among themselves in the sections concerning the draft laws; and a limited vertical relationship, with the platform that permits the interaction between members and elected representatives, but only 5% of the users' comments actually receive an answer from the elected representatives.[30]

Finally, lack of democracy: only the leaders of the party can take decisions concerning the content and the structure of the online voting. For instance, Mosca[31] reports how, in 2017, Grillo 'unilaterally decided that the mayoral candidate in Genoa (the leader's hometown) would not be the person selected through online primaries. After rejecting the winner, online primaries were held again.' This occurred because the founder of the M5S 'retains the power of excluding any candidate from the selection procedure, at any stage of the process'.

CONCLUSION

One of the long-lasting issues affecting the European Union is the democratic deficit, namely the perceived distance between European institutions and citizens. The recent rise of populist and Eurosceptic parties in many European countries worsened the opinion of the people towards the EU, usually portrayed as a technocratic elite that does not respect the general will of the citizens. Moreover, the crisis of representative democracy contributed to the growth of Eurosceptics and populists, due to the fact that these parties advocate for participatory or direct democracy, together with an intense use of the Internet.

The aim of this article was to understand whether the development of digital democratic tools could be considered an effective solution for the European Union in order to reduce the democratic deficit. For this reason, I chose as case study the 5 Star Movement, one of the most successful populist and Eurosceptic political movements, which considers the direct democracy – to be reached through the Internet – as one of its main political objectives.

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[29] Deseriis. „Direct Parliamentarianism: An Analysis of the Political Values Embedded in Rousseau, the" Operating System" of the Five STAR Movement.", 54

[30] Mosca. „Democratic vision and online participatory spaces in the Italian Movimento 5 Stelle."

[31] *Ibid*., 13

Therefore, in the first part of the article, I focused on defining democratic deficit and what the European Union has done in order to overcome it. In the second part, I analyzed the development of ICT for the enhancement of the citizens' role in the decision-making process. Hence, I identified the meaning of the term e-democracy, by recognizing opportunities and challenges. Moreover, I described the three main e-democratic instruments currently implemented by the European Union: the Online EU Public Consultations, the petitions to the European Parliament and the European Citizens' Initiative. However, all these tools did not reach the expected result.

In the third part of this article, instead, I focused on the case of the 5 Star Movement as a possible successful example of digital democratic instrument. As a matter of fact, in 2016 the M5S launched Rousseau, an online platform for direct democracy, whose main functions are: voting on candidates and on the program of the movement, submitting draft legislation and providing observations to M5S representatives on proposed legislation, and advertising local events. Nevertheless, Rousseau still has several limits: lack of participation, transparency, interaction and democracy.

Hence, can Rousseau become a model for participatory democracy adopted in other contexts? The limits that we identified indicate that the platform does not guarantee yet the necessary transparency and security. Nevertheless, Rousseau can be seen as a first step towards a more direct type of democracy through digital participation tools and the 5 Star Movement remains the only Italian party – and one of the few in Europe – that actually gives the chance to its members to participate in the decision-making process – this being one of the reasons of its rapid success.

In conclusion, with the declining of traditional form of participation, the European Union can develop digital tools of participation through the use of technology in order to gain legitimacy by reinforcing the decision-making process and reduce the distance with its citizens. For instance, by implementing an agenda that would: strengthen the already existing instruments; unify them in a single platform; and introduce new means of direct participation. The newly elected European Parliament – where the European People's Party and the Socialists & Democrats are now forced to find agreements with other political groups – could represent a chance to boost this process, even by attempting a dialogue with those political actors that are usually critical towards the EU, but that, at the same time, are already introducing e-democratic instruments at national level – for instance, the 5 Star Movement.

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EU–CELAC RELATIONS:
A BI-REGIONAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Diana-Nicoleta PETRUȚ[*]

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to provide an assessment of the strategic partnership between the EU and CELAC. In order to do so, it starts with a brief overview of the strategic partnership, and then focuses on four key areas of cooperation between the two regions: trade and investment; social cohesion; higher education; environmental sustainability and climate change. A critical evaluation of these policy areas is provided, including a short description of their importance, their benefits and limitations, as well as suggestions for possible improvements. In the case of the last three topics, a representative programme was selected, in order to provide a practical analysis of the policy area it addresses.

The impact of these common policies cannot be ignored, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean. In terms of trade, CELAC countries represent the EU's fifth largest trading partner, after the USA, China, Russia, and Switzerland. In regards to social cohesion, whilst the EU has allocated more than €100 million under the EUROsociAL programme between 2005–2021, poverty and inequality rates remain high in the Latin American region. In education, it is estimated that, under the Erasmus+ programme, 6,500 student and staff mobilities and 100 capacity building projects will be funded during the 2014–2020 period. Regarding climate change, the EUROCLIMA+ programme has been allocated a budget of €80 million in 2016, providing technical and financial support for the creation and implementation of adaptation and mitigation policies, as well as promoting regional policy dialogue and climate action.

This paper emphasises the positive effects of these policies, but also draws attention to their drawbacks, and provides possible solutions to these issues. As such, it can be seen as a pilot assessment of the EU–CELAC strategic partnership, setting the basis for further, more extensive research on the topic.

Keywords: *EU; CELAC; Strategic Partnership*

INTRODUCTION

The European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean are considered to be natural partners, having similar cultural and historical backgrounds, as well as

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strong economic ties. Having relations that go back to the 1960s, the connections between the two regions have developed and grown over time, leading to their institutionalisation in 1999, when the Strategic Partnership between them was launched.[1] Celebrating two decades since its creation, it is worthwhile to explore the impact of this partnership and look at how the common policies and programmes between the two blocks are being implemented.

Thus, the aim of this paper is to provide an evaluation of the bi-regional strategic partnership between the European Union and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Consequently, the research question that the paper attempts to answer is:

> *What are the benefits and limitations of the common policies and programmes implemented in the framework of the strategic partnership, and how can they be reformed?*

The approach chosen in this paper is a descriptive-evaluative one. As such, it was very important to maintain a critical tone throughout, by considering at all times what is working properly and what could be improved in terms of the policies and programmes implemented. The research method chosen is secondary data analysis, as the bibliography utilised consists of official documents, reports, or information provided by reputable international organisations. The majority of the sources used are published on the websites of the European Union and the EU–LAC Foundation. This research method was chosen for its advantages, namely the elimination of financial and time costs necessary to collect information, as well as the use of professionally collected data. Still, it has some disadvantages, such as the fact that the information was collected for other purposes or the reduced accessibility of some of the data collected by established bodies. However, the wide range of materials published by international institutions was sufficient for the purpose and space constraints of this paper, and thus this method has proved to be very practical and effective for achieving the aim of this research.

The paper is structured into five sections. The first provides a brief overview of the strategic partnership, looking at the actors involved, the political framework, and the current Action Plan.Each of the next four sections focuses on one of the following key areas of cooperation, representative for the strategic partnership: trade and investment; social cohesion; higher education; environmental sustainability

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[1]   Roberto Dominguez, *EU Foreign Politics Towards Latin America* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 52–53.

and climate change. All of the latter four sections provide a short description of the importance of the respective policy, and then present their benefits and limitations, as well as suggestions for possible improvements. In the case of the last three, a representative programme was chosen, in order to provide a practical analysis of the policy area it addresses.

1. THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

While the EU and the Latin America and Caribbean region have been cooperating since the 1960s, the initiative of EU–LAC summits appeared only in 1996 in Chile, during the 6th Iberian-American Summit, when the then-Spanish President José María Aznar proposed establishing a continuous dialogue between Latin America, the Caribbean and the EU. The initiative was supported by the European Parliament, EU foreign ministers and the Rio Group, during its 7th ministerial meeting with the EU, in 1997. During the EU–Rio Group meeting that took place the following year, the bilateral agenda was reviewed, and new cooperation areas were added. In September 1998, the ministers of the EU and LAC submitted to the UN General Assembly a joint declaration establishing their commitment to the new privileged bi-regional partnership, as a response to 21st century challenges. The dialogue was finally institutionalised in 1999, when the first bi-regional summit took place in Rio de Janeiro.[2]

At first, the EU's relationship with the LAC region was mainly expressed through summits with the Rio Group and Latin America and Caribbean Summit on Integration and Development (CALC), as well as through various sub-regional and bilateral agreements that are still in place.[3] However, when CELAC was launched in 2011, it became the EU's official counterpart in the bi-regional strategic partnership. As such, it is important to look at this institution in order to understand its purpose and role within this framework.

The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) was officially launched in December 2011 through the Declaration of Caracas, Venezuela, as a common forum for the member states to facilitate dialogue and decision-making, as well as advance political, economic, social and cultural integration in the region. The membership is very similar to that of the Organisation of American States (OAS), with the notable exceptions of the USA and Canada, and the presence of Cuba as a

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[2] *Ibid.*, 55–56.
[3] *Ibid.*

full member; in effect, all 33 states of Latin America and the Caribbean are represented. A CELAC Summit is organised every year, during which the general direction and goals for that term are established in the form of an Action Plan, as well as the upcoming meetings' calendar.[4] In terms of institutional structure, it has six organs which coordinate and perform certain functions, to ensure that the aims of the institution are met: The Summit of Heads of State and Government; the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs; the Pro Tempore Presidency; the Meeting of National Coordinators; Specialised Meetings; and The Troika.[5]

The political framework of the strategic partnership consists of EU–CELAC Summits, held every two years, and Foreign Ministers' Meetings, organised in the year between the Summits. To present date, there have been eight Summits in total, organised in Rio de Janeiro (1999), Madrid (2002), Guadalajara (2004), Vienna (2006), Lima (2008), Madrid (2010), Santiago de Chile (2013), and Brussels (2015), as well as a Foreign Ministers' Meeting, held in Santo Domingo in 2016.[6] The most recent EU–CELAC Summit took place in Brussels, in June 2015. Under the theme "Shaping our common future: working for prosperous, cohesive and sustainable societies for our citizens", the adopted documents include a political declaration renewing the strategic partnership, titled "A partnership for the next generation"; the Brussels Declaration, covering the several strands of the relationship; and an updated and expanded EU–CELAC Action Plan for the 2015–2017 period.[7]

The EU–CELAC Action Plan 2015–2017 outlines the various areas of cooperation between the two regions, with their respective objectives and work programmes. It identifies instruments and activities which are expected to lead to results guaranteeing joint ownership and mutual capacity building in ten key areas, linked to the central theme of the 2015 Brussels Summit, "Shaping our common future". The ten priority areas are:[8]

1. Science, research, innovation and technology;
2. Sustainable development, environment, climate change, biodiversity, energy;

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4   Denis Kennedy and Brian Beaton, "Two Steps Forward? Assessing Latin American Regionalism Through CELAC", *Latin American Policy*7, no. 1 (2016): 55.
5   CELAC, *Procedimientos para el Funcionamiento Organico de la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños*, 2013, I Cumbre CELAC, Chile, 1–2.
6   Council of the European Union, *Shaping Our Common Future: Latin America and the Caribbean – European Union Strategic Partnership* (Luxembourg: EU Publications Office, 2015), 84.
7   *Ibid.*, 11–37.
8   *Ibid.*, 1–39.

3. Regional integration and interconnectivity to promote social inclusion and cohesion;

4. Migration;

5. Education and employment to promote social inclusion and cohesion;

6. The world drug problem;

7. Gender;

8. Investments and entrepreneurship for sustainable development;

9. Higher education;

10. Citizen security.

Out of these, four key areas of cooperation were selected and analysed for the purpose of this paper, namely: trade and investment; social cohesion; higher education; environmental sustainability and climate change. These policy areas will be analysed in the following sections.

2. TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Trade is a fundamental aspect of the relations between the EU and CELAC, setting the basis for cooperation in other areas. Thus, any analysis of the strategic partnership would not be complete without taking this matter into consideration. The EU has concluded various trade agreements with Latin American and Caribbean states, including: a multi-party free trade agreement with Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, three of the four members of the Andean Community; agreements with sub-regional groupings Cariforum and Central America; agreements with Mercosur and its individual members, which could soon be replaced with an agreement with Mercosur, which is being negotiated; and bilateral agreements with Mexico and Chile, currently in the process of modernisation. So, apart from the Mercosur agreement that is being brokered, the EU does not have any trade deal with Cuba, Bolivia and Venezuela.[9] This is important to note, especially in the case of Venezuela, taking into account the crisis situation that the country has been facing recently.

Collectively, CELAC countries represent the EU's fifth largest trading partner, after the USA, China, Russia and Switzerland. Trade in goods has more than doubled over the last decade, amounting to €213.2 billion in 2015, representing 6.1% of total EU trade. The EU imported €95.9 billion worth of goods from CELAC countries,

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[9] GiselaGrieger and Roderick Harte, *EU Trade with Latin America and the Caribbean – Overview and Figures* (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2017), 30.

mainly agricultural products and raw materials, and exported goods, such as machinery, transport equipment and chemicals, worth €117.4 billion in 2015. Trade in services reached the sum of €72.2 billion in 2013.[10]

In terms of investment, the EU is the leading foreign investor in CELAC countries, with total foreign direct investment (FDI) stocks of €642 billion in 2014, representing more than a third of all FDIs in the region. The EU's FDI stock in CELAC is higher than in Russia, China and India combined, reaching a total of €354.2 billion.[11]

One of the main benefits of these trade relations is the access to new markets for goods and services. Since the CELAC region is mostly dependent on trade with the United States, having access to the European Single Market helps to reduce this dependency, as well as diversify the products which customers in CELAC states have access to. This leads to greater competition, resulting in better quality products at lower prices. On the EU's part, CELAC provides a market of affordable raw materials, which are imported and turned into finite products on the continent, thus helping to reduce costs and increase efficiency. The fact that trade in goods between the regions has more than doubled between 2005–2015 is another positive indicator, since it proves that there is a great potential for expansion in this area. Representing 6.1% of total EU trade, Latin American and Caribbean states have a sufficient window to increase their share of EU trade if their commercial agreements are strengthened.

Trade also helps to increase investment opportunities. The fact that EU enterprises choose to invest more in Latin American and Caribbean states, in the detriment of Russia, China and India, shows that there is a huge amount of interest in the economy of the LAC region. As leading investor in CELAC countries, the EU benefits greatly from the wealth generated by those businesses, which in turn become more productive and efficient, as they have access to the raw materials and labour force available there. Foreign direct investment also stimulates the economy of the region and provides and impetus for future economic growth, facilitating the development of CELAC states.

On the downside, trade between the two regions is not diversified. As mentioned above, the EU imports mainly agricultural products and raw materials and exports to CELAC machinery, transport equipment and chemicals. Consequently, Latin American and Caribbean states become a market of primary commodities for the EU, which imports only the products that are either not available in EU states or are sold at cheaper prices in CELAC countries. Since the latter imports from the EU mostly

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[10] European External Action Service, *EU–CELAC Relations*, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/13042/EU-CELAC%20relations (accessed May 1, 2018).

[11] *Ibid*.

finite products, it shows that the manufacturing and industry sector is not as well developed, thus the economy of CELAC is based more on exporting agriculture and services.

Moreover, the various trade agreements between the EU and CELAC states and sub-regional groupings differ greatly in content and methodology, depending on the time and context in which they were concluded. Dating from the 1990s, the bilateral and interregional EU-Mercosur agreements are the least advanced in terms of content. This is also the case of the agreements with Mexico and Chile, which reflect the conditions of the early 2000s and are significantly different in content from later agreements. For example, these contain no specific chapters dedicated to sustainable development, which form an important part of more recent agreements, such as the one with Cariforum.[12] These differences create imbalances between the various CELAC states and sub-regional groupings, as some have more favourable trade regulations than others. Thus, the fact that the EU is negotiating new agreements with the Mercosur states and is trying to modernise those with Mexico and Chile is a necessary step for the improvement of trade relations with these states.

Apart from these changes, a possible reform would be the conclusion of a trade agreement between the EU and the CELAC bloc as a whole. Since it is supposed to bring all of the Latin American and Caribbean states and sub-groups under the same umbrella, it should have the power to negotiate a trade deal on behalf of its members, just like the EU is doing on behalf of the Member States. This would help both the EU, which would finally conclude trade agreements with all of the LAC countries, but most of all the CELAC region, as it would create a trade policy framework common to all of the countries. This will lead to more coherence and homogenisation in terms of trade and investment. Thus, considering the current global context, among the negotiations of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the USA, it is vital for the EU and CELAC to strengthen their trade relations, in order to cope with the challenges posed by an increasingly globalised economy.

3. SOCIAL COHESION

Social cohesion, meaning the fight against poverty, inequality and social exclusion, is one of the priorities of the bi-regional strategic partnership, as affirmed at successive EU–CELAC summits. During the Guadalajara Summit, in May 2004, the

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[12] Griegerand Harte, *EU Trade with Latin America and the Caribbean,* 31–32.

programme for social cohesion in Latin America, EUROsociAL, was created as a joint commitment to address this issue. Its objective is to contribute to the design and implementation of strategic public policies aimed at improving social cohesion, as well as strengthen the institutions which carry out those policies, through peer learning, exchange of best practices between public institutions, and technical assistance. The programme is based on the following key principles: ownership, result-orientation, structural impact, European added value, and South-South cooperation.[13]

After the first stage of the programme was carried out between 2005–2010, EUROsociAL was extended for a second stage, from 2011 to 2015. Since 2016, EUROsociAL+ continues the work of EUROsociAL I and II, lasting until 2021, having as priorities social policies, good governance policies, and gender equality ones. The total budget allocated by the Commission for the three stages of the programme exceeds €100 million.[14]

The impact that this programme has had throughout the years cannot be ignored, as the generated results are very encouraging and stand as proof of its success. During 2011–2015 alone, EUROsociAL II has conducted more than 1,500 activities, such as studies, seminars, exchange visits, and advising, gathering more than 10,500 participants in total, and supported 90 policies aimed at improving social cohesion.[15] For example, Colombia adopted an anti-corruption policy, promoted by the Office of the Presidency with technical support from the programme, and also launched a new system of labour market service, combining job mediation with active employment policies, such as training. In only 6 months, more than 125,000 people found new employment, and the resounding success of the initiative led to its extension to Costa Rica as well.[16] It is clear that this programme has and will continue to have a long-lasting impact in Latin American societies, helping to address the root causes of inequality and increase the level of social cohesion in the region.

Moreover, the fact that the European Union is the facilitator of the programme is of key importance. Having years of experience in the field, materialised through the cohesion policy, the expertise that the EU has to offer to Latin American states is crucial in advancing a coherent and effective strategy for the region. The fact that

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[13] European Commission, *Partners in Development – European Union–Latin America/Caribbean Development Cooperation Guide* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015), 11.

[14] European Commission, *Latin America – EUROsociAL – Regional Programme for Social Cohesion*, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/latin-america/eurosocial_en (accessed May 6, 2018).

[15] *Ibid*.

[16] European Commission, *Partners in Development,* 12.

EUROsociAL has been extended twice already is indicative of both its success, as well as the continuous commitment that the EU and Latin American countries have towards addressing this issue.

However, despite sustained growth in the last decades, Latin America is still a region with high poverty and inequality rates, with 28% of the population living in poverty, and 11% in extreme poverty.[17] Although poverty has been reduced over the years, it has not triggered a significant reduction in income inequality. Latin America and the Caribbean remains the region with the highest inequality rates in the world, surpassing even poorer ones, such as Sub-Saharan Africa. There is also widespread inequality in terms of access to and the quality of basic social services, such as social and health security, education, housing, and even public safety; discrimination affecting vulnerable groups; insufficient conditions for exercising human rights; and labour informality.[18] Thus, although EUROsociAL has indeed had a positive impact in the region, there is still much work to be done in order to reduce inequality and increase social cohesion. The two strategic partners have to continue sustaining this programme, as well as other initiatives that facilitate cohesion, focusing on social and good governance policy reforms that address the interests of the most disadvantaged groups of society.

As a recommendation, this programme could also be extended to the Caribbean region. Although it has been approved in the framework of EU–CELAC summits, currently it is only being implemented in Latin America. The policy priorities for the Caribbean are different, focusing on the environment, regional economic integration, crime and security, since they are funded through the European Development Fund (EDF).[19] Whilst this issue is partly addressed by the regional economic integration sector, it is not enough to significantly improve social cohesion. Considering that the Caribbean is also experiencing high levels of poverty and inequality, it is obvious that extending or establishing a similar social cohesion programme in the area would be highly beneficial for those countries. In addition, its EU and Latin American partners already have more than enough practical experience and know-how in order to devise such a programme, with tried and tested methods that can lead to concrete

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[17] European Commission, *Latin America – EUROsociAL – Regional Programme for Social Cohesion*, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/latin-america/eurosocial_en (accessed May 7, 2018).

[18] *Ibid*.

[19] European Commission, "European Union Regional Cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean",*European Commission*, 2015, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/lac-leaflet-poster-150320-web_en_0.pdf (accessed May 7, 2018).

results. Thus, a social cohesion section should definitely be included in the next regional programme for the Caribbean.

4. HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education is another priority item on the bi-regional agenda, as stated during successive summits, aiming to provide Latin America and the Caribbean with the necessary skills and knowledge to advance a more balanced and inclusive social and economic development in the region. Between 2007–2013, support for strengthening the higher education system in Latin America was conducted through the ALFA III programme (Latin America Academic Training) and Erasmus Mundus – Action 2: Partnerships. For the 2014–2020 period, Erasmus+ is the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport, with an allocated budget of €163 million, funded through the Development Cooperation instrument (DCI). The programme includes an international dimension of higher education through three key actions: international credit mobility, joint masters and capacity building.[20]

In terms of results, in the case of the Erasmus Mundus – Action 2, €95.6 million have funded 50 partnerships, with 539 participations from about 220 Latin American higher education institutions. In total, more than 6,650 students and academics have participated in a mobility, out of which 21% Masters, 23% Doctorates, and 6% Post-Doctorates, whilst 39% were Undergraduates and staff. It is estimated that under the Erasmus+ programme, 6,500 student and staff mobilities and 100 capacity building projects will be funded during the 2014–2020 period.[21]

One of the advantages of the Erasmus programme is the fact that it enables higher education institutions from the EU, Latin America and the Caribbean to share and exchange ideas and experiences. This is very important because, by seeing how different approaches to education are implemented in other countries, higher education institutions can adapt and improve their own working methods. For example, the internal structures and mechanisms of universities can become better suited to the needs of international students and researchers, to facilitate their adaptation to the new academic environment. For instance, the coordinator of the partnership from University of Bologna, Italy, has said that: "Participation in Erasmus Mundus programme made

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[20] European Commission, *Latin America – Erasmus Mundus and Erasmus+: Partnership in Higher Education*,https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/latin-america/erasmus-mundus_en (accessed May 8, 2018).

[21] *Ibid*.

it necessary for our international office to take internationalisation into account on a different level. It helped us to admit that if we really want to develop the process of internationalisation, it is not enough to accept sole incoming students and prepare a few courses in English. More than that, we have to adapt our institutional structure and our philosophy behind them."[22] Thus, the share of know-how between institutions, as well as the feedback received from students, teachers and researchers can have a significant influence on the quality of education provided by the participating universities, as well as on national education systems.

Moreover, the programme brings many benefits to the students and staff taking part in them. Students that participate in a mobility improve their knowledge and skills, as they are experiencing different teaching and learning methods, and because they can have access to subjects that may not be available in their own country. Furthermore, experiencing a different culture and academic environment helps them in their personal development, as they become more open-minded, tolerant and adaptable to changes. For instance, in a questionnaire about the impact of Erasmus Mundus on the education and career of 900 students and alumni from Latin America, 560 of them reported that their mobility had the greatest impact on their professional career, personality and social/private life.[23] This experience can thus offer students a different perspective on their personal and academic life and facilitate the access to more professional development opportunities upon their return home. Regarding the staff, they have access to more resources and advanced research facilities, and can participate in conferences, seminars and debates. These experiences help them to gain more knowledge and expertise in their field, acquire different teaching and learning methods, as well as create networks and set up future partnerships with staff from the receiving institution.

Still, Erasmus does have some drawbacks, which should be corrected in order to ensure a better experience for the institutions and individuals taking part in them. One of these refers to the grading and assessment systems, which differ not only from country to country, but also between the universities within the same state. Students taking part in a mobility are not acquainted with a different grading and assessment system than one used by their home institution, and as such may experience difficulties in adapting to the requirements of the host university. This

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[22] European Commission, *Higher Education Cooperation Between the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015), 23.

[23] *Ibid.*, 23–24.

can hinder their chances of obtaining the results that they normally would at home, which could be problematic upon their return, or even lead to the risk of failing their exams. Whilst there is a common agreement on grade and credit conversion procedures, it should still be improved in order to ensure greater similarity and compatibility between different academic systems.

These differences lead to another issue, causing difficulties in academic recognition. This is a crucial aspect that ensures the success of the programme. Besides grading and assessment systems, the curriculum itself of the home and host institutions may not be fully compatible, as the students taking part in a mobility might not be able to study the same subjects that they would at their home institution. Although Erasmus partnerships have adopted some tools to facilitate academic recognition, such as a Learning Agreement for students and study/research/training/teaching plan for doctoral, post-doctoral students and staff[24], there are still difficulties regarding this process, as in some countries, mobility periods are only partially recognised or not recognised at all. For example, more than 20% of students from Uruguay, Panama, Costa Rica and Argentina reported that their credits had not been recognised.[25] Thus, it is very important to continue developing tools to achieve full academic recognition in all participating countries.

Furthermore, the programme has to be improved in order to become more accessible and inclusive. The application process is quite long and complicated, and students could miss their opportunity because they do not understand the procedure. This should be simplified in order to ensure that as many applicants as possible are successful in receiving their mobilities. More information should be provided regarding the selection process, so that possible candidates are fully informed about their opportunities, as well as the possible challenges they may face during the mobility. This will also lead to more transparency regarding how the Erasmus+ programme is conducted.

Also, the programme has to become more accessible to people from vulnerable groups, such as students from low income backgrounds. Since the grants do not cover all the expenses that will be incurred during the mobility, it is more difficult for them to apply, because they might not have additional sources to finance their study period abroad. Thus, adjusting the programme so that it will better take into account the needs of these people will definitely improve it, showing that everyone has access to it.

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[24] *Ibid.*, 21.
[25] *Ibid.*, 25.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The most important area of cooperation between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean is clearly environmental sustainability and climate change. Through the Regional Continental Programme Latin America 2014–2020, the EU has allocated €300 million for this priority.[26] This sum is used to finance five programmes: WATERCLIMA LAC, EURO-SOLAR, FLEGT, RALCEA, and EUROCLIMA, the latter of which is the most important and successful one.[27]

EUROCLIMA has been created following the 5th EU-LAC Summit in Lima, 2008, which established climate change as a priority in bi-regional cooperation. Its aim is to contribute to reducing poverty by decreasing environmental and social vulnerability to climate change and improving the capacity to adapt, as well as create opportunities for sustainable growth. The first phase of the project lasted between 2010–2013, having a total budget of €5.2 million, out of which the EU's contribution was €5 million. During this period, the programme focused on three main components: policy dialogue, communication and coordination; socioeconomic component; and biophysical sciences. The second phase was conducted between 2014–2016, and this time the total budget was of €12.6 million, out of which €11.5 million was contributed by the EU. The programme was focused on the following core activities: exchange of information and experiences; development of adaptation and mitigation measures with co-benefits; and sustainable agriculture.[28]

Following the great success of these two phases, the programme was upgraded in 2016 and became EUROCLIMA+, with a total allocation of €80 million.[29] It provides technical and financial support to the creation and implementation of adaptation and mitigation policies and promotes regional policy dialogue and climate action, supporting the strategies adopted by Latin American states in the context of

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[26] European Commission, "European Union Regional Cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean", *European Commission*, 2015, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/lac-leaflet-poster-150320-web_en_0.pdf (accessed May 7, 2018).

[27] European Commission, *Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change,* https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/latin-america/environmental-sustainability-and-climate-change_en (accessed May 10, 2018).

[28] European Commission, *Experiences of the European Union with Latin America – Regional Development Cooperation on Climate Change, Renewable Energies and Water* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2014), 4–5.

[29] EUROCLIMA+, *EUROCLIMA+: A Regional Cooperation Programme*, http://www.euroclima.org/en/ (accessed May 11, 2018).

the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. The programme is organised into seven sectors of activity: climate governance; forests, biodiversity and ecosystems; renewable energy and energy efficiency; water management in the context of urban resilience; disaster risk reduction and management: drought and floods; urban mobility; and resilient food production.[30]

One of the main strengths of the EUROCLIMA+ programme is constituted by the national Focal Points. These are determined by the governments of the 18 participating Latin American states and have the task of guiding and facilitating the programme's implementation, as well as ensuring that its findings are taken into account in policy-making at national and regional levels. They also identify needs and priorities, foster participation and promote the exchange and application of knowledge created in the framework of the programme.[31] Since the programme is a facilitator, it is very useful to have these Focal Points as a relevant authority in each country, in order to ensure the coordination of the programme at national level and the complementarity of the initiatives organised regionally.

The demand-driven approach of the programme is another plus, as the sectors and activities of EUROCLIMA+ were identified by the national Focal Points according to the specific needs of the region. One of the sectors is horizontal, namely climate governance, and the other six are vertical. The activities which provide the basis of the vertical sectors are calls for proposals and technical assistance. This approach is very practical and pragmatic, leading to concrete projects and results in all of the priority areas. The fact that states receive technical assistance is also beneficial because it ensures the successful development and implementation of these projects.

While it is too early to evaluate the results of EUROCLIMA+, it is noteworthy to look at the impact of the previous stages of the programme. EUROCLIMA has supported the preparation of toolkits, guidelines, software for adaptation and mitigation policies and action plans, as well as studies on the social and economic impacts of climate change. More than 700 Latin American government officials and scientists have taken part in regional meetings to foster dialogue, information sharing and debates. They also received training in innovative research techniques on various climate change scenarios and in methods to measure the socioeconomic effects of climate change, in order to help in the formulation of public policies.[32] The fact that the programme has been extended from three to six years is clearly an indicator

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[30] *Ibid.*
[31] European Commission, *Experiences of the European Union with Latin America*, 4.
[32] European Commission, *Partners in Development*, 16.

of its success, which provided a solid base for the development of the upgraded EUROCLIMA+.

As a suggestion for improvement, the accessibility of information regarding the programme should be enhanced. There should be more progress reports published regarding all its three stages, so that citizens have access to sufficient data to know how the programme is being implemented, which will help to increase transparency. Moreover, there should be more information regarding the calls for proposals, especially regarding the application process and the documents that have to be filled in. This will be very helpful both for the potential applicants, as they will understand better the criteria that their project has to meet in order to be eligible for funding, as well as for the states themselves, since more project ideas will be submitted, and they will be able to select the most appropriate ones. Also, all of the information available should be published in more foreign languages, or at least in English, since some of it is only available in Spanish, which will ensure that both the accessibility and transparency of the programme are increased.

CONCLUSION

Evaluating the strategic partnership between the EU and CELAC is an extremely complex task. Nevertheless, this paper has aimed to do just that, by providing a brief overview of how the strategic partnership has developed, looking at the actors involved, the political framework, and the current Action Plan, as well as examining four key areas of cooperation. The analysis of each policy sector includes a short description of the importance of the respective policy, its benefits and limitations, as well as suggestions for possible reforms and improvements. In the case of the last three sectors, a representative programme was chosen, in order to provide a practical analysis of the policy area it addresses. Overall, the common policies and programmes implemented in the framework of the strategic partnership have a positive impact on LAC countries, although they do have some drawbacks and could be further developed and improved, in order to become more effective.

However, given the complexity of the issue at hand, this paper does have some limitations. One of these is the fact that, due to space restrictions, it was impossible to evaluate all of the joint policies and programmes between the EU and CELAC. The extensive research this implies would have taken a huge amount of time and, given the space limits for this paper, the evaluation would have not been so in-depth as it

is presented in this form. As such, it was necessary to select some policy areas, four in total, which are representative enough to demonstrate the impact of the bi-regional cooperation. Likewise, it would have been very difficult to evaluate all of the programmes implemented under a specific sector, for instance all of the environmental ones. As mentioned, to ensure that the final analysis would be as critical, in-depth and practical as possible, one of the most important programmes implemented in each policy area was selected in this regard.

Moreover, the fact that this topic is quite novel was another challenge. Since many of the policies and programmes mentioned in this paper are currently being implemented, this has created difficulties in finding up-to-date information regarding the stage of their implementation and their effectiveness. For example, the fact that the official websites of CELAC and EURO social are not functioning was particularly problematic, as the only way of finding relevant information about them was to look for official reports or information provided by other international organisations and use these instead.

Despite these limits, the present paper has achieved its intended objective and has provided a comprehensive answer to the research question established. As such, it can be considered a pilot analysis that could be used for further research in this field.

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THE RHETORIC OF GEORGE W. BUSH, BARACK OBAMA AND DONALD TRUMP IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WAR ON TERROR

Ionela Loredana RUȘTI[*]

ABSTRACT

The War on Terror (WOT) is more than just the counterterrorism strategies laid out by the administrations of George W. Bush, Barack Obama and, at present, Donald Trump. The War on Terror is also a discourse that has evolved for the past 18 years, ever since it was first formulated as such by former president Bush in his Address to Joint Session of Congress following 9/11 attacks. This article will, at first, offer an explanation as to why it is important to look at the discourses based on this topic and delivered by wartime leaders. It will then go on to explore how WOT has been described in the speeches of the previously mentioned US presidents, what differences and similarities we can identify between them and the various ways that the speeches themselves reinforce the actions pertaining to counterterrorism undertaken by the respective administrations. The article aims to provide answers to the following research questions: what were the strategies that each president outlined in his speeches and to what extent have they actually been implemented? How has the approach of each president with regards to WOT changed throughout their speeches? Lastly, the question of the unique style of each speaker's discourse will also be raised.

Keywords: *war on terror, counterterrorism, radical Islamic extremism, rhetoric, doctrine, power*

1. WHY GOVERNMENT SPEECH MATTERS

In his book about the rhetoric of politicians, Jonathan Charteris-Black writes that "the spoken language is the primary mode of communication in the gentle arts of persuasion and impression management because it projects shared social beliefs about what is right and wrong so that alliances can be formed around these beliefs."[1] Hence, rhetoric is what gives words power. And it should not go unnoticed. It is because

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[1] Jonathan Charteris-Black, Politicians and rhetoric: the persuasive power of metaphor (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011): 2.

of this power and ubiquity that the presidents' speeches can "both provide great value and inflict great harm to the public. In wartime, especially, the government can use its voice to inform, inspire, heal, and unite – or instead to deceive, divide, bully, and silence."[2]

The topic around government speech is perhaps more relevant today than it ever was before, particularly in the context of WOT. First of all, this boundless conflict, unrestricted by limits of time or space, is directed against an equally ubiquitous enemy, whose identity does not resume to that of a traditional nation-state, although it was perceived as such in the beginning by the Bush administration. Secondly, the location of the battlefield includes both the homeland as well as the rest of the globe and, to make things even more complicated, it would appear that WOT does not have a clear temporal stopping point either.[3] After all, this is a conflict that extends anywhere in the world that the specter of terrorism resides, one that "does not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated."[4] This single, powerful statement has set America on a course of action that, contrary to the country's political leaders' denunciation of it as seemingly endless, is ambiguous, confusing and costly. Additionally, the significance of the political leaders' speeches is aggravated by the changes in technology that this century has brought. The speed and reach of expressive technologies (e.g. social media platforms, television and online newsletters) have increasingly permitted the government to speak to its audiences more directly and influence the public's political polarization.[5]

Thus, the rhetorical use of language by political leaders gained a significant amount of power as of late, and it did that by promising a better future – often by dismissing what is wrong with the present; but it communicates this vision by tapping into the deep-seated ideas, values and feelings of its audience.

2. THE RHETORIC OF GEORGE W. BUSH

On September 11, 2001, Bush's presidency would experience a major trans-formative boost. The 9/11 events made George W. Bush deliver some of the most

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[2] Helen Norton, "Government Speech and the War on Terror" in *Fordham Law Review,* Vol. 86, No. 2, (2017): 543, http://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/flr/vol86/iss2/9 (accessed on June 4, 2019)

[3] *Ibid.* 562.

[4] George W. Bush, "Address to Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks", September 20, 2001, https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911jointsessionspeech.htm (accessed on June 5, 2019)

[5] Norton, *op. cit.,* 563.

powerful and effective speeches of his career. Within days, his popularity rose to an amazing 90% and his words made history:

> "A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can **shake the foundations of our biggest buildings**, but **they cannot touch the foundation of America**. **These acts shatter steel**, but they **cannot dent the steel of American resolve**. America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining."[6]

Throughout Bush's speeches, we will observe that he often employs a variety of metaphors that explore certain recurrent themes such as morality, images of crime and punishment, the domain of finance and even religion. The war on terror shaped the newly elected president into a heroic wartime leader that carried on his shoulders the reins of justice. At times, when events bore too much of a significance and could hardly be translated into facts that resonated with logic, the president would appeal to metaphors as a powerful rhetorical strategy that allowed him to address the public in a more accessible manner. As highlighted in the paragraph above, Bush even contrasted literal with metaphoric senses in his speech. He managed to appear in front of his audience as a brave and sure man who had suddenly found renewed purpose in his life:

> "I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people. The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. **Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war**, and we know that God is not neutral between them."[7]

There is no doubt that Bush felt as if he had the moral authority to do everything in his power to bring America's enemies to justice. The severity of the 9/11 acts and the immorality behind them were of such magnitude that the American people felt as if the perpetrators of these acts had incurred a huge moral 'debt' to all those who suffered. The years that followed in Bush's presidency would be spent in exacting payment for that debt.

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[6] George W. Bush, "9/11 Address to the Nation", Washington, D.C., September 11, 2001, https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911addresstothenation.htm (accessed on June 7, 2019)

[7] George W. Bush, "Address to Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks", September 20, 2001, https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911jointsessionspeech.htm (accessed on June 5, 2019)

"Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger, and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice, or bring justice to our enemies, **justice will be done**."[8]

This sense of justice is founded on the metaphor of the 'debt' that needs to be paid back in full. Black writes that "it is effective because the positive evaluation of behavior that resolves moral debts by settling scores has a historical resonance for many Americans, as it evokes earlier historical periods in American history when powerful beliefs about moral justice have motivated both domestic and international policy."[9] This leads to a justification based on ethical legitimacy. For the first time in a long time, America was the innocent and vulnerable victim of crimes perpetrated by others and the country needed to defend itself as well as its values:

"America is no longer protected by vast oceans. We are protected from attack only by vigorous action abroad, and increased vigilance at home."[10]

An analysis of Bush's speeches reveals that he uses personifications that carry strong expressive force and applies them to abstract political issues. He mostly employs two major types of such personifications, as Black indicates.[11] The first are those that have a strong positive evaluation that portray the USA as a person who is free and has evolved and changed in time for the better; the second category is composed of personifications with strong negative evaluation that refer to terrorists as lower forms of life such as parasites. Black calls this second category "depersonifications"[12] and their purpose is to construct the enemy as being unworthy of acts of humanity and so dangerous that their immediate destruction is necessary to keep America and the rest of the civilized world safe.

This leads to the general theme of Bush's speeches that revolves around 'the fight against evil' and images of crime and punishment:

"And all nations should know: **America** will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security. **We**'ll be deliberate, yet time is not on our side**. I** will not wait on events, while dangers gather. **I** will not stand by, as peril draws closer and closer. **The United States of America** will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons."[13]

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8 *Ibid.*
9 Charteris-Black, *op. cit.,* 225.
10 Bush, *op. cit.*
11 Charteris-Black, *op. cit.,* 257
12 *Ibid.*
13 Bush, *op. cit*

By analyzing the text we can observe that Bush shifts from 'America' to 'we' to 'I' to 'the United States of America', but in fact, they all refer to the same thing – the government. However, by making these references, he underlines the connection between nation, leader and government and thus creates and impression of unity and common purpose that unites them all in times of crisis. The 'axis of evil' speech represented a hallmark of the president who made a universal declaration of war against evil and took on the role of a 'caped crusader' who would stop at nothing to fight the 'infidels'. The president's rhetoric was continuously inclined towards a black and white moral contrasted, which fitted with his own view of the world.

This was reflected in his Bush Doctrine. In a commencement address at West Point on June 1, Bush announced his new strategic doctrine that called for the United States to be prepared to fight a preventive war:

> "Homeland defense and missile defense are part of stronger security, and they're essential priorities for America. Yet the war on terror will not be won on the defensive. **We must take the battle to the enemy**, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge. In the world we have entered, the only path to safety is the path of action. And this nation will act."[14]

In depicting the war on terrorism as a struggle between good and evil, Bush often made reference to God in his speeches: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me", he told the nation on the night of the attacks, quoting the well-known words of the Twenty-Third Psalm. American politicians did not shy away from invoking God's name in their speeches, so this was no novelty. However, Bush proved to be one of the most religious presidents that stood in the Oval Office in decades. This attitude resonated with Americans, especially in the wake of the 9/11 tragedies, but, in time, that same attitude began to bother both his people at home, as well as his listeners from abroad. By referencing God in his speeches so often, people began to feel as if the president was intentionally mirroring the image of Islamic terrorists whom he was so keen on hunting down. Even more worrying was the fact that many feared that the president saw his role in the war on terrorism as part of a divine mission[15] which could very easily blind him in making wrong decisions and taking bigger risks. The conclusion is that Bush's strategy for winning the war on terrorism proceeded from principles and

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[14] George W. Bush, "U.S. Military Academy Commencement Address", West Point, New York, June 1, 2002, https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbushwestpointcommencement.htm (accessed on June 5, 2019)

[15] Daalder, Lindsay, *op. cit.,* 88.

predispositions that were evident long before the collapse of the World Trade Center towers.[16]

A final aspect of Bush's rhetoric that is worth analyzing is his approach to dialogue with the Muslim community and his choice of words in describing the terrorists. Right after the attacks, Bush held a speech at a Muslim Mosque on September 17, 2001, in which he tried to make the differences between those who sought the destruction of the civilized world and those who peacefully practiced Islam as clear as possible. By doing that, Bush immediately repudiated anti-Muslim bigotry by emphasizing Islam as a religion of peace:

> "The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam. That's not what Islam is all about. **Islam is peace**. **These terrorists don't represent peace**. They represent evil and war. When we think of Islam we think of a faith that brings comfort to a billion people around the world. Billions of people find comfort and solace and peace. And that's made brothers and sisters out of every race – out of every race."[17]

Bush employs yet again the use of personifications and depersonifications to send his message: by associating terrorists with all that is evil in the world, he reduces them to a form of life that is not worthy of being treated like human beings. On the other hand, using personifications to portray the US as the civilized world provides for ethical and moral justifications of its actions.

The rhetoric of George W. Bush played an important role in constructing the discourse around WOT. Not only did this major event set America on a course of action from which it could no longer return, but it also presented it with the first real challenge as a global superpower. President Bush had the responsibility of leading his country to respond to this challenge and he did so the best he could, considering that no other American president before him was faced with a more similar struggle. He was indeed heavily influenced by his personal background and perceptions of the world which were reflected in his speeches: his faith in God and sense of justice, his tendency to view the world in black-and-white terms and his refusal to understand policy issues in all their complexity. The strategies that the Bush administration employed in its war on terror were reiterated throughout the speeches he delivered so that the public may be judge of its representatives' actions.

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[16] *Ibid.*

[17] George W. Bush, "Address at Islamic Center of Washington, D.C.", Washington, D.C., September 17, 2001, https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911islamispeace.htm (accessed on June 5, 2019).

3. BARACK OBAMA: *YES WE CAN*

To understand the appeal of Barack Obama we ought to first consider how his personal background played a significant role in turning him into a symbol that people could relate to as well as the language through which he persuades. Black says that one of the reasons for his popularity is the fact that "he is the living embodiment of the policies he advocates as much as he provides their expressive medium."[18] Obama is the first African American to become a US president. That turned him into a symbol of hope for all those who, in the past, had fought for just laws and equality for all people, no matter their race. As the child of a single mother, he has proved that out of vulnerability and struggle, a person can overcome his or her limits through perseverance and education. It is this combination, says Black, of *who he is* with *who he has become*[19] that made Obama believable, trust-worthy and an example to follow – the living embodiment of the myth of the American Dream, one that also shows in his speeches.

An analysis of some of Obama's speeches, made by Black, reveals that the word "dream" occurs 35 times in the structure of his speeches, often used as a synonym of 'hope' and in combination with other metaphors as well. The general theme of 'hope' is also in accordance with the presidential campaign slogan "Yes We Can".

One of the first changes that the Obama administration brought to the White House with regards to the WOT approach was the language used to describe it. A clear departure from the Bush days, Obama abandoned the Global War on Terror framing of the Bush administration not because he intended to make terrorism sound less important, but because he wanted to adopt a more moderate approach in his discourse and to try to undo the perception held by in the past that America was at war with Islam:

> "But we are here today because of a very specific challenge – and that's **countering violent extremism**, something that is not just a matter of military affairs. By "violent extremism," we don't just mean the terrorists who are killing innocent people. We also mean the ideologies, the infrastructure of extremists –the propagandists, the recruiters, the funders who radicalize and recruit or incite people to violence."[20]

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[18] Charteris-Black, *op. cit.,* 280
[19] *Ibid.*
[20] Barack Obama, "On countering Violent Religious Extremism", February 18, 2015, Washington, D.C., https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/barackobama/barackobamaviolentreligious extremism.htm (accessed on June 5, 2019).

The highlight of the Obama administration's counterterrorism strategies was presented by the President in a speech from the Oval Office. Working closer with allies, providing training and equipment to armies in Iraq and Syria so that they may defend themselves without America's support, employing drones and intelligence gathering efforts are only some of the new approaches mentioned. In contrast to his predecessor, Obama was willing to also rely on America's allies to help win the war on terror.

The Obama Doctrine was first formulated in Obama's speech when he received the Nobel Prize for Peace in 2009. To everyone's surprise, the president took the chance to explain why the US acts the way it does, why it often resorts to the use of force and why it will do what needs to be done in the future:

> "To begin with, I believe that all nations, strong and weak alike, must adhere to standards that govern the use of force. I, like any head of state, reserve the right to act unilaterally if necessary to defend my nation. Nevertheless, I am convinced that adhering to standards, international standards, strengthens those who do and isolates and weakens those who don't. […] America's commitment to global security will never waver. But in a world in which threats are more diffuse and missions more complex America cannot act alone. America alone cannot secure the peace."[21]

Slowly, the world saw the emergence of an 'Obama Doctrine': the President wanted to make known the fact that America will no longer be solely responsible for keeping the peace in the world; others were called out to do their fair share of the burden. After having lost so much in Afghanistan and Iraq, the US was learning its lesson and the President was trying really hard not to repeat his predecessor's mistakes.

Many described Obama as being very calculated and much more risk-averse. He did not reach a decision easily, but when he did, he was ready to take responsibility for it. Indeed, during the Obama administration, much more has been accomplished in conflicts around the world (e.g. Libya, Syria) with the help of allies such as France, Germany, the UK or Saudi Arabia. The world understood Obama's message and US understood that it also needs to focus on its top priorities back home that is, building America's powerful economy. Consequently, if a threat did not concern America alone, than it would not act by itself unless others were also willing to intervene.

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[21] Barack Obama, "Nobel Prize for Peace Acceptance Speech and Lecture", December 10, 2009, Oslo, Norway, https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/barackobama/barackobamanobel prizespeech.htm (accessed on June 5, 2019).

Lastly, throughout his speeches, Obama also emphasized how important transparency is in the conduct of his administration's foreign policy. In contrast to his successor, who made a case out of not making public certain information about US's plans abroad as we will see next, Obama was prepared to be held accountable for his actions and knew that for a democracy to work as it should, transparency was a crucial element:

> "I also believe we must be more transparent about both the basis of our counter-terrorism actions and the manner in which they are carried out."[22]

Similar to the rhetoric of George W. Bush, Obama also employed various types of metaphors in his speeches, especially in the epilogues or concluding parts, where their impact is most lasting. Experts concluded that his speeches, compared to those of Bush or Trump, were harder to grasp by the average person as they conveyed more hidden messages and used a more complicated language. Nonetheless, Obama remained a popular president with a lot of charisma on stage and widely appreciated for his skills as an orator. The discourse he build around WOT was realistic and, at times, also pointed towards his more idealistic considerations, but, in practice, Obama's foreign policy reflected the greater emphasis he placed on realism. Just like his predecessor, the president learned that the world stage arena is a much more hostile environment that rarely allows idealistic visions to permeate its boundaries. But while Barack Obama struggled to bring some change to this environment, his successor fully embraced the rigidity of it as he proclaimed himself a defender of American interests both abroad, and at home.

4. MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN, BY DONALD TRUMP

In 2016, candidate Trump gave Bob Costa and Bob Woodward his definition of what it means to be a president: "More than anything else, it's the security of our nation… That's number one, two and three… The military, being strong, not letting bad things happen to our country from the outside. And I certainly think that's always going to be my number-one part of that definition."[23] To everyone's surprise, in 2017 Donald Trump became the 45th president of the United States and, perhaps more

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[22] Obama, *op. cit.*

[23] Bob Woodward, "Prologue" in Bob Woodward, *Fear: Trump in the White House* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018).

than ever, the future of the United States was tethered to the words and actions of "an emotionally overwrought, mercurial and unpredictable leader."[24]

The president's rhetoric is greatly influenced by his own personality and it has made him quite famous among those who share his populist views. A quick analysis of Trump's overall rhetoric, by also comparing it to that of his predecessors, reveals some interesting facts: similar to Bush, Trump uses mostly short phrases in his speeches, compared to Obama who prefers longer ones. The syntactic structure employed by Trump makes his speeches easy to read and to understand, as was Bush's speech. Most of the time, the president's speech includes standard, short, common nouns, adverbs and conjunctions and uses less artistic language such as metaphors. However, in line with his predecessors, Trump emphasizes words like "our" and "nation" quite often in his public addresses, which convey a message of unity. But while Obama used his speeches to engender a sense of community and to call for positive change, the words Trump uses are reflective of the considerable doses of nationalism that dominate his speeches.

From the very beginning, the president tapped into a feeling that many voters shared: that the political system was broken and that Washington was run by the elites, for the elites. Consequently, Trump's inaugural speech echoed the themes that were central to his campaign: a populist, anti-establishment message combined with a promise to transfer power back to the people:

> "Today's ceremony, however, has very special meaning. Because today, we are not merely transferring power from one administration to another or from one party to another. But we are transferring power from Washington, D.C., and **giving it back to you, the people**."[25]

The president distanced himself from many of his predecessor's policies, choosing instead to refer to them as being harmful for the people and the country and building his campaign on promises and plans that would change what has been done so far. But changing something does not always entail a positive aspect because why would you change something that already works unless you want to improve it? Trump's attitude was more aggressive and stubborn, as he often claimed that everything that the previous administration did was bad. When it came to building his own discourse around WOT, the president was very vocal and straightforward in delivering his message, far from the calmer, more calculated attitude of Obama and closer to the

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[24] *Ibid.*

[25] Donald Trump, "Inauguration Speech", January 20, 2017, Washington, D.C., https://factba.se/transcript/donald-trump-speech-washington-dc-january-20-2017 (accessed on June 6, 2019)

passionate, morally-driven rhetoric of Bush. One prime example is that of the way Trump makes references to terrorists:

> "We will reinforce old alliances and form new ones. And unite the civilized world against **radical Islamic terrorism**, which we will eradicate completely from the face of the earth."[26]

Unlike Obama, who refused to focus solely on the war on terror throughout his presidency and abandoned President Bush's onetime goal of hunting down terrorists all over the globe, Trump returns, more or less, to the Bush-era rhetoric about eliminating the terrorist threat altogether. He uses the same personification that Bush did, making the US the equivalent of the 'civilized world', responsible with delivering justice to those who try to escape it. What Donald Trump and his advisors suggest is that support for terrorism has turned into a religious belief and in order to put an end to it, policies of extreme vetting would have to be implemented to keep the threat out of America. This will later be translated into Trump's contro-versial proposals for a ban on immigrants arriving from seven different Muslim countries. Even as a presidential candidate, Trump criticized both Obama and his opponent, Hillary Clinton, for not naming the terrorist threat properly:

> "Hillary Clinton can't even say the words 'radical Islamic terror.' Can't say the words. She won't say the words, and our president won't say the words and unless you're going to know what the words are, unless you're going to admit what the problem is, you're never going to solve the problem. She won't say the words; he won't say the words."[27]

However, even as he criticized others from avoiding the phrase 'radical Islamic terrorism', Trump stopped using it himself in later speeches when he talked about terrorists, as a result, perhaps, of accepting the advice of his cabinet members. Instead, he restrained himself to other terms:

> "Terrorists who slaughter innocent people will find no glory in this life or the next. They are nothing but **thugs, and criminals, and predators, and – that's right – losers**. Working alongside our allies, we will break their will, dry up their recruitment, keep them from crossing our borders, and yes, we will defeat them, and we will defeat them handily."[28]

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[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Donald Trump Rally in Selma, North Carolina, November 3, 2016, full transcript available at: https://factba.se/transcript/donald-trump-speech-selma-ncnovember-3-2016 (accessed on June 6, 2019).

[28] Donald Trump, "Remarks by President Trump on the Strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia", Fort Myer, August 21, 2017, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-strategy-afghanistan-south-asia/ (accessed on June 6, 2019)

In his speech held at Fort Myer, the president took the chance to announce many of his administration's strategies in the war on terror. Some of them will sound familiar, but phrased differently, while others will outright mark a departure from the previous administration's plans. Trump acknowledges the fact that he was left with many challenging and troubling situations that the US is involved in abroad, but he expressed confidence that his administration tradition will manage to overcome them. He relates to the American people's frustration who, for too long, have been dissatisfied with a foreign policy that has invested too much time, energy, money and, above all, lives, in trying to rebuild countries in America's own image, instead of pursuing, first and most of all, the country's own security interests.

Unlike President Bush, Trump made it painfully clear that America would not get involved in nation-building, but it will, instead, provide the people of Afghanistan with the necessary tools to take ownership of their future. In a clear departure from the Obama days, Trump made a point out of not divulging details about military operations, number of troops or departure days to the public. He calls this a "shift from a time-based approach to one based on conditions"[29], arguing that it is counter-productive for the US to announce in advance these kind of details because it will only alert the enemy. Although there is some well-funded reasoning behind this decision, it could also be interpreted as a way of avoiding accountability for the administration's actions. Obama placed a lot of emphasis on being open to the public with these kind of details, having learned from his predecessor that hiding what the administration does and making up stories to cover up mistakes will end up in the public light anyway and cause more harm. Eventually, if this will be the case for the Trump administration, the decision to degrade the importance of transparency will show its consequences.

An advocate of principled realism, Donald Trump has chosen to build his discourse around WOT on aggressive and powerful statements. The overall theme of his speeches is success, as time and time again he makes promises that will 'Make America Great Again' (his presidential campaign slogan) and, in an attempt to distance himself from the work of his predecessors, Trump pursues a foreign policy agenda that is isolationist in nature and very speculative. The counterterrorism strategies that he outlined in his speeches are reiterations of what has been done before, mostly during the Bush administration, with a couple of minor changes. His actions and language made America's traditional allies treat with reluctance the new president, as he hastily pulled his country out of international agreements and

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[29] *Ibid.*

associated himself with authoritarian leaders and ignored their violations of human rights and their attacks on democracy in the United States and Europe.

CONCLUSION

The article concludes that the rhetoric on WOT of each president reinforced the actions that they ultimately decided to take. But more than that, it showed the differences between each leader's position on WOT: while Bush took on the role of a 'caped crusader', morally justified in his actions to seek out those responsible for America's loss, Barack Obama preferred to be more balanced in his discourse, showing confidence, openness to dialogue and willingness to forge alliances where it was possible to do so. However, his successor, Donald Trump, would return in a way to the rhetoric of Bush, but adding his own personal touch of aggressiveness and defensiveness.

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EUROPEAN UNION EVOLUTION AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION. OR HOW NEW FACTORS INFLUENCE THE ORGANIZATIONAL FUTURE

Tiberiu Tudor SALANȚIU[*]

ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the possibility to improve the actual environment of the European Union in a positive climate for innovation and creativity, to respond to the world transformation through openness. For that, I focus on the gap between how member states and the European Union prioritized the approach of global trends and perception of opportunities. Second, I follow the implication of a structural change of European doctrine from system view to a network one with the aim of adapting to the new world logic.

Keywords: *European Union, global logic, transformation implications, networking paradigm, resilience of interests*

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, the strategic priorities of the European Union (EU) are to foster regional cohesion, and to stabilize its own resilience from the perspective of foreign affairs. Additionally, the EU needs to develop continuously its capabilities, to assure a strategical advantage through its actors on a global level – this implies competitiveness. However, the EU as an organization cannot devote equal attention to all aspects which are contained in this perspective. So, there is a space which needs to be filled by the actors. In the last years, this necessity was completed by the non-state actors and unconventional actors – more than state members – which with the help of the new digitalization tools from the economy, communication, security or research were able to develop or customize the necessary elements.

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Despite the organizational frame, the Fourth Industrial Revolution has caught the EU in a difficult period with numerous institutional and discrete regional issues. On the other hand, on the global level, this revolution was the starting point to reshape competition between actors and to strengthen the influence of *mega-trends* above systemic dynamics. Because this revolution integrates on world level a combination of multiple factors such as globalization vectors, technological competition, social behavior or digitalization[1], the European Union (EU) was founded in a transformative environment of innovation and competitiveness which came in detriment of the organizational framework. The main distinction that came out from that is the hierarchy of vectors which characterize the international dynamics. Thus, *smart and speed* becomes equivalent to the future, power, and popularity.

In this backdrop, the biggest challenge for the EU became the differences in economic and R&D among member states which are revealed in the development perspective. Additionally, the discrepancies between how EU members report to the future of organization through their policies and strategies, construct a sensitive factor. Thus, the innovation in different sectors and continuity of organizational development through creativity know a relative stagnation after debt crises.

This article argues that such a gap between the internal state of the EU and its actors reduce on the medium term the opportunities of the EU as an organization in international environment. Due to space constrains for a detailed examination of all factors which are related to this issue, my argument will subject to three key pathways. First, as the Fourth Industrial Revolution and globalization are covered elsewhere[2], I shall focus primarily on the competition. This focus is justified because it is one of the main elements that characterize the economic framework of EU and has a significant impact on the evolution of EU patterns. With the involvement of the new technologies in several areas, the impact of competition above the activities from EU lead to a shift from regional convergence toward a global one. Second, and following from the previous point, the image of EU's structure become increasingly unclear. Therefore, it is very likely for the European Union to be an organization with the behavior of a social network. This is a challenge not just for institutional management but even

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[1] Mathias Schäfer,"The fourth industrial revolution: How the EU can lead it". *European View* 17, no. 1 (2018): 6.

[2] Colombo A.W., et al., "Industrial cyber physical systems: A backbone of the fourth industrial revolution". *IEEE Industrial Electronics Magazine 11* no, 1 (2017): 6–16. Antonella Petrillo, et al., "Fourth industrial revolution: Current practices, challenges, and opportunities". *Digital Transformation in Smart Manufacturing*, 2018: 1–20.

for other actors which need to be guided to perform with competitors from China, India or the U.S. Because of this inconvenience, the EU currently fulfills just an organizational role in detriment of a supporting one, beyond geographical boundaries. In this context, the problem of European brands appear as a related effect, mainly that members states can agree on strategic priorities. In particular, on a public-private partnership between universities and private environment which develop the framework needed for R&D performance.

Third, I believe that the EU's strategic priority must evolve from a strategic actor to an international hub and stabilize its own set of *smart resources* on the organization level. These issues are directly linked with the article subject, and areal so the core of our concerns. Thus, I will focus primarily on where creativity and innovation matter the most for the EU: the capacity of each actor to sustain the EU interest through individual competitiveness on a global level. Or, how the credibility of actors from the EU can advance and develop the strategic interests in global competition.

1. THE NATURE OF COMPETITION
IN THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The fourth industrial revolution began with the transformation of everyone's life through digitalization of information and continued with implications of artificial intelligence and learning the machine. This has changed the way we think and perceive social reality. This expanding of information introduced new technologies that accentuate the R&D role and the nature of the new products. In this context, the changing of the nature of the economic landscape through miniaturization and the reshape of information[3], altered the nature of competition, and created new competitive opportunities and threats[4].However, to be able to have R&D expenditure or new products, technological expertise, which merges knowledge and skills, is necessary to exist. Therefore, the challenge for actors in the global market is how to use R&D by fostering creativity to trigger competitiveness through innovation.

This situation led to define the competition through a combination between two parts – one of the resources and another of the environment. The first approaches

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[3] Youngjin Yoo, et al., „Research commentary—the new organizing logic of digital innovation: an agenda for information systems research." *Information systems research* 21, no. 4 (2010): 724–725.

[4] Michael E. Porter, and James E. Heppelmann. „How smart, connected products are transforming companies." *Harvard business review* 93, no. 10 (2015): 6.

the competition from the perspective of skilled workers, because this generates knowledge which can create and implement innovation[5]. The last one understands competition from how to introduce innovative ideas and products to the market. This part it is responsible to make the correlation between conditions that environment need to accomplish to be able to assure, through its dynamics, the promotion and diffusion of innovation in the network partners. Yet the changes brought about by this link goes beyond spatiality. At the level of markets or private environment, the new nature of competition has facilitated new efficiency and productivity, with the cost of technological substituting[6]. Because, according to Brinjolfss on and McAfee, what matters now is the pattern between human, machine and related process[7]. As a result, the various components from global competition converge to a single point which link knowledge with personal information and manufacturing. The effect is systemicdislocation of the labor force, which creates profit and expands the infra-structure from advances to developing countries.

All of these create a highly dynamic global environment, which connects, in a fuzzy sense, non-state actors with countries' economies and their policies. This is happening in every country and accelerates the competition on two levels. In the upper level, the countries try to be more attractive for FDI flows. For that, the national champions are used to develop the image of competitiveness and transparency from national level as a part from attractiveness. Onthe contrary, the countries will follow to sustain their own champions to be more credible in international activity, and through this, to reinforce the national interests on an international level. On the lowest level, there is a direct competition between different types of actors to con-solidate their position. Through this, they follow to be the market leader through innovation.

Somehow, these new levels of order follow the Putnam model[8], with the diff-erence that foreign affairs incorporate private R&D activity on a global level. In

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[5] Fiona McKenzie, "The fourth industrial revolution and international migration". *Lowy Institute for International Policy* 5 (2017): 1–3.

[6] Erik Brynjolfsson, Andrew McAfee, and Michael Spence. „New world order. Labor, capital, and ideas in the power law economy." *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 4 (2014): 44. Klaus Schwab, "The fourth industrial revolution: what it means, how to respond". *World Economic Forum,* 16 January 2016, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-what-it-means-and-how-to-respond/, (accessed 12 October, 2018).

[7] Erik Brynjolfsson, and Andrew McAfee, "Thriving in the automated economy". *The Futurist 46*, no.2 (2012): 27.

[8] Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and domestic politics: the logic of two-level games". *International organization*, 42, no. 3 (1988): 427–460.

this type of competition, the technology appear primary as a catalyst between the potential reach, capacity, and resources of actors. Secondly, it is a factor which increases the value of services, products, and also amplify the information and consequences for the economy and for society.

1.1. THE COMPETITION TODAY AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

The connection between actors becomes so complex and so complicated, in the sense of convergence, that it leads to transforming every structure in a network of the multiplex, and develops a new kind of dependence – based on *big data*, virtual profiles, informational connections or smart resources. In addition, the Fourth Industrial Revolution creates an automation substitute for labor in the economy and accentuates the social and political discrepancies. Furthermore, the speed of innovation from all levels and disruption made it hard to anticipate the dynamics using just the existing information.

While the world incorporates and personalizes the technology more than ever[9], in all manufactures there is clear evidence that technologies and robots change the meaning of industry, which has a major impact on business and national strategies[10]. In addition, the non-state actors become faster unconventional actors, which develop new platforms in reality and in a virtual environment.

In post-recession fallout, the EU economy emerges slowly even if European actors have a comparative advantage in a number of manufacturing sectors. In general, this is because the EU, as an organization,is faced with a structural issue (BREXIT) and geopolitical crises spilling over into the region[11]. In particular, the recessionhas a negative influence on the development of "champions". To these, the challenges of administration, such as targets for manufacturing value added, R&D expenditure or gross fixed capital formation, are added[12].

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[9] Pierre Nanterme, and Paul Daugherty Paul, "Technology for people. The era for intelligence enterprise." *Accenture*, 2017, https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/pdf-45/accenture-amp-lifyou-technology-for-people--the-era-of-the-intelligent-enterprise.pdf (accessed 21 October, 2018).

[10] Mario Hermann, et al., „Design principles for industrie 4.0 scenarios." *2016 49th Hawaii international conference on system sciences (HICSS)*. IEEE, Working Paper 01/2015, 2016: 3–5. Mary Hallward-Driemeier, and Gaurav Nayyar, *Trouble in the market? The future of manufacturing- Led development*. (Washington DC., *World Bank Group,* 2018), 10.

[11] Klaus Schwab Klaus,"The global competitiveness report 2016–2017", *World Economic Forum* (2017): 11.

[12] European Commission, Helping firms grow. European competitiveness report, *Commission Staff working document, SWD(2014)277 final,* 2014, Brussels: Publication Office of the European Union.

As the EU recovers momentum, it is clear that the recession has a heavier impact on manufacturing than other sectors. In part, this is because of small and medium-sized enterprises' (SME) vulnerability in the face of FDI between members states and those outside of the European market. At the same time and after the crisis, the European institutions ignored the national variation in the industrial sector and infrastructure between members. In this sense, the domestic policy played an important role to develop relative individual competitiveness, but which as a group affect, in a negative way, the EU resilience. For example, Poland was focused on developing the domestic demand, while Romania or Bulgaria preferred to focus their growth towards personal *booms* in construction or consumption rather than on improving their perspectives.

On the other hand, the Nordic states focus on R&D and to externalize their offers in terms of competitiveness, even if it was a risky bet. In this sense, Moravcsik argues strongly that the non-alignment of trends from public spending, competitiveness and other areas which exists between different groups of members lead to fundamental disequilibrium in the eurozone which diffuse crises in the entire organization[13].

Today, unfortunately, European manufacturing is losing global market to the detriment of Chinese and other Asian producers which grow faster[14]. Because of this, Europe risks falling behind – and its economic venture or industrialization rhythm to become irrelevant from a global perspective. However, a decisive role in this story can be played by SME which, through their dimension and agility, are able to penetrate regional markets with innovative projects. A strategy like this can refresh the European environment with knowledge and *know-how* from outside, and to raise the competition among actors to create groups as a successful space for start-up.

1.2. R&D ROLE IN THE NEW FORM OF COMPETITION

In the last years, the new technology and the process of transfer among actors became a vector for competitiveness, acting both as a driving force – on a system level – and as a factor of a new stage of globalization – for the state. The effect produced in a short time was a web of linkage, new structures, and implications of virtual platforms in real activity, and a more complex line of production. In this

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[13] Andrew Moravcsik Andrew, "Europe after the crises. How to sustain a common currency". *Foreign Affairs* 91, no. 3 (2012): 54–68.

[14] ERT, European competitiveness and industry, 2017, Online, http://ert-industry-benchmarking.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ERT-Stats_Benchmarking-2017_4web_21122017hyperlinksgrouped Bookmarks.pdf (accessed, 29 March 2018).

backdrop, the SMEs have a real issue to fill all technological and human resources they need[15]. Thethis situation was found in research, knowledge and technology transfer from university offices to private[16]. This is not a new process, but what is different is the government implication in the spill-over that incorporates special issues in the university-industry relationship, which creates an outcome on the global network[17].

However, a new option sustained by internationalization is R&D alliances. Non-State actors and especially SMEs use this possibility to acquire technology and knowledge which are unavailable on a macro level[18]. Using this option, the actors try to access technological resources and capabilities through share or co-develop R&D activities[19]. The idea of that, is to increase in an optimal way their accessibility to the sources from global level which usually request serious investments.

In a classical way, R&D development is associated with big companies from industry and manufacturing. However, the impact of the digitalization over information and communication, and also on the global interaction facilitate the SME capacity to develop the new kind of products which are requested in IT or robotic fields. For these companies, the R&D is based on creativity offered by the new generations and on the management of the open sourcing. Thus, the research looks to improve the existing codes and to find a way to minimalize even more with the help of learning machine. On the other hand, the development process searches to offer more simple products or services to answer for individual need in a global world. For this task, the capacity to prospect the future and to trying to influence from the present is essential.

At the global level, competition and R&D are directly linked through enhanced specialization advantage in terms of perception, reaction and response to dynamics

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[15] David B. Audretsch, et al., "Entrepreneurial finance and technology transfer", *The Journal of Technology Transfer* 41, no. 1 (2016): 2.ConorO'kane, et al., „University technology transfer offices: The search for identity to build legitimacy." *Research Policy* 44, no. 2 (2015): 421–422. GiustinaSecundo, et al. „Mobilising intellectual capital to improve European universities' competitiveness: the technology transfer offices' role." *Journal of Intellectual Capital* 18, no. 3 (2017): 608.

[16] Donald S. Siegel, et al., „Assessing the impact of organizational practices on the relative productivity of university technology transfer offices: an exploratory stud y." *Research policy* 32, no. 1 (2003): 27–28.

[17] David B. Audretsch, et al., "Entrepreneurial finance and technology transfer", *The Journal of Technology Transfer* 41, no. 1 (2016): 5.

[18] Hans TW Frankort, „When does knowledge acquisition in R&D alliances increase new product development? The moderating roles of technological relatedness and product-market competition." *Research Policy* 45, no. 1 (2016): 293.

[19] Beverly B. Tyler, and Caner Turanay, „New product introductions below aspirations, slack and R&D alliances: A behavioral perspective." *Strategic Management Journal* 37, no. 5 (2016): 897.

from markets and manufacturing. All of these define the shootouts between competitors. To achieve all of this, an important aspect is a coordination between R&D portfolios and the projects which are carried out. In terms of the functions performed, the coordination imposes anticipation of future trends and the introduction of the "*smart resources*" in product construction. In such revolutionary context, the networking, outsourcing, and the competition logic are essential for sustainable competitive advantage[20] in an environment where innovation and imitation are the main conditions to rise in the global competition.

In this international framework, where knowledge and technology are determinant factors for international position and competitive advantage, Europe remains behind the U.S or Japan. One key reason for this, in terms of economic growth, is insufficient investment in R&D[21]. In general, the absence of high-tech and IT or robotics industry represent the most pronounced minus for European R&D infrastructure. And, in particular, the lack of greater specialization in high-tech industries is a structural factor for this discrepancy. For EU, Lisbon strategy was a legislative frame that was wanted to raise the R&D level in the business sector, however, in a short time, it became obvious that the reach of policies implemented in the Lisbon process was not enough to attain the stated goal[22].

In addition, to legislative issues, the internal disparities among the E.U members are a visible weakness in the path-creating or early entrance of new technology in terms of efficiency, diffusion, creation and knowledge assimilation[23]. Thus, the last crises and the actual position in the world showed how important it is for EU to narrow the technological gaps and to redefine its policy *vis-à-vis* R&D. Particularly, concepts such as *"smart specialization"* or *"smart resources"* accentuate the importance for country development but not an imitation, duplication or reproduction as it is now, but in terms of creativity and innovation.

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[20] Silvio M. Brondoni, „Global Networks, Outside-In Capabilities and Smart Innovation." *Symphonya. Emerging Issues in Management* 1 (2015): 8.

[21] Kristian Uppenberg, *R&D in Europe: Expenditures across sectors, regions and firm sizes*, (CEPS, Brussels, 2009), 1–2.

[22] European Commission, The governance challenge for knowledge policies in the Lisbon Strategy: Between revolution and illusion. *Synthesis Report of Expert Group for the follow-up of the research aspects of the revised Lisbon strategy, EUR 23469*, 2008, Brussels: Office of Official Publications of European Communities.

[23] Tassos Giannitsis and Marianne Kager, "Technology and Specialization: Dilemmas, Options and Risks?", *Expert group "Knowledge for Growth"*, 2009, Online: http://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/pdf/download_en/kfg_report_no8.pdf. (accessed on 10 May 2018).

This challenge highlights the importance of public-private partnership, in which the stakeholders need to be involved in policy design and to identify future challenges. In the systemic matters, all of this is necessary to accelerate the reforms and to grow the efficiency of networking.

2. EU BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL FRAME AND NETWORKING

A theoretical issue is whether the EU can provide a shortcoming to achieving its strategical goals, considering the impact of the last reform of the EU institutional framework through the Lisbon Treaty. The fact that the treatydoes not introduce any reform regarding EU institutions responsiblefor making policy and adopting legislative measurements[24] lends support to this assessment. The second discussion is around the effect of co-existence between two different forces, one of organizational sclerosis and other of intergovernmentalism. In this matter, the treaty, instead of simplifying institutional construction and offering an impulse, it brings just a modest approach in times when resilience seems to be everything. However, what the EU can achieve and its ambition is the image of institutional stability despite sensitive situations, such as BREXIT or stagnation process. Furthermore, the compromise and internal negotiation process among actors offer a unique aspect for organization development.

Even so, the Lisbon Treaty represents, unfortunately, the continuity of a hybrid state without bringing major or radical departure, which is needed to develop the resilience in the global context. From this perspective, the EU, as an organization, becomes not necessarily more complex, but more static which preserves the nature of the system. Thus, the organizational challenge for EU is to simultaneously follow several objectives on the organization level, such as the growth of efficiency, the predominance of some members in relations with others and adaptation of resilience through members convergence. Even if these objectivesare compatible with the perspective of EU philosophy, the individualistic approach from the member states generate some dysfunctions. From this point of view, now the static state of EU is an internal cycle between European institutions and member states who try to reform the EU but who fail to harmonize in real time with the global requirements.

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[24] Laurent Pech, The Institutional Development of the EU Post-Lisbon: A case of plus ça change…?. *UCD Dublin European Institute.* Working Paper 11–5 (2011): 3–4.

Today, the EU is made up of member states pursuing a combination between fewer groups and more individual aims in different directions with different speeds. Therefore, the EU organization is based on institutional differentiation between member states, which are interested more in market cooperation and region stability, and a group of states which try to compete on a global level using regional advantage. To find a stable point between these two trends, I believe that should become the real interest of the European Union. At the same time, different perspectives show up compromises on the institutionalization as a political system and institutional proprieties. In time, the problem of this creates the frame of necessity to rethink the political order in the interior of EU. In particular, the political cleavage reveals the factors that obstructed the coherence in strategical matters and lead to the delineation of vectors.

The EU, as construction, is an institutional organization which includes a very complex social, economic and political dimension. Due to this fact, it is normal, somehow, for sensitive situations like the above to exist. Nonetheless, what is difficult is to manage the variables which are dependent rather independent from national frame-work. Through his nature, the EU is an institutional organization whose structure generate a regular decision on the basis of power relations between institutions and state members. Yet the sub-construction levels are not fixed sets of units that might be captured totally in an organizational structure. This made non-state actors from European construction to be out of focus which is due, to some extent to the externalization of activity through linkage with other regions. What is important to this character is that it offers an alternative to organizational nature which is translated in terms of information and knowledge flow as an input for EU; and in addition, it offers a connection function in organization level. Because of this, the integration and decentralization can be better appreciated as a design on the partnership between state members with European institutions to regulate the functions that have escaped their competence in a chaotic world. Therefore, if this is a technical subject in institutional discourse, that may be a source for more reforms, particularly, after BREXIT vote.On the other hand, in an effort to recalibrate the organization configuration to achieve a high level of competitiveness this is secluded source from political contestation of EU scope in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

So at the sub-institutional level, R&D policy has often been neglected to the detriment of a general cohesion which has a single goal – regional competitive growth. Hence, the social space obtained is filled with dissatisfied actors that structure the

agenda in different ways. According to Keating, in this situation the countries' policies from the region level focused on economic development in a sense that challenge their social and environmental impact[25]. And this represents a source in regions to constitute political communities[26].

However, there is an alignment with the European project and country members which tends to operate at a new supra-global level, this being systematically integrated and converged to economic and security dimension. With a more global and inter-connected vision on EU organization – market, global and urban culture, interaction instruments, driven force handle, multilateralism implication and so on, networking among actors is constructed and capitalized differently. Their development and meaning are thus diffused on the international level and highly technologized. Their expansion is not pre-limited but reflects social preferences and informational or knowledge power to the detriment of political relationship which are integrated as a subsidiary.

In this sense, for what single markets are not able to do – to eliminate territorial disparities – these virtual constructions come as a feasible solution to minimize the disparities. In strategic terms, the development of European networking appears in a period when members experienced some difficulties to continue the integration process in political and economic terms.

However, the possibility of relocation and externalization of activity everywhere in the world not just in the EU, poses some difficulties and make the policies more expensive. For this, two factors are essential. First, is the possibility to benefit from certain information through European networking, even if the actors decide to expand the activities despite institutional agenda. Last, is the pressure above the EU organization which comes from internal disparities between country members that are regimented through organization policies.

In view of these complexities, the development of R&D and the EU policy agenda to sustain the capacities of competitivenes depends on very specific conditions. From the organizational point of view, this implies for non-state actors to be involved even more in European construction and to share on the organizational scale the accumulated knowledge to facilitate the transition. In this sense, networking as an alternative platform of communication to an institutional frame needs to be inter-connected with national and supra organization structure, and not a distinct alternative.

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[25] Michael Keating,"Europe as a multilevel federation", *Journal of European Public Policy* 24, no. 4 (2017): 617.

[26] *Ibid.*, 618–619.

However, the asymmetry between institutional reality and how stakeholders are positioned in international matters using networking remains a thorny discussion.

3. THE FUTURE
OF EU ORGANIZATION INTO PRESENT DYNAMICS

The new techno-economic paradigm has brought new platforms and processes which must be taken into account in global strategic prospects. An international character was the diffusion phase of connectivity sources, which accelerate the change in information coding and communication technology. In this stage, societies, through their needs for consumption, innovative services, and products or for more knowledge play a special role as a catalyst.

The investments and research that facilitate, through these instruments, global connectivity among governments, business, telecom providers and cloud service providers, have a direct and irreversible impact on economic growth and performance of every country[27]. In this direction, the recent studies[28], show the role of absorptive capacity, knowledge connectivity and connectivity between places, firms and individuals from geographical space, in co-evolution of firms and locations through so-called "*epistemic communities*"[29].

Both theory and practice showed that the European Union has been concerned about the shift of knowledge-driven in economy and development since the Lisbon Summit 2000. However, the changes in the global and regional level are faster and are even accelerating. Because of this, the EU needs to develop capabilities which allow to find and integrate a new combination of knowledge and methods. For this task, the organizational frame is not enough in the actual context. Hence, the EU needs to find an alternative approach of global forces to increase the assimilation capacity of technological waves and human capital that can develop and maintain the competitiveness in the global dynamics.

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[27] Juan Alcácer, et al.,"Internationalization in the information age: A new era for places, firms, and international business networks?".*Journal of International Business Studies*47(2016)*: 500.*

[28] José Guimón, et al. „Policies to attract R&D-related FDI in small emerging countries: Aligning incentives with local linkages and absorptive capacities in Chile." *Journal of International Management* 24, no. 2 (2018): 165–178. AhreumLee, et al. „An analysis of Japan's connectivity to the global innovation system." *Multinational Business Review* 24, no. 4 (2016): 399–423.

[29] Marcelo Cano-Kollmann, et al. „Knowledge connectivity: An agenda for innovation research in international business." *Journal of International Business Studies* 47, no. 3(2016): 260.

The solution is possible to come from imitation of public-private partnership (PPP) from the United States or Japan on a regional scale. In particular, development of hubs in terms of creativity and production to assure the sourcing for R&D. For EU, such a structure must be what Saxenian and Lee called "*a knowledge cluster*"[30], which offers global connectivity through regional flexibility to the quick changing which to assure the continuity of national producers. For this, member institutions – private developers relationship need to consist of formal collaboration between universities and investors, developers, SMEs, as well as the divisions of MNEs which are relocated. In this backdrop, the European Union has just an informal role to oversee and support. A regional community of this kind will only be possible because of communication between institutions and actors, and changes in the structure of competitions among member states.

Until the financial crisis, the competitors into a single market were horizontally integrated companies, to the encouragement of the European Commission[31], hoping to formulate general benefits than private ones. Through this, state members have been granted flexibility to pin particular issues on a domestic level as a concession. In reality, this flexibility has been straightened to the labor market because it create the possibility of accessing non-standard forms of work[32]. However, with the onset of the crisis, the boomerang effect was the tendency of companies to create cartels and deterioration of labor markets. This is due to apre-existing weakness as well to a larger exposure of organization to the direct consequences of the shocks[33] (European Commission, 2009).

Two aspects become essential for future development in the EU using networking under this circumstance – cognitive platforms and interactive communities. For both aspects, the corporate culture became the customary set which defines the common knowledge and streamlines information flows. Through that, these aspects offer a new sense to the European ecosystem, especially after debt crises, when the regional networking have been highlighting some co-evolving communities with very dynamical

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[30] Anna Lee Saxenian and Jinn-Yuh Hsu, „The Silicon Valley–Hsinchu connection: technical communities and industrial upgrading." *Industrial and corporate change* 10, no. 4 (2001): 893–920.

[31] Philip Lowe. "Competition policy and the economic crisis". *CPI Journal, Competition Policy International 5*, no. 2 (2009):13.

[32] European Commission, Economic crisis in Europe: Causes, consequences and responses. *European Economy 7,* 2009, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 35.

[33] *Ibid.*, 5–6.

trends on the international level. For the sharing of information and cooperation in the upload of personal knowledge in *know-how* this communities describe the base of the process. In terms of clusterization, this mean that cognitive and cultural dimension are asset factors which make linearity to disappear in competitive situations.

In this case, the prospection of the future is possible, through the approach of alternative evolution vectors that appear in the present situation and are identified in the relation among social-policy-economic state which implies accumulated knowledge. For the private environment, this kind of knowledge put in the center the request for innovation/information which is formulated and computed in more complicated ways rather than in the anarchical state of the organization.

Almost all the mentioned clusters between EU organization, internal networking, and the fourth industrial revolution show that the present functionality of the organization is far from reaching its true potential in terms of innovation and global competitiveness. In fact, the divergence between political construction and members' resilience under EU framework remains the main issue for EU evolution in a global context. In addition, the discrepancy between west and east members is not the only factor. After the debt crises, even in the western part, fissures appear which continue to persist under institutional sclerosis. What all of this has in common is the major difference in how the innovation, creativity and global competitiveness are perceived on a domestic level.

However, in the last few years, the non-institutional constructions based on cumulative knowledge and information diffusion between new types actors become a feasible factor that can influence and accelerate the resilience of competitiveness to international pressure. Through this, the alternative structure developed in the regional level is able, in an integrative way, to better assure the diffusion of knowledge. Under these circumstances, the integration process can change its nature and be more performant in the face of the challenges created by the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

CONCLUSIONS AND REMARKS

The international and regional organizations put the horizons of the international actors in a new stage from international relations. This is due to the fact that, both *megatrends* and the Fourth Industrial Revolutions express the new vectors and phenomenon that shape International System construction from the social interaction to the perception of social-political reality. In this context, resilience, adaptability or *smart integration* are the key ingredients which can assure the future for every actor.

The paper represents a conceptual advance which follow the improvement of organizational framework of EU. This approach pursue a framework which is not reducible to the arguments about institutions or policies. Due to that fact, the paper bring to discussion the necessity for the development as knowledge supplier by the EU for the foreign actors as an act to report to the global transformation. Pursuing this argument, the paper focuses on the potential meaning of the EU as an international hub. For that, the advance of SMEs emergence and innovation distribution from the non-state actors to institutions appear as the most rational strategy. The capacity to achieve this aim can be found in the development of the *smart resources* by the state members as an act to sustain their international competitiveness. Through report to that perspective, the paper seeks to present a potential evolutionary process which engage the organization as an environment which can report to the global transformation and actors as carriers of change.

In this context, the main quarry is if the EU as an organizationis prepared to assume adoption or master new knowledge clusters between information-technological change – PPP occurring in the competitiveness backdrop of the fourth industrial revolution.

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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF E-VOTING SYSTEMS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION COUNTRIES. THE CASE STUDY OF ROMANIA

Raisa TOFAN[*]

ABSTRACT

Electronic voting is one of the most questionable practices of electoral expression nowadays. Even though some nations, such as Estonia, consider it to be an excellently-functioning system and convenient for its people, others, such as the Netherlands, France or Germany, find e-voting a risky technique. Therefore, there had been much concern upon the transparency of this new voting method and comprehensive research needed to adopt an accurate and country specific implementation strategy.

This article aims to make a pro's and con's analysis by studying e-voting implementation at the European countries level, and to provide recommendations on the most appropriate way for putting it in practice in Romania.

The importance of my research resides in the fact that decreasing participation in elections on the one hand and increasing use of the Internet amongst the population on the other have given rise to speculations about using e-voting as a means to increase turnout rates in general elections all over the European Union, including Romania. However, many high developed democracies had failed to implement the system yet.

Therefore, the research hypothesis is that "the success of implementing an e-voting system in Romania depends mainly on the confidence in the state institutions and computer literacy. "Empirical data collection was achieved through structured observation, statistical analysis, historical method, elements of comparative analysis, case study, etc.

Keywords: *electronic voting, Estonia, Romania, European Union, Internet voting, transparency*

1. BASIC CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT E-VOTING

There are different approaches of understanding e-voting. According to Techopedia.com, "electronic voting is when a voter casts a ballot through a digital system instead of on paper. Until the beginning of the 21st century, electronic

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voting did not exist, and paper ballots were the sole means of recording votes."[1] Starting with the 1990s/early 2000s, electronic voting became more popular and, in the same time, raised many concerns in regards to verification and transparency.

Another definition for electronic voting is given by Britanicca Encyclopedia that describes it as a form of computer-mediated voting in which voters make their choices with the aid of a computer. The voter is helped by a touch-screen display most of the time however audio interfaces may be made available in cases of visual disabilities.[2] This approach drastically simplifies the electronic voting meaning comparing with the one associated to it by Techopedia.

To understand electronic voting, it is necessary to consider four basic steps in an election process: ballot composition, when voters choose whom to vote for; ballot casting, in which they submit their votes; ballot recording, when the submitted ballots are recorded by a system; and tabulation – counting the votes. In case of ballot casting, recording, and tabulation, they usually can be done with the aid of computers even in voting systems that are not, necessarily, electronic. Electronic voting is mostly considered the system where the first step, ballot composition (or selecting the candidates), is done with the help of a computer.

Due to the rapid spread of Internet use in the 1990s and early 21st century, the method of voting seemed to migrate there naturally. Voters would cast their choices in this circumstance from any internet-connected computer – including from home. Sometimes this kind of voting system is called I-voting.

In addition to voting in normally planned elections, many saw the development of these new techniques as a chance to transform democracy, allowing people to directly engage in the decision-making process. However, for voting reasons, many nations decided that the Internet was not safe enough.

In addition to denial-of-service attacks on the Internet, security researchers are concerned that many PCs are susceptible to malware (malignant software) penetration. Such attacks can be used to obstruct or replace legitimate votes, and thus potentially undetectably subverting the electoral process.

A third worry about I-voting concerns the likelihood of voting coercion and the sale of votes, which can, in principle, happen easier if voting is not carried out in a controlled environment. Even so, there is no general agreement in stable democracies

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[1]   Electronic Voting (E-Voting), Techopedia https://www.techopedia.com/definition/13616/electronic-voting-e-voting (accessed 23.07.2019).

[2]   Electronic Voting, Encyclopedia Britannicca https://www.britannica.com/topic/electronic-voting (accessed 25.07.2019).

on the seriousness of this issue and would be wise to take into consideration the numerous advantages of I/e-voting, such as:

- E-voting might make voting for the electorate more convenient;
- E-voting could save private expenses on a long-term basis and be cost-effective;
- By enhancing the effectiveness, velocity and precision of recording and counting votes, e-voting could enhance the electoral administration process;
- Citizens have more time to vote and they generally have the opportunity to modify their choice;
- No more distance or accessibility related problems;
- Diaspora can cast votes without having to make 10-hours journeys to the nearest voting location.[3]

This article will mostly tackle the Internet voting, however a holistic approach that refers both to I and e-voting would be needed in order to better understand the implementation of this new revolutionary system in the European countries.

The majority of large-scale electronic voting is presently conducted in designated polling places using special-purpose machines due to safety and access issues. This form of voting system is called e-voting. There are two main categories of e-voting equipment: electronic direct recording (DRE) machines and machines for optical scanning.

A DRE comprises a computer-connected touch screen. On the touch screen, ballots are provided to electors where they make their choices and cast their vote. The touch-screen display is used to help voters in a multitude of ways, including showing large fonts and strong contrast for those with restricted vision, warning voters about under-voting and preventing over-voting.

The Direct Recording Electronic machine registers the cast votes directly and stores the information in its memory. Just one machine is therefore used to compose, cast and register votes. The presumption that vote is recorded as cast is based on pre-election hardware and software testing of the machine and confidence that the software operating during the election is the same as the software tested prior to the election.They are both highly controversial topics.

Optical scanning is the oldest and most popular technology. This technique is comparable to traditional voting, but voting ballots will be read as quickly as the vote

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[3] Г. П. Акимова, А. К. Попов, А. В. Соловьев, „Аналитическое исследование систем для электронного голосования" http://www.isa.ru/proceedings/images/documents/2007-29/123-138.pdf (accessed 25.07.2019).

is provided and the results will be accessible instantly. Optical scanning has been used in many countries, but the use is not so common. Recently, the system was used in Canada, the United States, the Philippines, or South Korea.[4]

None of the above mentioned e-voting technologies is totally secure. Additionally, these systems do not allow the voter to demonstrate how they voted to a third party (thus decreasing the threat of vote selling and manipulation. From a safety perspective, the cryptographic systems, called end-to-end (E2E) safe, are the preferred technologies. Therefore, the development of these schemes is of significant scholarly concern. On the other side, some individuals argue against E2E systems on the basis that the average electorate does not understand their mathematical complexities.

Trojan horses, spyware, malware, worms, spoofing, denial of service (DoS) attacks, and more are the main disadvantages of I-voting. Some of these threats were designed to hurt the general voting system (e.g. DoS attacks) where, like others, vote swings (e.g. Trojan horses) can be used. The source of the attack could be a trustworthy insider so physical measures of security (smart-cards, biometrics, etc.) may not be particularly helpful. The consequences can be of four types – disenfranchisement, vote theft, loss of privacy, and compromise of election.[5]

I-voting supporters seek to persuade those who oppose it that various physical and network security measures can be used to guard against attacks aimed at the technological infrastructure. For instance, software for intrusion detection can be used to handle DoS attacks. It is successful against spoofing to use public and private keys to encrypt private votes and to rely on stable socket layers to transmit them.

According to the authors Saggi Nevo and Henry Kim, physical measures include placing host servers at undisclosed locations and continuously replicating them to clone servers. Once ballots are cast, voters' privacy can be guaranteed by splitting election data into two. One data source will be used to store votes thus allowing vote counting while the second data source serves to record voters' actions without actually identifying their voting decisions. It is recommended that a trusted 3rd-party will be used to store and count the votes.[6]

Legislation molding is a mandatory procedure for e-voting implementation. It is necessary to define the use of electronic voting and counting techniques in the

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[4] Dimitrios Zissis, Dimitrios Lekkas, „Securing e-Government and e-Voting with an open cloud computing architecture", in Government Information Quarterly, University of the Aegean, No. 28, (2011): 242.

[5] *Ibid*., 244.

[6] Saggi Nevo, Henry Kim, „How to compare and analyze risks of Internet voting versus other modes of voting", in E-Government: An International Journal, No 3(1), (2006): 108.

legal framework. This phase can take significant time, especially as important legal provisions should be integrated both at the legislative level (i.e. in constitutions and electoral laws) and at the regulatory level. Electoral stakeholders, including political parties and civil society, should be involved in the process of developing amendments. level (i.e. in constitutions and electoral laws) and at the regulatory level.[7]

Despite the high attention offered to e-voting worldwide, there are no universal or regional norms in regards to e-voting usage in the world and efforts are currently made only at national or local levels. Since the Council of Europe's recommendation on legal, operational and technical norms for e-voting (Rec(2004)11) was adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2004, there have been many developments in the implementation of e-voting. Some countries no longer use e-voting; some have run e-voting pilot systems and have chosen not to implement them. Others are still conducting pilot systems in order to introduce e-voting.[8]

Although proponents and opponents disagree with the perception of the role that the Internet will play in the future elections, all accept that the risk of losing voter confidence in the voting system is far too high to require I-voting for presidential elections and propose that voting on the Internet should be used for election where less is at stake.

The public institutions have to always estimate the risks before starting to introduce e-voting. For example, a way to do this is the OCTAVE approach that has been used before to identify some of the risks associated with electronic voting.

OCTAVE is a risk-analysis approach that identifies assets, threats to assets, and with their cost and effectiveness protective measures. As far as voting is concerned, assets are components of the election process that affect the confidence of citizens in the voting process. Artifacts such as incomplete and completed ballots, as well as the list of electors, are therefore tools for voting. The probability and extent of the threat to each asset and the ability to defend against them and the costs of defending them must be part of the framework of risk analysis.[9] This risk-assessment method is very useful for governments or other institutions to perform quantitative risk

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[7] Legality of E-voting, National Democratic Institute https://www.ndi.org/e-voting-guide/legality-of-e-voting (accessed 25.07.2019)

[8] E-voting handbook, Council of Europehttps://www.coe.int/t/dgap/goodgovernance/Activities/E-voting/E-voting%202010/Biennial_Nov_meeting/ID10322%20GBR%206948%20Evoting%20handbook%20A5%20HD.pdf (accessed 25.07.2019).

[9] Thomas W. Lauer, „The Risk of e-Voting", in Electronic Journal of e-Government, Vol. 2, No. 3, (2014): 181.

analysis to compare different voting alternatives including Internet voting, as well as poll, mail-in, and telephone voting.

2. ESTONIA – A SUCCESS MODEL OF E-VOTING

Estonia's use of modern information and communication technologies in public sector and for governance has put the nation at the forefront of countries aimed at modernizing their public sector and ensuring transparent governance. Estonian citizens and residents have access to numerous internet government facilities including digital identification, digital signatures, electronic tax filing, online medical prescriptions and internet voting. Most of the services provide money- and time-saving effectiveness for both customers and government organizations.

Digital IDs were used for authentication more than 80 million times in 2014 and 35 million times for digital transactions, a considerable number in a country with a population of just 1.3 million. Ninety-five percent of all income tax returns are submitted online, and in the last two elections in 2014 and 2015, every third citizen voted online.

In 2015, ten years after its first use, Estonia is the first and only country use electronic internet voting for all types of elections both in the country and for the outside.

The first steps for introducing electronic vote were made in 2002. It was first used extensively in 2005 for local elections.

Regarding user attitudes and behavior, survey evidence suggests that online governmental services are regarded as trustworthy and reliable.

Nothing would happen in Estonia without electronic identity cards. Estonia began building a centralized system that gathers information about citizens such as education, health, car data, etc. in the late 1990s. The information is held by the decentralized public authorities, but the databases are merged in an unique portal, www.eesti.ee. The portal can be accessed by public authorities, citizens and companies. The Ministry of Finance is the one who manages the architecture of the system.[10]

The technical design of the Internet voting mechanism is inherited from the traditional way in which an individual votes outside their residence's polling district, by postal voting. A two-envelope scheme is used with postal voting to cast a ballot.

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[10] EppMaaten, "Towards remote e-voting: Estonian case"; in Lossi No. 1A, 15181, Tallinn, p. 83–90.

The inner envelope contains a ballot with the vote choice of the voter, but there are no markings for identification. The exterior envelope includes data about the voter's identification. The data on the exterior envelope will be used when sent to the ballot station to check the voter's eligibility to vote and, if verified, the internal envelope will be removed from the outer envelope and placed in the ballot box for counting.

The Internet voting system in Estonia operates similarly. The e-voting app that is downloaded encrypts the ballot (PIN1). The encrypted vote can be considered as the vote in the anonymous inner envelope. After that, the voter provides their choice a digital signature (PIN2). The voter's personal information or outer envelope is added to the encrypted vote by the digital signature.

During the Election Day evening, the encrypted votes and the electronic signatures (i.e. the information identifying the elector) are separated before the vote results are determined. Then the anonymous e-votes are "opened" and counted. The system only opens the ballots after the removal of private information.

Given the concerns about secrecy and security, the Estonian Electoral Committee developed the following principles that must be adhered to by the Internet voting system:

- Time framework of e-voting: e-voting may be cast for seven days, from 10th to the 4th days before the Election Day;.
- Possibility of e-vote recasting: during the e-voting period, the elector may vote as often as he wishes, but only the last e-vote is counted;
- Primacy of ballot paper voting-if a voter who has already cast an e-vote goes to the polling station and casts a paper ballot, the e-vote shall be cancelled;
- E-voting similarity to regular voting: e-voting adheres to the same principles and customs as general elections;
- E-voters are going to vote for themselves: To prevent safety risks, only a trusted computer should be used, e.g. either owned by the elector or trusted by the individual.[11]

Voting verification is the latest and most technologically developed response to safety risks. Piloted during the 2013 local elections and fully enforced since the 2014 European elections, the verification of votes allows Estonian e-voters to check that their vote was cast as intended.

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[11] Vassil K., Mihkel S., "E-voting in Estonia: Technological Diffusion and Other Developments Over Ten Years (2005–2015)", Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies, University of Tartu, (2016): 124.

Following the 2011 general election, where nearly a quarter of all votes were electronically cast, the parliament decided to define I-voting standards in electoral law to enhance the legitimacy and transparency of I-voting. In 2012, Parliament introduced a number of amendments to the electoral legislation stating that a special electoral commission – the digital voting commission – should be created.[12]

Throughout this period, there was generally a political consensus, without which no negotiation would have been possible. The system required expenses of 2 million euros, plus about 50,000 to 60,000 euros for its upgrading.

Even though the e-voting implementation in Estonia was first established in order to increase the level of voter turnout, there is not enough research proving if e-tools were the ones enhancing the turnout or it was a collateral factor. The certainty is that the e-voting system has made Estonian electoral process much easier and more convenient.

The country experienced a huge cyber-attack in 2007 – just as Estonia embarked on its digital path – that shut down the government, finances and many websites. Estonia, though, was not to be discouraged. The government learned precious lessons about cybersecurity rather than backing away from technology and worked harder to become a world pioneer.

3. NOTABLE ENDEAVORS IN OTHER EU COUNTRIES

Theoretically, Estonia should have served as a best practice example for the entire Europe. But ten years of rapid progress and reports of hacking and disruptions during latest U.S. and European elections have underlined the danger of cyber attacks on democratic procedures and institutions. Therefore, most of the European countries behaved cautiously and returned to the traditional voting methods.

„The wave of euphoria from the early 2000s has tempered to a large extent for a number of different reasons and contexts," says Steven Martin, a senior election advisor with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. "A perception that you can't just blindly rely on technology to improve people's confidence in the process has been gradually created – you must first create confidence and then follow it up with technology."[13]

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[12] Vassil, K., Weber T., "A bottleneck model of E-voting: why technology fails to boost turnout"; in New Media Soc. No 13, (2011) p. 1339.

[13] Uwe Serdult, Micha Germann, Fernando Mendez „Fifteen Years of Internet Voting in Switzerland. History, Governance and Use", in Law, Politics and Society, No 32, University of Zurich, p. 128.

Ireland spent € 54 million on digital voting devices in 2002, but concerns regarding their susceptibility to vote fraud and absence of paper trail meant that they have never been used. Germany also launched e-voting machines at about the same moment, however having to cancel them when the Constitutional Court decided that they were not transparent.

Switzerland is the second worth to mention pioneer in e-voting. However, there is a distinctive difference between the applicability of the system in Switzerland and Estonia, the first one adopting a decentralized bottom – up approach. The country started to implement the system gradually, canton by canton.

In 2003, some residents in the municipality of Anières voted on the internet in a trial in the Swiss canton of Geneva, marking the first time e-voting was used for a binding referendum in Switzerland. Over the years, the government has permitted cantons to increase the use of e-voting gradually.

The Federal Council allowed the following cantons to offer electronic voting (known as e-voting) to Swiss residents abroad registered in these cantons: Geneva, Lucerne, Basel-Stadt and Neuchâtel. This implies that approximately 34,000 Swiss registered overseas could vote electronically in 2015. The Federal Council provided the chance to vote on the Internet only to electors in the cantons of Geneva and Neuchâtel for electors living in Switzerland. Approximately 90,000 people residing in Switzerland could vote online.

Two e-voting systems are currently in use in Switzerland as of 2019. In the Geneva cantons of Vaud, Bern, Lucerne, Basel City, St Gallen and Aargau, CHVote is used. The program is open source software licensed under the AGPL, but in 2018, for price reasons, Geneva chose to begin phasing it out. The second system in use is Swiss Post's sVote, Scytl's proprietary but revealed software. It has been used in Fribourg, Neuchâtel and Thurgau since 2018.

In 2019, for safety reasons, politicians and computer specialists enacted the people's initiative to prohibit e-voting. The vulnerability lies in the cryptographic mechanism verifying that cast votes are the same as recorded, and yet scientists claim that this cryptographic scheme is weak and permits the swap of votes.

Meanwhile, Norway tested online voting in both 2011 and 2013, but chose not to continue due to government perception of voting safety.

France temporarily provided the choice of voting online to people abroad. But after the U.S. held Presidential elections in 2016, when proof arose that the Democratic National Committee had been hacked by Russia to attempt to harm the campaign of

Hillary Clinton, France was one of the first nations to react, stating that in its 2017 presidential election, digital voting would not be permitted.[14]

The Netherlands also took precautions. Holding an election a few months before France, announced that all votes would be counted by hand to isolate the cyber-interference process. Furthermore, the Netherlands experience shows the many distinct factors affecting the use of technology in elections: they stopped utilizing electronic voting machines in the 2000s, after investigations showed they may be prone to fraud.

Existing electoral law in most countries in Europe does not contemplate e-voting, so new legislation requires to be drafted. In order to implement electronic voting or counting technology correctly, their use must not only comply with the constitutional and legal regulations pertaining to elections and the overall behavior of public affairs, but must also be formulated in the election legal framework.

Countries' constitutions rarely say anything in particular about electronic voting or counting devices, only general provisions being mentioned. Germany offers a pertinent example of this, with the German Constitutional Court decision in 2009 that the electronic voting devices used in Germany did not meet the overall criteria for transparency in the constitutional electoral system.[15]

4. E-VOTING IN ROMANIA – SOLUTION OR DANGER?

For many years, Romania has avoided to introduce e-voting that could facilitate diaspora voting. The debate is losing momentum in Romania; it lacks arguments and is not open to the public, with no citizen's consultations. We are talking about fear of electoral fraud, possibility for system corruption or restricted technological capabilities of people.

Still, what would be Romania's circumstances for implementing online electronic voting and what measures should politicians and officials take? How possible is an e-voting reform at this time?

Multiple nations inspired from Estonian e-government, but adjusted their own specific domestic processes: Norway, Switzerland, Latvia, and so on. Estonia is regarded as the God of elections in Romania. However, the circumstances of Romania are

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[14] Elections under threat: Europe's electronic voting landscape, Microsoft Corporate Bloghttps://blogs.microsoft.com/eupolicy/2018/11/22/europes-voting-landscape/ (accessed 23.07.2019).

[15] E-public, e-participation and e-voting in Europe – prospects and challenges http://www.europarl.europa.eu/stoa/default_en.htm (accessed 23.07.2019)

very distinct comparing to Estonian's: bad confidence in parties and government officials, greater electoral body size and fluidity (compared to nearly. 1 million Estonian voters), electoral fraud as a widespread phenomenon and a much bigger electorate, as well as various diaspora profiles. Let's also not forget the case in 2014 when the ballot box from a polling station was literally stolen.

The People's Movement Party proposed draft legislation on e-voting that was vehemently denied by the Parliament in 2014. The National Liberal Party was fully against e-voting. The Social Democratic Party, through the voice of Prime Minister Victor Ponta, proposed the Internet vote during the negotiations on the correspondence vote in 2015. Nevertheless, the party did not take any concrete steps towards voting on the legislation.[16]

According to previous examples and the Romanian demographics, plus political background, there would be six main steps to be followed in order to introduce a working e-voting system in Romania:

1. There is need of common vision, clear objectives and political consensus.
   Electronic voting can demonstrate a failure without political consensus. In this context, the cases of Latvia and Lithuania are examples. In addition, patience is a main component: it took more than four years for the law to be adopted by the Parliament in Estonia, and the preconditions were better than in Romania.
2. There should be public consultations held with the civil society and a technology testing timeframe.
   E-voting should not be carried out without a concrete and realistic plan: feasibility studies, piloting, auditing, and making sure that the required infrastructure is in place.
3. There is a proper existing legislation and prospects to enlarge it.
   For each phase of the process, the legislation must include very clear processes, regarding voting processes, system structure, counting, risk management strategies, invalid ballots, etc. An initial debate about the constitutionality of such a law is essential.
4. The essential electoral principles are followed.
   There is needed that the e-voting system meets the vote secrecy. Voting is crucial for individual and universal verifiability. The voter must be able to verify that

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[16] Electronic voting in Romania: how far are we going towards this system and what happened in the first country that adopted it, https://adevarul.ro/locale/cluj-napoca/votul-electronic-romania-sistem-s-a-intamplat-tara-l-a-adoptat-1_56b0d2715ab6550cb862abaa/index.html (accessed 25.07.2019).

his/her vote has been recorded, then that it has been recorded in accordance with his/her choice, and that it has in reality been counted as such.

The observation of elections should be respected in any type of elections as a fundamental way to ensure transparency.

5. New infrastructure is created.

    For instance, it is a possibility to print special cards with chips, secured by two codes – one for authentication and the other for confirmation. Some specialists believe that this model is more practical for a country such as Romania, as it would eradicate the danger of fraud.

6. Building a transparent and safe environment, with systematic monitoring and evaluation

Transparency is the cornerstone of public trust in the electronic voting institutions. One of the main deficiencies that Romania suffers of is the total absence of confidence in political parties, the Parliament, as well as the electoral administration, according to latest surveys. The system should be developed through consultation with civil society, academia, and public discussions. Public organizations must manage the system, as there have been noticeable examples of private participation failures.[17]

Since the previous Romanian experience has shown that even the paper ballot is not secure from fraud, it would be very difficult to implement such a complex reform as e-voting at this particular time.

Also, the trust of the Romanian people in the state institution doesn't look very promising in order for the e-voting to be successfully implemented. The Public opinion barometer of the Romanian Academy was conducted between March 5 and 13, 2019, at the command of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.The sample volume was 1050 persons and is representative of the non-institutionalized Romanian population, aged 18 years and over 18 years.

According to a survey conducted between March 5 and 13, 2019, at the command of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the ranking of confidence in domestic and international institutions in Romania is dominated by the Army, respectively by NATO, as an institution providing security internally and externally (68.1 % declaring that they have high and very high confidence in this institution). The Church follows with 55.1% (54.5% in January 2019, 52.8% in November 2018), Gendarmerie with 48.1% (43.5% in January 2019 and 49.3% in November 2018). 40.9% of Romanians have

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[17] Septimius Pârvu, Paper vs Internet: is electronic voting a solution for Romania? https://expert forum.ro/en/files/2015/04/EFOR-Paper-vs-Internet.pdf (accessed 25.07.2019).

highconfidence in the National Anti-corruption Division, while 38.2% have a lot of confidence in the Presidency.

On the following positions are the County Council with 22.3% (20.1% in January 2019, 21.2% in November 2018), Constitutional Court with 21.9% (18.4% in January 2019, respectively 19.9% in November 2018) and the Government with 13.8% (12.8% in January 2019 and 13.7% in November 2018).The ranking of confidence in the internal institutions is concluded by the political parties, with 11.3% (11.8% in January 2019, respectively 9.1% in November 2018) and Parliament – 11.2% (9, 8% in January 2019, respectively 10.6% in November 2018).[18]

These ratings prove the fact that the population of Romania is quite skeptical when it comes to the political institutions and in such conditions the implementation of such a controversial voting system could suffer a fast failure considering the fact that namely the political institutions should make efforts to put it in practice.

In order to implement the system, from the very beginning, the design of the project is very important: encryption methods, hardware and software, secrecy of voting or proper project management, with skilled and upright executives. In the present circumstance, the beneficiary is the one who matters and must be put ahead of the expenses. Therefore no savings should be considered that could endanger the project.

One of the most useful methods would be to test the new system on low-stake elections (as referendum) for acquiring initial experience. It could take many years to discover the most suitable formula for Romania and we must not jump into adopting a vulnerable and fraud prone system.

E-voting must be in advance, not on Election Day, such as the Estonian example shows. First of all, in the event of an emergency scenario, this would ensure the option of remaking the elections.

Basically, if all the six steps mentioned above would be carefully followed, together with capable experts and researchers to ensure the success, Romania could become an e-voting country. However, at the current moment the lack of political cohesion and public trust in the political system is the main obstacle to implement such a reform. And considering that 65.6% of all households in Romania own a computer at home, and only 68.6% of households in Romania had access to the

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[18] The Public opinion barometer of the Romanian Academy, Aprilie–May 2019, https://www. inscop.ro/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Sondaj-Inscop-Research-Alegeri-europarlamentare-si-referendum.pdf (accessed 05.11.2019).

internet network in 2017[19], the e-voting method could be considered quite discriminatory for the people with a low income.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It has become clear over the years that e-voting structures can not be implemented unless people have confidence in their political and administrative systems. The next significant element to acknowledge is that e-voting should not lead to the exclusion of any groups, such as socially deprived or disabled individuals.

Therefore, Romania would have to work on improving the main requirements for implementing the e-voting: friendly legislative base; openness to change from the society; high trust in the governmental authorities and informational and PC knowledge amongst the citizens.

As main recommendations to improve the successful implementation chances would be:

- Raising awareness in the society about e-voting benefits and risks;
- Political consensus and public trust, less corruption;
- Piloting the project on a small election, a referendum, e.g.

The Estonian model should not be taken as secure and fully replicable in Romania because of the considerable differences in the matter of demographic background, political system, public trust, legislation, etc. Romania should find her own path to a safe e-voting system, a process that will probably take time and require patience.

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[19] National Institute of Statistics, Living Standards in Romania http://www.insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/com_presa/com_pdf/tic_r2017.pdf (accessed 25.07.2019)

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ANALYZING YOUTH'S PERCEPTIONS ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION. CASE STUDY – ROMANIA

Daria-Mara VESCAN[*]

ABSTRACT

In constructing a perception, many factors can challenge its development. Be it an economic, political or social factor, it is certain that how we perceive ourselves as citizens of the EU and how we project our image in the massive collection of ideas that surround the boundaries we have come to live in can be affected both positively and negatively. While taking into consideration different socio-economic factors such as age, gender, or labour status can help uncover the perceptions of the European youth, it is also important to analyze the environment in which such perceptions are established. Citizens' mistrust of public institutions, particularly governments and national parliaments which have been at the center of political corruption, continues to affect youth's outlook of how their life is improved or worsened by the ones who govern. On another note, the constantly emerging opportunities that surface for young people, such as employment abroad or scholarships, can determine a positive shift of approach in this regard and offer a sense of stability and recognition.

I have chosen to put an emphasis on the situation of Romania, by using Eurostat-specific data and the Youth Progress Index of 2017, which offers a deep insight into the basic human needs, the foundations of well-being and the opportunities our youth are experiencing. I will also briefly display my own understanding on this subject, while acknowledging that each person's outlook on their life is equally important and relevant. Methodologically speaking, I will firstly attempt to explain concepts such as perceptions, quality of life, happiness, and how they are interconnected. The second chapter will focus on specific data and the influencing factors which affect European youth's perceptions, and a comparison with the Romanian situation. There will be both qualitative and quantitative elements, as well as descriptive and analytical parts.

1. PERCEPTIONS, QUALITY OF LIFE AND HAPPINESS

Generally, the quality of life of an individual or a community can be interpreted as a function of the actual conditions of that life and what an individual or a community

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makes of those conditions. This is in turn a function of how the conditions are perceived, what is thought and felt about those conditions, what is done, and what consequences follow. It is certain that people's perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and actions have an impact both on their own and others' living conditions. These two variables, conditions of life and what people feel about them, can determine four scenarios: good living conditions and positive perceptions; bad living conditions and negative perceptions; good living conditions and bad perceptions; bad living conditions and positive perceptions.[1] *Perceptions* are constructed based on a certain interpretation at a given time linked with past experiences. When speaking about the *quality of life*, we take into account both subjective and objective aspects, such as physical or psychological health, social relationships and environment. All these factors control one another[2] without losing specificity[3]. The World Health Organization defines *quality of life* as follows: "individuals' perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns."[4]

It is well established that socio-demographic characteristics play a key role in quality of life. Older people, for example, are less likely to be in physical and psycho-logical health, whereas persons with high incomes and individuals with marital relationships report higher levels of quality of life. It has been clearly shown that people's relation to their living environment is a key issue for their well-being and for physical and mental health.[5] What if we were to talk about *happiness* as a definitive factor on the quality of life? Surprisingly, it only relates to one facet of it. Quality of life concepts determine a fourfold matrix which is based on two distinctions: the distinction between chances and outcomes, which means the difference between op-portunities for good life and good life itself, with quality residing in the environment;

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[1]   Alex C. Michalos and Steven R. Robinson, "The Good Life: Eighth Century to Third Century BCE", *Handbook of Social Indicators and Quality of Life Research*, ed. Kenneth C. Land et al. (New York : Springer, 2012), 23.

[2]   Robert A. Cummins and Helen Nistico, "Maintaining Life Satisfaction: The Role of Positive Cognitive Bias", *Journal of Happiness Studies* Volume 3, Issue 1 (March 2002): 41.

[3]   Laura Camfield and Suzanne Skevington, "On Subjective Well-being and Quality of Life", *Journal of Health Psychology* Volume 13, Issue 6 (2008) : 764.

[4]   World Health Organization, *WHOQOL: Measuring Quality of Life*, https://www.who.int/healthinfo/survey/whoqol-qualityoflife/en/ (accessed July 9 , 2019).

[5]   Omar Fassio et al., "Health, Quality of Life and Population Density: A Preliminary Study on Contextualized Quality of Life", *Social Indicators Research* Volume 110, No. 2 (2013): 479–488.

the difference between the inner and outer qualities of life, with quality residing in the individual. [6]

Table 1. *The fourfold matrix on quality of life*[7]

Four qualities of life

	Outer qualities	*Inner qualities*
Life chances	Livability of environment	Life ability of the person
Life results	Utility of life	Satisfaction with life

Society is central in a sociological perspective and *livability* is associated with the quality of society as a whole, but also with the position one has in society. It is not equal to happiness, but rather a precondition for happiness because not all environmental conditions are equally conducive to it. It has no precise or universally agreed upon definition and embraces cognate notions such as sustainability, the "character" of place, and the health of communities.[8] *Life ability* of the person has as its most common depiction the absence of functional defects, along with good health, acquisitions of new skills for living and the art of living. Generally, the ability to deal with the problems of life will mostly contribute to happiness but is not identical. *Utility of life* reflects the contributions to society that an individual's life can bring, as it has many environmental effects. Apart from its functional utility, life is also judged on its moral or esthetic value and here the focus is on mere "experiential" happiness, on how much one likes the life one lives. *Satisfaction with life* represents the inner outcomes of life, conscious humans who experience a subjective enjoyment of life, commonly referred to as "subjective well-being," "life-satisfaction," and "happiness" in a limited sense of the word.[9] Even when we focus on subjective satisfaction with life, there can be different meanings associated with the word *happiness*, determining another fourfold matrix based on: "life aspects versus life as a whole and passing delight versus enduring satisfaction."

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[6] RuutVeenhoven, "Happiness, also Known as Life Satisfaction and Subjective Well-Being"*, Handbook of Social Indicators and Quality of Life Research*, ed. Kenneth C. Land et al. (New York: Springer, 2012), 63.

[7] *Ibid*., p.64.

[8] C.J. Andrews, "Analyzing quality-of-place", *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design* Volume 28, Issue 2 (2001): 201–217.

[9] Veenhoven, *Happiness*, *also Known as Life Satisfaction and Subjective Well-Being*, 64–65.

Table 2. *The fourfold matrix on happiness* [10]

Four kinds of satisfaction

	Passing	*Enduring*
Part of life	Pleasure	Domain satisfaction
Life as a whole	Top experience	Happiness

The top left quadrant represents passing enjoyments of life aspects, referred by the author as instant-satisfactions. It represents hedonistic happiness, both overall satisfaction and life as a whole. Though momentary enjoyment certainly contributes to a positive appreciation of life, it is not equal to the whole of it. Domain satisfaction denotes enduring appreciation of life aspects, such as marriage satisfaction and job satisfaction, with happiness being used in the broader sense of satisfaction with life as a whole. Top experience denotes the combination of passing experience and appraisal of life as a whole. However, short-lived and intense feelings are not equal to enduring appreciation of life, often being detrimental to lasting satisfaction. Lastly, the bottom right quadrant represents the combination of enduring satisfaction with life as a whole, and the author's categorical meaning of the word happiness.[11] For Veenhoven, overall happiness is "the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his/her own life as a whole favorably." [12] It is certain that people differ in happiness, but there is no clear answer as to why. Various levels of human functioning are involved: collective action and individual behavior, simple sensory experiences and higher cognition, stable characteristics of the individual and his environment, as well as life chances. Ultimately, the judgment of life draws on the flow of life experiences, which is a mental reaction to the course of life events.[13]

Modern economic growth has improved quality of life, as it brought larger amounts of food, clothing, and shelter per capita, as well as rising qualitative changes in the level of living. But it has also worsened life due to congestion and air, water, and noise pollution fostered by urban concentrations, which are accompanied by the negative spin-offs of rising consumption. If we are to analyze it by means of well-being rather than objective indicators, the disparity between economic growth and quality of life becomes even greater. Although there is limited evidence, the common pattern both in rich and poor countries is that typically, increases in per capita income

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[10] Veenhoven, *Happiness*, *also Known as Life Satisfaction and Subjective Well-Being,* 65.
[11] *Ibid*., 65–66.
[12] RuutVeenhoven, *Conditions of Happiness* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1984), 22–25.
[13] Veenhoven, *Happiness*, *also Known as Life Satisfaction and Subjective Well-Being,* 68–72.

fail to raise levels of happiness and life satisfaction. People may possess many more goods and a much wider variety, but it remains questionable whether they find their lives more satisfying. [14] Furthermore, quality of life can be positively influenced but also constrained by economic factors, as individuals and households use material resources according to their own priorities, in order to pursue their own self-defined well-being. Economic conditions and material living conditions, while not reflecting quality of life per se, provide a framework for the measurement of the potential of individuals and households to achieve it.

2. THE EUROPEAN YOUTH
AND ROMANIA – OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Veenhoven pointed out that when evaluating the favorableness of life, we tend to use two more or less distinct sources of information: our affects and their thoughts.[15] Taking into consideration the ideas that the same author proposed, I will focus on and compare data and analysis that present how the European and Romanian youth (young people in the age-groups: 15–19, 20–24 and 25–29)[16] visualize their life in relation to their education level, their economic status, their environment, and the opportunities which they enjoy as citizens of the EU.

2.1. EDUCATION

One major factor pertaining to the quality of life is the level of education among the majority of youth. The risk of falling within the *NEET* (not in employment, education, or training) category is generally associated with low educational attainment and weak information processing skills, such as poor literacy and numeracy.[17] Limited skills and expertise means worse job opportunities and worse economic prospects, and early school leavers face higher risks of social exclusion and are less likely to participate in civic life. As of 2018, 16.5 % of young people aged 20–34

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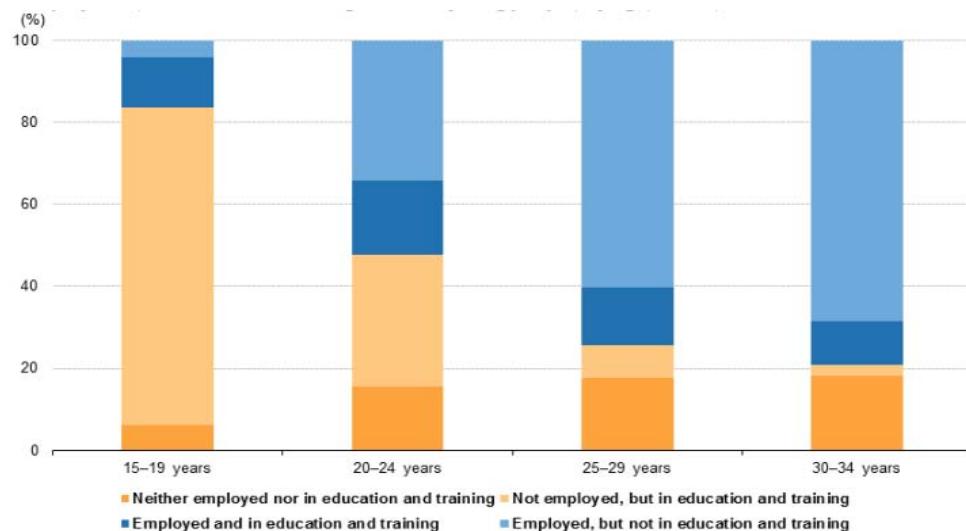
[14] Richard A. Easterlin and Laura Angelescu, "Modern Economic Growth and Quality of Life: Cross-Sectional and Time Series Evidence", *Handbook of Social Indicators and Quality of Life Research*, ed. Kenneth C. Land et al. (New York : Springer, 2012), 134.

[15] Ruut Veenhoven, "How do we assess how happy we are?", *Happiness, Economics and Politics: Towards a Multi-Disciplinary Approach,* ed. A.K. Dutt and B. Radcliff (Cheltenham: Edward Elger Publishers, 2009), 45–69.

[16] European Commission, *Commission Staff Working Document: On EU indicators in the field of youth* (Brussels, 25.03.2011), SEC(2011), 401 final, 3.

[17] UNESCO, *One in Five Children, Adolescents and Youth is Out of School*, Fact Sheet No. 48 (February 2018) UIS/FS/2018/ED/48, 1–5.

were neither in employment nor in education and training at the EU level, while in Romania the numbers rose to 20.6%.[18] The educated youth of today will be the future leaders of tomorrow, so it is vital to create a proper environment in which young people can thrive through and enjoy their educational journey. Of course it is a different path for each person, especially taking into account the difficulties some are facing in the rural areas of Romania, with little access to schools and economic issues at home, and this is where much emphasis should be put into helping them achieve their goals. Only 16.8% of people aged 20–29 finish tertiary education, as compared to the EU-level of 29.4% in 2018.[19]

Fig. 1. *Employment, education and training status of young people, by age, EU-28, 2017*[20]

2.2. ECONOMIC/EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Satisfaction with one's economic status can vary in European countries, and is dependent on the needs of each age group and how they can satisfy those needs in accordance to the income they obtain. With young people, the satisfaction may come generally more from the results they can attain in school/university rather than from

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[18] Eurostat, *Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and labour status (NEET rates),* Online code: edat_lfse_20.

[19] Eurostat, *Population by educational attainment level, sex and age (%)*, Online code: edat_lfs_9903.

[20] Eurostat, *Participation rate of young people in education and training by sex, age and labour status (incl. NEET rates)*, Online code: edat_lfse_18.

what they earn, as many of them are still dependent on their parents and seek employment only later on. As of 2017, 66.7% of young adults aged 16–29 were living with their parents (in Romania 75%)[21], of which only 25% were employed full-time (in Romania 21.2%)[22]. Last year, Romania saw a 16.2% youth (aged under 25) unemployment rate, while the EU had 15.2%.[23] Being able to find quality work and to access all social rights is essential for young people in order to participate fully in society, be autonomous and to avoid the pitfalls of poverty and social exclusion. Youth unemployment rate in Romania was at 15.4% in March 2019 [24] compared to EU-level 14.3%.[25] An important factor to take into consideration regarding the economic status of young people is that the cost of housing has continuously been growing in the past years in many Member States, affecting their purchasing power and their expectations of owning a property.

**Fig. 2. *House price indices – euro area and EU aggregates;
index levels (2015 = 100), 2007–2019Q1*[26]**

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[21] Eurostat, *Share of young adults aged 18–34 living with their parents by age and sex – EU-SILC survey*, Online code: ilc_lvps08.

[22] Eurostat, *Share of young adults aged 18–34 living with their parents by self-defined current economic status – EU-SILC survey*, Online code: ilc_lvps09.

[23] Eurostat, *Unemployment by sex and age – annual average*, Online code: une_rt_a.

[24] Trading Economics, *Romania Youth Unemployment Rate*, https://tradingeconomics.com/romania/youth-unemployment-rate (accessed July 25, 2019).

[25] Eurostat, *Unemployment by sex and age – monthly average*, Online code: une_rt_m.

[26] Eurostat, *House price index (2015 = 100) – quarterly data*, Online code: prc_hpi_q.

2.3. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

There is still a lack of reliable international comparative data on the well-being of young people, which affects not only young people themselves, but also those who work in support of their development. This is particularly noteworthy as today we have the largest young generation ever by numbers globally, accounting for slightly less than 1.8 billion in a world population of 7.3 billion. The emergence of such a large youth population can profoundly affect on any country: "Whether that effect is positive or negative depends largely on how well governments respond to young people's needs and enable them to engage fully and meaningfully in civic and economic affairs."[27] At the political level, young adults seem to become more and more aware of the important role they play in a country's institutional environment, trust building and positive developments. Recent years have shown that extreme nationalism has not yet left the European agenda and that we may see, for the first time, a nation retreating from the community and stepping back from its involvement in European affairs. On the same note, the youth of Romania are continuously reacting to the political events that unfortunately seem to cast a dark veil over the country, with protests and online campaigns tailored to respond to the needs of the whole population. Young adults are among the most fervent participants and it seems that it is only through their relentless riot that true changes are ever going to occur in the country. With a corruption perception score of only 43 out of 100 (where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean) it seems that Romania has joined the global crisis of democracy, with many backfalls in fighting dishonest leaders and coalitions. [28] With "very little progress" made to prevent corruption in its government, Romania's previous responses to the Group of States against Corruption or GRECO's recommendations were analyzed recently and it was concluded that Romania had only fully complied with just over a quarter of the recommendations issued in two previous reports. The reports come just over a month since Liviu Dragnea, one of the most powerful and untrustworthy politicians was jailed over corruption charges. [29]

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[27] UNFPA, *The Power of 1.8 Billion: Adolescents, Youth and the Transformation of the Future. The State of World Population 2014*, ed. Richard Kollodge (Prographics, Inc., 2014), 2.

[28] Transparency International, *Corruption Perceptions Index 2018*, https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018 (accessed July 19, 2019).

[29] Lauren Chadwick. *Romania has made "very little progress" to prevent corruption – report*, Euronews, July 26, 2019, https://www.euronews.com/2019/07/09/romania-has-made-very-little-progress-to-prevent-corruption-report (accessed July 28, 2019).

2.4. OPPORTUNITIES AND RESTRAINTS

The structural changes in labour markets, technological progress and international trade are changing the world of work for young people, in particular, in the EU today, with a lasting impact on their whole working lives. This may put youth at a relative disadvantage to older generations, who were less exposed to such developments and, depending on where they live, are currently enjoying the protection of welfare arrangements. Nevertheless, there are many opportunities as well that young people do enjoy, such as scholarships abroad, cross-border projects, and chances to work in international organizations, which internationalize their experience and can help them achieve their professional goals. Within the 2019–2027 EU Youth Strategy, the following objectives were set: to engage, by fostering young people's participation in civic and democratic life; to connect, by connecting young people across the European Union and beyond, to foster voluntary engagement, learning mobility, solidarity and intercultural understanding; and to empower, by supporting youth empowerment through quality, innovation and recognition of youth work.[30]

There are substantial differences in quality of life across age groups in Europe, with an apparent east–west and a north–south divide. The older generations in general enjoy better quality of life than younger age groups in western Europe, while the younger generations are better off in eastern Europe. As for Romania, there have been many expressing concerns over legislative reforms that undermine the independence of the judiciary and threaten the ability of NGOs to operate. The absence of strong monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the field of youth policies makes the national coordination more difficult. One of the most important instruments used for the implementation of the youth policy is the allocation of grants for small projects of youth NGOs by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, but also by the Ministry of Culture and National Identity. [31]According to the Youth Progress Index of 2017, Romania, in comparison with other EU and non-EU countries with the same GDP (such as Bulgaria, Croatia, Turkey, Mauritius or Azerbaijan), the weakest areas were the following: access to improved sanitation facilities, access to piped water; availability of affordable housing, household air pollution attributable deaths; primary and secondary school enrollment; suicide rate, youth mortality from non-communicable diseases;

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[30] European Commission, *A renewed EU Youth Strategy proposed by the European Commission for 2019–2027*, https://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/eu-youth-strategy-adopted_en (accessed July 10, 2019).

[31] European Commission, *EACEA National Policies Platform- Romania*, https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-romania (accessed July 18, 2019).

private property rights. young members of parliament, youth confidence in police; freedom of religion, youth perception of corruption; discrimination and violence against minorities, religious tolerance; youth openness for immigrants, youth openness towards gay and lesbian people; tertiary enrollment rate. The domains that still need to progress are diverse, but there were also sectors in which Romania performs well, such as: Rural access to improved water source, female and male secondary education, internet users, freedom over life choices, and women's average years in school.[32]


Romania — Youth Progress Index 68.19 — Rank: 41/102
Gross Domestic Product $19,363 — Rank: 51/154

	Score	Strength/Weakness Rank		Score	Strength/Weakness Rank		Score	Strength/Weakness Rank
Basic Human Needs	77.40	54	**Foundations of Wellbeing**	75.10	43	**Opportunity**	53.42	50
Nutrition and Basic Medical Care	96.85	47	**Access to Basic Knowledge**	91.10	46	**Personal Rights**	53.82	51
Child mortality rate	90.35	57	Female secondary education	86.12	42	Freedom of assembly/association	74.58	46
Deaths from infectious diseases	97.81	41	Gender parity in secondary enrollment	98.33	13	Freedom of expression	87.50	51
Depth of food deficit	100.00	26	Gross secondary school enrollment	89.53	64	Political rights	87.50	44
Maternal mortality rate	95.67	68	Male secondary education	92.24	32	Private property rights	35.00	78
Undernourishment	100.00	38	Primary school enrollment	82.17	106	Young members of parliament	2.33	102
			Youth literacy rate	100.00	37	Youth confidence in police	39.73	103
Water and Sanitation	73.88	74				**Personal Freedom and Choice**	53.94	56
Access to improved sanitation facilities	75.67	89	**Access to Info and Communications**	84.04	39	Corruption	35.00	48
Access to piped water	62.70	93	Internet users	86.00	48	Early marriage	94.55	38
Rural access to improved water source	100.00	18	Press Freedom Index	75.71	43	Freedom of religion	66.67	89
Satisfaction with Water Quality	56.92	71	Youth Mobile telephone	91.53	52	Freedom over life choices	66.67	61
Shelter	69.66	82	**Health and Wellness**	67.86	86	Satisfied demand for contraception	60.27	76
Access to electricity	100.00	36	Death rate from HIV/AIDS	99.82	42	Youth perception of corruption	14.00	141
Availability of affordable housing	18.92	110	Life expectancy at 60	57.31	57	**Inclusion**	44.49	97
Household air pollution attributable deaths	83.59	87	Suicide rate	73.03	105	Discrimination and violence against minoriti..	33.33	93
Quality of electricity supply	62.21	75	Youth mortality from non-communicable dis..	44.18	117	Religious tolerance	66.67	91
Personal Safety	70.69	42				Youth community safety net	70.00	76
Homicide rate	96.25	42	**Environmental Quality**	59.52	61	Youth employment gap	61.54	110
Level of violent crime	75.00	45	Air quality satisfaction	49.09	94	Youth not in employment and not in education	56.95	56
Perceived criminality	50.00	68	Biodiversity and habitat	94.63	23	Youth openness for immigrants	23.00	145
Political terror	75.00	53	Greenhouse gas emissions	77.41	53	Youth openness towards homosexuals	19.00	79
Safe walking at night	50.01	61	Outdoor air pollution attributable deaths	53.65	97	**Access to Advanced Education**	62.18	48
Traffic deaths	81.34	53	Wastewater treatment	15.39	60	Inequality in the attainment of education	90.06	25
						Tertiary enrollment rate	53.22	50
						Women's average years in school	88.01	40
						Years of tertiary schooling	22.53	73

Overperforming by ≥1 points — Overperforming by <1 point — Performing within expected range — Underperforming by <1 point — Underperforming by ≥1 points

Strengths and weaknesses are calculated relative to 15 countries of similar gross domestic product (GDP): Uruguay, Argentina, Panama, Turkey, Croatia, Gabon, Mauritius, Belarus, Chile, Latvia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Mexico, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan

Fig. 3. *Romania's status in the Youth Progress Index of 2017*[33]

FINAL REMARKS

International support can unlock the potential of the next generation of innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders. Perceptions on the quality of life cannot be so easily outlined in a community of countries so attached yet so different. Although there is clearly room for improvement in regard to the quality of life that the European

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[32] OSCE, *Youth Progress Index 2017* (European Youth Forum, 2018), 261.
[33] *Ibid*., 262.

youth is experiencing, a lot has been achieved by the implementation of certain policies and strategies aimed directly at the development of young people. Romania has undoubtedly benefited from these EU-level policies and will continue to rely on European projects in order to broaden the perspective of its youth. There is much need for innovation and brand new ideas in order to, firstly, attain a high level of school attendance and then to increase the overall number of young people who finish their education and are in search of a job. I believe there needs to be a certain degree of trust in public institutions and belief that the economy, infrastructure and legal environment will progress over the years, so that the Romanian youth are motivated to remain in the country. Every young person is responsible for any positive change that can be done in their place of residence and should visualize themselves as the only creators of their happiness. In a Eurobarometer survey from 2017, it was found that young people believe that the most mentioned priority topics for the EU are education and skills (53%), protection of the environment and the fight against climate change (50%), employment (42%) and the management of migratory flows and integration of refugees (40%). It is also noteworthy that more than eight in ten also agree that learning about European matters, such as the functioning of the EU and its institutions, EU history or European culture, should be part of compulsory school education (83%).[34] We should keep a watchful eye on how the new EU Youth Strategy will be carried out, remembering its several instruments that will accompany its realization, such as mutual learning activities, Future National Activities Planners, EU Youth Dialogue, EU Youth Strategy Platform and Evidence-base tools.

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