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CONTENTS

IMAGES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE DEBATE HELD IN THE POLISH PARLIAMENT ON THE INFORMATION OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON THE TASKS OF FOREIGN POLICY OF POLAND IN 2017

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Abstract:
This paper is an analysis of speeches delivered by the Members of Parliament in the Sejm of the Republic of Poland during the discussion which took place on 9th February 2017 regarding the information from the Minister of Foreign Affairs about the tasks of the Polish foreign policy in 2017. The aim of the analysis focusing on parliamentary discourse was to reconstruct the images (visions) of the European Union created by the representatives of the main political powers in Poland. The analysis confirms that since 2007 there have evolved two separate images of the European Union in the Polish parliamentary discourse (EU as an area of rivalry/confrontation vs EU as a conciliatory Union), hence there have also been two different propositions of how Poland should participate in the integration process.
Keywords: parliamentary discourse, political divisions, integration process, full sovereignty, dependent sovereignty

1. Introduction

The aim of the study presented in this text is to re-create political discourse, that is the meanings of linguistic constructions – images (visions) of the European Union which arise in the communication process in the parliamentary debates and are created by categories of "place" and "role" of Poland in the system of the Union (perception of Poland's place and role in the EU). It should be pointed out that parliamentary debates create special conditions where, as a result of communication processes, the meaning of the language of politics is

confronted and negotiated. Hence, it should be assumed that the study of a large amount of expanded utterances in a chronological system which are formed in similar conditions will help establish the structure (shapes) of these creations, the scopes of convergence and divergence between particular political stands as well as their determinants.

Such formulation of the aim determines the necessity to fulfil three tasks: 1) to specify the methodological assumptions of discourse analysis; 2) to reconstruct the internal and external discourse context – the context opening the possibility to make interpretation; 3) to establish, as part of the debate under analysis, the categories of meanings that organise discourse and to separate and put in order the stands by establishing the convergence and divergence of the formulated evaluations.

2. The discursive dimension of political reality

For the purpose of this paper, it is assumed that political discourse means the politicians' speeches which they deliver while fulfilling their roles in political institutions that is the speeches of persons belonging to the elites of power, the speeches which are related to their political roles and functions (Czyżewski at al., 2010, pp. 22-23).

The material scope of this paper is outlined by two categories of reference: the "place" and "role". They encompass the specific tension which exists between the thesis that countries have the power to independently act in the international area and the thesis that, in fact, their capabilities are determined by the structure of the international system (Czaputowicz, 2008, pp. 29-30). These concepts should be related to the active participation of the entity in the system. Their meanings indicate that they have some potential of creating possibilities. At the same time, they can be interpreted in the categories of objects, as a specific positioning which is only a consequence of mainly external circumstances and which should be accepted. Therefore, they should be acknowledged and it would be best to justify them somehow, hence to rationalise the existing status quo.

However, no matter these objections, it seems that the occupied place is a derivative of a role performed by a given entity. The "role" category includes a sort of meaning of the measure, that is the capacity, potential, strength and the lack of it, insignificance, susceptibility, subordination, and weakness. The said opposition, although it is usually not so clear since in politics independence is intertwined with dependence, is questioning how the

organised political grouping, while being equipped with resources and mind, being motivated to act with a specific intent (Sułek, 2013, p. 49), is generally able to overcome barriers. So, the question is whether the will is powerful; does it have the capacity to change the surrounding, or does the environment (cumulation of its potential) define the limits of its capabilities? Hence, to some degree, does it shape, that is actually restrict, its will (defines its creative space)?

Stepping onto parliamentary discourse level, the above-mentioned categories, mainly the "place" and "role", may be treated as separate perceptions, as the ways of perceiving Poland in the European Union, as different visions that is actually different "places" and related "roles". This diversity and ambiguity indicates that there is a dispute concerning what constituted, constitutes and perhaps what should constitute political order, which brings to mind a relative unity (Waśkiewicz, 1998, p. 14). The concepts of "place" and "role" include, however, various concepts of political governance, which is – paradoxically and contrary to what "governance" should bring to mind – a contentious concept whose strong ambiguity, given and enhanced by the category of politics, is reflected in the contradiction of constructs (these constructs want to be deemed as exclusively applicable), the contradiction which gives this term, in a certain way, a discursive dimension (Waśkiewicz, 1998, p. 14). This dimension materialises itself during, for example, parliamentary debates.

But do the images (constructs) being studied have any value in the impenetrable complexity of the international system? As Andrzej Waśkiewicz proves, although linking the language of politics and political activities may have different forms, the key factor here is the relation with the shape of a given political reality – created reality and factual reality (Waśkiewicz, 1998, p. 14). Hence, these concepts, visions – the things which constitute an "idea-creating" activity, consisting of the designing of a desired political governance (Paruch and Trembicka, 2002, p. 8), the activity which in some aspects has a status of political thought – constitute in fact, yet often different, political emanations of the awareness of a diverse community.

These images located, as it would seem, at a quite unreachable, abstract level (as opposed to the level of political practice, that is real actions), therefore are actually part of political life and because of that, they gain a status of a "fact" (Waśkiewicz, 1998, p. 87). However, it is illegitimate to adopt the meaning which largely expands their impact

capabilities, hence through caution, the texts should be treated as a record of "thinking activity" (Waśkiewicz, 1998, p. 87). This does not mean, in any way, that the text is detached from reality. The text is an emanation – a sort of manifestation of circumstances. If, however, each omission of the context enhances hypothetical and undefined political thought and restricts, or even makes it impossible to interpret events, the text should be treated as depending on circumstances in which it was written and read out or uttered, although obviously perceiving this relation is highly problematic (Waśkiewicz, 1998, p. 89). Therefore, it should be assumed that discourses contain representations of what reality could or should look like (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2008, pp. 386-387).

In this context, the fact worth noting is quite obvious, that any political institutions are human creations. It suffices to be able to mindfully discover these creations. Additionally, the susceptibility to change of these materialised political creations only confirms the creation capabilities of this idea which is defined in discourse level categories, since without such reflection they would need to have a static nature, external and impenetrable for society (Waśkiewicz, 1998, p. 13). These capabilities to create and change the social world (although limited) are undoubtedly proof of the word's strength. This is a linguistic picture – the speech is therefore a linguistic picture of the world (Bartmiński, 2008). Hence, the speech is a form (not necessarily clear), a reflection of this world. At the same time, it is the only form of the word that we have, by which our place in the world and our connection to the world is materialised. But this picture not only is not, but it cannot be coherent, since the oppositions and differences of the messages/solutions, non-obviousness that we experience, are an inevitable product of communication (Fleischer, 2005, p. 132), hence it is the reality's necessity to have various, non-reducible pictures.

In view of the dependencies as presented above, the possibility to apply discourse analysis in learning political reality directs our attention to a polito-linguistic approach which combines rhetoric, political science and linguistics (Reisigl, 2011, p. 153) and which refers mainly to its dimension 1) "policy" – that is the essence of political activity and 2) "polity" – that is formal and structural frames of reference (Reisigl, 2011, pp. 153-154). So, it is obvious what should be underlined – that political discourse analysis is based on its dual structure. On the one hand, the linguistic dimension should be considered, and on the other hand – political relations which together form a proper discourse area (Rittel, 2005, p. 51). If this is the case,

political discourse should be treated as an event generalised by the political system and simultaneously generating its verbal and extra-verbal meaning (Rittel, 2005, p. 24).

The determinants outlined above show that the assumptions of critical analysis of discourse of political messages seem to be extremely promising and combine the above specified dimensions (Howarth, 2008, pp. 16-17). The critical discourse analysis shows the tension which can be seen in the combination between meaning and materiality. This involves the combination formed in relation to the pressure created by the governing bodies. The pressure is reflected by the process of "reducing our freedom" (Fairclough and Duszak, 2008, p. 10) and directs the investigator's attention to social discursive processes, such as relations, systems and structures (Fairclough and Duszak, 2008, p. 15). Taking the approach that the social world is socially construed (Faircloug and Duszak, 2008, p. 8), hence that the discourse is a driving force in the ongoing process of Poland's integration with the European Union, all issues related to this process focus on "the central dialectic axis". This axis is defined by such categories as: the "creation", "consolidation", "reproduction" and "transformation" of social phenomena being in the range of its impact. In view of the perspective outlined in this way, the primary postulate of the study should be to see the dialectic relation between meaning and materiality (Fairclough and Duszak, 2008, p. 8).

3. The analysis of political discourse (taking into account its contexts) during the discussion held on 9th February 2017 in the Polish Sejm

The perspective which can help us to explain the textual reality is provided by the systemic approach. Here, the system is understood as a type of perceptual construction through which the investigator (but also participants in language practices of parliamentary debates) strives to put in order (understand) parliamentary reality (Dahl and Stinebrickner, 2007, p. 51). However, it should be noted that systems are not static by nature. Therefore, systems should be treated as specific "structural processes" covering also transitions, transformations and structures (Dahl and Stinebrickner, 2007, p. 52). Accordingly, foreign policy should be treated as a social process which (in short) is created by structures of three co-depended areas: 1) internal system of the country where foreign policy is initiated; 2) international environment where it is pursued; and 3) social level where it is verified (Zięba, 2007, p. 387). Yet, special attention should be paid here to the two often contradictory trends:

1) the country's drive to obtain an optimal international position and 2) the pressure put by the international environment on state bodies, in fact by the bodies which have gathered and are able to maintain greater potential than other bodies (Koziełło, 2011, p. 39). Adopting such a perspective allows to perceive Poland as a subsystem through which a desired efficiency is partially obtained. However, more opportunities to achieve such efficiency are determined by the impact of the surrounding environment. It is out of necessity that they are completed in the country's connections with external entities. Such a functional and at the same time limited in a sense (which should be emphasised) surrounding environment for Poland is the European Union (the structure of mutual links and dependencies which comprise the EU).

Following the elections to the Sejm and Senat held on 25th October 2015, Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość – PiS) gained 235 mandates in the Sejm. PiS gathered the majority in the Sejm, which allowed them to form an independent government. In the Sejm there were also: Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska – PO) – 138 mandates, Kukiz'15 (K'15) – 42 mandates, Modern (Nowoczesna Ryszarda Petru – N) – 28 mandates, Polish People's Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe – PSL) – 16 mandates, German Minority (Mniejszość Niemiecka) – 1 mandate (Elections Outcomes, 2015). A consequence of the political change which took place as a result of parliamentary elections was the switch in respect of the perception of the place and role of Poland in the international surrounding, mainly in the area of the European Union. One can notice a departure from the conciliatory vision of the EU (the rule of PO-PSL in the years 2007-2011 and 2011-2015) and the return to the concept of sovereignty indivisibility pursued in 2005-2007 (initially as a minority government of PiS, later as a coalition of PiS, League of Polish Families [Liga Polskich Rodzin] and Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland [Samoobrona Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej]).

A category useful to explain the situation in Poland after the disintegration of the Eastern Block may prove to be the peripherality. It allows to describe specific relations of Poland with the centre that is with the European Union. The separation of Poland for almost half of the 20th century from the world system (connections within socialist countries system) determined Poland's peripherality, in both the factual and the mental dimension (Gawrycki and Szeptycki, 2011, pp. 231-232). An increasing dysfunctionality of Poland which was caused by a sudden entry in 1989 into the circle of the world capital system only revealed

even more its incompatibility with the surrounding environment (Staniszkis, 1995, p. 47). Poland's own resources proved to be insufficient to carry out profound adaptation changes. Faced with this issue, the offer of the western countries from the beginning of 20th century which promised modernisation gave Poland hope to overcome its peripherality. It was in fact a necessity, since there was no alternative for a country detached from the new international arrangement. However, this offer required the implementation of numerous solutions that would make the Polish system more compatible with western structures. By accepting this offer, Poland became at first the client of the Communities, and later the client of the European Union, and since 1st May 2004, while gradually "learning" the Union, became a participant in the integration process searching for its own place in the integration environment and trying to define its role in the new system (Cebul, 2018, p. 428).

A consequence of the lack of alternative for the integration with the EU was accelerated adaptation and a lack of immunity to disturbances of quite a weak integration compromise. Moreover, the pressure of the Union to modernise Poland, reflected in the transformation process coupled with integration processes, imposed a liberal market logic as a binding one, which limited the extent of perception of integration to an economic dimension which was adjustable to its own requirements. Consequently, internal transformations were under the impact of external logic.

But since 1st May 2004, Poland, by being included in the union system, from the position of being solely the Union's client, has gradually become a co-creator of the integration process, but at the same time was a territory susceptible to the impact of integration. In other words – a place where the country's strength clashes with the pressure to integrate. Since the breakdown of the integration compromise, whose symbol was marked by the parliamentary elections in 2001, when the groups challenging both the existing transformation direction and the-then Poland's integration achievement – the field of political discourse was polarised by two different images of the integration process. This dichotomy became especially clear before the elections in 2007 and, as subsequent analyses of debates in the Sejm confirm (Cebul, 2017), has remained until today.

Different images are the basis for various assessments of the transformation process initiated in 1989 in Poland. The first among these directions enumerates the achievements of the transformation period which preserved the continuity (mainly PO and PSL), while the

second direction focuses on systemic dysfunctions of the transformation period underlining an absolute need for in-depth reconstruction (predominantly PiS). The essence of the dispute is the fact that there are different perceptions of Poland's potential: cumulation and continuation (PO and PSL) or breaking and building from scratch/possibly re-building (PiS), respectively. On the basis of these perceptions, images of the European Union arise as well as postulates regarding the place and role of Poland in the Union (Cebul, 2018, p. 432).

The analysis of the debate held in the Sejm on 9th February 2017 concerning the information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the tasks of the Polish foreign policy in 2017 (Speeches, 2017) shows that in the Polish parliamentary discourse there are separate images of the Union, hence also two different propositions regarding the manner of Poland's participation in the integration process. The differences in this respect define a permanent division between PiS, on the one hand (postulating to achieve full sovereignty, independence of the country), and PO, N and PSL, on the other hand (accepting the necessity of dependent sovereignty which is co-created by the EU Member States). The analysis confirms the above specified persistence of images which have been observed in the Polish parliamentary discourse since 2007, consisting of two clearly separate images of the Union: 1) the EU as an area of rivalry/confrontation (PiS) vs 2) the Union of coalition (PO) and therefore – also two contrary propositions as to the manner of Poland's participation in the integration process. The position of K'15 should be situated outside the scheme described above, since this club rejects both the concept of foreign policy of PiS and the policy of PO-PSL which was previously pursued– accusing these groups that they lack the vision of the Polish raison d'État.

PiS invokes the category of decisional independence directly stemming from the classic concept of sovereignty. According to this concept, the sole entity capable of resolving the key decisions to a certain extent is the state. Limiting these powers, as PiS claims, in fact eliminates the subjectivity. In this case, the state becomes a passive object in the integration sphere, gradually dependent on other states. The Union is perceived by these groups dually: 1) as a quite effective area of security and at the same time 2) as a surface where different interests of various Member States clash (rivalry), that is an area not actually for co-operation and integration, but an area of fight for domination (to seize the rule over the Union's system). It seems that the adoption of this, somehow discordant, construction enables one to

acknowledge that the internal rivalry is a kind of process streamlining the EU system and it does not threaten the durability of the integration project. Hence, the participation in the Union's system is rather determined by exclusive preference for Polish national interest.

PO, N and PSL, in turn, use a modified concept of understanding the independence. The sovereignty seen in this way is not perceived from the particular perspective of a state but from the perspective of a country placed in the structure of connections. Here, the essential need is to reduce the contradictions of the relations between entities that form the Union's system. In this case, the independence which is characteristic of the sovereignty of a state, in the light of the classic concept, is located on the superior level (EU). Such a shift causes that the manner of perceiving Poland's position (potential) is a derivative of the evaluation/condition of the potential of the entire Union's system. It should be emphasised that this type of co-dependency is treated as an objective necessity, apart from which Poland has no alternative. This specific sort of unity in the EU is also a sort of guarantee of safety for Poland. The maintaining of the co-dependency of the state is to be guaranteed by being in the so-called main integration stream (a guarantee to be in this stream is, inter alia, the co-operation with Germany in the crucial issues for the Union). To break out from this stream means to weaken the Union.

During the debate, PO submitted a motion to reject the information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs about the tasks of the Polish foreign policy in 2017. The Sejm dismissed this motion and accepted the information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In the voting, 432 deputies took part. The outcomes of the voting were as follows: 190 deputies voted in favour of the motion to reject the information (PO – 118, K'15 – 26, N – 28, PSL – 14, Union of European Democrats [koło Unii Europejskich Demokratów – 4), 231 deputies voted against the motion (PiS – 227, non-party members – 2, Free and Solidary [koło Wolni i Solidarni] – 2), 11 deputies abstained from voting, 28 deputies did not vote (Voting, 2017).

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WHAT MACEDONIA? SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE CURRENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE NAME DISPUTE AMID FYROM'S EU INTEGRATION BID

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Abstract

Part of an ampler study dedicated to the European integration prospects of the West Balkans, this study attempts to connect the perceptions of the Macedonian name dispute to the progress of the country in matters of its sinuous accession bid. A brief historical insight into the matter enables one to comprehend the complexity and unusually strong feelings surrounding this unique hurdle in the process of EU enlargement, with inflammatory actions on both sides of the dispute, namely Skopje and Athens, and with protracted efforts of international mediators. While the antiquisation policy pursued by FYROM, which has been a (albeit not the only) bone of contention in the conflict appears to be diminishing, it remains to be seen to what extent perceptions from inside and the vicinity of the interested parties still favour the integration bid and endow it with genuine chances of accomplishment before the feebly-enshrined date of 2025. The study examines the latest developments in the name dispute, with the positions of FYROM, Greek and EU decision-makers, as well as some statistical data underlining the perceptions of affected citizens. Set against the background of the difficulties the candidate country is facing apart from the aforementioned obstacle and the progress made in compliance with the acquis, we bring forth some of the recently-emerged scenarios that are likely to unblock the Macedonian file and, along with it, appease some of the scepticism surrounding the West Balkans' integration bid.

Keywords: Macedonia, EU integration, antiquisation, West Balkans, mediation.

1. Background

The far-reaching name dispute surrounding the so-called former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is undoubtedly a remnant of the early 20th century Balkans turmoil (Herța, 2015, pp. 164-185), a rather peculiar conflict chiefly involving this country and its southern neighbour, Greece, but with much a more intricate background, taking one all the way back

to the Balkan Wars, only to later cover the Cold War period. In actuality, during the time of the People's Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and, after 1963, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the severity of the controversy was somewhat appeased by the inherent division on the continent, albeit protests on the Greek side never ceased even at that time (Rossos, 2013). What becomes of interest to us, as part of this study, is not to perform a history of the dispute, let alone explore its ancient history-inspired validity or linguistic/cultural bases. Instead, we aim to pursue the up-to-date perceptions on the matter under the auspices of FYROM's EU integration bid and to assess the prospects of the issue remaining a paramount hinderance – although far from the only one – in the aforementioned process.

Given its uniqueness in the history of EC/EU accession, which, of course, is no consolation to any of the parties involved, the case study deserves ample exploration and is fertile ground for scenario-building at a time when country denominations are seldom subjected to a process of alteration. Fairly recent precedents do exist, however, which, taken out of their respective geographic, geopolitical and historical contexts, could indicate several approaches to how a name dispute or at least a quest for a country name is likely to be tackled and prompt recognition from the international community may be achieved. A bird's eye view of the map of the world would take a wondering mind from the informally-called "Congo-Brazzaville" to South Sudan, or much closer to the case at hand, with names such as the Republic of Moldova, all of which could spark a note of controversy connected to the not-too-distant past.

Having set the objective of examining the nature of the FYROM file, it becomes apparent that our study may in no way stake a claim to be comprehensive with respect to the Macedonian terminological dispute, but rather to examine some of its possible resolutions, from the standpoint of the broader file of the integration of the West Balkans into the European Union, which is of interest to us. That said, we acknowledge the fact that the controversy extends beyond, on the one hand, the EU integration endeavour, given the fact that the NATO membership of the country is also put on hold for similar reasons, and on the other hand, since Greece is not the only member state of the Union to have formulated objections to the integration bid (even though it has been by far the most vocal), with Bulgaria expressing concern over the situation of its minority living on the territory of

FYROM (Katsikas, 2012, pp. 74-78). Nevertheless, we acknowledge that, while both NATO accession and EU negotiations are of importance to the country and broader area, we shall solely focus on the impact of the case on the latter file, whose intricacies are unquestionably greater than the much more straightforward former endeavour.

In order to underline our unbiased view on the thorny subject and to avoid complication over the nomenclature used, we shall opt for the acronym FYROM when neutrally addressing the country, with the full spelling of the word "former" in minuscule, in keeping with the United Nations' Security Council Resolution 817 of 7 April 1993, denoting a descriptive term, rather than an official name of a state (UN, 1993).

One more significant mention which we deem necessary for a proper introduction to the matter of perception surrounding the name dispute is the fact that, complementarily to it, FYROM has been involved, after gaining its independence in 1991, in a broader quest for a renewed national identity, one which would engender prestige and the kind of symbolism that brings a nation closer to its homeland. The process took the form of or became draped in nationalism, chiefly after the proclamation of independence, amid the ethnic and linguistic complications arising at the time, and devolved into what specialised literature commonly refers to as "antiquisation" (Peshkopia, 2014, pp. 183-186). A process of questionable archaeological accuracy and with perilous consequences on the ethnic stance of some of the people living within the country's borders, such as Albanians, but also Macedonians themselves to some extent, it was notably pursued by the governing Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity, between 2006 and 2016. So what is the decade-long process about and why did it spark so much controversy? The adornment of cities across the country, with the capital, Skopje, in the limelight, with statues and representations of Alexander the Great and Philip II of Macedon, and the baptising of landmarks, from airports to motorways, with such names, lies at the core of the politicised process. This, of course, only amplified the dérapage of the country from its Euro-Atlantic path, drawing stark criticism from Greece, but frowned upon by more and quickly turning into a focal point of the international community. To make matters worse, or at least more tortuous, under the impetus of the powerful FYROM diaspora, the occasional unrealistic leitmotiv of Greater Macedonia springs into public debate, which is not unique in

the Balkan scenery, but does serve as a damaging complement to the already spiky situation (Ahrens, 2007, pp. 382-386).

Whilst formulating its objections on the historical accuracy of such claims as the aforementioned ones, usually grouped around the "antiquisation" concept, Greece has also turned to the classic argument of possible territorial claims made by a country bearing the same name as its northern province, a subject which has been put forward on occasions by FYROM nationalists. We concede that the logical validity of the assumption stands, as does its historical analogies that have occasionally been brought forth by Greek decision-makers, although we cast doubt on the likelihood of any actual change that may be triggered in foreseeable times by the action itself. Regardless, institutionally speaking, this objection has led to numerous setbacks, delays and failures in the integration and modernisation endeavours of FYROM, as soon as it became an independent nation. If a UN membership compromise was brokered in 1993 (Danforth, 1997, pp. 150-151), in an unprecedented move surrounded by uncertainty over the future, a permanent solution appears to be the only clear-cut guarantee that the country would be allowed to move forward in the two major national projects pending, i.e. NATO and EU membership. Negotiations under UN auspices have been pursued since 1994, with US senior diplomat Matthew Nimetz dedicating more than two decades of his career to this unique undertaking, in a truly spectacular case worthy of a thorough biographical insight, especially if a happy ending is eventually brokered (Peshkopia, 2014, pp. 195-205).

Progress at the core of the issue was first achieved in 1995, with the Interim Accord brokered between Greece and FYROM, allowing the latter to broaden its international prospects (by joining the Council of Europe, for instance), on condition that some symbols and constitutional provisions be changed by FYROM – such as the discontinuation of the use of the Vergina Sun symbol on its national flag (Papavizas, 2006, pp. 224-225). That said, despite economic ties running smoothly with both Greece and other countries on the continent, most of which have shown no sign of reluctance to adopt and use the name Republic of Macedonia, it is evident that neither NATO nor EU membership can advance with Greece's veto power hanging over the already complicated files. On the other hand, FYROM nationals have also been exhibiting particular sensitivity to the matter, reacting negatively to attempts to be referred to as "Skopians" or "Macedonian Slavs" (Roisman and

Worthington, 2010, p. 573), which only strengthens the idea that symbols remain paramount from the national standpoint in this day and age and convey exceptionally strong feelings and cohesive factors.

A major institutional setback was met during the NATO Bucharest summit of 2008, when FYROM was not invited to join the organisation, unlike Albania and Croatia, with the name dispute cited as the principal hinderance and with certain risks to the ever more challenging geopolitics of the region (Aybet and Moore, 2010, pp. 186-187). In a predictable outcome, the FYROM government decided to initiate proceedings against Greece before the International Court of Justice for the resolution of the name dispute, whose verdict, although favourable to the former, failed to result in any imposition on Greece to lift its veto (ICJ, 2011). Thus, the severity of the case emerges and the spread of its implications begin to exhibit how much damage FYROM is likely to sustain in the absence of a definitive resolution.

2. Impact on FYROM's EU integration

The relations between FYROM and the European Union were initiated not long after the country's successful independence bid, while in 1995, the two parties engaged in formal diplomatic ties, in preparation for the Cooperation Agreement. This calendar (Government of the Republic of Macedonia, 2018) indicates the drive of the former communist state to detach from the past and pave the way for a pro-western solution, not unlike most of its former fellow-regions within Yugoslavia. After the coming into force of the Cooperation Agreement in 1996, the driving force behind FYROM's EU endeavour became the need to sign a Stabilisation and Association Agreement, which was accomplished on 9 April 2001, in Luxembourg, and entered into force in 2004.

The internal situation of the country was complex, given the large number of Albanian nationals that had sought refuge there amid the Kosovo War, leading to a destabilisation of the political context and more. The presence of the Albanians' National Liberation Army on FYROM's territory and its hostile actions in 2001 saw Macedonia in the midst of a NATO intervention, aimed at stabilising the dangerous internal situation. This was followed by the signing of the Ohrid Agreement with the ANLA, which eventually led to a normalisation of the situation within its borders (Ohrid, 2001). The favourable outcome then

enabled the EU to take over the peacekeeping duties from NATO and engage more actively with the Government in Skopje.

At the Thessaloniki Summit in 2003, FYROM had been declared a potential candidate to EU membership, along with the broader region of the West Balkans, which prompted an application from Skopje in this respect, in March 2004, days before the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the parties came into force. A National Strategy for European Integration was adopted by the Government in Skopje, setting out the priorities and strategies meant to accompany the country throughout its foreseeably protracted negotiation process. On 9 November 2005, the European Commission, under the impetus of the Commissioner for Enlargement, Olli Rehn, issued a formal recommendation for the country to be granted candidate status, which was subsequently approved by the European Council. The timeline continues with December 2009, when the visa liberalization regime was instilled and FYROM appeared to be on track, following a comparable calendar to other neighbouring countries aspiring to join the Union, such as Montenegro and Serbia (Delegation of the European Union to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 2016).

From a financial standpoint, FYROM was eligible to benefit from pre-accession funds on the part of the EU, in spite of the name dispute, starting with PHARE and, as of 2007, under the auspices of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, given the signing of the Framework Agreement with the EU. Between 2007 and 2013, 622 million euros were allocated to FYROM by the EU, while in the current multiannual framework of 2014-2020, the country has been granted 664.2 million euros to conduct its internal reforms, in keeping with its integration requirements, following the known set of priorities set for the entire West Balkans region (Idem).

It is in December 2009 that the green light was received by FYROM from the European Commission to start formal negotiations with the EU, and with the support of the European Parliament, but this failed to materialise itself, chiefly on the grounds of the name dispute with Greece. Whilst the High-Level Accession Dialogue between the European Commission and Skopje was initiated in 2012, the aforementioned hurdle prevented FYROM from attaining any progress in opening negotiation chapters. To make matters worse, in May 2015, a major political crisis erupted around the conflict between then-Prime-Minister Nikola Gruevski, of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for

Macedonian National Unity, and opposition leader Zoran Zaev, from the Social Democratic Union. The involvement of the EU in the resolution of the crisis, which included accusations of illegal wiretapping and even the alleged obstruction of a murder investigation by the Government, was prompt and led to the signing of the Pržino Agreement, in July 2015 (Euractiv, 2015). It becomes apparent that the EU has indeed assumed a stabilising role within the country, whose legitimacy partly stems from the decidedly pro-integration path adopted by Skopje. In fact, according to the European Commission's progress report on FYROM for 2018, the country has returned to a state of political stability (FYROM Report, 2018), notably after the election of Zoran Zaev as Prime-Minister, with a pro-EU and pro-NATO message, albeit both endeavours remain blocked by the name dispute.

3. Prospects amid the latest developments

Facing a categorical veto on the part of Greece and with neighbour Bulgaria hinting at the possibility to voice opposition to membership as well, FYROM appears to have picked up the pace of its actions meant to overcome this rather peculiar battle, but with major consequences on its security and prosperity. Despite the uncertainty that still hovers over the file, PM Zaev voiced the apparently positive developments in the dispute, in an interview with Reuters from 27 February 2018: "The suggestions are Republic of North Macedonia, Republic of Upper Macedonia, Republic of Vardar Macedonia and Republic of Macedonia (Skopje)" (Jones, 2018). His message echoes some of the geographically-based denominations that have been put forward on various occasions, as potential solutions to the disagreement with Greece. Indeed, the reaction from the Greek Government hits an unusually optimistic note, with Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias declaring in a news conference held in Skopje, on 23 March 2008, that: "Today, we made steps to solve the problems we inherited" and "We have agreed in great degree what we want for the future" (RFE/RL, 2018).

Moreover, it is not to be left out that the most important political parties in FYROM have stood for election on a pro-EU and mostly pro-NATO agenda. The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity has been affiliated, as an associate member, with the European People's Party since 2007 (Jansen, Steven Van Hecke, 2011, p. 79), while the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia is an

associate of the Party of European Socialists[*]. Also, the largest Albanian party in FYROM, the Democratic Union for Integration, openly embraces a pro-EU agenda,[†] which is quite significant because the Albanian minority comprises approximately a quarter of FYROM's population (Cole, 2011, p. 8).

With respect to the public opinion, a survey published on 17 February 2017 by the Macedonian Information Agency and led by the Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis", together with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, shows that 77% of FYROM's citizens are in favour of European integration. Ivan Damjanovski, of "Societas Civilis", explains that the figure would rise to 90% in the absence of the name dispute. The same study indicates that 26% of citizens believe the EU is the country's most powerful foreign ally, closely followed by Russia (25%) and the USA (17,5%), still indicating a net pro-western tilt (Macedonian Information Agency, 2017).

The EU's Commissioner for Enlargement, Johannes Kahn, has recently declared himself to be "very confident" that the name dispute will be settled before July 2018. On 16 February 2018, he explained that he was "optimistic that in the next two weeks we will have a solution. At least a solution that will open the way for the beginning of accession talks with FYROM", which – although did not occur – clearly indicated the readiness of the EU's executive to initiate formal negotiations, in which case the name dispute indeed remains the last (and perhaps it has always been the sole) obstacle. Nevertheless, this fairly optimistic statement prompted less than amiable reactions on the part of Athens and, to a lesser extent, Skopje. While the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs qualified the message as "unfortunate" and painting a "wrong picture of the negotiations", FYROM Prime-Minister Zaev treated it with gentler but no less discrediting words: "I would love it a lot, but I think it is not possible" (Euractiv, 2018).

In the meantime, the Commission does not fail to take advantage of any means at its disposal to reassert its commitment to starting accession talks with both FYROM and Albania, as underlined by HR Federica Mogherini on 18 April 2018, on a visit to Tirana

[*] The pro-EU agenda of the Party also emerges from the strategic documents published on its official platform: http://www.sdsm.org.mk.

[†] Same observation as above. See website: http://bdi.mk/en/index.php.

(Grobe, 2018). The predictable announcement reflected the internal decision of the European Commission to give this needed impetus to the two countries, which are supposed to join Montenegro and Serbia in the customary negotiation of chapters, with Kosovo remaining on the side-lines pending full recognition from all member states. However, the European Council in June is expected to have the last word on the matter which, in the absence of concrete resolution signals from Athens, is bound to once again slide into the maze of postponement.

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THE "MEDIUM-TERM"‡ HAS PASSED FOR THREE OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES. HOW DOES THE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY REACT?

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***Abstract**: Since the adoption of the European Neighbourhood Policy, criticism has been directed to the lack of policy instruments correlated with the objectives of the countries concerned. Following the evolution of relations between the EU and the six Eastern Partnership countries, three of the latter are proposing an EU accession project in the future. The EU has configured the evolution of these partnerships through Summits dedicated to the Eastern Partnership. At the request of Ukraine, Georgia and the Republic of Moldavia, the EU is owed with clarifications and options on the prospects for European accession for the three. The summit this year could offer such an opportunity if the EU were not caught up in so many dilemmas about its own future.*

Keywords: **EU enlargement, Eastern Partnership, European Neighbourhood Policy, Eastern European countries, Euro-fatigue**

1. Overview

The Enlargement Policy of the European Union is an ongoing process, started in the 1970s and continued for half a century. Beginning as a 6-member construction, at that time the European Community, today the European Union after the Maastricht Treaty, reached 28 successive members, but in the last year has also met with a retreat from within it, that of Great Britain, possibility which was only foresaw in the Treaty of Lisbon (2009).

Today, as the processes of deepening and expansion have evolved, the European Union has open accession negotiations with West Balkans states (Corpădean, 2018), which are less spoken of, due to two phenomena: first, that of a "European fatigue" in the Enlargement Policy, especially after the two successive waves of accession in 2004 and 2007, where 12 new members became part of the Union, and then, not accidentally or inexplicably,

‡ The wording refers to the terminology used in the "Wider Europe document", COM (2003) 104 final, p. 3.

difficulties in historical trajectory and complicated institutional evolutions. These are most likely to have been the reasons why the current European Commission President, JC Juncker, announced at the end of 2014 in his speech on "The European Commission's program for the next 5 years that in the current mandate there will be no new additions to the Union" (Juncker to halt enlargement, 2014).

In this context, the European Union is confronted with a significant current, geographic and historical phenomenon, that of its eastern borders, especially with the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia and less Belarus, with which it has a relationship of good neighbourliness through the perspective of stability and pursuit. That is why, in 2003, the European Union opened the dossier of a new policy, that of neighbourhoods, addressing both the Eastern and the Southern neighbours. Later, in 2009, the EU personalized its relationship with Eastern European countries through a strategy known as the "Eastern Partnership", which would meet every two years in a Summit dedicated to new developments and orientations in the area concerned.

The EU's concerns about border expressed in the neighbourhood policy have, unfortunately, turned out to be grounded. Starting with 2010, amid the Arab Spring, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, and later, with the developments in the area, it turned out that both the southern and the eastern neighbourhoods had evolved negatively from the point of view of stability, with serious long-term consequences. The year 2016 put the entire union, from this perspective, through a tough trial given the wave of migrants at the southern border of the EU, a humanitarian effort that tested both its capacity for reaction and European solidarity. On the eastern flank, Russia's aggression in the Crimean Peninsula, a Ukrainian sovereign territory, has prompted a strategic action from the EU, by positioning Russia as an aggressive state.

In this context, in 2017, the parliaments of three Eastern Partnership countries, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia, through a document addressed to the European Parliament, asked the EU to state what would be the road and future strategy for EU relations in their regard from the point of view of joining the Union. This is by no means a coincidence, on the one hand, due to the Russian strategy that is increasingly present in the area, and on the other hand, the expectations of the peoples of the three countries in the sense of an EU accession perspective were eventually encouraged by the November Eastern

Partnership summit dedicated to the Eastern Partnership - objective expectations, as we will try to show during our analysis, following the application of pre-accession instruments to the Eastern Partnership countries. Deciphering the importance and significance of the gesture of the three national parliaments is also the objective of our approach, as long as, in our opinion, the EU owes an institutional response to the request of the three states. And the efforts to re-establish and reform the European Neighbourhood Policy must be circumscribed to this answer.

But before we begin to analyse the documents and the evolution of relations between the EU and the three states, we will make some personal assumptions about the general framework offered by the EU's relations with its neighbours:

- ◊ The model of European integration, constituted and modelled historically and successively, represents for East European states a model to follow, positive and prolific, to which they would like to adhere by future integration. From this perspective, we can assess European construction, even taking into account the occasional difficulties, as a successful approach that ensures standards for countries and peoples that meet its expectations.
- ◊ The European Enlargement Policy is precisely the proof of the success of European construction today, the successive waves of new member states' accession, confirming the superior standards that a community can achieve through deep economic integration and cooperation. Through its successive enlargement efforts, the EU has steadily increased its global relevance and economic significance, so that the enlargement of the Union has become a sign and a reference to the very functioning of the EU. For this reason, the enlargement of the European Union should be phased in, first with the West Balkans and then with the eastern part of the continent.
- ◊ After all, the EU is in a positive situation of being the "victim of its own success," as the interest shown by the ten new member states today is much more significant than the regrettable withdrawal of Great Britain. It is precisely for this reason that the gesture of the three eastern states must not be

left without a response: open, generous and constructive, as is the whole European construction.

2. The Eastern Partnership within the overall geopolitical framework

Since the last meeting on the Eastern Partnership, the Riga Summit in 2015, many events have appeared on the global stage that will deeply influence the evolution of this dimension of the European External Policy. Whether we are talking about EU internal events (elections in Belgium, France and Germany, plus the Dutch Referendum on the Negotiation Agreement of Ukraine to the EU with a negative result and, not least, the Brexit process) or events at the borders of the Union (the wave of emigrants in the southern neighbourhood, the successive tensioning of relations with Russia on the Crimean Peninsula), or broader geopolitics (the election of a more distant and unequivocal president in the US with the EU), all these come to highlight future EU decisions even more significantly in the perspective of the Eastern Partnership and the evolution of this dimension.

Formally adopted in 2009 under the European Neighbourhood Policy, the strategy known as the "Eastern Partnership", dedicated to six neighbouring countries of the European Union, has seen more difficult stages and more fruitful stages, depending on the developments in the area. The year 2015 was, however, a review of this policy, especially in the context of the Russian aggression in the Crimean Peninsula.

Sustained in the moments preceding its adoption by Poland and Germany, the "Eastern Partnership" strategy was tributary to the general framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy, often referred to as ambiguous and hesitant. “In the first place, it sends contradictory signals to the Partners: if the ENP is separate from the question of membership, as the EU claims, why use pre-accession techniques? Lynch argues that this approach has led to a focus by the EU on tactics (i.e. techniques) at the expense of strategy (i.e. the long-term goal of the relationship). Thus, to the extent that the ENP incarnates the initial EU differentiation between Central and Eastern Europe, it is unsustainable. The better it succeeds, the less the ENP can legitimately be disconnected from the membership prospect of the eligible partners, because the conditions for membership are de facto being met. In other words, if it works, the ENP will create candidates.” (Cremona, Hillion, 2006)

Moreover, the main criticism to the European Neighbourhood Policy is that, in the first place, it is a policy of internal tensions that emerged since its launch: “As previously emphasized, the ENP has been marked by ambivalence from its very inception. This engendered discrepancies in expectations which have not been reconciled” (Cadier, 2013), and then putting neighbouring countries in a position of meeting specific candidate country criteria without having this perspective has brought the ENP to a point where major future decisions are required. “Countries of the neighbourhood were originally hoping for some signs of ‘EU membership light’ at the end of the ‘ENP’, while the EU was hoping to see deep and sustainable political reforms implemented – but neither party could readily offer what the other wished for”. (Cadier, 2013)

At this point in our perspective, we will only say that the historical evolution of the European Neighbourhood Policy needs a recalibration that puts its objectives in line with both the EU's prospects in the field of Foreign and Security Policy and the options and aspirations of the participating countries, especially with the new independent states of Eastern Europe. The signal of the National Parliaments of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia is, therefore, a reference to this need for recalibration and remodelling. "The EU proposes to launch in 2016 a new phase of cooperation with partner countries, including consultations on the nature and priorities of the partnership in the future. It is expected that different configurations will be crystallized in the relations between the EU and the neighbourhood, so that there is a stronger sense of commitment and accountability. The EU stands ready to discuss the possibility of jointly setting up new partnership priorities, which would better articulate each relationship around common interests identified.” (Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy, 2015)

Remarks, welcome, are presented in a document issued at the end of 2015, the result of a Review of the Entire European Neighbourhood Policy, initiated through the Neighbourhood at the Crossroads (2014).

3. What is the starting point?

Since 2002, with the coming of the preparatory year of the largest wave of EU accession, i.e. 2004, with ten new members, the Union, through its institutions, has shown concern about the new future borders both in the east and in the south, amid the future

accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007[§]. Thus, in 2003, the Communication "Wider Europe Neighbourhood: a New Framework for Relations with Our Eastern and Southeastern neighbours" was adopted, in which the issue of the successive approximation of the standards of the neighbouring countries to the acquis communautaire brings somehow logically the perspective of future accession to the EU: "EU's neighbourhood should benefit from the prospect of closer economic integration with the EU in its return to concrete progress demonstrating shared values and effective implementation of political, economic and institutional reform, including aligning legislation with the acquis. (...) If a country has reached this level, it has come as close to the Union as it can be without being a member." (Wider Europe-Neighbourhood…, 2003)

However, to plan the outlook for the moment, we must remember that Europe was approaching the largest wave of accession in 2004 and 2007, and the option of admission to the EU for the countries covered by the ENP was well-specified. "The aim of the Neighbourhood Policy is therefore to provide a framework for the development of a new relationship that would not, in the medium term, include a perspective of membership or a role in the Union's institutions." (Wider Europe-Neighbourhood…, 2003)

Even more so, in an honest assessment of the language and signals transmitted by the President of the European Commission at the time, Romano Prodi, in a speech at the end of 2002, we can easily see both the preoccupations of a tie between the two policies, enlargement and neighbourhood, and the compensatory offer that European leaders had in mind. "The goal of accession is certainly the most powerful stimulus for reform we can think of it. But why should not the goal be less? A substantive and workable concept of proximity would have a positive effect. (...) we have to be prepared to offer more than partnership and less than membership, without precluding the latter. (...) A proximity policy would not start with the promise of membership and would not rule out eventual membership". On the same occasion, the President of the European Commission affirmed a later acknowledged and much resumed principle, "sharing everything with the Union but institutions." (Prodi, 1999)

[§] See the European Parliament's reports on new neighbourhoods from the end of 2002 and the beginning of 2003.

Hence, things were clear at the end of 2002, as outlined in the 2003 Wider Europe document, so that in 2004 the "Neighbourhood Policy" was even avoided in the release text of the new policy. “Since the launching of this policy, the EU has emphasized that it provides a means of strengthening relations between the EU and the partner countries, which is distinct from the possibilities available to European countries under Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union.” (European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper, 2004)

Looking at things from the perspective of this article, they are legally clear as long as its second paragraph clearly specifies that procedures for the admission of new Member States, subject to prior conditions, will be subject to a specific and separate agreement. "The conditions of admission and the adjustments to the Treaties on which the Union is founded shall be the subject of an agreement between the Member States and the applicant State. This Agreement shall be submitted for ratification by all Contracting States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements. The conditions of eligibility agreed upon by the European Council shall be taken into account.” (Lisbon Treaty, 2009) The aforementioned Neighbourhood Policy clarification furthermore states the fact that the new policy has no place in, nor is it confused with the EU Enlargement Policy, and the processes registered within it cannot be assumed as an accession processes to the EU. “The next step could consist of the negotiation of European Neighbourhood Agreements, to replace the present generation of bilateral agreements, when Action Plan priorities are met. Progress made in this way will enable the EU and its partners to agree on longer term goals for the further development of relations in the years ahead.” (European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper, 2004). In this way, what are the future stages of the ENP, which sheds even more light on the policy outlook, whose major objectives are, in fact, the economic integration that is as coherent as the neighbours’ and, automatically, the stabilization of the area of neighbouring circles.

However, today, the EU finds itself in the position, nearly 15 years after the adoption of the ENP, of responding to the three states with which it has already signed "EU" and "Deep Economic Co-operation" agreements - we are talking about Georgia, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova.

4. Neighbourhood Policy today

Several well-known issues characterize the European Neighbourhood Policy at this time:

- The ambiguous tone of ENP summits;
- The provisions of the Association Treaties of the three signatory states (Ukraine, Georgia and Republic of Moldova);
- Reserves expressed by EU citizens to the approach of the three, due to "Euro-fatigue", mirrored by the referendum in the Netherlands;
- The expectations of the three East European peoples, expressed in turn by the letter of the three presidents.

To these four listed landmarks, we believe that the conjuncture in which the EU finds itself at the moment is also to be added, a situation that we have tried to portray in the first part of our paper. Together, all these milestones produce a status-quo of the ENP that will certainly trigger a reorientation, if not a decision on the future of this European policy and, along with it, on the EU's relationship with the three states.

Regarding the ambiguous tone, the strategic decisions or only the stage, characteristic of Eastern Partnership Summits, we also emphasize their historical evolutions and their directions for approach.... But going beyond stage decisions, the real issues of ENP remain visible to any concerned analyst. “However, the final efficacy of all those efforts depends on more than just the quality of projects, preparation of appropriate actions or amounts of resources involved. Instead, it seems that the principal problem behind the ENP is its very serious limitation, which results more from the very essence of that policy than it does from any weaknesses of its concept. The problem in question is the lack of the most important impulse to stimulate the EU’s partners to contract close ties and collaboration under the European Neighbourhood Policy – namely: the lack of real prospects of getting their full membership in the European Union. This assumption was at the very base of the policy idea in the first place: out of definition, it isn’t meant to pave the way for membership, it is just going to build a network of close links with neighbouring countries or regions.” (Petrov, 2007)

Considering the relative aspects of European policies that are often the simplest ground for relationships that may become particularly tight, we will have the duty to point out

the moment of the conclusion of the Association Treaties to the EU of the three nominated states, but they do not, however, give them more hopes for future membership of the Union. In this respect, we only reproduce the European Parliament's resolution 3032/2015, in which, referring to the mentioned treaties, the institution "underlines that, under Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, any European State may apply to become a member of the EU." "Any European State which respects the values referred to in Article 2 and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the Union. The European Parliament and national Parliaments shall be notified of this application. The applicant State shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after consulting the Commission and after receiving the consent of the European Parliament, which shall act by a majority of its component members. The conditions of eligibility agreed upon by the European Council shall be taken into account. The conditions of admission and the adjustments to the Treaties on which the Union is founded, which such admission entails, shall be the subject of an agreement between the Member States and the applicant State. This agreement shall be submitted for ratification by all the contracting States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements." (Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, 2012)

At this point in our paper, we cannot omit that, by definition, the relations established by the Association Agreements between the European Union and the three countries must be assessed on two levels, the EU on the one hand, and these agreements themselves, on the other hand. "It should be remembered that the ENP has been run at two different levels: that of the EU and that of its Member States. This means that both intents and specific actions of the Community institutions are confronted with preferences and national policies of the EU's individual Member States. In many cases this leads to conflicts of interests or clashes, which, according to an extreme scenario, might result in the whole EU's policy being paralysed. The lack of any consistent policy on the part of the EU regarding the conflict in the former Yugoslavia was a good example thereof, this having resulted, among other things, from disagreements between France and Germany. Differing attitudes of various Member States towards the "orange revolution" in Ukraine provide another example. The EC/EU's Eastern policy, being a fundament for the ENP, obviously has to evolve in the setting of similar conditions and limitations." (Petrov, 2007)

For this reason, we also remember the referendum in the Netherlands on Ukraine, as well as refer to its potential significance in overcoming happiness. “It is not clear what the referendum outcome means for the EU-Ukraine agreement. Of the EU’s 28 members, the Netherlands is the last government to ratify the deal — which already went into full effect in January. The Dutch prime minister, Mark Rutte, said the ratification could not automatically go forward, and he would now have to consult his government.” (Stern, 2016)

We have touched upon the aspects we have set to bring forth. In addition to the two parts of an international treaty, their peoples, their future choices, the public opinion forming the conjuncture that might favour or, on the contrary, block such a legal link, must also be taken into account. By bringing the peoples into question, we will need, with sufficient importance, to pay attention to the signals provided by the citizens of the three signatory states of the Association Agreements. Of course, improving economic conditions as well as the adoption of the acquis communautaire can be sufficiently generous targets for any neighbouring EU country. But here and there, things are more than natural, they bring these countries towards the European Union so much that the next natural step is accession, and the citizens of the signatory states are even entitled to expect this. But even in this case, the entire Neighbourhood Policy does not provide clear answers. “A tension may similarly exist between the economic development objectives of the ENP and the issue of accession; it is not clear to what extent measures adopted with a view to accession in fact contribute in the most effective way to economic development. In addition, of course, although accession may be an ultimate objective of some of the neighbours, it is not a stated EU objective. However, the ENP-based rationale (in the absence of an accession rationale) for the neighbours to adopt the EU acquis and implement substantial economic reform programmes is not always clear. The neighbour states are likely therefore to develop their reform strategies in the light of their own economic development needs.” (Petrov, 2007)

For all these reasons, in particular, the gesture of the presidents of the three national parliaments in Georgia, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova must be seen as a signal on behalf of the peoples they represent as supreme legislative-representative fora. The joint declaration was signed by the head of the Moldovan parliament, Andrian Candu, his Georgian counterpart, Irakli Kobahidze, and the chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Andrei Parubiy. The leaders urge the European Parliament to adopt a resolution, regarding

their future membership, at the Eastern Partnership summit to be held in November 2017. "We, the parliaments of Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, call on the European Parliament to adopt a Resolution prior to the EaP Summit reflecting political support and reaffirming the appeal to the European Council to opening the Perspective of Membership to the three Associated Countries in line with Article 49 of the Treaty of the European Union. With this ambitious and forward-looking statement, the EaP Summit Declaration shall carry a powerful signal in the currently strained geopolitical situation and shall become an inspiring instrument to accelerate further progress and democratic transformation of the three associated partners of the EU." (The joint Statement by the Parliaments of…, 2017)

At the same time, if we are talking about the atmosphere created, referring to the referendum in the Netherlands, it is imperative to refer to the vision of the EU countries already extending eastwards. Preferring the optimistic option, we also take on the perspective that the ENP and the EP represent anchorages of future possible memberships for the three signatory states of the EU's Association Agreements. Today, however, a few days ahead of the future Eastern Partnership Summit, we wonder whether the European Union has a prompt response to the three states' question about their future European path, because the strength of the continental joint venture has been highlighted with every enlargement (News European Parliament, 2017). Does Europe still have energy for the future?

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ASPECTS OF EUROPE´S NORMATIVE POWER IN THE CONTEXT OF ROMANIA´S TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

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Abstract

This paper aims to provide an insight into the European Union constructing its role as a normative power in relation to Central and Eastern European countries. Special attention is drawn to a specific scenario, namely Romania´s attempts to initiate the transitional justice process. Thereby, it is shown that transitional justice has become increasingly relevant within the EU, and that it has recently evolved into an independent European field of action within the democratization policy. This leads to the question of previous manifestations and impacts of Europe´s normative power role in relation to Central and Eastern European countries, more specifically to Romania´s transitional justice measures. Although a more indirect approach has been followed, the diffusion of Europe´s norms within communicative platforms and even normative pressure were identified in relation to truth seeking attempts and reconciliation with the communist past.

Key words: normative power, transitional justice, Romania, European Union, reconciliation with the communist past

1. Introduction

The European Union continues to change its behaviour as a global player, depending on multiple variables including resources and instruments available in each policy field, internal cohesion among member states, external constellations, and especially the role of the counterpart it is acting on. One major challenge in acting globally with a single voice is facing different situations, which make a coherent behaviour - given its complex decisional structure and the multiple actors having to reach a common denominator - even more difficult. Therefore, it is more appropriate to differentiate between and discuss scenarios of EU actorness, rather than refer to uniform attitudes in international relations.

When referring to "normative power Europe" (Manners, 2002; Dietz, 2005), several scenarios arise from its effectiveness towards specific actors, in other words, the reaction of member or third states towards the EU´s normative claims, this effectiveness being measured in what scholars more recently also describe as "Europeanization" (Börzel 2003; Hirschhausen and Patel, 2010; Radaelli, 2003). Other scenarios could emerge from Europe´s behaviour itself.

The main purpose of this paper is to examine the constructiveness of "normative power Europe" from both perspectives, pointing at internal and external challenges confronting the EU and arguing about the importance of role-assignments not only as self-attributions but also as ascriptions granted by member states or third countries. The perspective of Central and Eastern European countries seems to be even more interesting in this regard, as this region has always felt part of Europe and, on the other hand, because it still had to undergo – even more than other old member states – an adjustment process that was not without normative pressure. Following these introductory remarks, the first part of the paper will discuss the concept of "normative power Europe" introduced in the scientific and political debate by Ian Manners and Thomas Dietz (chapter 2), while in the main second part the focus will be shifted to Romania´s case, namely transitional justice discourses that may have consolidated or even challenged the construction of Europe´s normative role (chapters 3 and 4).

2. Constructing Normative Power Europe

Compared to other actors in the international system and especially to the USA, Europe was described in terms of military (Bull, 1982), civilian (Duchene, 1972; Maull, 1992) and ultimately normative power (Manners, 2002; Dietz, 2005), which corresponds to the endeavours of the EU to act in the global system as a distinctive entity with a single voice.

Considering its new form of governance, the European Union emerged as a new type of actor, being firstly described by François Duchêne (1972) as a "civilian power" with various economic and lack of military resources (cited in Manners, 2002, p. 236). Starting from this point, political and social science scholars extended the debate to the concepts "civilising power" (Hyde-Price, 2000 cited in Niemann and June, 2011, p. 105-106),

"normative power" (Dietz, 2005; Manners, 2002), and "hegemonic power" (Niemann and June, 2011, p. 114), and adapted those to new challenges of European foreign policy. Without tracing the history of this concept, this paper focuses on Ian Manners´ (2002) and Thomas Dietz´s (2005) "normative power Europe", which is more relevant in this regard, as it emphasises the ideational aspect of norms and values.

Referring to H. Maull (1992) and K. Twitchett (1976), Manners mentions significant aspects, which mark the economic and civilian dimension of the European Union: "the primacy of diplomatic co-operation to solve international problems; and the willingness to use legally-binding supranational institutions to achieve international progress." (Twitchett, 1976, pp. 1-2; Maull, 1990, pp. 92-3 cited in: Manners, 2002, pp. 236-37). The opposite perspective which Manners refers to as "empirical force" (Manners, p. 238) is that of "military power Europe" emphasised by Hedley Bull (1982) on the background of the Cold War (Manners, 2002, p. 237). Manners (2002, p. 240) concludes that both "civilian and military power Europe" have been structured by the political constellation of the Cold War, also stressing the continuing weakness of the European defence policy despite its increasing institutionalization after the Cold War. Pointing out that former regimes defined themselves rather normatively and that their collapse was rather a normative than a physical one, Manners argues about the concept of "normative power Europe" described as the "ability to shape conceptions of `normal´" (Manners, 2002, p. 240), therefore shifting the focus from institutional to cognitive, symbolic processes (Manners, 2002, pp. 239-240).

Significant political and institutional transformations, such as the European integration process, the eastward enlargement, and the further development of the social policy in order to overcome negative consequences of market integration have been linked to a catalogue of norms, which aim to ensure the EU´s internal and international identity. "Peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law, human rights" but also the subsequent norms "social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development and good governance" (Manners, 2002, p. 242) are included, according to Manners, in EU´s normative basis. Whether through unintentional or intentional diffusion, the European Union acts in different policy fields, using also its normative reserves. However, the specific circumstances in which the EU is able to infuse norms, considering also other normative powers, as well as the unclear

distinction between norm diffusion and represented interests, were subject to criticism, as emphasized by Thomas Dietz (Dietz, 2005).

Thomas Dietz (2005) draws on Manners' concept and considers "normative power" from the constructivist perspective - rather than a discourse, a more or less efficient ability to change others´ behaviours and attitudes. In his view: "`Normative power` is not an objective category […] it is a practice of discursive representation" and the main question "is not whether Europe is a normative power or not, but how it is constructed as one." (Dietz, 2005, p. 626). He continues to argue that the European Union is engaged in a practice of "othering", constructing "the other" in order to play a normative role in relation to it. Others may be represented therefore as "existential thread", "inferior", "violating universal principles", or "different" (Dietz, 2005, p. 628). The EU is strengthening to each of these counterparts its corrective function. In order to avoid double standards and prescriptive attitudes, Dietz (2005) suggests, at the end, a self-reflexive approach.

The question in this regard is whether the EU can apply its practice of "othering" not only in relation to various international actors, but also within its own structures. In addition to the practice of "othering", an extensive view on the EU´s normative power role should also include attributions granted by member states and third countries. Only a mutual role attribution can validate this concept, detach it from a one-sided, unidirectional definition and therefore complete it.

However, these attributions are differentiated and gradually used by both sides. While the EU, according to Thomas Dietz (2005), develops several forms of "otherness" to which it behaves differently, with a different degree of normativity, the addressees respond by the role attribution "normative power Europe", which they assess in relation to their self-image. Thus, the attributions by candidate-, neighbour-, and other third countries, but also among member states, would be different or at least would gradually differentiate.

On the other hand, although the EU advocates universal norms, it uses - depending on the scope for action and the profile of the addressees – a variety of norm diffusion instruments, which in turn have a gradually varying impact: Stabilization and Association Agreements, accession negotiations, development policy, diplomatic conflict resolution, or foreign trade. Actors such as Russia, the USA, the West Balkans countries or the new and old member states may respond differently to Europe´s normative aspirations.

In such different constellations, it is therefore more appropriate to discuss what Norman Davies (1997, p. 9) emphasise as “tidal Europe” and other scholars recently relate to as the concept of “Europeanization” (Hirschhausen and Patel, 2010), as well as to mental maps or the spatial dimension of cognitive processes (Troebst, 2013). “Tidal forms” of normative power are providing a more differentiated explanation for Europe´s identity constructions, considering their spatial and temporal transformations, the more or less prominent capacity or willingness to enforce this role, as well as the various reactions of the counterparts.

3. The European Union´s transitional justice policy

One of the most important areas in which the European Union enforces its role as a normative power is that of transitional justice.

This process includes a series of legal and institutional measures meant to ensure transition from an authoritarian, dictatorial to a democratic regime, based on human rights principles. Providing access to secret police archives, seen as a precondition for other transitional justice mechanisms, as well as lustration, trials on crimes against humanity, formation of truth commissions, and material compensation or moral rehabilitation of victims are, however, state affairs that, because of their controversy or conflict potential, are often induced by external normative pressure. Reconciliation with the past could also be initiated by various scientific, cultural or civil society communities, which do not necessarily direct public opinion towards a moral, but rather a critical examination of the past (Gyöngy, 2016).

The EU´s relation to Central and Eastern European countries before and even after enlargement was linked to transitional justice issues at a discursive level, rather than to concrete top-down indications focused on the entire judicial reform. Moreover, in relation with the West Balkans, the normativity of transitional justice was led to a categorical imperative, which ultimately indicates that the EU seems to be tightening its role as a normative power. In the context of accession negotiations, conditionality was extended to

concrete transitional justice measures, namely world-crime trials led by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) (Woelk, 2013).[**]

Although already implicit in the EU´s democratization and enlargement policy including the Copenhagen criteria and the 23th Negotiation Chapter, transitional justice as a commitment was explicitly introduced in the *Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2015-2019* (c. 22b) and further elaborated in *The EU´s Policy Framework on support to transitional justice* (2015) as part of its implementation. The objectives and measures elaborated in the latter document reflect the lessons that "normative power Europe" has drawn so far and emphasise a contextual, flexible approach to supporting transitional justice, which should ensure timely implementation, address challenges of political will in the respective country and provide support to further victim groups such as women and children (EU´s Policy Framework, 2015). Moreover, the cooperation with international organisations, the UN and the International Criminal Court in particular, but also with local and international civil society has been identified as particularly important, suggesting that the EU is neither able nor willing to act prescriptively. This multilateral framework should facilitate the exchange of best practices and the implementation of training programmes, mutual learning, which in turn reinforces its open attitude towards transitional justice.

However, normative pressure can result from the direct connection of the transitional justice process with crisis management, development policy, and, most importantly, with enlargement policy, which ultimately brings financial incentives and accession prospects into the equation. In addition to combating impunity and providing "technical and financial support", in the specific field of enlargement policy the bottom-up process of transitional justice is explicitly emphasised, with the EU now focusing on empowering civil society and NGOs open for reconciliation. This seems to be particularly relevant given the role of the EU vis-à-vis Central and Eastern European countries in their pre-accession period.

[**] Further details about the EU´s transitional justice requirements in the West Balkans, as well as about the current status of the enlargement and neighbourhood policy can be found in: COM (2018) 65 final. *A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans*, pp. 6-7/ p. 15, Strasbourg, 6.2.2018. Available from: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:d284b8de-0c15-11e8-966a-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF [Accessed 26/04/18].

4. Romania´s approach to transitional justice: constructing normative power Europe?

The main areas of transitional justice in Romania are the lustration attempts in the 1990s, the criminal prosecution and, in some cases, the conviction of communist officials, and finally the opening of the Securitate files and the foundation of the *National Council for the Study of Securitate Archives* (CNSAS) (Stan, 2009), the latter being a precondition for judicial, political, cultural, scientific, and individual coming to terms with the communist past. However, all these transitional justice areas, while being a major issue of public debate, either have failed or are lagging behind, the most advanced area being the administration of the Securitate files by CNSAS (Stan, 2009), without considering here the restitution of properties and the material compensation of victims.[††]

Systematic and more comprehensive scientific research on this subject was provided by Lavinia Stan (2009) and Julie Trappe (2009), both pointing to the lack of political will and other technical difficulties faced in this process. In this regard, the measures taken at the official level were not without controversy, power struggles or criticism within civil society, and furthered the division between the new-old political elites and the Romanian society. Focused on rhetorical commitments rather than concrete judicial measures and their coherent implementation, the transitional justice process has been prolonged and rendered obsolete.

Considering the implementation deficits of transitional justice in Romania, also emphasised by various scientific endeavours (Gyöngy 2016; Stan, 2009; Trappe, 2009), one could raise the questions: what role did Europe play in this process, how was this role discursively constructed and what impact did it have in this regard?

"Normative power Europe" can be identified in this specific context – rather in Thomas Dietz´s than in Ian Manners´ terms – as a discursive construction. The main explanation lies in the absence of direct intervention through explicit guidelines and in the creation of a (transnational) communicative platform, allowing first of all the emergence of such ascriptions that finally confirmed its normative role. By supporting bottom-up

[††] For a country-based as well as a comparative insight into transitional justice measures in various European countries, see the online platform *Transitional Justice and Memory in the EU*, available from: http://www.proyectos.cchs.csic.es/transitionaljustice/, [Accessed 28/04/18].

initiatives, as also envisaged in the current enlargement policy (The EU´s policy framework, 2015), the EU has gained access to non-state social structures, thus indirectly exerting normative power.

The "return to Europe"- a paradigm emphasised by Central and Eastern European countries after the end of communism and, in this respect, the return to European democratic principles was highlighted in particular by emerging civil society groups. Newly founded political and cultural organizations were steeped in this idea.[‡‡] Society´s claim to transitional justice was not limited to the Romanian state either, but was discursively linked to Europe; this intended to put the Romanian state under normative pressure. Nevertheless, these discourses had to confront nationalistic tendencies often turned against Europe´s norm infusion (Marino, 1996, chapter IV).

Nonetheless, the return to European democratic values was explicitly declared in the *Proclamation of Timișoara* (1990), the first document claiming transitional justice and, in particular, lustration (Art. 8), a document created by Timișoara´s civil society and former protesters (Stan, 2009). Beyond lustration, which ultimately could not be achieved, this document clearly reflects openness towards Western Europe, without claiming to imitate it. Entering the "House of Europe" – one could recognise M. Gorbachev´s concept – is linked to a learning process based on values of tolerance, "European" democracy, dialogue and freedom of political expression (Art. 4 and 5, Proclamation of Timișoara, 1990). In this proclamation, the European "normative pressure" projected upon the new political leaders becomes particularly visible.

After transitional justice measures such as lustration, opening the Securitate archives and criminal proceedings against human rights offenders proved to be mostly unsuccessful in the 1990s (Stan, 2009), and new initiatives emerged especially in the second half of the 2000´s, in the context of Romania´s accession to the EU. The approach changed, however, from a judicial to a more symbolic one, so that one could speak of softening transitional justice. The link between truth-seeking and the confrontation with the past, on the one hand,

[‡‡] A remarkable collection of press articles, founding documents and statements from the civil society and intellectual elites concerned with the idea of Europe between 1990 and 1995, can be found in: Adrian Marino (ed.) (1996) *Revenirea în Europa. Idei și controverse românești 1990-1995*. Craiova: Aius.

and European norms and principles, on the other, was not only advocated within various civil society groups, but also affirmed among political actors. The establishment of a truth commission to investigate the Romanian communist past (Raport final, 2006)[§§], on the basis of which president Traian Băsescu´s condemnation of communist atrocities in parliament took place in December 2006, was nevertheless marked by EU accession and, consequently, by a certain normative pressure. In his speech (Speech given by Traian Băsescu, 2006),[***] he addressed Romania´s new future within the Union, pointing to a break with the communist past. He also referred to Resolution 1481/2006 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, emphasizing the European normative framework in which this symbolic act took place.

Further evidence for "normative power Europe"- attributions concerns the Securitate archives, whose accessibility has been assured during this period. Even though they have been open since 1999, access to the files has been hampered by shortcomings und controversies (Gyöngy, 2016; Stan, 2009). In this regard, Europe´s communicative platform was identified within the *European Network of Official Authorities in Charge of the Secret-Police Files* launched in 2008. This network representing all Eastern European authorities responsible for examining the files of the former political police relies on mutual exchange of information and best practices. The new European cooperation framework as well as the prevention of political instrumentalization of these files were particularly emphasised in the foundation paper:

> "With the establishment of this European network, we would like to make clear that these issues do not encompass merely a national context. They involve coming to terms with the past in a European, an international context. We wish to stress the importance of opening the files and access to these files, which is regulated in accordance

[§§] Comisia prezidențială pentru analiza dictaturii comuniste din România, *Raport final, 2006,* București. Available from: http://www.proyectos.cchs.csic.es/transitionaljustice/sites/default/files/maps/info/truth-commissions/romania_commission_2006.pdf [Accessed 22/04/18].

[***] The Speech given by the President of Romania, Traian Băsescu, on the occasion of the Presentation of the Report by the Presidential Commission for the Analysis of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania (The Parliament of Romania, 18 December 2006).

Available from: http://www.proyectos.cchs.csic.es/transitionaljustice/sites/default/files/maps/info/public-apologies/romania_basescu_condemns_communism_2006.pdf [Accessed 22/04/18].

> with the rule of law, and also the importance of independent research […]. We wish to guarantee the full independence of archival research. Any kind of political instrumentalization must be prevented. We wish to advocate this together publicly." (Foundation Paper, 2008, p. 77).[†††]

This statement indicates that a European communicative framework can promote exchanges and mutual learning among the countries concerned, thereby allowing the intentional or unintentional, "informational" or "procedural" (Manners, 2002, pp. 244-245) diffusion of European norms. The constructed "other", in the words of Thomas Dietz (2005), is thus gradually incorporated into a common "self", not without changing it.

5. Conclusion

The reasons why Romania´s transitional justice is still lagging behind other Central and Eastern European countries were emphasised by Lavinia Stan (2009). The social advancement of a major part of Romania´s population as well as the high number of party members and informers during the communist period indicate either regime acceptance or resignation, both incompatible with demands for transitional justice and reconciliation with the communist past. Moreover, the relatively limited anti-regime opposition during the 1980s finally hampered an "elite replacement", leaving room for "elite reproduction" (Stan, 2009, pp. 147-148). Another reason for this hesitant attitude towards transitional justice is closely related to the emergence and cohesion difficulties faced by the civil society during and after the communist regime, a civil society that would have had the ability to guide the regime change and the post-communist transition in a much more coherent way.

However, "normative power Europe" envisaging principles of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, to mention just a few, has been linked to transitional justice in Central and Eastern Europe mainly through transnational communication platforms, informational

[†††] Foundation Paper "The European Network of Official Authorities in Charge of the Secret-Police Files", Berlin, 16. 12. 2008. *The „European Network of Official Authorities in Charge of the Secret-Police Files", a Reader on their Legal Foundations, Structures and Activities* (2009), Berlin: Die Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, pp. 77-79. Available from: http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/European%20Network.pdf, [Accessed 28/04/18].

exchange and mutual learning, which encouraged these countries to grant normative roles to the EU.

At discursive level, normative pressure regarding concrete transitional justice measures was played off by oppositional or civil society groups against the old-new political elites, while later, at the time of accession, it was taken over even by the political leaders.

Tidal forms of "normative power Europe" can be noticed even more recently in the programmatic strengthening of the EU´s role in this field. The transitional justice policy is now directly related not only to the enlargement policy, but also to conflict resolution and peace building (EU´s Policy Framework, *2015*), precisely because the current political situation in the new neighbouring and accession countries could escalate into new conflicts, while the normative power of the communist regime in East-Central Europe at the time no longer presented any conflict potential, but still belonged to a "constructed other".

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CHANGES IN THE EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT POLICY AFTER 2020. CONCLUSIONS FOR THE VISEGRÁD GROUP

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the changes that will take place in the development policy of the European Union after 2020 from the perspective of the Visegrád Group states. The article begins from a short description of the systems of development cooperation among the four states of the Visegrád Group. The analysed elements are i.a.: evolution of engagement of V4 states in development cooperation and assumptions of their assistance programmes, particularly the assisted sectors and countries. Through the above, the author indicates that the V4 states have a similar historical experience of their cooperation with developing countries and their development programmes have similar characteristics (for example, the assistance level, supported sectors and countries) and problems, i.a. in execution of their international obligations. As a result, the V4 states are not in the centre of the debate on development assistance. The next part of the article analyses the conditions of development policies, indicating both changes in the international environment of the European Union, such as the increasing differentiation among the developing countries, growth of the position of BRIC countries or adoption of the new development agenda, and also the changes that have occurred within the European Union itself, including i.a.: institutional changes and Brexit. The above constitutes the basis for the analysis of potential changes in the development policy of the European Union after 2020. The paper ends with an analysis of the challenges faced by the V4 states on their way to effective participation in international development cooperation.

Keywords: **development assistance, Visegrád Group, V4, European Union, sustainable development goals**

1. Introduction

Development policy is one of the key areas of foreign relations of the European Union. Due to the significant funds dedicated to it, the European Commission and the

member states are jointly the most important entities creating international development cooperation as they constitute more than a half of the official world development assistance.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the future changes in the development policy of the European Union after 2020 from the perspective of the Visegrád Group states (V4). The adoption of new perennial frames of financing and new assumptions of cooperation with countries of Africa, the Pacific and the Caribbean gives an opportunity to modify the development policy in a way that it reflects the conditions and interests of the European Union in the forthcoming years in a better way. It will not happen without influencing policies of individual member states.

The V4 states seem to be an interesting case due to a number of reasons. In spite of some experience dating back to the times of the Cold War, the states are still called "emerging donors". In the 1990s, the V4 countries had to build their capacity of development cooperation from almost nothing. As a result of many weaknesses, their policies are often different from international practices. A substantial part of their development assistance is distributed through the European Union and due to that they might be significantly affected by the mentioned changes. Ignoring their importance might result in V4 continuing to distance itself from accepted international practices, which would in turn deteriorate their position in the European Union. At the same time, analysing the V4 case allows drawing broader conclusions relating to challenges faced by all South-East European member states of the EU.

To do that, it is necessary to answer the following questions: What are the assumptions of the development policy of the V4 countries, particularly what are their goals and directions of action? What factors will condition development cooperation in the forthcoming years? What will be their influence on the development policy of the European Union? What could be another, better form of assistance programmes of the V4? What particular changes should the V4 countries introduce to adjust their policies to changes in international, particularly the Union's, development policy? What are the biggest challenges faced within this area?

This article has the following structure: the first part begins with a short description of systems of development cooperation of the four countries of the Visegrád Group. The author proves that the V4 countries have similar historical experience of cooperation with

developing countries and their assistance programmes have similar characteristics (for example, the level of assistance, supported sectors and states) and face similar problems. The V4 countries are out of the main debate on development cooperation and struggle with the execution of many obligations in this area. The second part is dedicated to analysing the factors conditioning development policies. The author indicates changes in the international environment of the European Union, such as the growing diversity of the developing countries or the adoption of the new development agenda and the changes that have occurred within the European Union itself. Among them the author analyses institutional changes and Brexit. That constitutes the basis of the third part, describing potential changes in the development policy of the European Union after 2020. The fourth part of the article is dedicated to challenges that the V4 countries must face to effectively participate in international development cooperation.

2. Development cooperation of the countries of the Visegrád Group

In spite of the fact that the V4 countries are often called “emerging donors”, they have provided international assistance for quite a long time since the 1950s. Their programmes work in a similar historical context. Before transition, the V4 states did not pursue a fully independent foreign policy and their actions used to be in accordance with the ideological and political interests of the Soviet Union. Their policies were coordinated by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. Within its scope, the main effort was directed towards other socialist states or allied authoritarian regimes, including receivers like Cuba, Vietnam, North Korea, Mongolia and Angola. Its basis was constituted by technical and scientific cooperation covering the supply of equipment, experts, trainings, scholarships and subsidized loans. The above-mentioned actions had little to do with actual assistance in economic development as their beneficiaries were selected through political decisions. Those states were important from the perspective of the geopolitical interests of the USSR and the transferred aid was mainly used to support communist regimes (Szent-Iványi and Tétényi, 2013: 820-821). At its peak, in the 1970s, the assistance provided by Central and Eastern European states may have had the total value of around 300 million USD, but due to combining development assistance with economic and military cooperation, it is difficult to assess it in a precise manner (Lancaster, 2007: 31; Pavlik, 2016: 38).

In the 1980s, as a result of growing economic problems, the assistance programmes of V4 were significantly reduced and finally put on hold nearly a decade later. The main focus of the V4 policy was moved to political and economic transformation, and integration with Western structures, as a result of which the remaining aspects of foreign policy, including relations with developing countries, were marginalized (Carbone, 2007: 47).

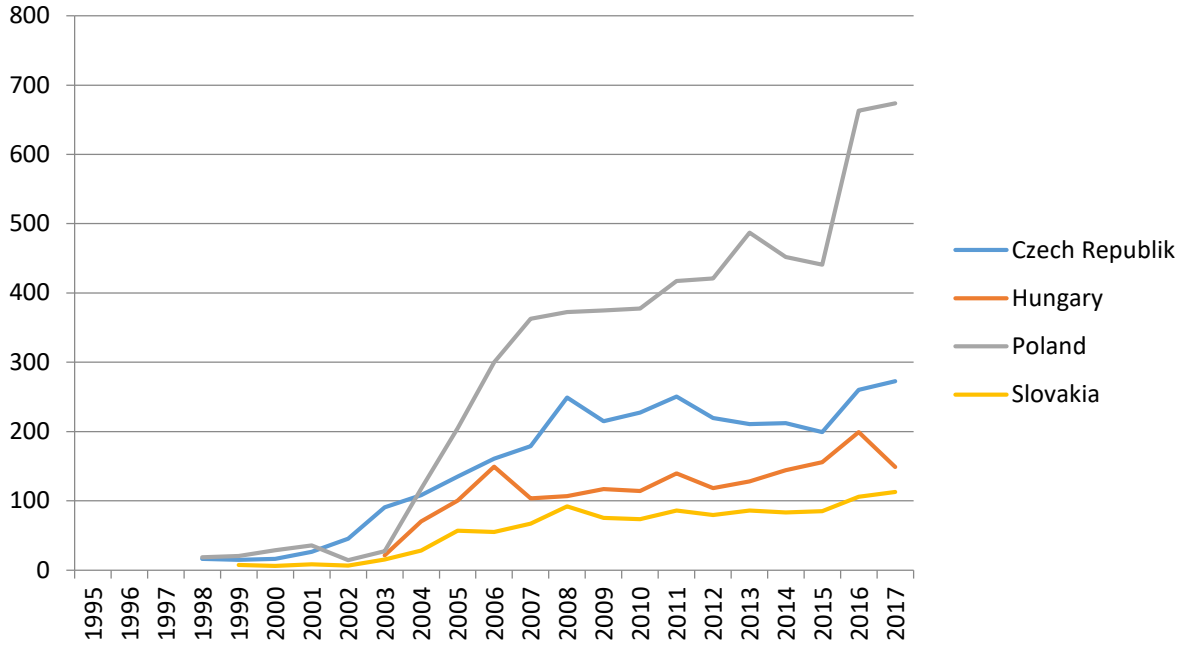
The transformation caused a major need for financial and technical assistance, which resulted in V4 countries becoming donees rather than donors at the beginning of the 1990s, with the World Bank, IMF, OECD and the European Union among the donors. The main instrument for the distribution of the aid was PHARE (Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies) programme. In the first years, its purpose was to transfer non-returnable aid for the purpose of supporting the processes of economic transformation. Ultimately, the assistance measures were gradually concentrated on long-term economic development goals. In the following years, the programme was supplemented with two others: ISPA and SAPARD. The ISPA programme was launched to support investment projects within the scope of transport infrastructure and environmental protection, and the SAPARD project aimed to cover structural reforms in agriculture (Pavlik, 2016: 36-37). The V4 countries also received support in building their assistance capability from the Canadian "ODA in Central Europe" programme and the "Emerging Donors Initiative" led by UNPD (Szent-Iványi and Tétényi, 2013: 822).

At the end of the 1990s, the V4 countries joined OECD and finished their accession talks with the European Union. By joining those organizations, they undertook to fulfil a number of obligations regarding assistance for developing countries, which resulted in their re-engagement as participants in development cooperation. One of them was the declaration aiming to increase the assistance to the level of 0.33% of GNI (Horký and Lightfoot, 2012: 3-4).

The V4 were then recorded in international statistics as donors of small amounts for the execution of humanitarian aid, minor development projects and voluntary contributions for international organizations. It is worth underlining that in spite of their minor character, those were constant actions fulfilling the criteria of Official Development Assistance and they made it possible to gather necessary experience in that area. At that time, the first strategic documents were also developed and works began on regulations at the level of statutory acts

(Jankowski, 2015: 138-139). NGOs started to be active participants in development assistance. Many of them working in the area of humanitarian aid appeared to answer the needs caused by the civil war in Yugoslavia and the conflicts in the former Soviet Union. The most important to be mentioned are Polish Humanitarian Action and Czech People in Need (Grimm and Harmer, 2005: 8-9).

Chart 1. The Official Development Assistance provided by the states of the Visegrád Group (in millions of USD in relation to current prices)



Source: OECD, Total flows by donor. OECD statistics, http://stats.oecd.org/viewhtml.aspx?datasetcode=TABLE1&lang=en# [Accessed 15/04/18].

Chart 1 indicates the level of Official Development Assistance provided by the V4 states. Their expenditure dedicated to development assistance is one of the lowest among the members of OECD and the European Union. A clear growth of the volume came no sooner than in 2004. When joining the European Union, the V4 countries paid their member contribution, part of which was dedicated to cooperation for development. That situation meant a growth of the amount of provided assistance to the level of several hundred million dollars. Before that, the assistance expenditure had not been higher than a dozen or so million dollars and the average value of aid donated until 2003 had only been 22.4 million dollars. This growth seems to be more a result of unwanted obligations resulting from the

membership of the European Union than a conscious political decision. The rapid increase in expenditure for ODA was continued until 2008. After that year, the V4 countries decreased their assistance due to the economic crisis. In spite of the relatively high dynamic of the nominal growth, the relation of ODA to DNB is still small, amounting to between 0.11% and 0.13% (the average for DAC OECD countries is 0.31%). It is worth mentioning that over 70% of the development aid of V4 is transferred via international organizations, mainly the European Union.

Table 1. The Official Development Assistance of the Visegrád Group states in 2016

	Poland	Hungary	Slovakia	Czech Republic
ODA %GNI	0,13%	0,11%	0,12%	0,13%
ODA in millions of USD	662,9	199,1	106,0	260,2
ODA bilateral	207,0	59,7	27,5	72,4
ODA multilateral	455,9	139,4	78,5	187,8
Priority countries	Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Ethiopia, Kenya, Myanmar, Palestine, Senegal, Tanzania	West Balkans, Eastern Europe	Programme countries: Afghanistan, Kenya, Moldova Project countries: Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Ukraine	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Moldova, Zambia.
Subject priorities	Good governance, democracy and human rights, human capital, entrepreneurship and private sector, sustainable agriculture and development of rural areas, environmental protection	Institutional development, green growth, environmental and climate protection, human development	Education, health, good governance, development of civic society, water and sanitary facilities, energy, support for development of market environment	Good governance, sustainable management of natural resources, economic transformation and growth, agriculture and development of rural areas, inclusive social development
Main donees	Ethiopia 42,3 M Ukraine 24,1 M Tanzania 22,9 M Belarus 19,2 M Turkey 18,1 M	Turkey 11,8 M Laos 3,1 M China 2,4 M Sri Lanka 2,1 M Serbia 2,1 M	Serbia (1,1 M USD) Ukraine (1,6 M) Kenya (2,11 M) Montenegro (0,58 M) Moldova (0,46 M)	Mongolia 4,1 M Jordan 3,4 M Ethiopia 3,2 M B&H 3 M Georgia 2,8 M
Assistance per region	Europe 59,3 M Africa 80,2 M America 0,31 M Asia 0 M Unspecified 9,3 M	Europe 16,9 M Africa 6,3 M America 0,9 M Asia 19,5 M Unspecified 11,2 M	Europe 5,7 M Africa 2,4 M America 0,5 M Asia 1,8 M Unspecified 15,2 M	Europe 19,0 M Africa 6,3 M America 0,8 M Asia 22,8 M Unspecified 22,5 mln

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (2017) *Development Cooperation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2018-2030*. Prague; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary (2014) *International Development Cooperation Strategy and Strategic Concept for International Humanitarian Aid of Hungary*. Budapest; Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic (2013) *The Medium - Term Strategy for Development Cooperation of the Slovak Republic for 2014-2018*. Bratislava; Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland (2015) *Multiannual Development*

Cooperation Programme 2016-2020. Warsaw; OECD, Aid (ODA) disbursements to countries and regions. OECD statistics, http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TABLE2A# [Accessed 15/04/18].

The V4 countries have similar geographical and subject priorities. Three basic directions can be indicated while analysing the evolution of the list of priority countries. They are all effects of historical relations and economic and political reasons. The first, most important group of countries being donees of development aid are the neighbouring countries of Eastern Europe (Eastern Partnership initiative), or the Balkans. The second group includes Iraq and Afghanistan, where V4 was or is engaged in stabilizing missions with development cooperation as one of their elements. The last group of priority countries is constituted by selected underdeveloped countries, for example the Palestine National Authority and Ethiopia. This group also includes many countries with which V4 had cooperated before 1989 within the frames of Comecon (Jankowski, 2015: 131-132; Szent-Iványi: 4).

In accordance with recommendations of the UN and OECD, development aid should get to the poorest developing countries, especially African ones. The Sub-Saharan region is the main receiver of the means donated by the European Union. On the other hand, the V4 countries concentrate their actions mainly on the Eastern Partnership and Balkan states. Africa has never played a significant role in the V4 foreign policy and therefore it is usually excluded from assistance programmes. In spite of many promises and declarations, aid for Africa has never gone beyond rhetoric. This situation is a result of a lack of political, historical and economic ties with that region (Kopiński, 2011: 8-10; Lightfoot, 2008: 135). However, some improvement within that scope should be noted, as for example in recent years the assistance provided by Poland to Africa has increased from USD 2.6 M in 2010 to USD 80.3 M in 2016.

There is a rather distant relation between the list of priority countries and those which receive most of the bilateral aid. The majority of the assistance is provided to states which fail to comply with democratic standards and which have an average level of development due to political and economic reasons. The assistance provided by the V4 countries is fragmented, less effective and visible due to the fact that the support is granted to dozens of countries each year. Consequently, many states receive aid of barely several thousands of dollars. It is mainly a result of the lack of cohesion among the targets of economic diplomacy promoted by the ministries of economy and the targets of foreign policy specified by the

ministries of foreign affairs (Jankowski, 2015: 132-134). Development assistance is considered to be a means of foreign policy for the creation of a positive image of donors, introducing stability and regional security, supporting democratization in the region, gaining favour of local elites and stimulating economic contacts (Olsen, 2005: 594; Szent-Iványi: 5).

The V4 countries also have a similar sector strategy. In spite of the relatively many declared subject priorities, the development cooperation programmes of V4 reserve a special role for the areas of democratization, human rights and system transformation. The above-mentioned areas are especially visible in supporting the partners in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Choosing them derives from the confidence of having a unique experience of political and economic transformation initiated after 1989 and therefore having an advantage over other donors. This confidence was enhanced after the Arab Spring, when the V4 countries offered their assistance to the states of Northern Africa. For example, Poland claimed Libya and Tunisia to be priority countries (Kugiel, 2012: 106-109).

The above-mentioned confidence is strengthened by the international community, which was expressed i.a. in the European Consensus on Development, stating that: "The EU will capitalize on new Member States' experience (such as transition management) and help strengthen the role of these countries as new donors" (O.J. EU 2006/C 46/01, 24 February 2006: point 33). In 2010, the European Commission published the European Transition Compendium. OECD shares the European Union's opinion. In the special review of Polish development assistance, DAC stated that: "Polish development assistance focuses on enhancement and promotion of democracy and good governance, human rights, sustainable development and civil society, particularly among its neighbours in Eastern Europe. Poland's own recent experience of transformation gives it a clear comparative advantage in its neighbourhood in these sectors" (OECD, 2010: 13).

3. The changing context of development cooperation of the European Union

While making assumptions for its development policy, the European Union must take into account numerous changes that have appeared in its environment, especially in the world economy, international relations, global problems and within itself. Those factors indicate the conditions for the functioning of development assistance of the European Union, especially the challenges it will face.

The changes in economic and political balance of power, especially the growth of importance of emerging economies pursuing a greater role in global management cause the fact that the European Union is neither the only nor the most important partner of many developing countries. The role of the USA and Europe is decreasing, which leads us to a multipolar world. Within recent years, this process has considerably gained speed with BRIS states (Brasil, Russia, India and China), expected to constitute a third part of the world economy. The dynamic of cooperation among developing countries is governed by different rules and, therefore, the European Union loses its possibility to shape the internal situation of the countries of the South, which are presented with a different vision of economic development and political order, leading it to being perceived as alternative to the European Union. They offer significant financial assistance without interfering with the internal matters of each country. Especially China is more and more engaged in relations with developing countries, offering trade cooperation and political and economic support. Many developing countries are interested in the Chinese economic model due to the fact that on one hand it offers significant commercial effects, but on the other it does not interfere with their internal affairs and therefore poses no threat to authoritarian regimes (Mah, 2014: 9; Odén and Wohlgemuth, 2015:1; Pape, 2013: 729; Vaes and Huyse, 2016: 17).

Developing countries have undergone substantial changes becoming more diversified regarding the level of income and economic results. The economies of many of them have significantly grown in recent years, increasing their income to the intermediate level. Non-OECD countries are expected to constitute 60% of the world GDP in twenty years (Lundsgaarde, 2012: 706). In 2030, the states of the South will represent 70% of the world consumption and 80% of its middleclass. As a result of that, the development assistance plays a less and less important role in stimulating their economies, as its amount is smaller than other flows of capital, such as foreign direct investments and money sent by migrants (Odén and Wohlgemuth, 2015: 2-3). It is becoming necessary to adjust the means of cooperation and their diversity to new needs of developing countries, taking into consideration their social and economic conditions. Due to that, the discussion on the future of development cooperation concentrates on measures beyond the traditional development assistance, for example the stimulation of investments, trade etc. (Janus, Klingebiel and Paulo, 2014: 1).

On the other hand, many developing countries struggle against ferocious internal conflicts, political and economic instability. Poverty is one of the sources of threat to international security as it stimulates the radicalization of societies, generates terrorism, internal conflicts and migration. Consequently, the European Union must take into consideration the decrease in the security level, especially in its vicinity, in North Africa and the Middle East. Development assistance may be a precious measure for solving those problems. Development and security are strictly related to each other. It is claimed that security is a necessary condition of economic development (Bossuyt and Sherriff, 2017: 1). That statement was clearly underlined in the new Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union. The document sets strategic assessments of the external actions of the European Union. The strategy underlines the direct relation between European security and the economic stability and welfare of the surrounding regions. The aims of sustainable development are to broadly specify the direction of all actions for the execution of the global strategy of the EU (High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, 2016). However, there are doubts concerning the excessive integration of the targets of the development policy with security policy and migration control, which can impose limits on the means and their use for purposes other than social and economic development. Many measures combining development and security have been created in the last decade. It is estimated that between 2001 and 2010 the means combining those targets amounted to EUR 7.7 billion, which constitutes about 10% of all assistance means governed by the European Commission (CONCORD, 2017: 3; Merket, 2013: 90-91).

The next factor which should be taken into consideration is the changing context of cooperation for development. In 2015, the UN passed Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030 resolution, setting Sustainable Development Goals (A/RES/70/1), which substituted Millenium Development Goals. The new agenda includes 17 targets and 169 obligations. It is also wider and more ambitious than the previous ones, as it covers areas beyond fighting poverty, combining it with social development and environment protection. The new goals comprehensively cover many challenges of the contemporary world, from fighting poverty and hunger, through good quality of education, clean and accessible electrical energy, sustainable cities, equality of genders, limiting inequality, environment protection, climate change, to peace, justice and international partnership. By that, the Agenda covers matters so

far not directly included in development cooperation. At the same time, it is much more universal as it concerns all countries, independently of their level of development. The assistance donors and donees have the same rights and obligations within the scope of reaching those goals, which undermines the traditional division between givers and receivers. Finally, the agenda establishes a bigger role of the private sector, especially businesses and civic society (Venturi and Magro, 2016: 3-5).

The decisions made at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Paris (COP21) will be of major importance for the talks on the future form of the development cooperation of the European Union. The purpose of the conference was to conclude a common agreement among all countries of the world concerning climate change. It was the first time a global compromise on limiting climate change had been reached. The main arrangements of the agreement are the limitation of global warming and zero emission of greenhouse gases. It is especially important for developing countries as they are particularly vulnerable to the results of climate change such as drought, flood and other natural disasters. Non-sustainable and unjust use of natural resources also deepens inequality among countries.

Furthermore, the decisions made at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in 2015 should also be taken into consideration. The conference hosted representatives of countries, international organizations, business and civic society. A number of initiatives was started in many areas including: technologies, entrepreneurship, taxation and climate change. The undertaking to increase the Official Development Assistance to the level of 0.7% GNI, including 0.20% for the least developed countries, was repeated (A/RES/69/313).

Significant changes have also appeared within the European Union. The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 significantly influences the functioning of European development cooperation. New legal frames and institutions were created to increase the importance of the EU on the international stage and to ensure the cohesion of its policy. Pursuant to the Lisbon Treaty, the EU policy in the area of development cooperation is conducted in accordance with the principles and goals of the EU, which includes support of peace and security, sustainable development, fighting poverty and protection of human rights. Eliminating poverty was stated to be the most important target of development cooperation.

Additionally, the necessity to keep the cohesion of the development policy and other policies was underlined, as the goals of development cooperation must be taken into consideration in all actions that might have influence developing countries. The treaty also introduced important internal reforms enhancing foreign policy. Signing the Lisbon Treaty resulted in creating the European External Action Service and the office of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who is the vice-president of the European Commission at the same time. On the one hand, the implementation of the institutional reform brings hope of improvement in the functioning of the European development policy, particularly an increase in cohesion and coordination, but on the other hand, it raises concerns of developing countries related to misuse of development assistance and competence disputes (Nowik, 2011: 428-433).

Brexit is also an important factor shaping the development cooperation of the European Union. The perspective of Great Britain leaving the EU raises much uncertainty related to the future of development cooperation. Great Britain, after Germany and France, is the third biggest net contributor to the budget of the European Union, making it one of the most important actors creating EU policy. UK is also responsible for 15% of the 11th European Development Fund and one of the major trade partners of developing countries. Leaving the EU and especially the cancellation of decisions regulating economic cooperation (general system of preferential tariffs, free trade agreements, trade partnership agreements) might mean a serious disruption of mutual trade. It might create considerable trade barriers for developing countries in their access to one of the most important markets. It might be particularly negative for the least developed countries and those relying on the British market, for example Belize (30% of export), Mauritius and Fiji (20% of export each). The costs of Brexit might also have a negative influence on the level of development assistance provided by Great Britain (Mendez-Parra, Papadavid and Te Velde, 2016: 2-5; Price, 2016; 499-507).

Another aspect worth mentioning is the economic crisis that affected the eurozone. It is an important factor limiting the ambition of the European Union within the frames of executing its international role and position. The above-mentioned challenges and ambitious goals require significant financial spending. At the same time, as a result of the economic crisis, the majority of member states tend to cut their expenditure, also in the area of development policy. It has repeatedly been a serious problem. For example, while working on

the 11th European Development Fund, the European Commission presented a number of proposals for increasing assistance, but none of them was accepted by the member states and most them pressed for decreasing EU expenditure. In their letter to President Barosso, the leaders of Great Britain, Germany, France, Holland and Finland underlined that "The challenge for the European Union in the coming years will not be to spend more, but to spend better" (Kilnes, 2012: 2).

4. Potential directions of change in the development policy of the European Union

The European Union took an active role in development of the Agenda for Sustainable Development and, due to that, it adopted a new development agenda with satisfaction, regarding it as fully compliant with its own values. The EU strives to be a pioneer in its execution. Sustainable development is one of the treaty-based principles of the European Union and its goal within the scope of external actions. However, the execution of the new development agenda might be a serious challenge. It is necessary to identify targets and policies. The agenda must be taken into consideration in all internal and external policies with a comprehensive approach tackling all goals of sustainable development, including the connections among three of its dimensions. In the external dimension, the development policy will play a major role in executing the programme of actions. Due to that, the New European Consensus on Development was adopted. It specifies a comprehensive approach within the scope of the programme of actions (COM(2016) 739; O.J. EU, C 210, 30 June 2017).

The ambitious goals of development cooperation require i.a. sufficient financial resources. A chance to execute them appears together with the currently commencing negotiations on the multiannual financial frame of the EU for the period 2021-2028. The official part of the negotiations will begin in May 2018. The most important matters to be settled are the size of the future funds dedicated to Official Development Assistance and the character of the financial instruments (Kugiel, 2018: 1).

Negotiations over the size of the future budget of the European Union seem to be particularly complicated. Currently, the multiannual financial frame (covering the period 2014-2020) constitute only 1.03% GNI of the European Union. The means earmarked for

external actions amount to 66.2 billion euros (Section IV – Global Europe), which constitutes about 6.12% of all measures in the current financial perspective. They are divided among eight financial instruments – four geographical, three subject-matter and one geographical and subject-matter. Not all of those instruments fulfil the criteria of the Official Development Assistance and there are not only developing countries among their beneficiaries. Moreover, the eleventh European Development Fund, currently excluded from the EU budget, holds 30.5 billion euros for ACP countries for the period between 2014 and 2020 (Kengyel, 2017: 8,12; Zajączkowski, 2013a: 650-651).

Those measures are disproportionately small compared to the ambitions and obligations of the European Union. Obliging the EU and the member states to spend 0.7% GNI on Official Development Assistance until 2030 would require an additional amount of about 40 billion euros. However, due to Brexit and the economic problems of many member states, it seems unlikely that the expenditure for external actions of the European Union will significantly increase. Because of that, the European Commission, in its communication issued in February 2018, suggested an increase in the current level of financing external instruments over the amount of 100 billion (COM(2018) 98 final: 17).

Apart from the level of development assistance, it is important how it is distributed. Currently, the instruments for financing external actions are seen as complicated and time-consuming in management. Critics underline that the current external actions, including development cooperation, lack a strategic approach. The purpose of the reform of financial instruments should be their simplification, including a reduction in their numbers, which will allow for an increase in assistance efficiency and effectiveness (Di Ciommo, Sherriff and Bossuyt, 2017: 3-7). The new instruments should focus on executing long-distance goals such as liquidation of poverty, sustainable development or supporting democratic governments and human rights.

That is why it is recommended to establish an instrument whose expenditure would be fully qualified as ODA and a separate instrument for humanitarian aid. The purpose of the new instrument should be to support the execution of sustainable development goals (CONCORD, 2017: 8; Di Ciommo, Sherriff and Bossuyt, 2017: 7; OXFAM, 2018: 5-6, 11-12). The simplification of instruments can be reached by including the European Development Fund in the Union's budget and joining it with the Development Cooperation

Instrument. The discussion on it has continued from the early 1970s. Due to historical and political reasons, EDF works outside the EU budget. The special character of EDF was understandable at the moment of its creation in 1958, but currently there is no basis for it, especially because the differences between EDF-funded assistance and the EU budget are not clear anymore (Gaves, 2012: 1; Mackie, Klavert and Aggad, 2010: 8).

It is necessary to increase the effectiveness and flexibility of the measures used. Some experience in this matter is provided by the currently used fiduciary funds and financial instruments combining public and private means. However, the development assistance itself is insufficient and, therefore, it is crucial to prompt the activity of private and business donors. Good examples of such an approach are the EU External Investment Plan and the European Fund for Sustainable Development (Bossuyt and Sherriff, 2017: 3; Latek, 2017: 1-3).

The problem with gathering sufficient financial resources and the diversity among developing countries causes the necessity to modify the rules of cooperation. The engagement of the European Union in development will be effective only if it is diversified and takes into consideration the possibilities, needs and problems of different groups of developing countries. That approach resulted in the adoption of the Agenda for Change. It involves treating the poorest countries, the economically vulnerable ones and those with limited perspectives of long-term development as priorities. The financial assistance should be spent on the basis of needs analyses, the capacity of the developing countries to generate their own financial resources, the efficiency in executing the assistance and its potential results. That all means the cancellation of assistance provided in the form of subventions. The Commission proposes providing diversified forms of assistance: technical assistance, preferential loans and commercial cooperation (COM(2011) 637 final: 5-12).

The New European Consensus on Development underlined the necessity to engender innovative cooperation with more advanced developing countries, including other than financial cooperation, as they often do not need any preferential form of support. Those countries are of significant importance for the European Union. On the one hand, they stabilize their regions and are valuable trade partners. On the other hand, due to a vast influence on global public goods and challenges, they are of crucial importance for the execution of Agenda 2030 (O.J. EU, C 210, 30 June 2017: 19-20).

The European Commission consequently decreases its support for the donees classified among the countries of middle and higher income. Part of the observers even claim that in the longer perspective it is possible that the financial assistance is completely cancelled for some developing countries (Herrero, et. al., 2015: 19). At the same time, the European Union adopted a number of regional (for example concerning the Caribbean and the Pacific regions) and subregional (for example: Horn of Africa, Sahel) strategies setting the rules of cooperation, including development cooperation (Carbone, 2013: 750). The negative consequences of that action must also be taken into consideration. Critics of the new development policy of the EU indicate their inadequateness. In accordance with the criteria developed by the World Bank, 81% of poor people live in countries with a medium income. In spite of relatively good economic rates, many of those countries are vulnerable to disruptions. The least developed countries in turn usually have no efficiency and capacity to effectively use the measures, which can limit the effectiveness of assistance. Consequently, in spite of the declared pursue to liquidate poverty, that goal may be reached only in part (Herbert, 2012: 8-10; Markova, 2013: 11).

Cooperation between the European Union and the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific will be subject to change. Official negotiations concerning the future of cooperation will begin in August 2018. The communication of 2016 presents possible options for cooperation and preferences towards them. The first likely scenario assumes resigning from signing a new agreement and further cooperation with ACP states in the present form. In such a case, the relations with ACP as a whole would be substituted with more effective cooperation with particular regional groups or concentrate on selected matters or the countries in biggest need. The second scenario involves prolonging the Cotonou Agreement after its review and update. That option of cooperation will not ensure the necessary cohesion and will not take advantage of the growing regionalism in the ACP states. The last cooperation scenario assumes signing a framework agreement with a whole group of ACP states and detail agreements with single regions. The framework agreement would set general assumptions and goals of cooperation, while the regional agreements would include specific provisions related to political, economic and development cooperation, adjusting to the needs and characteristics of each region (JOIN(2016) 52 final: 29-30; Kugiel and Wnukowski, 2015: 38-40).

5. Summary: challenges and opportunities for V4 countries

Changes within international development cooperation, especially those related to the policy of the European Union, create a number of challenges for the states of the Visegrád Group. One of the possible answers to them is the preservation of the present development policy in an unchanged form. In spite of the declared will to execute the goals of sustainable development, the V4 states are not obliged to actually do so. Lack of execution does not cause any negative legal consequences, as the international obligations related to development cooperation are soft law only. These would not be the first not executed declarations of the V4 states on development assistance (for example: the obligation on the level of assistance). On the one hand, it would allow for further use of development assistance for own political and economic reasons related to Eastern Europe and the Balkans and some financial savings due to the lack of need to increase the assistance level. Such an option would surely mean the marginalization of the V4 in the matter, being one of the key elements of international relations. It would particularly have a negative impact on the image of the V4 and its position in the European Union, for which development assistance is one of the most important elements of foreign policy. It would also deteriorate contacts between the V4 and developing countries. Lack of solidarity with developing countries and neutrality towards the efforts of the European Union would also make it difficult to convince Western European states to more intensively engage in V4 projects, for example within the Eastern Partnership. Therefore, the more probable decision is the one of wider engagement in the execution of the new development agenda (Kugiel, 2015: 2). Such a scenario forces the introduction of a number of changes, for which the V4 countries do not seem to be ready.

Undoubtedly one of the biggest challenges faced by the V4 is the lack of political will, which limits both activities and financial resources. Political elites perceive development cooperation more as an unwanted obligation deriving from membership of the EU, OECD or other international organizations, than as an independent instrument of the state's foreign policy. This results in international cooperation being of secondary importance to the foreign policy of the V4. Lack of political will limits social awareness, causes little engagement of the civic society and lack of knowledge on threats deriving from global problems i.a. poverty or climate change. The public opinion of the V4 still sees their countries as poor and struggling against a number of economic and social problems.

Consequently, politicians do not risk any decision on leading a more intensive development policy as they are afraid of the negative reaction of society. Lack of political will entails lack of knowledge and administrative capacity. The V4 personnel working on the execution of the development cooperation policy is incomparably smaller than the one in Western European countries. Its shortage is deepened by the high level of staff rotation. Consequently, there is lack of experience, knowledge and institutional memory (Lightfoot, 2008: 130-131; Szent-Iványi and Tétényi, 2013: 829).

The V4 countries should consider the development of new subject areas and selecting new priority countries. A question should be raised whether the V4 has correctly identified and understood their comparative advantage. What is the transformation experience and how can it be shared with other countries? The specialization selection of the V4 countries is controversial. First of all, the selection of supported areas seems unconsidered. The high self-assessment of the V4 in the area of transformation and democracy-building is not confirmed by international analyses. Consequently, there is no consistent concept of implementation of operational goals assessments. Second of all, the selected areas bring minor contributions to development, fighting poverty and improving the situation of societies in developing countries. There is only an indirect relation between those sectors and economic and social development (Jankowski, 2015: 75; Kugiel, 2012: 116). It must also be considered that developing countries might not be interested in economic and political transformation. Third of all, there is no evidence that sharing transformation experience is effective. Ondrej Horky uses the word “myth” to describe it. The concept of system transformation is more an element of rhetoric covering real national interests (Horký, 2012: 27). Due to the above, it seems reasonable to develop new sectors corresponding to the goals of sustainable development and other international obligations. Developing countries, especially those of Sub-Saharan Africa, are more interested in the V4 experience in education, agriculture and development of rural areas. The V4 should also consider modifying the list of their priority countries. Currently, the list is too long in comparison with the limited financial resources, which results in fragmentation and the invisibility of the V4 as donors. It is recommended to select a group of 3-4 African countries on which the effort and resources would be focused. The basis for their selection should be constituted by: the level of their democracy, respecting human rights, level of poverty, rate of human development and historical and contemporary ties. V4 states

do not have a vision of their relations with African countries and their action are of limited and random by character. Although the majority of V4 countries claim that African countries are their priority, they are in fact practically marginalized (Zajączkowski, 2013b: 4-5). An increase in diplomatic activity of the V4 in Africa is an opportunity to reverse that tendency. It might be gained with bilateral meetings and the adoption of activation programmes for trade, for example Polish "GoAfrica" and Hungarian "Opening to the South" (Cibian, 2017: 12).

The V4 countries should make an effort to increase their financial means earmarked for development assistance. It will be the result of increasing their contribution to the EU, as a consequence of Brexit. Additionally, the possible budgeting of the EDF might result in the V4 countries losing their foregoing preferential contribution pattern for calculating the level of contribution of each country. Some funds can be moved from agricultural policy or cohesion policy to external actions, which would be unprofitable for the V4 countries, which are the biggest receivers of the EU funds (Kugiel, 2018: 2; Kugiel and Wnukowski, 2015: 51). The above would result in an increase in multilateral development assistance on which the V4 have no influence. Therefore, it is suggested to increase the measures dedicated to bilateral aid.

The V4 countries should increase their activity within the institutions of the European Union which decide on development cooperation. Over 70% of V4 ODA is distributed through the EU structures. In spite of such importance of the European Union, the V4 countries are almost totally insignificant in assemblies working on development assistance. Only by active participation in works on the reform of the policy and its execution after 2020 will the V4 be able to really create the policy of the European Union.

The creation of a common assistance programme of the V4 is a chance to overcome some of the above-mentioned problems. Wider cooperation would result in V4 actions being more effective and the V4 position stronger (Zajączkowski, 2013b: 4). V4 countries can be inspired by the Scandinavian Nordic+ programme and the Visegrad 4-Eastern Partnership Programme (V4EaP) launched by the International Visegrad Fund. Execution of common actions can be held by lack of mutual trust, particularly the reluctance of some V4 countries towards the Polish ambition to be the leader of the group (Kugiel, 2012: 114-115, 118).

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THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP – A CHALLENGE FOR THE EU'S SOFT POWER IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Abstract:
The main problem analysed by the article is one of the key issues of theory and practice in European studies, the impact of the European Union on its surroundings, mainly eastern neighbours in order to change it in accordance with its own preferences. The analysis has been made based on the specifics of the nature of the European Union, which exploits the resources of soft power understood as the system of values, cultural identity and political activities undertaken towards the Eastern Partnership states. It is an idea launched in May 2009 on the basis of the European Neighbourhood Policy and essentially replicated the main weakness of the ENP, offering too little incentive and support to the partners. Therefore, the main aim will be the analysis of the main assumptions, goals and instruments of the EaP as the principal tool of the European Union's soft power toward the region. Simultaneously, a controversial issue of soft power effectiveness of the European Union has been discussed – identified as its soft power in the activities involving the eastern neighbourhood in the post-Soviet region.

Keywords: the European Union, the Eastern Partnership, soft power, Poland, eastern neighbours

It is now ten years (26 May 2008) since Poland and Sweden proposed the Eastern Partnership initiative to the European Union. In 2009, the Eastern Partnership initiative was recognized as an official EU cooperation policy comprising six Eastern European neighbours – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The emergence of the EU Eastern Partnership initiative was primarily determined by the fundamental changes in EU external relations, specifically the 'fatigue' in EU development policy, which made the EU look for alternatives to the Community development policy. Slogans such as 'everything but institutions', 'integration without membership', 'less than integration, but more than

cooperation' etc. appeared. In other words, in the 'frozen' context of its accession and development policy, the EU started looking for ways to expand its power without extending its institutional boundaries (Kasčiūnas, Šukytė, 2013, pp. 1-2).

A special role in the promotion and development of general eastern policy of the EU known as the eastern dimension of the EU was played by Poland due to geographical proximity and historical ties with the region. The policy of Polish diplomacy was very active on every stage of creation of the EU's eastern policy even before 2004. From the very beginning, Poland treated the eastern dimension of the EU as a change stimulation instrument in Eastern European countries (Piskorska, 2017, pp. 311-315). According to Polish diplomacy, the EU should play the role of a specific transformative power, able to reform and democratize poor and destabilized countries. Over the last decade, the European general discourse around its Eastern neighbourhood states has also been cantered on concepts of Europeanization, integration and reform, since it remains within the EU's most important interests to have stable and prosper countries at its borders.

When the EU launched the Eastern Partnership, it did so with much rhetoric about projecting soft power into Eastern Europe. Soft power is understood in a classic sense as "the ability to get what you want thorough attraction rather than coercion and payment" and "getting others to want the outcomes you want". Then, the EaP is supposedly a medium for such attraction, and for co-opting the eastern neighbours around the EU's agenda (Nye, 1990). The EU also believes in its transformative power over the countries in the Eastern Partnership, which is understood as an ability to transfer norms, values, institutions, practices and public policy instruments, as well as the participation of beneficiary countries in the EU market. Despite the Union's efforts to assist these countries in developing their economic and political environments, the outcome of the ENP has been rather disappointing so far, especially in the sphere of democracy and the rule of law.

The main assumptions of this paper are: firstly, despite a multifaceted crisis, the European Union continues to be a soft power that is able to exert influence on its external environment, so that the peace and democratic processes it desires could take place. Thereby, the policy of soft power that is based on values and practices preferred by the Union rather than on "arguments of force" is the tool for the positioning of the European Union as a regional power, for promoting its image and brand outside its borders. Second, by the outset

of the Eastern Partnership initiative, the EU attempts to play the role of an ambiguous and influential actor, being able to change the way of thinking and democratize states in the region. Due to the fact that the EU cannot offer them an eventual membership perspective, it pursues 'milieu goals' – of indirectly shaping the external environment by means of diplomacy and soft power. Third, soft power occupies a special position in the policy of the European Union toward the said region. Not only is it reflected at the phase of conceptualization in the approach to the sensitive neighbourhood area, but in its implementation as well. The implementation of such a policy, which also arises out of the lack of well-functioning backing of hard power, manifests itself primarily in the application of non-power and non-compulsory instruments.

The paper attempts to answer a few research questions: What does the term of soft power mean in EU policy? What are the main aims, assumptions, and instruments of the European Union's soft power toward the region? What role does the Eastern Partnership play as an instrument of EU soft power? What is the effectiveness of the EU's soft power in the policy toward Eastern Partnership countries?

1. Soft power as a theoretical approach to the EU's policy towards Eastern Partnership states

Soft power is treated as dominating theoretical approach and as the main research tool serving as a concept basis or as a starting point for other theories. It boils down to the ability to shape the preferences of the other members of the international system with the use of attracting force, its attractiveness, rather than the application of coercion and force. The author of the term is an American researcher of international relations, J. S. Nye, who introduced it into the literature on the subject in 1990 from the field of international relations, in his work titled *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (Nye, 1990a).

Soft power is a manifestation of new tendencies relating to the shaping of the international order. As a result of the changes, the discussion revived on limiting the use of hard power as an instrument of foreign policy while the significance of law and international regimes, i.e. the use of soft power in keeping international security increased. Furthermore, the appearance of soft power is a kind of response of the West to the articulation of a new type of challenges and threats, so-called non-military or asymmetric threats, the most

important being terrorism, cyber terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, nationalism, ethnic nationalisms, economic crises, climate change, and organized crime. In the case of the European Union, the soft power approach will make it possible to understand and determine its potential in global politics.

The reason behind my selecting and using the concept of soft power as the main framework for researching the EU's policy toward the Eastern Partnership countries in this article is its specificity allowing it to aptly translate into the manner the European Union functions in the said region. The concept has more capacity and greater elasticity than other theories that identify the role of the European Union in the world, although encompassing within its range similar approaches (civilian and normative power). Furthermore, due to the fact that both the EU's policy in its neighbouring states and the idea of the Eastern Partnership countries itself belong to the sphere of external relations, it is assumed that soft power constitutes a certain way or method of foreign policy, of exposing its qualities/attractiveness but also its interests arising out of such determinants formulated by J.S. Nye as culture, values, and foreign policy that is implemented on their basis. Unlike the concept of civilian (Duchêne, 1972) and normative power (Manners, 2002), until now soft power has not been used as a method for a broader analysis of the EU's policy in the region under discussion.

The assumptions of researching soft power include: a given subject's possibility to use soft instruments of a peaceful, political, diplomatic, and cultural character, i.e. non-coercive means in general terms (a reference to the concept of civilian power) and their use by the subject to influence the outside environment; building on the global catalogue of generally accepted values; promoting democratic values; shaping of the ideological nature of international relations (normative power); using its own civilization attractiveness and stirring the interest in its cultural potential; having an effective foreign policy that is based on generally accepted values.

The soft power of the European Union in the post-Soviet areas takes the form of widely understood political, diplomatic, economic, cultural, and social activities. The EU policy *sensu largo* includes among others promoting European political, economic, cultural, and civilization standards (so-called power of examples), political cooperation (association agreements), economic cooperation (deep free trade areas), liberalization of a visa regime

(plans of actions for visa liberalization), promotion of the European culture and development of civil society, as well as mediation and presenting a unified front in conflicts in Eastern Europe. The EU's soft power instruments can, therefore, be treated as a natural and logical supplement of mechanisms that the European Union has been using on the international arena so far.

The specificity of the European Union's policy in the international sphere implies one's adducing to the liberal approach in international studies as a theoretical basis for research. Due to the fact that the aim of the European Union is the democratisation and stabilisation of its neighbouring countries through the use of soft instruments: political, diplomatic, and economic, as well as the policy of conditionality as the primary strategy toward its neighbours and the export of the western model, i.e. the market economy and liberal democracy, the components of the strategy are in line with the liberal theory of international relations.

Despite one's treating soft power as an element of a broader European Union policy in the region, it should be kept in mind that the instruments it uses, *inter alia* those from among the key projects – the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership – do not belong to the manifestations of soft power only, because soft power is an element of international influence, in other words an element of this organization toward the region of the neighbourhood that is subject to the influence or even rivalry for the sphere of influence with other participants of international relations, primarily Russia. This seems relevant to the theory of international influence proposed by K. J. Holstie (Holstie, 1994). The theory, in turn, refers to other than liberal theoretical approaches, namely realism.

However, as a rule, the European Union is not viewed as a traditional/hard power; however, its transformation is noted, one that consists of departing from promoting only a peace project (manifested in using civil means), and heading toward an entity competing for geopolitical influence. This is evident in reference to the necessity to strengthen soft power with hard power as presented in the EU Global Strategy adopted in June 2016 (Shared Vision, Common Action, 2016). The European Union manages the external area by either letting in 'new territories' or by the European Neighbourhood Policy/Eastern Partnership, though which it strives to create a sphere of influence by deepening economic and political relations with the neighbouring states. Furthermore, it can be assumed that, while wishing to

ensure security for itself through exporting democratic values, the European Union acts for the stabilization of its neighbours.

2. The main aims and instruments of the Eastern Partnership – the special role of Poland

The Eastern Partnership (EaP) established by the European Union and the six Eastern partners: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine at the Summit of 7th of May 2009 in Prague, represents a specific Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy (Council of the European Union, 2009). The ENP, covering sixteen states from two different regions: Mediterranean countries (Communication from the Commission, 2004) and Eastern Europe and Southern Caucasus ones, has been a target of major criticism from the Central European states, mainly Poland ever since it was created in the aftermath of the 2004 enlargement. Poland is the largest Central-European member state and the main initiator of the Eastern Partnership, having the greatest political ambitions in the region and being the most fervent advocate of the EU's Eastern policy.

The idea behind the policy was to support democratic transformation and economic development in the new immediate neighbourhood, while in principle excluding the prospect of further enlargement (Cianciara). The policy outlined in the ENP proposal fuelled disappointment in Central Europe and particularly in Poland. It was then widely believed that, although participation in the ENP did not formally exclude future accession, it did *de facto* define the frontiers of Europe.

Poland advocated for the development of special relations with eastern neighbours within the framework of the 'ring of friends', covering both the Eastern and the Mediterranean regions. In the Polish view, such a differentiation would have contributed to greater efficiency and EU influence in the eastern region. The Polish non-paper (2003) addressed border management, fighting illegal immigration and organized crime, as well as perspectives for economic integration with the EU single market (Non-paper, 2003). The core of this plan was upheld in the Polish-Swedish proposal for an Eastern Partnership and finally implemented by the Commission in its December 2008 communication (Polish-Swedish Proposal, 2008). This shows the continuity of Polish efforts to the benefit of eastern neighbours.

The main goal of the EaP, as stipulated in the Joint Declaration, is to create all necessary conditions in order to accelerate political association and also economic integration between the EU and the interested partner countries. The EU has a great interest in seeking stability, better governance and economic development at its Eastern border.

The Eastern Partnership is the most developed political initiative which is associated with a set of activities offering soft cooperation mechanisms. This idea combines both political and diplomatic instruments, cultural and education, economic and financial, but also stability ones in neighbouring states in Eastern Europe. The EU perceives eastern partners through the prism of the ability to strengthen its economic, political and energy security and the realization of its soft power policy.

For those reasons, the EU tries to continue cooperation at political, economic and security levels, while also working towards strengthening good administration, market economy and sustainable development. From the EU's perspective, applying soft power strategy by maintaining of active neighbourhood policy and the stabilization of each dimension of the European security architecture is essential to becoming an important actor in the region.

According to the former president of the European Commission, J. M. Barroso, the Eastern Partnership represents a significant progress in comparison to the European Neighbourhood Policy and reflects a soft power projection in the post-Soviet area (Runner, 2008). This partnership shows what could be called the power of soft power, the ability of the EU to attract others and bring about changes in societies. According to Barroso, "prosperity and stability in the 21st century will be brought about by economics, not by missiles; by political dialogue, not by demonstrations of force". He also underlined the EU's ambition to transform the post-Soviet countries into Western-type democracies and market economies, hitting a rare note of assertiveness in EU foreign policy vis-à-vis Russia.

Furthermore, as Poland's foreign minister, Radoslaw Sikorski, said, the European Union will not apologize for the "civilizational attraction" of its Eastern Partnership project, a Polish-Swedish initiative that Russia claims is a front for an attempt to secure for the bloc a "sphere of influence" (Polish FM).

The EU's use of its soft power is trying to assist partners in their modernization efforts via their convergence with EU standards and rules. The main objective of the EaP is to

bring the Eastern partners closer to the EU by exporting the EU *acquis* and European values into the Union's Eastern neighbourhood. There is also a plan for the development of relations between the Union and the countries of Eastern Europe and South Caucasus, which offers the latter a possibility of gradually joining EU policies and programmes and of integrating with the common market.

As examples of the EU's soft power instruments towards EaP states we can enumerate: association agreements, economic cooperation, financial support and humanitarian aid, public diplomacy (scholarships, student exchange, trainings), civilian missions, support for governments, civil society and democracy.

The main objective was to deepen bilateral cooperation, while promoting more profound integration of all partners with the EU (Wolczuk, 2011, p. 8). At first glance, the EaP does not bring much novelty in institutional terms to bilateral relations between the EU and partner countries. These take place in the context of the established institutional frameworks, i.e. the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs). The pivotal innovation of the EaP from the point of view of the partner countries is the development of new ambitious legal frameworks: the Association Agreements (AAs), which were negotiated with the EU by most of the partner countries (Communication from the Commission, 2008a). An integral part of the AA are the agreements on Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTA), which include a very detailed set of policy prescriptions, requiring extensive approximation to the *acquis* (Drăgan, 2015, p. 9-10). Additionally, according to the document, this deepened bilateral cooperation includes a broader migration agenda that encompasses a roadmap towards a visa-free regime and enhanced EU support for sector reform and student and scholar exchange programmes.

The EaP initiated a multilateral format in interactions with post-Soviet states, which share many common legacies but also some essential differences, not least their geography, preferences vis-à-vis the EU and progress of their bilateral relations with the Union. The multilateral cooperation is focused on the following principles: 1) project-orientation; 2) flexible participation in the projects (on a voluntary basis, and depending on the interests of each country); 3) complementarity with the regional projects being developed under the Black Sea Synergy or Northern Dimension (Multilateral Cooperation). The added value of the initiative is its fostering of regional links among partner countries and the enhancement

offer for Belarus, as well as the possibility it provides to extend certain projects to Russia if the latter is willing to get involved.

The realization of the aims of the EaP will be supported by the flagship initiatives such as the Integrated Border Management Programme; a Small and Medium Enterprises Facility; the promotion of Regional electricity markets, energy efficiency and renewable energy sources, th development of the Southern energy corridor; and cooperation on Prevention of, preparedness for, and response to natural and man-made disasters (The Eastern Partnership). Soft political instruments are also implemented by the existing and developed social structure, starting from regular summits of heads of states or governments to the mobilization all social trends such as Euronest (Parliamentary Assembly of EaP), Civil Society Forum (*Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum),* CORELAP and Sopot Business Forum.

The deepening of relations with the EU depends on the partners' progress in implementing such values as democracy, rule of law, upholding human rights and the implementation of the principles of market economy, sustainable development and good governance. At the same time, the EU undertakes to support reform efforts in the neighbouring states. In this context, the comprehensive institution-building programme for improving administrative capacity in all relevant sectors of cooperation will be developed and co-financed through the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (now, European Neighbourhood Instrument) (Wojna, Duleba, p. 92). Hence, the transformative soft power used towards eastern partners means the ability of the EU to spread democracy and motivate them to reform, but also the strong support of the EU's interests and values in the region.

3. The effectiveness of the EU's soft power in the policy toward Eastern Partnership countries

The efficiency evaluation of the EU's soft power policy in the region of the six Eastern Partnership countries is not an easy task. This problem is very complex. It depends, firstly, on the specificity of the phenomenon of soft power, the hybrid structure of the EU's foreign policy and the differences between the six Eastern Europe countries. The other determinants are the capabilities and the will of the beneficiaries of the Eastern Partnership to

adapt to soft actions of the EU. Summing up, ten years of functioning of this initiative (2008-2018) have proved divergent trends in the future development of the eastern neighbours and in their relations with the EU.

At present, as a result of asymmetry in their adapting to the requirements and drawing closer to the European Union, these countries are divided into 'associated states' (signatories of the affiliation treaties with the European Union – Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia) and those not in favour of integration (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Belarus).

As a consequence, the EaP is divided into those countries that signed Association Agreements with the EU and those preferring to maintain their loyalty to Eurasian integration. The first group consists of three states (Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia), willing and able to integrate with the EU within the proposed initiatives. Therefore, the EaP has managed to provide tangible value to the most committed members, such as visa-free travel and trade benefits (Deep Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements), i.e. to three countries which are also proud of their association with the EU through the signed Association Agreements (AAs).

The second group consists of the states which are reluctant to integrating with the EU, and to adapting to its requirements. These are: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus, which are sensitive to the soft and, more recently, hard influence of Russia. It means that the implementation of the Eastern Partnership depends predominantly on the Eastern neighbours' commitment to the project. The level of upholding the rules of democracy, civil rights and liberties, and the rule of law varies among the countries to which the EaP is addressed (Wojna, Duleba, p. 93).

What is the reason for the weak effectiveness of the Eastern Partnership? Firstly, there is a growing feeling that the AA is less relevant than the populations of member states expected. It is not difficult to see the striking clash of views between EU bodies and EaP governments, revealing a serious lack of mutual understanding. EaP states are expected to act as 'accession countries', restricted from accessing EU structural funds and other development money that could greatly improve their economic resilience. History has proved that the perspective of integration was the greatest guarantee of successful internal changes in applicant countries. Unfortunately, the EU is unable to ensure membership for countries of the eastern neighbourhood, even in the long-term perspective. Therefore, the lack of a

membership perspective makes this policy opaque, since it is not transparent how a policy could otherwise incentivise the neighbours (Kelley, 2006, p. 49). In other words, EaP citizens have yet to see the benefits of membership.

On the other hand, the Eastern Partnership as an initiative focused first of all on the EU exerting its influence as a soft power, it is not a very original response to the security challenges in the Eastern neighbourhood because, in fact, it is a continuation of the ENP, which was launched some years ago. The EU's cooperation with its Eastern neighbours is to lead to the transfer of good EU practices and standards in the fields of trade, economy and politics, and its pace will depend on the changes taking place in those countries, and on the partners' expectations. The hard security issues related to regional conflicts (Ukraine-Russia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria) are not included in the agenda. It needs to be emphasized, however, that without deeper involvement in conflict resolution there, the EU will not be able to achieve its own interests in the Eastern neighbourhood. In this context, the EaP could only play a supporting role, providing a forum for dialogue and instruments for the Europeanization of the six countries (Cornell, Benes, 2009). This may, hypothetically, enable the Union to make full use of its soft power and thereby indirectly contribute to the improvement of international security in the region (Piskorska, 2014, p. 206). However, as an initiative designed to contribute to the transformation of the Eastern neighbours into democratic states with transparent and reliable market economies, the Eastern Partnership could have a strategic significance for the stability and security of both the countries of the Eastern dimension of the ENP and the EU as a whole.

We can unfortunately also notice that despite the initial aim to create a ring of friendly states around the EU, the EaP ended up being perceived as a "ring of fire", which reveals the multiple flaws and ambiguities of the original concept. The strategic resolve to transform the EU's eastern neighbours is not as strong as it once was, while an assertive Russia "flexes its muscles" (Muntenau, 2017).

The half-progress within the Eastern Partnership of the EU is also due to external factors, such as the EU debt and migration crisis or the revolutions in the Southern flank of the ENP which shifted the EU's attention away from its eastern neighbours. Nevertheless, there has been a certain overall progress in the economic sphere of the Eastern

neighbourhood, namely when it comes to development and growth within the areas of trade, FDI flows or real GPD growth (Sabbati, 2013, p. 3). At the same time, regarding the democratic environment within this region, the evolution is quite backwards (except for Moldova and Georgia) (Sabbati, 2013, p. 4). Most of the regimes have consolidated and centralized their power and the EU's policy in the region has not achieved its expected ambitious objectives since the support for democratic development and good governance represents a priority.

According to the EaP Index (Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016), Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine are the leaders in legal convergence with the EU, while the remaining three countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus) have implemented only limited reforms. The most striking sign of decline is the rising gap between plans for reform and actual results, growing political instability at home, rising external insecurities and foreign military threats. All of this makes the original assumption that EaP states will be able to become a 'well governed ring of friends around EU' extremely optimistic. So far, however, visa liberalisation has been a powerful incentive in pushing for real reform.

The general conclusion that can be drawn from the impact that the EU soft power policy has had on its neighbours is that the pace of progress is determined by the extent to which partners are willing to implement the necessary reforms; not coincidentally, many achievements have been met in the economic sphere, particularly in the field of commerce, and almost none in the areas of governance and democracy.

Conclusions

The analysis of the EU's soft power policy towards the Eastern Partnership countries has enabled us to verify the research hypotheses. Some of them have been confirmed only partially. Over the last dozen or so years, radical changes have indeed taken place in many countries neighbouring the European Union. One could notice both positive and negative tendencies. The former include reforms initiated by local authorities toward the rule of law, an increase in social justice and accountability, which was the reason for awarding the European Union the Nobel Prize in 2012. It should be kept in mind, however, that the changes did not take place as a result of the European Union's using soft power only, but, rather, they were the effect of the reforms undertaken.

Although part of the EU's political culture is its conviction on the rightfulness of its actions and the ability to impose its own objectives onto other players, it has not so far found its implementation in all countries of the Eastern Partnership. The realization of the example to follow and the model of the promoter of development and democracy, as well as the provider of assistance, have been partially successful in the case of three countries: Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova, which upon signing the association agreements and the deep free trade area agreements intensified their works for reform according to the direction shown.

Furthermore, with the continued significance of military force for international security, it would be difficult to have just the soft power of the European Union as the tool for positioning it as a regional power, for promoting its image and brand outside its borders. Therefore, the European Union must progress towards equalising potentials arising from the assumptions of pragmatism. Therefore, it is necessary to maintain balance between idealism and realism and to stress the importance of the latter in order to relaunch the project. The European Union willingly presents itself as a modernist entity that does not require force as a tool to achieve the position of a global player, pointing out to its role as a non-military power - an enlightened guide, a civil and normative power, including a propagator of principles of democracy and good rule, which comprehensively forms the concept of soft power.

However, it seems that the European Union's offer is inadequate to the expectations of some Eastern Partnership countries, which express their willingness to become members of the organization, *e.g.* Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia, which ambivalently perceive the realization of the EU's soft power. Moreover, building on the policy addressed to candidate countries or aspirant countries, the European Union does not present an offer to its neighbouring countries that is equally attractive. The EU's enlargement policy requirements toward Eastern European countries do not coincide with its proposal addressed to the states which already aspire to become EU member states. The lack of a precise offer can bring about a discouragement of potential candidates and make them turn, again, toward Russia, which would mark a defeat of the EU's eastern policy and the deterioration of the relations therewith (the case of Armenia).

Moreover, due to the lack of any significant involvement, and above all the willingness of member states, the EU has not contributed to stabilizing security in the region, especially in the context of solving the conflicts which exist there. This was proved by the

hybrid war in Ukraine. Furthermore, it seems that the European Union deliberately, as it were, "turns a blind eye" on the less pleasant events in the world surrounding it and behaves as if the policy of force and geopolitics no longer existed. The conflicts existing in its neighbourhood that have not yet been resolved decidedly exemplify the EU's shortcomings in its effectiveness as a soft power.

Finally, it needs to be stressed that the Eastern Partnership countries form a natural region of soft influence of the European Union but also of other international actors, *i.e.* Russia, which in recent years has been deliberately applying the tools of soft power without neglecting the hard tools, including the policies of force and energy, at the same time. The research shows that the EU's soft power and attractiveness could be threatened by Russia's activities toward the region. It can weaken the effectiveness and the image of the European Union in the Eastern Partnership countries in the long run. Russia's policy in Ukraine also proves that the geopolitical factor in international relations has been strengthening. This means that, at present, the European Union's idealistic paradigm is threatened.

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VIKTOR ORBÁN - FIRST AMONG ILLIBERALS? HUNGARIAN AND POLISH STEPS TOWARDS POPULIST DEMOCRACY

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Abstract:
The main aim of the article is to examine a new phenomenon which we witness in Central Europe, namely the illiberal shift. The significant victory of Viktor Orbán in 2010 has determined a new era not only in Hungarian but also in European politics. Basic rules and principles of liberal democracy in Hungary have been deeply weakened. The attack on the separation of powers, the rights of the opposition, independence of public institutions are only few examples of the current illiberal matrix used by Fidesz's government in Hungary, but also Law and Justice in Poland. Importantly, this paper analyses the correlation between the transition process of the early 1990s and the current conservative and declarative anti-neoliberal revolution in the region. Readers of this article could also discover some links with even more illiberal political practices applied by the countries of the former Soviet bloc.
Keywords: illiberal democracy, populism, Hungary, Poland, Orbán

Poles and Hungarians have long shared a special relationship. The shared proverb: "Poles and Hungarians brothers be, good for the sabre as well as for the (drinking) glass" (in Polish "Polak, Węgier, dwa bratanki, i do szabli, i do szklanki", in Hungarian "Lengyel, magyar – két jó barát, együtt harcol, s issza borát") sums up the characteristics of the relations between the two societies revealing a centuries-long intimacy between them. The 20th century bears witness to many events that reveal the existence of friendship between the two countries. They include Hungary's refusal to attack Poland in 1939 while remaining in a political-military alliance with Nazi Germany, overlapping anti-Stalinist demonstrations in Warsaw and Budapest in 1956, and cooperation in 1989 when the whole Central and Eastern Europe became an arena of transition from real existing socialism to liberal democracy. Poland and Hungary joined NATO together in 1999 and the European Union five years later.

Recently, however, a rather different Polish-Hungarian alliance - one that raises concerns and astonishment among European and American observers - has emerged.

The illiberalism observed in Central Europe today has the face of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Law and Justice leader Jarosław Kaczyński. They jointly represent the new type of the so-called Visegrad politics. It includes open reluctance to admitting refugees from the Middle East and Northern Africa, being blunt critics of the European Union as well as the lack of respect towards fundamental rules of the state of law. Jarosław Kaczyński is in a sense Orbán's ideological pupil. It seems as if many Hungarian practices are being "copy-paste" implemented in Poland. The aim of this article is to analyse how and to what extent the various reforms of Orbán's government are a matrix for the illiberal shift in Poland. The author argues that just as Poland and Hungary shared know-how and experience throughout the transition to the market and liberal democracy, now we can observe the same Hungarian / Polish cooperation in illiberal politics. Beata Szydło's government is fully benefiting from "Fidesz's revolution", which has been taking place in Hungary since 2010 and whose aim it is to retain power not only via elections, but also by influencing the law, consciousness and language.

1. "We lied morning, noon and night" – the Starting Point of Fidesz's Hegemony

Under the leadership of Viktor Orbán, Hungary's Fidesz Party achieved a spectacular result in the parliamentary elections in 2010. Together with its junior allies, Fidesz won 263 out of 386 seats in the Hungarian parliament with the support of 52,7% of those who voted in the elections. At least two key factors influenced the success of the Hungarian right, namely the economic crisis and a political scandal centred on the incumbent socialist Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány. In the parliamentary elections of 2006, the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) together with the co-governing Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ) had achieved a majority, which allowed it to continue governing for a second term. However, soon after the elections, a recording surfaced in which Prime Minister Gyurcsány confessed that he had been lying to the Hungarian people about the economic condition of the country. "There is not much choice. There is not, because we have screwed up. Not a little but a lot. No country in Europe has screwed up as much as we have. It can be explained (…) we lied morning, noon and night. I do not want to carry on with this. Either we do it and have the personnel for

it, or others will do it" (Excerpts: Hungarian 'lies' speech). The whole country was flooded with anti-government demonstrations in the biggest show of political unrest since 1989. Prime Minister Gyurcsány, however, did not resign and subsequently dragged his party to the very bottom. Moreover, the outbreak of the global financial crisis in 2008 pushed Hungary to the edge of insolvency. The drop of the Gross Domestic Product in 2009 by 6.6% clearly shows the state of the Hungarian economy at that time (Real GDP growth rate – volume).

As a result of growing frustration with the government of socialist and liberals at that time, Fidesz was able to make its way not only to autonomous governing, but it also gained a constitutional majority in 2010. The above-mentioned coincidence of events gave Viktor Orbán an unprecedented chance for a revolutionary change in Hungarian politics. It is worth mentioning that Fidesz was the main power curbing the market reforms of Gyurcsány's government. The party successfully conducted a referendum against the commercialization of higher education and the introduction of fees for medical care. Fidesz became the main party representing the interest of the common Hungarian and giving him and her political subjectivity.

2. Recipe for the "Hungarian Illiberal Goulash"

Fidesz's outright majority was unprecedented in Hungary's post-1989 history. With the exception of the government of 1994-1998, each of the winning parties was forced to make post-election coalitions to govern. Having chosen proportional representation electoral systems as an antidote to the strong, unified power of the communist era, early elections routinely produced coalition governments. The unexpected domination of a single party in Hungary in 2010 created the most serious challenge to the Western system of checks and balances based on the control and balance of the executive, legislative and judicial powers since 1989.

One year after gaining power, Fidesz took advantage of its supermajority to change the Hungarian constitution (after a 9-day parliamentary debate), as well as the election laws, and fundamentally rebuilt a number of state institutions without social consultations or taking into account any of the remarks of the parliamentary opposition. Besides changing the name of the country from the Hungarian Republic (*Magyar Köztársaság*) to Hungary (*Magyarország*) and introducing a number of changes that reflected a particular worldview -

like the provisions of the constitution stating that a marriage can be only between men and women, as well as appeals to the Christian heritage of the state of Hungary and national values - the country was politically centralized.

The legal limitations of the jurisdiction of the Constitutional Tribunal unambiguously reflect the reduction of both the powers of review and ability to provide checks on other branches. The election of the president of the Tribunal by parliament and not by the judges, as it used to be, may be an example of a new practice and understood as an assertion of the supremacy of political power over the judiciary in Orbán's Hungary. To ensure space for further unrestrained reforms, all opinions of the Tribunal passed before 2012 were invalidated. One of the arguments used during the process of this reform was the conviction of the Fidesz politicians that judges who are not chosen in democratic elections cannot have more power than politicians appointed by general elections. Importantly, 11 out of 15 judges of the Hungarian Constitutional Tribunal have been elected since 2010. One of the effects of the changes to this judiciary body is a radical decrease in the number of cases ruled on by the Tribunal itself. This also provides evidence that the principle of separation of powers has been shaken to its foundation.

Besides the changes to the Constitutional Tribunal, the government of Viktor Orbán has also made fundamental changes in the media law. The newly created Council of the National Media can administer fines to print and online publishers and broadcasters whose materials the Council considers biased and unbalanced (Spence, 2016). This body also has the right to demand that journalists disclose their sources of information. The new National Media and Infocommunications Authority was filled with Fidesz loyalists who received long-term appointments. As a result of the creation of the Hungarian Media Service Support and Asset Management Fund, which gathers all public media, they have been centralized and the public television, radio and press agency have all become transmitters of government communiques (Sadecki, 2014). There have been mass lay-offs of left-wing journalists.

An important aspect of the above-mentioned reforms is that Orbán's government organizes advertisement campaigns called "government information" via media, both public and private (as they are financed by state advertisements). The slogans promoted during such actions over the last years have included: "We won't yield to the IMF" (against the conditions of the IMF regarding financial support for Hungary), "Hungary is performing

better" (presenting the achievements of the Orbán government) and "Don't put Hungary's future at risk! Vote no!" (against the refugee quota demanded by the European Commission). The examples mentioned above show the government's interference into the life of the Hungarian media. Both the centralization of the public media, their close relation to the politics of the government and the possibility to fine private media are signs of the weakening of freedom of speech in Hungary. Obviously, many television stations and newspaper publishers representing the opposition are active, but they have to be careful in regards to the less official way of the Hungarian government to interfere with their activities. In October 2016, the majority of assets of one of the most popular leftish daily newspaper called *Nepszabadsag* were taken over by persons connected to Fidesz. It was closed down immediately and its journalists lost their employment.

Another element which distinguishes the populistic politics of Hungary under the leadership of Viktor Orbán is the supremacy of the national idea in politics. It is not without reason that the speech proclaiming Hungarian illiberalism in 2014 was held by Orbán in the Romanian city of Băile Tuşnad (Tusnádfürdő) during the annual meeting of Hungarians living abroad. The connection of the heritage of the "Great Hungary" and the non-liberal character of Hungarians was at that point fundamental. The leader of Fidesz stated: "Consequently, what is happening today in Hungary can be interpreted as an attempt of the respective political leadership to harmonize the relationship between the interests and achievement of individuals – which need to be acknowledged – with interests and achievements of the community, and the nation. Meaning that the Hungarian nation is not a simple sum of individuals, but a community that needs to be organized, strengthened and developed, and in this sense, the new state that we are building is an illiberal state, a non-liberal state. It does not deny foundational values of liberalism, such as freedom etc. But it does not make this ideology a central element of state organization, but applies a specific, national, particular approach in its stead" (Full text of Viktor Orbán's speech at Băile Tuşnad (Tusnádfürdő) of 26 July 2014). That is how the discussed national community is used by Orbán as an argument in the fight for the full sovereignty of Hungary.

An example of the Hungarian Prime Minister's nationalistic approach are the relations with the European Union and various member states. Orbán, from the beginning, has been criticized by EU institutions, which have pointed out the undemocratic aspects of his policy

changes and accused him of undermining the fundamental principles of the rule of law. The prime minister of Hungary has from the very first day in office used the rhetoric of opposing Brussels' interference in the internal affairs of Hungary. He claimed that his country had not opted for feudal relations between Brussels and Budapest when entering the European Union. The EU criticized a number of reforms of the judicial power and media law. The quasi-authoritarian autocracy of Fidesz and the lack of respect to the rights of the opposition were also topics of the resolutions passed by the European Parliament. Orbán, however, has made a number of concessions and compromises in the relations with the European Union and the European People's Party (Fidesz is a member of the EPP). In a sense, Orbán used the Eurosceptic narrative more for the needs of internal politics, whereas the lonely Hungary accepted the agreements of the vast majority of other governments in the key decisions of the European Council. The crucial moment for a change was the refugee crisis, which drew the bone of contention between the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany Angela Merkel, and Viktor Orbán himself, as they represented two contradictory positions in this case.

The summer of 2015 witnessed horrible scenes on the Serbian-Hungarian border. More than 200,000 refugees and economic migrants besieged the external border of the European Union on their way to Western Europe. Angela Merkel's "policy of open doors" met with heavy criticism within Central European countries with Viktor Orbán as the undisputed leader of the backlash against permitting greater migration. At that time, the prime minister of Hungary used two arguments. One was a legal one and concerned the Dublin Convention stating that the asylum motion should be decided on in the first EU country which the refugee reaches. The second one was political and it concerned the threats to the identity and security of Hungary that would come from Muslim migrants. From the legal perspective, Orbán's point of view fit into the norms of abiding by international law. However, the use of language generating fear of Islam has a strictly illiberal character. As Dominik Héjj points out, the division into "us" and "them" used by Orbán also has a quasi-religious character: "Christianity has become one of the key state-building elements in Hungary, along with culture and language. In this context, the influx of immigrants – largely Muslim – is unequivocally interpreted as a threat to the existence of the state" (Héjj, 2015). Orbán used in Central Europe a well-known symbol of the "Bulwark of Christianity", which

constitutes an important element of the regional identity. In a sense, he wanted to prove that in the refugee crisis Hungary was once again taking part in a historical "clash of civilizations" and to argue that as a special nation it has to withstand not only attacks from outside of Europe, but also from the inside, as it was being accused of lack of solidarity with refugees from war-torn Syria. The symbolic power to save the Hungarian nation from the "lethal danger" became a powerful weapon used by Orbán in order to consolidate support for his country. Seemingly, Hungarian illiberalism has not only an ideological character, but also a very pragmatic dimension.

3. "We will have Budapest in Warsaw"

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I am fully convinced that there will be a day when we will manage, when we will have Budapest in Warsaw" – it is with these words that Jarosław Kaczyński addressed the electorate of his Law and Justice (PiS) party after they lost the parliamentary elections in 2011. Even then, just one year after Viktor Orbán took over the Hungarian government, the chairman of Law and Justice felt strongly inspired by the Hungarian reforms. Four years later, his party got 235 out of 460 mandates in the elections to the Polish parliament, which constituted 37.58% of the vote. The way to the implementation of Orbán's policies was wide open in Poland. The media in both countries immediately began to forecast an imminent meeting of the leaders of Hungary's and Poland's right-wing parties. It took place a few months after the elections in Poland, in Niedzica, a city that before 1918 belonged to Hungary but is now a part of Poland. Since then, both the two leaders and other politicians from Fidesz and Law and Justice have been meeting regularly. It remains unknown how much these meetings are a reflection of friendship between the politicians and how much they are aimed at sharing and receiving "instructions".

4. "Opinions of the Constitutional Tribunal (…) are final"?

One of the Law and Justice government's first controversial acts stemmed from a conflict with the Constitutional Tribunal, an institution regarded as fundamental in Poland's judiciary system. The problems began a few weeks before the elections with a rapid and - as it was later proven, un-constitutional - election of two out of five judges of the Tribunal during the final weeks of the coalition government of the Civic Platform (PO) and the Polish

Peasants' Party (PSL). The parliament majority elected three new judges and filled the vacancies in the Tribunal with them. With this move, the government of Ewa Kopacz had tried to ensure a centrist majority in the Tribunal in case Jarosław Kaczyński's party won the elections. The incoming Law and Justice government questioned the results of the elections of these three judges when its government came to power. The judges of the Tribunal, however, decided during a special meeting that the election held during the Law and Justice majority government was not valid, as the election of three out of five judges by the government majority of the Civic Platform and the Polish Peasants' Party was in accordance with the Constitution. This verdict, however, was not published by the government despite a law that makes such publication mandatory. Subsequently, President Andrzej Duda, coming from the same political party as the new parliamentary majority, did not take the oaths from the rightfully elected judges - a clear violation of the Constitution. The situation also led to the creation of two parallel legal systems in Poland. The article of the Polish Constitution stipulating the finality of the opinions of the Constitutional Court is basically dead. This step has given the parliamentary majority the basis to take over the majority in the Tribunal, appoint the president of this institution, which, similarly to Hungary, has become a subsidiary institution of the executive power.

In contrast to the situation in Hungary, Law and Justice does not have the constitutional majority, which means it cannot formally change the constitution as did the government of Viktor Orbán. Taking this into account, Jarosław Kaczynski decided to paralyze the institution of the Constitutional Tribunal and take it over. One of the effects of the status quo is the total lack of constitutional control over adopted legal acts. In a sense, the Law and Justice conducts heavily antidemocratic policies, which are characterized not only by the lack of respect towards the law, but also an absolute immunity in regards to any arguments and comments from the parliamentary and non-parliamentary opposition. Therefore, Poland is now in the same situation as Hungary. The laws adopted in Poland are a result of one-party decisions, serving the ruling party ad-hoc for its populist policies.

A second example of institutional change to serve partisan ends is the new media law in Poland. Following the footsteps of Hungary, the public television, radio and press agency were consolidated into one institution of national media. As it was the case in Hungary, a Council for National Media was created, which is to be elected by parliament and the

president. In this way, the constitutional competence of the National Council for Radio and Television, an institution whose role is to safeguard the freedom of speech, was limited. The Council for National Media has been filled with ruling party politicians, which is evidence of the party-loyalist character of this institution. The mission of the national media, as laid down by the law, is also characteristic. Namely, it is said that the role of the media is "to cultivate national traditions as well as patriotic and humanistic values, contributing to the spiritual well-being of media listeners and viewers"; also, the media shall "respect the Christian value system, based on the universal rules of ethics" (Nowa ustawa medialna: TVP, PR i PAP będą mediami narodowymi). Like in Hungary, many journalists working for the public media have been made redundant. The main information services became an easy transmitter of pro-government content. In the opinion of the media scientists Maciej Mrozowski and Tatiana Popadiak-Kuligowska, the main information service of the national media does not fulfil its duties as a public broadcaster in the field of political neutrality and pluralism (Mrozowski and Popadiak-Kuligowska, 2016). Both in Poland and in Hungary, government-friendly private media receive generous financial support from public advertisements and several public institutions.

The national media are also the main tool to raise the public's fear of refugees from the Middle East and North Africa. Journalists purposefully use the term "immigrants" instead of "refugees" to give the impression that people fleeing from the war in Syria are really motivated by financial motives to come to Europe. Additionally, representatives of the Polish government and public media use the adjective "illegal" pointing out the unlawful character of the migrants' stay. After the terrorist acts in Berlin on December 19th 2016, the terms "immigrant" and "terrorist" have been used by the media interchangeably. The impact of this message was strengthened by the fact that the first victim of the attack was the Polish driver whose truck had been stolen and used in the killing. After another terrorist attack in Manchester on May 22, 2017, Prime Minister Beata Szydło made a comment that clearly linked the tragedy with the refugee crisis: "we will not participate in this madness of the Brussels' elites. We want to help people, and not the political elites. And I repeat: we are helping and we will continue to do so, but our help will be directed to those who need it and are waiting there, on the spot. The Polish Border Guards are engaged in securing the external borders of the European Union. We are engaged in international projects. All services which

are ensuring security in Poland are engaged to make sure that Poles and Poland are safe (…) I have the courage to say, I have the courage to ask the political elites in Europe this question: Where are you heading? Where are you heading, Europe? Rise from your knees and wake up from your lethargy. Otherwise you will mourn your children every day" (Beata Szydło - wystąpienie z 24 maja 2017 r.).

Similar to Victor Orban, Polish politicians of the Law and Justice Party refer to the refugee crisis with the argument of threat and danger for their citizens. Refugees are wrongly called illegal immigrants and linked to terrorist attacks, even though most of the killings were carried out by citizens of France, Belgium and the United Kingdom. Thus, it could be said that the illiberal approach towards the refugees falls within the widely discussed phenomenon of post-truth. Facts are not as important as the power of the political message.

5. Putinisation of Central Europe?

The official approach towards the Russian Federation is fundamentally different in Poland and Hungary. Poland has many historical issues with Russia and contradictory foreign policy interests. Not being Russia's neighbour, Hungary can afford a more pragmatic approach to the Kremlin. Cheap gas and the promise of Russian assistance with the modernization of the nuclear power plant in Paks define at least a wiling attitude of Viktor Orbán towards Vladimir Putin. Despite visible differences between Poland and Hungary towards the Russian regime, one should take note of how the Central-European illiberal shift resembles the politics conducted by the political elites of the Kremlin. Russian conservatism, similar to Orbán's illiberalism, draws a stark contrast between national identity and the multiculturalism of the West; it juxtaposes "illiberal democracy" to liberal democracy, and opposes social conservatism to hedonism, Christianity to atheism. This strong ideological project is followed by a strong pull of democratic reins and the questioning of a number of rules of the state of law.

The impact of the conservative ideological project is evident in Poland today. Poland is, by taking the path of Orbán's Hungary, heading towards the putinisation of the public sphere. Viktor Orbán, by adopting a law limiting the activities of Hungarian non-government organizations that receive financing from abroad, follows the commonly known Russian

practice of marking those NGOs as “foreign agents”. This is another step in the direction which certainly cannot be called democracy.

Ivan Krastev, in his 2007 article *The strange death of the liberal consensus*, correctly defined the post-transformation hiccups that are choking the post-communist states. “The liberal era that began in Central Europe in 1989 has come to an end,” he wrote. “Populism and illiberalism are tearing the region apart (...) The growing tensions between democracy and liberalism, the rise of ‘organized intolerance’ increasing demands for direct democracy, and the proliferation of charismatic leaders capable of mobilizing public anger make it almost impossible to avoid drawing parallels between the current political turmoil in Central Europe and the crisis of democracy in Europe between the world wars" (Krastev, 2007). Ten years later, however, it turns out that the world can look much worse.

The experience of the global financial crisis of 2008, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, the refugee crisis, the divisions within the European Union, the rise of social inequalities, the increasing fragility of the labour market and ongoing structural unemployment are contributing to the popularity of isolationistic tendencies throughout Europe and the West. Brexit, the victory of Donald Trump, the strong electoral showings of Norbert Hofer in Austria and Marine Le Pen in France, as well as the stable support for populist parties in Western Europe and the illiberal governments of Viktor Orbán in Hungary, Robert Fico in Slovakia, and Beata Szydło in Poland clearly prove that liberal democracy is going through a crisis.

The case of East-Central Europe provides an important lesson regarding the weakness of democracy and the possibility for authoritarian leaders to learn from one another. As of 2015, Viktor Orbán gained an important ally in his illiberal politics, an alliance with ramifications both in Central Europe and in the European Union as a whole. Commonly criticized reforms by Fidesz became an important inspiration for the Polish government. Questioning the separation of powers, rule of law, nonpartisan media and administration turned into a textbook for the Polish government. Kaczyński and Orbán, hand in hand, are using xenophobic and nationalistic arguments in their internal and external politics. Together, they are questioning the sense of European solidarity, treating the European Union as a source of additional income.

To understand the phenomenon of populism correctly, I would argue that more attention needs to be paid to the neoliberal experience of the countries. Despite differences in current day economic growth, both underwent the privatization of public services, deregulation of markets, decrease in social spending - creating social Darwinism. Populism and neoliberalism are two sides of the same coin. To prevent further illiberal tendencies, one should critically analyse the transitions in Central Europe. The answer to xenophobic measures cannot be more free market. A strong and just welfare state, which guarantees equal chances and the common feeling of democratic community could successfully deactivate populism. By criticizing Orbán and Kaczyński, one ought to review the "liberal sins" of the early 90s.

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MULTIPLE TARGET AUDIENCES, CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF PRISTINA-BELGRADE DIALOGUE

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Abstract

Political actors often use media to convey messages of self-praise to the public. In such cases, they give the media only the information representing their positive side. When the developments in society pose increasing public interest as was the case with the last agreement between Pristina and Belgrade which is treated in this paper, the parties pay more attention to presenting themselves as winners against each other, rather than being concerned with informing the public about the real content of the international agreement. The findings of the paper show that a message giver, which could be either the Serbian party or the Albanian party of Kosovo, has at the same time four groups of message receivers: the country's opposition, its electorate, the opposing parties and the international mediation party. Considering that their message is addressed to those four different types of public, the findings show that the givers of the message do not hesitate to massage the message in order to impact the four different groups of public, and use media only as a transmission channel of their public relation strategies.

Keywords: media; communication actors; political communication; political message; information management.

1. The problem in review

Even after achieving independence, Pristina and Belgrade continue talks with the mediation of the European Union about issues regarding the international telephone code, the rights of Serbs in Kosovo, an association which would gather municipalities comprised of Serbs as a sort of internal autonomy, as well as other technical issues. In these talks, special attention is paid to the communication of government officials of both parties with their internal public. Both parties are cautious while they make public the course of these talks which are expected to be concluded with the normalization of relations. This caution comes as a result of the public opinion in Serbia that still considers the loss of Kosovo to be very

painful, whereas the public in Kosovo is not yet ready for other compromises toward Serbia after the suffering caused by the Milosevic regime. However, the information management could not result successful now at the time of media plurality and when the message could not be isolated only to an internal public.

Each party in these talks, along with the compromises they make towards one other, aims to adopt a specific information management. Each party, when back from Brussels, speaks about victory in these talks while referring to the compromises they have made. This happens because today it is difficult to address a political message only to a certain public and for the message to remain within the state borders of a country. Today, apart from the plurality of media, we also have the plurality of public. This requires that the message reach the preferences of several types of public. These are manifold, as former US Secretary of State Colin Powell expressed during Desert Storm (in Iraq, 1990), when he was the commander of US forces. He suggested his team staff be careful when speaking on television, since at the same time they spoke to the whole world, addressing five different groups of listeners (Leonard 2002:12). The first group of these listeners, according to him, were the reporters who asked the questions; the second group were the American people who watched television; the third group were at least 170 world capitals that were probably interested about what was being talked about; the fourth was that simultaneously you were talking to your enemy as well; whereas the fifth group were your military troops who were exposed to danger (Leonard 2002:12-13).

2. International political communication and cyber diplomacy

Media has become the greatest instrument of international communication, whereas new media increasingly finds use by state and non-state actors to convey messages even to the foreign public. This wide use has produced three conceptual models (Gilboa 2001:1): *public diplomacy*, when state and non-state actors use media and other communication channels to influence public opinions in foreign societies; *media diplomacy*, when officials use media to communicate with foreign actors and to promote conflict solutions; and *mediated media diplomacy*, when journalists temporarily take the role of diplomats and serve as mediators in international negotiations.

Jonsson and Hall (2005) emphasize that in today's communications, politicians and diplomats should be active and daily communicate even privately with the people outside the country, in order to create as positive an image as possible for the country, its policy, its ideas and its values. The challenge of today's diplomats is to move from finding the information – to capturing the imagination (Leonard 2002:90). These authors divide public diplomacy into three dimensions. The first is communication about everyday issues, or information management, approximating the diplomacy with a wide range of news. The second dimension is strategic communication, the management of general perceptions about the country. The third dimension is long-term cultivation of sustainable relations with important individuals. To be successful, a persuader does not move the receiver to a message, the persuader moves the message to the receiver (Gass & Seiter 2009:161). In other words, effective influence or the drafting of activities of public diplomacy require, first of all, considerable communication with foreign audiences in their country. Since the purpose for the participants in communication is to be understood and to dialogue, modern day communication with the foreign public is cleverly done through the media and internet.

The term *information management* was used for the first time by James Reston in front of a Congressional Committee in 1955 (Laurano 2006:34). This technique allows to overcome traditional censorship. The news is not kept secret or refined (as it usually happens for sensitive issues of foreign policy). Instead, the importance is focused not in the news but in creating *pseudo-events* (Boorstin 1987), where the news is to be granted a greater echo than it originally had, or said differently, it consists of transforming a not very important development into important news. Nevertheless, things have changed as not only state factors participate in this sort of communication. Indeed, non-state factors communicate more and more with the foreign public as well. Communication with the external public also takes place from house to house, through the internet, a communication channel that imparts the written message, acoustic, video-message, music etc. The first thing for every diplomat starting their work, or right after entering the office, is to open their e-mail address and see their messages or read the developments (Baldi 1998:10). Information and electronic communication influence external policy not only in establishing a new strategy of sustainable issues but also in changing the ways we deal with it. While ambassadors used to be exchanged between royal crowns and were prepared with knowledge from the

Renaissance, culture, art of communication, courage and eloquence in order to communicate well with the officials of the host state, today they need another culture since the actors of communication for a diplomat are also the people of the host country, not only its state officials. “Recently ambassador resources have dramatically expanded and they include access to the computer, satellite and other information technologies” (Dizard 2001:2).

As a result of new circumstances, the nature of diplomats’ work has practically changed, from a traditional diplomacy that has often remained secret, into a massive diplomacy through new communication channels. The rapid development of technology and internet which has generated the expansion of social networks has also brought a new communication channel with the foreign public, through the internet, known as cyber-diplomacy. This massive communication at global level and the progress of new information and communication technologies have brought substantial challenges to the traditional course of international relations in the distribution of authorities on various terrains. “This has increased the activities of the global civil society and has led to a financial and global market expansion” (Potter 2002:3). According to Potter, such activities correlate the impact of innovation in communication and information technology with foreign policy and diplomacy. On the other hand, Melissen (2005) considers the development of this diplomacy mainly as a result of the progress of communication and information technology. “All these developments give opportunities to redefining the public diplomacy in conditions of an active role for the public instead of passive objects of foreign policy governmental strategies” (Melissen 2005:30).

The world is nowadays living sunk deeply into the electronic digital telecommunication technology which Deibert (2002:27) calls *hypermedia*. “However, the information explosion increases the need of increasing the reliability of information” (Potter 2002:23). It has also brought the democratization of foreign policy, because communication with the foreign public has also increased the transparency of foreign policy and at the same time has facilitated the possibility for manipulation attempts. Wolton (2009) says that the internet is an ocean of information, but there is a permanent question about how to establish relations with someone in a more easy, free and original way, because in this versatile communication channel, everyone communicates about everything, whereas reliability needs enhancement (Wolton 2009:53). “The internet is a great space of freedom, but also a huge

financial, criminal, mafia, propagandist perversity, the greatest warehouse of noise and manipulations when the essential information is not confirmed" (Wolton 2009:55). In public cyber space, the individual emerges into the space of public discussion, but the individual also emerges as a community, so community and collective speaking increases. It is a sort of democracy that goes downwards from state decision-making to community decision-making. "This virtual public space starts from the local one to the global one and it could be whether international or supranational" (Fuga 2013).

The daily communication is no longer the privilege of elites (political, military, economic etc.) of a country and its governance structures which were usually thought to have too much information, but a large public is being formed with the widespread of the word and the traditional media sight (Hyavard 2001:20)

This kind of message exchanging space aims for the creation of relations, which is the foundation of today's public diplomacy. As career diplomat George Kennan (1997) says, despite the fact that the foundation of American diplomacy are the relations cultivated by the ambassadors, these days this diplomacy may be called "diplomacy without diplomats" (Kennan 1997:207) in the sense of the physical presence of diplomats in the host country. The creation of this diplomacy without ambassadors at the time of internet has become a reality. After 30 years, the USA opened exactly this Embassy without ambassadors to communicate with the Iranian public. Diplomatic relations between Washington and Teheran were terminated in 1979 with the Islamic Revolution. The same year, on the 4th of November, a group of students entered the US Embassy in Tehran holding hostages dozens of American officials for one year. Precisely this dramatic episode marks the end of diplomatic relations between the two countries, to be reset virtually between the US Government and the Iranian people in October 2011. The reason of opening this virtual Embassy, as explained in the web page, is for the American voice to be heard by a wider Iranian audience, "in the absence of direct contact, we hope it can serve as a bridge between the American and Iranian people" (**Why Virtual Embassy Tehran? n.d.)**. This Embassy-web page includes multiple messages addressed to the Iranian people, audio video messages, social networks etc.

Although they belong to two countries without diplomatic relations, Pristina and Belgrade continuously communicate through the messages transmitted by the media.

Delegations of the two states, Kosovo and Serbia, on 25th of August 2015, with the mediation of the EU in Brussels, signed an agreement for the creation of the so-called *Association of Serbian Municipalities in Kosovo*, which provides exclusive rights for the Municipalities inhabited by Serbs in Kosovo. The signatory parties have interpreted this agreement in very different ways, each of them speaking of a great victory in the negotiations. Different interpretations of the signed document continue to be made not only by the signatory parties, but also by the opposition, in both Kosovo and Serbia. Transmitting the statements of Kosovar and Serbian officials, the media have informed the public in Kosovo and Serbia about the content of this agreement, but always in different ways, with respect to the competences that the Serbian Municipalities in Kosovo will have. The Serbian party proclaimed itself triumphant in the negotiations mediated by Brussels, just in the same way as the governors of Kosovo. "Using sports terminology, Serbia has won with the result 5:0. Serbian Municipalities Association in Kosovo shall have their Mayor, assembly directly linked to Serbia, and many executive powers" (Đurić 2015). The Serbian Prime Minister also made a similar statement (Vučić 2015).

On the other side, the Kosovar party has as well expressed to have reached great achievements with the conclusion of this agreement, denying that Serbian Municipalities shall have executive powers (Deutsche Welle, 2015), because with this agreement, the sovereignty of Kosovo is finally established even in the Municipalities inhabited by Serbs in the North of Kosovo. Foreign Affairs Minister Hashim Thaci states that the signing of this agreement marks "*de jure* the recognition of Kosovo by Serbia and that the Serbian delegation signed this agreement after great international pressure" (Tači, 2015). A similar statement is made by the Prime Minister of Kosovo.

The interpretation and the argumentation by government and nongovernment actors, including the media, are completely different for the same issue.

2.1. The message receiver

In political communication, a message addressed to the public, aside from informing, intends to influence, convince, sometimes manipulate, orientate and encourage to act. Even the messages in the case of this political agreement, apart from informing, aim to influence the receiver of the message. In this case, the message is drafted in such a way that the effect

would lie over some heterogeneous public, because the same message is addressed: to the internal public from whom the vote is required; the country's opposition so as to neutralize and minimize its critics; to the foreign chancelleries, especially to Brussels as the mediator; the opposing party, which in this case is either Pristina or Belgrade. While formulating such a message, the political actor wants to be all-inclusive, first of all interlocking a message liked by the electorate, but saying the reality or at least a piece of it, so it will not provoke the opponent or the mediator who may disprove if the statement has a great diversion from reality; to save the tranquillity of the opposition; to prove oneself as a good political manager. In such cases, finding a common denominator about the content of a drafted message is difficult and the information is more of a public relations message than a message close to reality. In other words, in this case, *a massage* is done to the message in order to make it more preferable to the message receiver's preferences.

2.2 Political communication and message transformation

The problem that arises here extends into pragmatic moulds of political communication, a communication which is as old as politics. But today's political message, in a time of new technologies and internet, when the message could be delivered in real time, has transformed not only the message, for it is challenging for the political actor who constantly loses the luxury of counselling before they pronounce acute and important issues in political developments. This is why policy and relations between individuals in today's societies are in continuous transformation. A huge role in the transformation of these relations has been played by new technologies. The political individual hopes that by using these technologies they shall continuously convey massive personalized messages to the public, for the purpose of raising their image and convincing the public about the ideas they express. The individual in this constant and permanent bombing is not always clear whether they are receiving information, having fun, consuming an advertisement or a message which combines a little bit of everything. Thus, this is a political communication that could be comprehended as an exchange of discussions between the politicians in power and those of the opposition, mostly during the electoral campaign. However, political communication also includes learning the role of communication in political life, in a wider sense, encompassing the media and polls of public opinion as well as marketing and political advertising (Todorov

2003). This common designation is focused on the constantly rising number of political actors. Said differently, if we understand political communication just like any other communication having politics as an object, then we could simply define it as intentional communication about politics, undertaken by politicians and other actors for the purpose of reaching specific objectives (McNair 2011). This short designation has advantages because it includes two of the most basic characteristics of contemporary politics: the expansion of the political sphere with the rising number of problems and actors, interlocked in the field of politics, as well as the enhancing role of communication. In other words, political communication is a fighting field of discussions, having politics as an object and having the purpose of getting the power for a political interpretation of reality. The basic idea is that today politics get their public character through the media, meaning that politics become real not through the people's personal experience, but through their presence in the media. The problem of political communication dates back thousands of years.

3. Communication classics

In the European cultural tradition, the studies concerning the relations between politics, political communication, convincing language or rhetoric can be encountered in Ancient Greece, in the 5^{th}-4^{th} centuries BC. This communication is often international because of the geopolitical specifics in the city-sates of the time. Plato (427-347), since that time required education in order to govern, said *let's invent with our discussions the method to educate the warriors (soldiers)* (Plato 1999). Moreover, he supported the idea of taking the power even through manipulation. "A man must want to seem fair and this probably makes one seize the governance of the state; you shall do good to your friends and bad to your enemies and this way you shall glorify Gods and shall be zealous to them; this is how you could do good more than a fair man could and it looks as if Gods love you more than the fair man" (Plato 1999:59).

It looks as though even at that time the methods of political communication were well known, while the advanced level of convincing methods, oratory as well as propaganda, is obvious. "And, in order to hide our rogueries, we shall hatch plots and there are masters who are ready to teach the art of eloquence and jurisprudence science and with their help we will partially convince the others and we will partially use the force with them and being the

strongest we shall not be punished" (Plato 1999:63). In other words, if we had given to our fiction the best possible view of the truth, we would have made a useful action through the lie.

Even Aristotle (348-322) requires more convictions for governance and this is to be reached through the obedience influenced by oratory. It looks as if he requires conviction with more presented facts. For as much as the direct democracy of the time had no need for communication mediated tools as we have the media today, Aristotle consulted political orators who should have:

"The goods for which a broad consensus was reached; welfare; some virtues: bravery, justice, restrain, patience, generosity, miracle; …body attributes: beauty, health; further: wealth, company, honesty, glory, art, ability, fear, admiration, jealousy, what they love and hate; …the good: good is the thing that is bad for the enemy – opponent, good is the things that deserves praise, the thing that is appreciated more by the others, good is the thing that is resolved easy, the thing that is desired, the thing that gladden friends, the thing that is chosen to be done by those we greed" (Aristotle 2002:58).

Rhetoric, according to Aristotle, is the ability to make use of what could be convincing at any given time and for these special convincing abilities are required not only speaking and sentence formulation, but also good personal attitude, intonation, looks etc. The present time of media development reminds us that media effects are not only words, but also appearance, the finding, the moment etc. It is not enough knowing only what should be said, but also knowing the way it should be said (Aristotle 2002:265). Aristotle's advice of that time applies today to those that treat public relations.

Opposing Plato, Aristotle sees rhetoric as a dialectic with the tools of general knowledge not of any special science. From the Aristotelian point of view, rhetoric differs from political propaganda because it does not require to impose ideas in the absence of critical access, but rational justifications. In contrast to science, which relies on truth, rhetoric refers to the actions in which sentiments, uncertainty and hopes play an important role in the formulation of judgments. The fact that human evaluations interact with entities and constituent materials helps explain why political rhetoric should always remain unscientific (Diodato 2003:22). This is the reason why in the third book he writes that if fraud applies as a truth, then the truth could not be trusted (Aristotle 2002:233).

4. The political message as an information and as an advertisement

Ancient debates about the existing relation between what is objective (or the truth) and political communication can be retaken now to analyse the problems concerning the debates that take place in Kosovo about a signed document which deals with the level of competences that Municipalities inhabited with Serbs inside Kosovo shall have. The messages conveyed by both parties include contradicting information. In earlier studies, especially during the 18th and 19th century, the authors emphasized the great importance of the press constituting an imperative element of the democratic system. Moreover, Thomas Jefferson considered the press as "the best instrument to brighten the human mind" (Bivins 2004:4). This shows that since the ancient Greece's direct communication, and after Gutenberg, we have yet another revolution in the spreading of the political message, and the press also enters as a political factor. However, later on, this assessment changed starting with Lippmann (1922), Dewey (1955) and the increasing voices and beliefs that the media do not play an influencing and mainly positive role in the democratic processes anymore.

Afterwards, we also have the assessment that the media turned from a reality description tool into a reality creation tool (Berger & Luckmann 1966), and with television it is absolutely notable how this media, from a reality recording tool, creates a new social reality (Bourdieu, 1998). On the other hand, the individual, as explained by Goffman (1959), constantly tries to play their role aiming to present themselves as well as possible in everyday life. Even in the 21st century, political communication where countries successfully enter into relations with other countries, or as it is preferred to be called today, global governance, includes complex technical tools for the management of people. In other words, global governance represents a power system, recognition, depending on the strategic orchestration of human freedom, within which dynamic and complex networks of governance are formed. These networks operate through strategic manipulations of diverse principles of society; this orchestration requires detailed knowledge of the population and the area where they live (Dillon 2003:135).

Thus, in our case, the state recognizes its citizens' preferences and that is why it intends to deliver such a message which on the one hand would fulfil their preferences regarding the internal regulation of the state of Kosovo, and on the other hand, would not incite the discontent of the international community.

However, not only state actors play the role regarding information and the truth. Media creates a reality in society and according to Luhman (2000), whatever we know about society, or think about the world, we know it through the media and this truth is not only about the knowledge of society and history, but nature as well. But, we may talk about the knowledge of mass media in the double sense. This ambiguity about the same issue also occurred with the rights of Serbs in Kosovo after the agreements with Belgrade were signed with EU mediation. The debate held in the media by the political actors made the public have different interpretations, which resulted in major ambiguity over the same agreement. Several media inform about a useful agreement for Kosovo, and some others do the opposite, so it is evident that this depends on the contiguity of certain media with actors and political organizations. Mediated political communication often contributes to reducing the value of democratic ideals and civic engagement. The researchers who find corruption in the process of democratic information, in the field of strategic marketing that excludes segments of the public from the field of politics, would do good to recognize the fields in which individuals demonstrate in an impressive way the autonomy of their critical thinking beyond information management (Bennett & Entman 2005).

5. Media contiguity with politics and media plurality

Regarding media contiguity and their attitude in supporting one or the other side, in these days of market and commercialization when the media, just like businesses, intend to profit or they face a survival crisis, their corruption can occur. Communication during previous eras of pluralistic democracy was relatively uncorrupted by the latest technologies (Bennett & Manheim 2005:281). Nowadays, with the multiplication of possibilities to possess a medium which the internet has facilitated, this problem is even more present. The level of media corruption is much higher now than it used to be in the past. The interaction between the media system and society often happens to be a confrontation of different realities, fragmented either within the society or the media system in a country. The importance of political communication for the citizens depends, first of all, on the decision-making power toward the local community and on the structure of the state (Lang 2003). And this importance in our analysed reality is quite huge because we are talking about the internal functioning of the state where within the state another entity is being formed, a Serbian

entity, directly connected to Belgrade. The state actors need information that describes actions as sustainable solutions, as can be noticed from the statements of the state actors that there are no political but only technical negotiations with Serbia, to the current repetitions that the Association of Serbian municipalities would sooner lead Kosovo to the EU. This is how Luhman (2000) explained this; according to him, the code of media system and the difference between information and no information is that the social system works with the information. Therefore, the system is forced to have new information and the repetition of the information becomes an event. After these events, the information is needed again and this gives rise to the need for new information (Luhman 2000:18).

Political actors, in this case, seek to follow the preferences of various types of public to whom the message is addressed, and to create a close connection with the social reality. The message receiver, according to Wolton (2009), refuses the information that concerns them whereas the individual, the people, would like to get their vision of the world.

6. Conclusion

In the era of continuous bombing by multiple information, the individual consumes too much information. Most of this information goes through a massaging process of the political message. For some of it, considering that the distribution time of the information is 24 hours, the receiving is continuous and selective at the same time. Nowadays, the individual receives the message when they want to, not through *prime time* when the others serve it, but when they have time for it, *my time*. Following consumer preferences, the information conventionally known as *objective* and *managed information*, loses even more the thin distinctive line. Media and the political actor already follow more the preferential reality of political and mediated consumer, than the social reality.

On the other hand, even communication actors are transformed into new communication channels. Today, even the citizen as a communication actor, through social media and other online media, becomes a political actor participating in political communication through comments, assessments or political views. This has led to the democratization of communication and political thinking and, at the same time, to increasing non-professional opinion about social issues. In this communication channel, the ongoing battle is no more about the relation between reasoned and objective justification on the one

hand, and non–objective or non-professional on the other hand, but what is required there is the dominance of quantitative support for a certain issue. Communication actors are more superficial than in traditional media and harsher in public discussions. Thereby, in this virtual political communication, the truth could be best proven by the one who has more powerful tools for the dissemination of a political message and greater mobilization for participation in communication. This means that the social reality and massive perception about it have been transformed.

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THE FUTURE OF THE NORMATIVE POWER EUROPE CONCEPT FROM THE VISEGRAD GROUP'S PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The European Union (EU) is becoming an independent actor of International Relations. Its external activities are diverse: ranging from economic relations (mainly through the Common Commercial Policy or association agreements) to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Also, the geographical scope of its presence is wide – from the nearest neighborhood in the European continent to the countries of Africa, Far East or South America. For this reason, in the academic as well as in the public discourse, questions are posed on the EU's role in international relations. One of the leading concepts is an idea of the European Union as a normative power (Normative Power Europe, NPE). This article will analyze the status quo and future of the NPE concept among Visegrad countries expressed in the discourse of their political elites in: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. It is assumed that the changing nature of the international reality in recent years, i.e. the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and the migration crisis undermined the dominant narration about the EU in International Relations as a Normative Power and led to new forms of expression of its international identity. Political discourse in the new member states of the EU will be analyzed in searching for an answer to the question: what is the perception of the NPE in the selected Central European countries?

Keywords: Normative Power Europe concept, Common Foreign and Security Policy, global strategy in foreign relations, Visegrad countries

1. Introduction

The Lisbon Treaty provisions, which became effective in December 2009, changed the European Union's character in International Relations (IR)[###]. The Treaty ended the discussion on the EU's international status. The European Union, since the Maastricht Treaty

[###] *Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community*, signed in Lisbon, 13 December 2007.

(1993), had not had a legal personality and could not act in IR as a single player. Due to the lack of legal personality, the Union's status in IR was unclear and did not allow it to undertake many external activities. On the basis of the Lisbon Treaty provisions (article 47 of the *Treaty on European Union*), the international status of the European Union became clearer. It was given a legal personality that facilitates the relations with the external environment. In addition, the organizational system of the European Union based on three pillars disappeared. However, it has been noted that this change is only formal (Skolimowska, 2014, p. 140). As part of the former first pillar, the community method of decision-making still applies (implemented mostly within the ordinary legislative procedure, with a strong role of the European Commission, the Council and the European Parliament, decisions are made in a large number of cases by qualified majority voting). Such a formula still refers to the economic aspect of the European Union's external relations (*Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*, 2009, Articles 288-294).

With regard to the Common Foreign and Security Policy, its specificity in terms of the method of decision-making and its nature has been preserved. The role of supranational institutions, such as the Commission and the Court of Justice or the European Parliament, is small here. The intergovernmental nature of cooperation in the field of political external relations of the European Union has also been preserved. In the field of the CFSP, it is subject to specific rules and procedures, which is expressed in the fact that decisions in this area are taken essentially unanimously (*Treaty on European Union*, Articles 21-46).

The legal changes of the EU's character in international relations introduced by the Lisbon reform were not the only elements of the discussion on the European Union's external activity. Parallel to the debate on the legal issues, there is a public as well as an academic debate about the nature of the EU's role and identity in the international arena. Scholars and politicians seek to develop theoretical approaches and political strategies that would correspond to the specificity of the European Union in the international space. One such theoretical proposal is the concept of Normative Power Europe (NPE) worked out by Ian Manners in 2002.

This article will examine the character, origins and evolution of the Normative Power Europe (NPE) concept form the perspective of Visegrad countries: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. It is assumed that new Central European countries do not

share the idea of the European Union as an actor whose only power is connected to the norms and values spread outside its borders. They tend to share a more realistic and pragmatic attitude towards the EU's character in international relations, rooted in its power of economic and military capabilities.

This study is divided into three parts. The first part will seek to answer the question about the nature of Europe's international presence, challenges for CFSP, as well as opportunities on the global arena. In the second part of the article the nature of the Normative Power Europe concept, its origins and *status quo* will be evaluated. The aim will be to find out whether the political actors of the EU share the idea of the normative character of the EU in IR. The third part offers an analysis of the Central European countries' attitude towards the EU's identity in International Relations.

2. The changing nature of the European Union in International Relations

The European Union appeared on the map of International Relation in 1993, when the Treaty of Maastricht provisions came into force (Treaty on European Union, 1992). According to the Treaty: "The Union shall be founded on the European Communities, supplemented by the policies and forms of cooperation established by this Treaty. Its task shall be to organize, in a manner demonstrating consistency and solidarity, relations between the Member States and between their peoples" (Treaty on European Union, 1992, Art. A). One of the elements of the newly-created institution was an integration of foreign and

security affairs within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy [§§§] (Treaty on European Union, 1992, Title V).

However, the Maastricht Treaty did not give the EU a legal personality. Since 2009, when the Treaty of Lisbon provisions came into force, the formal and legal status of the European Union in international relations has not been clear. Before that time, legal experts pointed that: "The European Union is a specific international structure of a *sui generis* character, without legal personality, operating on the basis of an international agreement (TEU) and being in a state of development (*in statu nascendi*)" (Barcz, 2011, p. 28). Then, the European Union derived from the legal personality of the European Communities in international relations. The illustration of this situation was its pillar structure. This situation changed with the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon, under which the European Union gained a legal personality (Treaty on European Union, 2007, Art. 47).

As a result, the European Union has received the characteristics of an international organization. The consequence of this decision is the abolition of the Union's pillar structure, the unification of the decision-making process and a catalogue of legal instruments. The decision to transform the Union into an international organization also entails important political implications for the perception of the Union's legal nature. In this way it is explained that the process of the European integration takes the legal form of an international organization - created by states under an international agreement, in which the competences

[§§§] According to Title V of the Maastricht Treaty: "The objectives of the common foreign and security policy shall be to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests and independence of the Union; to strengthen the security of the Union and its Member States in all ways; to preserve peace and strengthen international security, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter as well as the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the objectives of the Paris Charter; to promote international cooperation; to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Union shall pursue these objectives: by establishing systematic cooperation between Member States in the conduct of policy, in accordance with Article J.2; by gradually implementing, in accordance with Article J.3, joint action in the areas in which the Member States have important interests in common. The Member States shall support the Union's external and security policy actively and unreservedly in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity. They shall refrain from any action which is contrary to the interests of the Union or likely to impair its effectiveness as a cohesive force in international relations. The Council shall ensure that these principles are complied with."

and structure of this organization are defined. This should put an end to the fears that this process is moving towards some form of a pan-European state at the expense of the sovereignty of the member states.

On the other hand, it should be remembered that cooperation between states within the European Union goes far beyond the formula of an international organization. However, the single currency, specific political system being the subject of the analysis of researchers dealing with political systems of states, the category of European citizenship, universal elections to the European Parliament and finally the decision system in the European Union are those elements of the EU's construction that move it away from the category of classical international organization, even after the Lisbon reform.

Since 1993, despite a complicated and sometimes confusing system of the European Union's integration model, it has been becoming a more visible and important actor of international relations. The European Union has been seeking its place on the global stage. It is present in international relations through: external economic relations (within the framework of the Common Commercial Policy, rendered development assistance, cooperation with third countries, humanitarian aid etc.) and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Both of these dimensions make up the concept of its external relations. Institutionally, this area of European integration has a twofold character, which results from the existence of two decision logics in it: communitarian/supranational (for economic cooperation) and intergovernmental (for cooperation under the CFSP). Although the Treaty of Lisbon unified the structure of the European Union by eliminating its pillar structure - which is an expression of the above logic - in relation to external relations, its specificity has been preserved. Integration in the scope of CFSP has a different organizational and decision-making framework than in the context of economic relations. Making decisions here is in the nature of agreements and compromises between member states, and is not done at the level of the European institutions, independently of them. The European Union's role in foreign affairs is to: coordinate the positions of member states and establish strategies and an agenda for joint action. This area of European integration consists of the cooperation of sovereign member states in foreign matters, which is expressed by keeping unanimity as the main method of making decisions and limiting the role of supranational institutions (*Treaty on European Union*, 2009, Title V).

An important element of the external relations of the European Union are also the activities undertaken by member states as part of national foreign policies. In accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon, cooperation in the field of foreign affairs between member states has an intergovernmental character and is not in conflict with national foreign policies. The space of communication, negotiation and deliberation is occupied by institutions in which the member states coordinate their foreign policies and strive to develop a common European position. These include: the European Council and the Council of the European Union. The implementation of the adopted arrangements rests on the shoulders of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the President of the European Council and the member states.

Based on the above claims regarding the specific nature of the European Union's external relations, it can be noted that they differ from the national foreign policy model. Activities in the European Union forum (in particular under the CFSP) involve the coordination, negotiation and determination of joint strategies, positions and actions by the Member States.

The changes introduced by the Lisbon Treaty in the institutional structure under the CFSP are: strengthening the European Council by granting it the status of an EU institution and equipping it with the possibility of issuing binding acts (decisions); the separation and creation of two distinct configurations within the Council of the European Union: the General Affairs Council and the Foreign Affairs Council. This exercise was aimed at distinguishing foreign issues from the current matters of European integration; the establishment of the institution of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (Article 18 TEU). He is appointed to this position by the European Council (acting by qualified majority) with the consent of the President of the Commission. The High Representative leads the CFSP (the new office combined the tasks of two former institutions: the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Commissioner for External Relations). He contributes, through his proposals, to the development of CFSP and implements it, acting on the authority of the Council. This also applies to the Common Security and Defence Policy. The High Representative is also the Vice-President of the European Commission (his responsibilities concern the field of external relations and he coordinates its policies in this matter) and presides over the Foreign Affairs Council (ensures

coherence and continuity of work in the field of EU foreign policy). One should also mention the creation of the European External Action Service, which supports the work of the High Representative. The body cooperates with the diplomatic services of the member states and consists of officials from the relevant services of the General Secretariat of the Council and the Commission, as well as the personnel seconded by national diplomatic services. It started functioning on January 1, 2011. The office of the permanent President of the European Council was also created and equipped with the competence to conduct external activities. He is responsible for the preparation and continuity of the work of the European Council, in cooperation with the President of the Commission and on the basis of the work of the General Affairs Council. The activities of EU bodies in the field of external activities are supported by such institutions as: COREPER, the Political and Security Committee, the European Defence Agency and the European Union Satellite Centre.

The role of the European Commission in the field of the CFSP is defined by the Treaties. The Court of Justice of the European Union is not competent in this matter, with the exception of jurisdiction to control compliance with the legality of certain decisions. The role of the European Parliament in the field of external relations has been strengthened by, inter alia, the ability to address questions or formulate recommendations to the Council and the High Representative. Twice a year, it conducts a debate on the progress of the CFSP, including a common security and defence policy.

The European Union has indeed been seeking its own identity in International Relations. In 2003, the first of the political documents containing the self-definition of the European Union's identity in international relations was prepared (*European Security Strategy*, 2003). This document contains an indication of the civil and normative nature of European identity. It emphasizes the challenges for European security, such as: terrorism, the availability of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, the weakening of the state system and the privatization of armed forces. Europe's response to these challenges was to increase the potential to mobilize all necessary civilian resources in crisis and post-crisis situations. It was mainly about (soft) civilian instruments such as: increasing diplomatic capabilities, better exchange of intelligence information between Member States and partners, increasing the number of civilian missions or strengthening the EU's operational capabilities within NATO in the field of crisis management. The strategy assumed cooperation with

neighbouring countries in the field of the democratization process and economic issues. The document also contains an indication of the reference to international law and the United Nations system as guarantors of the order of the former.

The European Security Strategy of 2003, however, did not respond either to the content or to the form of the challenges and threats faced by the European Union and its members. In 2015, the European Council entrusted the High Representative with the task of developing a new global EU strategy in the field of foreign and security policy. It was determined that member states should expect such a document by June 2016. Many entities took part in the inauguration process where reflection on the directions and assumptions of the new global strategy of the European Union was made. Not only European institutions (including the European Parliament), national parliaments, expert circles (from Poland there was, inter alia, the Polish Institute of International Affairs), but also civil societies took part in it.

The effect of this process was the development and presentation of the assumptions of the global EU strategy in the field of foreign and security policy in June 2016. The new document entitled: *Common vision, joint action*: *A stronger Europe. The global strategy for the foreign and security policy of the European Union* includes the assumptions of the new global strategy of the European Union in international relations: "The strategy is to express the ambition of the strategic autonomy of the European Union. We live in times of existential crisis, both within the European Union and outside it. Our Union is at risk. Our European project, which brought unprecedented peace, prosperity and democracy, is now being questioned. In the east, the European security order has been violated, and terrorism and violence are afflicting North Africa and the Middle East, as well as Europe itself. Growth is not keeping pace with demographic change, security tensions in Asia are getting worse and climate change is causing further distortions".

Analysing the philosophy of the new strategic assumptions of the European Union in international relations, one can point to the evolution of views on the role of the EU in the world and the emergence of reflections on the need to develop real instruments of international influence. This evolution, also in relation to the Strategy from 2003, is expressed in the departure from the idealistic vision of the international environment and the

role that the European Union should play in it. Until now it was a role that could be described as a normative actor.

Meanwhile, the new strategic document from 2016 draws our attention to the concept of 'principled pragmatism' as a philosophy of EU external relations. It means that the actions of the European Union in the international environment will result from a realistic assessment of the environment, to which it will respond with more adequate external policy instruments than hitherto. The document focuses not so much on instruments of soft international influence, such as: economic instruments, promotion of democracy, human rights, institutionalization of cooperation, but clearly emphasizes the need to authenticate the EU's position in external relations by means of military external policy instruments: "The priority issue is investing in security and defence in particular. In order to be able to respond to external crises, build the potential of our partners and guarantee the security of Europe, a full spectrum of defence capabilities is necessary'.

The strategy devotes much space to issues related to the need to strengthen the European defence dimension and build independent forces capable of defending and guaranteeing European interests in the world. There are numerous references to the idea of multilateralism and the reform of global governance proposal for the area, which could compete, for example, with the Russian offer.

3. The Normative Power Concept - theoretical findings

The unclear character of the European Union in international relations since the Treaty of Maastricht has resulted in seeking appropriate tools and paradigms to describe its presence in global affairs. One of the popular concepts was an idea that the European Unions' uniqueness is its strength in the relations with third parties. There was an idea of Normative Power Europe (NPE) developed by Ian Manners in 2002 to describe the European Union's role in international relations (Manners, 2002). It was assumed that normative power refers to the European Union's ability to spread the norms and standards of European integration - respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights (*Treaty on European Union*, 2009, Art. 21) as well as the legal, economic, social, political, and cultural norms elaborated during the European integration process.

The analysis of the role of the European Union in international relations according to Manners' concept of normative power was supposed to leave behind the formal analysis of institutions or external policies of the EU in international relations, and to focus instead on the approaches within a sociological or cognitive framework. Manners claimed that the phenomenon of normative power should be understood as the ability of one international entity to exert its ideological influence on other members in international relations (described by the notions of 'power over opinion' and 'ideological power[****]'). Therefore, the concept itself is not founded on the analysis of the economic resources held by the EU in international relations. It rather refers to its ability to diffuse European legal and political standards, ideas, discourses and integration standards, and to shape the international environment with the use of such tools. The catalogue of norms includes all the legal, economic, social, political and cultural norms established in the course of European integration, as well as the norms featured in the *Charter of the United Nations*, *Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe* (Helsinki Final Act), *Charter of Paris*, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and in other documents. The normative presence of the European Union in international relations should lead to a change in the norms, standards and principles of international politics. The innovative and original character of the concept of the European Union as a normative power was built on the assumption that the power of the EU in International Relations does not lie in its military capabilities or economic resources, but stems from the importance of the ideas, standards and values underlying the project of European integration (Skolimowska, 2015).

[****] At this point, Ian Manners referred to Johan Galtung's idea of ideological power of the European Communities developed in 1973 (Galtung, 1973).

Ian Manners emphasized that the European Union constitutes neither a civilian power[††††], nor a military power; instead, it possesses the features of a *normative* power built on the founding principles of the European project. The normative power of the EU lies in exporting the systems of norms (or: the normative system), as described above. This occurs through: spontaneous diffusion – the European Union's norms are naturally diffused in third states without the EU's engagement or activity; the use of communication strategies – the informational activity of the EU; procedural activities – the institutionalization of relations with the EU; transference of mutual benefits in the relations of the European Union with third states; the presence of the EU in third states; cultural diffusion and the process of learning European norms by third states (Manners, 2002, p. 254).

Normative power is also related to the European Union's ability to exert influence on the external environment not merely by the use of economic instruments (as in the case of a 'civilian power'), but rather by the attractiveness of the European project to third parties. Once third parties recognize European values as attractive and convincing, mutual relations between the entities become institutionalized and a political dialogue concerning the conditions of co-operation between them is established. The European Union thus acts and promotes its values through its policies, for instance through development aid and assistance, through trade, enlargement policies etc. Yet, it is still the political dialogue with the third parties that remains the most important channel for transferring the European norms and values. This dialogue, however, needs to be institutionalized, for example in the form of

[††††] The concept of civilian power was developed in 1972 by François Duchêne. The author claimed that the power of the European Communities in IR was founded not on their military force, but rather on their common market and political instruments, which enabled the Communities to construct their areas of influence in the world. The notion of 'civilian power' refers to those international entities whose foreign policy consists of, for example: accepting the necessity of co-operation with other participants in the international forum (i.e. the idea of multilateralism); using non-military instruments (mostly economic instruments) to secure the states' individual interests; and being ready to create or to enter into supranational structures in order to resolve current issues. A foreign policy of a 'civilian power' is constructed *via* the use of economic, diplomatic and cultural measures, as opposed to the use of military power. F. Duchêne additionally noted that Western Europe, in its role as a civilian actor, was greatly contributing to international politics and helping to eliminate the risk of military conflicts by focusing on the necessity of economic, social and cultural co-operation.

association agreements, the European Neighbourhood Policy, or strategic partnerships, and accompanied by the socialization process of its participants (Manners, 2002, p. 241) for reasons of accepting or rejecting the EU as a normative power by the third states.

Ian Manners' concepts of Normative Power Europe has become popular among scholars of International Relations and European Studies. It was also influential among political elites and gave a theoretical background to constructing political strategies of the EU in IR, in 2003 (*European Security Strategy*, 2003).

There are scholars who express their concern when it comes to the thesis on the normative character of European power in International Relations. Thomas Diez is of the opinion that the concept of a normative power has become an important subject of discussion in the field of European studies. However, a number of significant questions related thereto give rise to controversies (Diez, 2015, p. 635). One of them is the issue of dichotomy: the particular interests of the member states *versus* collective European norms in external relations. This particular issue has seemed quite visible, for example, in relation to the attitude adopted by the EU towards the democratic movements in several Arab states (referred to as 'the Arab Spring'). On the one hand, the European Union declared that it would take an active part in building democracy in the region; while on the other, it supported authoritarian regimes in order to stop the wave of migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea and to secure petroleum supplies coming to Europe. It remains to be established whether the EU as a normative power constitutes an effective actor in International Relations; that is, whether the European norms truly influence the behaviour of third states. When researched, this question presents a number of difficulties, as the EU is usually but one of the actors in the process. It is equally difficult to provide conclusive and unambiguous proof that, at a given moment, it was the European norms that most influenced the course of events. The issue concerns the level of analysis of the normative power of the EU. In the light of the fact that the supra-national integration model for external affairs has not yet been established, the research into this matter must encompass a number of actors taking part in the process; this concerns both the Member States and private actors, such as European companies involved in weapons trade (Diez, 2011, p. 2).

Kalypso Nicolaïdis and Robert Howse state that the image of the EU's role in international relations is created by the EU itself and does not reflect its actual role, rather

constituting an image of the ideal that Europe wishes to attain (Nicolaïdis, Howse, 2002, p. 768). This means that the European Union does not truly export its normative offer, but rather a certain representation of what the EU wishes to be. The authors of this concept refer to it as 'EUtopia', i.e. a utopia that the European Union has created about itself. Hence, the international activity of the EU constitutes a form of projection or a presentation of the myth that Europe is a community of norms and values. This particular strategy is based on the assumption that the EU is indeed a role-model for the rest of the world and that it sets an example to be followed. This attitude can be seen, for instance, in the European support for regional forms of integration in various parts of the world, such as the African Union. However, as pointed out by Nicolaïdis and Howse, the true identity of the EU and the image that it wishes to create in international relations are not consistent, which, in turn, decreases its credibility in the eyes of the international public.

Despite some challenges, the concept of normative power, developed mainly by Constructivists in the area of European studies, may constitute an important contribution to the debate on the nature and specificity of contemporary powers in International Relations. The analysis of the European Union's case shows a different example of the specificity of power than we have observed so far (mostly a material one), offering the view of the cultural, ideological and identity aspects of this phenomenon; this does not mean, though, that Constructivists aim to develop a concept of power that would be competitive to that offered by rationalist theories. Representatives of this paradigm advocate the need for a broader analytical approach to the power phenomenon which will reflect its non-material, more ideological and social face. Constructivists perceive power in ideation categories, as constituted more by ideas than material forces and conditioned by the cultural context of the international system (Wendt, 2008, p. 97). The importance of power in international relations changes along with the current distribution of interests and their content. This means that power depends on the interpretation and significance attributed to it by countries. It is assumed here that ideas not only have significance in International Relations, but also constitute the material base of this reality, giving it sense and significance. In the Constructivist approach, the current materialistic interpretation of power is being replaced by the ideation and the normative and discursive approach. Based on the Constructivist assumption that the action of the state in international relations stems from the interpretation

of facts, we might also say that the specificity of power is connected with the subjective meanings given to it by other participants in International Relations.

To sum up, there are a few deficits of the Normative Power Europe concept. First, there is a need to develop more precise statements and take into account the evolving role of the material factor in the European Union's external policy. Second, the academic concept of the European Union's normative power is strongly correlated with the EU's own definition of identity, appearing in programming documents concerning its external relations. I have observed here the danger of a subjective theoretical position developed for the needs of a scientific legitimization of the EU's normative power, instead of an objective analysis and explanation. Third, the concept of the European Union's normative power is rather poor, as it focuses only on one aspect of the EU's power in international relations (the aspects of norms and European values). Moreover, it is difficult to demonstrate the relationship between the EU's normative power and its influence on international politics. Some scholars even claim that the concept of normative power was falsified in the research on the international role of the European Union (Toje, 2009, p. 49). It seems to have low potential to explain the EU's role in International Relations compared to such concepts as rational choice or the game theory on the analysis of norms, values and identity on the international system level and the importance of ideation ontology as a vital factor affecting political preferences of states (not only internal factors). Many proposed notions, however, are poorly defined.

4. The Visegrad Group's perspectives on the future of the Normative Power Europe concept

The future of European integration is an important element of public discourse not only among the political elites of the European Union based in Brussels, but also in its member states. Special attention will be paid to the Republic of Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia[‡‡‡‡] and their attitude towards the future of the EU in international affairs in the light of the Normative Power Europe concept. These are new members of the European Union (2004) with different kinds of challenges when it comes to foreign and security affairs. Proximity to Russia as well as strong ties with the USA and NATO makes

[‡‡‡‡] Countries that form The Visegrad Group.

them different from old European countries. From this perspective, it is interesting to make an analysis of their attitude towards the future of the CFSP in terms of the Normative Power Europe concept. The Visegrad countries have different views regarding their security. For Poland, it is Russia that remains the main threat, whereas NATO is believed to be the only real protection. Poland is concerned about creating any European structures that might be understood as competitive or even parallel to NATO. Apart from the concerns about creating structures competitive with NATO, Poland is worried about the negative consequences on its arms industry and its ability to compete with Western European factories. Poland, however, ultimately supported the launching of the so-called Permanent Structured Cooperation in Defence (PESCO) at the EU summit in June 2017.

The issue of the arms industry is irrelevant to Slovakia, which does not have such factories. Traditionally not investing in its military forces, Bratislava supports the idea of closer European defence cooperation. In May 2017, Slovakia announced it would increase its military budget to 1.6% of GDP by 2020. Russia does not elicit negative emotions among Slovaks.

Similarly, Russia does not raise serious security concerns in the Czech Republic and Hungary, unlike in Poland. However, both countries would rather support integration in the field of defence, due to their desire to remain in the mainstream of the integration process. In Hungary, security is a key watchword for the ruling *Fidesz* party (security against terrorism, security against refugees), which plays an important role in the party's political narrative (Fuksiewicz, Łada, 2017, pp. 7-8).

The country with the aspiration to become a leader of the Central European region is Poland. It is an active player of both economic integration and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Polish membership of the European Union, in particular of the CFSP, has somewhat weakened the current pro-Atlantic (pro-American) orientation of the country's foreign policy. Membership of the EU has made the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) an equally important pillar of Poland's security (involvement in the creation of new battle groups, in the work of the European Defence Agency, and the establishment in 2009 of strategic cooperation with France in matters of security and defence). However, this does not mean the weakening of relations with the US, but only the shift of emphasis in defining the pillars of national security (Milczarek, 2008, p. 50).

The above issue can be analysed as the effect of Europeanization in the top-down model. The Polish foreign policy operating under the CFSP has adapted to its objectives with regard to security issues. In the second dimension (assuming the bottom-up Europeanization hypothesis), Poland has brought a model of relations with the US to the CFSP system, balancing the role and importance of NATO, while striving to build a European identity in the field of defence. Poland drew the attention of the European Union's member states to the need and even the necessity to have close cooperation with NATO, for example on the occasion of the declaration of support for Georgian and Ukrainian membership plans in this organization, as indicated in the Bucharest Summit Declaration in 2008.

The possibilities of the effective implementation of the above strategy have so far weakened the image of Poland, especially in the eyes of the so-called 'old Europe', as the 'Trojan horse of the USA' (Garkov 2008). For this reason, the idea of Atlanticism, which is clearly present in the doctrine of Polish foreign policy, is often considered a source of deepening differences and divisions in European countries regarding the significance and place of NATO for the European collective security system.

As a member of the European Union, Poland began to engage in initiatives in the field of military integration as part of the Common Security and Defence Policy. In this way, it ceased to be oriented only towards NATO security issues. Poland occupies the fifth place in terms of participation in EU civil and military operations. In addition, strengthening the military capabilities of the European Union has become one of the tasks of the Polish Presidency in the second half of 2011 (Czaputowicz, 2011, p. 34).

At the moment, Polish political elites point at many challenges for the EU's presence in international relations (*Polska debata wokół białej księgi*, 2017). The Polish debate on European security focuses on new threats: energy, digital and information, still noticing their lower rank than the provision of hard security. However, experts and politicians claim that the biggest challenge for European foreign and security policy is the lack of readiness to fully cooperate among member states because of their divergent interests. Some Polish experts doubt the possibility of developing the common geopolitics of the European Union due to limited confidence among nations. In discussing the global strategy of the EU, we can see the confusion of Europe and the search for an answer to a new position in the world. It has been noticed in Poland that the Union is slowly redefining itself to the role of a normative

international actor, which means giving up value as the main axis of international action for realism as to its own potential. As a result, Europe wants to launch a wider range of foreign policy instruments - not only soft power, but also hard power (*Polska debata wokół białej księgi*, 2017, pp. 26-27).

Within the framework of the Visegrad Group (V4), the countries of the region (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic) expressed their willingness to develop the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and support military integration within the CFSP. In December 2013, V4 prime ministers called for a new impetus for practical cooperation between the EU and NATO, especially in the area of defence planning and development of capabilities. As a first step, the four Visegrad countries decided to build a joint EU Battlegroup, available for rapid deployment in the first semester of 2016 (Lorenz, 2013).

The Hungarian government welcomed the debate on the future of the EU as the best framework to face and tackle both internal and external challenges: "We are pro-Europe politicians, and our goal is for Europe to be stronger. We Hungarians don't think that it is good to have a debate on whether we need more Europe or less Europe. The objective is to have a stronger Europe. Where there is a need for more Europe, there should be more Europe; and where more national competence is needed, we should let the Member States do their job (…). We think that in the new, large-scale European plan we must have our own defence force, and in this new, large-scale plan we must not talk about a European Empire, nor a United States of Europe, but an alliance of free nations. Competences must be returned to Member States, where they would be in better hands. This is all possible and viable; the only question is whether the European Union will have the right quality of leadership to achieve these objectives" (Orbán, 2018).

In September 2016, the Czech and Hungarian governments voiced their support for creating a 'joint European army', echoing calls from their EU counterparts. This joint army would constitute protection for Europe after Brexit and the consequently weakened armed forces in Europe, and protection against immigration and terrorism (BBC News, 2016).

There is a strong commitment among Visegrad countries to re-launch the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy. A weak decision-making centre in Brussels has been hamstrung by often confused decision-making in national capitals. A revamped CFSP would

have a lower but more solid common denominator, filling the gaps in the EU's security and defence posture. In a more hands-on approach towards its neighbourhood, the EU can be a facilitator of conflict resolution and stabilization in the South and a transformative power in the East. Visegrad countries support a stronger and more flexible Common Security and Defence Policy, underpinned with adequate capabilities of rapid and meaningful reaction, and reiterate the importance of a strong and geographically balanced European defence industry (*Joint Declaration of the Visegrad Group Prime Ministers*, 2016).

5. Conclusions

The future of the Normative Power Europe concept among selected Central European member states of the European Union is not a popular way of describing the EU's identity in international affairs. Instead, there is a clear vision of both Europe's international role as well as of the future of the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Firstly, government representatives of the analysed countries together call for strengthening the intergovernmental character of the integration of foreign and security affairs. It is in line with their declaration on giving member states more responsibility in European integration.

Secondly, the countries of the Central European region call for abandoning the idea of the European Union as any kind of power or empire. They rather insist on the European Union as an economic and political partner for the outside world.

Thirdly, representatives of the countries of the region insist on building and strengthening European military forces and call for stronger ties with NATO. This strategy is pragmatic when it comes to geopolitical conditions (proximity to the Russian area of influence).

Analysing the debate on the future of the CFSP among the countries of the Central European region, we can draw a conclusion that there is no consensus when it comes to the perception of the European Union as a normative actor of international relations. Instead, there is a strong will to change the dominant discourse on the normative character of the EU towards a more pragmatic one and that of an actor relying on military capabilities in the international scene. Such an attitude is visible not only in the Polish efforts to work on the new global strategy of the EU in IR, but also in geopolitical circumstances such as proximity

to the Russian sphere of influence. From that perspective, it seems obvious that Visegrad countries would be more interested in leaving behind the debate on the normative character of the EU's foreign policy and identity. Instead, these countries prefer a more pragmatic and realistic approach to the CFSP.

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VISEGRAD EUROSCEPTICISM: DISCURSIVE NODAL POINTS IN EUROSCEPTIC DISCOURSES SURROUNDING EXTERNAL ACTIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract
Increasing support for Eurosceptic parties and movements can be observed in the European Union's (EU) member states since 2009, when the economic crisis heavily affected the continent. This process has happened also within Central and Eastern European countries, especially in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary (collectively referred to as the Visegrad Group countries, or V4 for short). The goal of this paper is an analysis of far-right Eurosceptic politicians and their attitudes towards EU external actions. Using the Thomas Diez concept of discursive nodal points (DNPs) and examining European Parliament (EP) debates, literature about V4 Euroscepticism and media reports, this paper attempts to give answers about their attitudes to aspects of EU external actions. First, the notion of Euroscepticism is examined and the main difficulties with the definition are briefly discussed. Then, the methodology of this research and the concept of DNPs are laid out. The following section pays attention to V4 Eurosceptic politicians' (V4E) attitudes towards five areas of EU external actions: EU-Russia relations, EU defence policy, environmental policy, development assistance policy, and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) issue. In the conclusion, the author summarises that V4 Eurosceptics are divided in their positions towards EU external actions. Paradoxically, they are linked not in the being in opposition towards the EU, but rather in having pro-Russian attitudes and being against any EU activity that would violate Kremlin's interests.

Keywords: Constructivism, Euroscepticism, EU`s external action, Visegrad, far-right

1. Introduction

The increase in popularity of Eurosceptic parties and movements among EU member states has been a subject of debates among scholars and journalist for many years, especially since the global economic crisis that seriously affected Europe in 2009. One of the most

important observations is that negative attitudes towards the EU is a part of the "populism ideology," meaning that in the EU a marriage between Euroscepticism and populism can be observed (Eiermann et al., 2017). In the context of populism, Martin Eiermann et al. make the latter observation, arguing that the so-called Old Continent has been divided into four parts: Eastern, Western, Southern and Northern Europe. As the authors state, Eastern Europe has featured an unprecedented increase in societal support for populistic and Eurosceptic parties since 2000. While they gained an average of 9.2% of the national vote in 2000, their vote share reached 31.6% in 2017 (2017). Among the Eastern Europe group are the Visegrad Group (V4) countries: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. Thus, this observation is also true for these countries. Moreover, this increasing societal support for such parties has pushed mainstream parties towards more populistic and Eurosceptic positions, as V4 governments are led by the parties that represent negative attitudes towards the EU, although they are not stringently Eurosceptic (Fidesz in Hungary, Smer in Slovakia, Ano in Czechia, and PiS in Poland).

Instead of dwelling on this shift, this paper is focused on V4 governing party competitors that represent the more visible anti-EU attitude, as well as rival mainstream parties from the far-right. In the researched literature, they are referred to by Christopher Lord as the *untidy right* (1998). The focus of this paper is an analysis of far-right V4Es and their attitudes towards EU external action, and poses several questions: Do these parties take part in discussions about EU foreign policy? How are their attitudes towards these areas: negative or critical (or even positive, as it can be observed to some extent among Western European Eurosceptics (Tereszkiewicz, 2016b))? Are they divergent or similar in their position towards EU external actions? Answers to these questions are important for two reasons. First, as Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart mention, knowledge about Eurosceptic parties and movement is still facile and needs wider and deeper research (2018). Second, the aforementioned V4 mainstream parties move on the political axis towards far-right competitors, and therefore could take some elements of the *untidy right* attitudes about EU external actions, which may have an impact on EU foreign policy.

Using the Thomas Diez concept of discursive nodal points (DNPs) and examining European Parliament (EP) debates, literature about V4 Euroscepticism, and media reports, this paper attempts to answer the above questions. The study is based on the hypothesis that

V4Es are divided in their attitudes towards EU external actions, ranging from total opposition to critical acceptance.

The article proceeds as follows: first, the notion of Euroscepticism is examined and the main difficulties with the definition are briefly discussed. Then, the methodology of this research and the concept of DNPs are laid out. The following section pays attention to V4Es attitudes towards five areas of EU external actions: EU-Russia relations, EU defence policy, environmental policy, development assistance policy, and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) issue. The conclusion summarises the main findings and reflects on the inquiry about V4Es attitudes towards EU external actions, with questions resulting from the analysis providing a perspective for further research.

2. Euroscepticism: difficulties with defining

Even though there have been many publications about Euroscepticism, there is a dispute between scholars over what exactly this notion means, and about the scope of opinion that is within its framework (Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2018). The concept of Euroscepticism was named into existence by some scholars, but they did so within areas of their research interest; only a few of them have tried to create a definition that covers the whole spectrum of Euroscepticism (Leruth et al., 2018). Until now, there has been no commonly accepted definition of the term (Vasilopoulou, 2018). Differences between definitions focus on the scale of the opposition against European integration, and also on the future of cooperation within the European Union (Vasilopoulou, 2011). Furthermore, along with the increase in Eurosceptic attitudes within European societies, and the more common presence of Eurosceptic politicians within EU institutions, the scope of their attention must be broader. These developments create a situation in which it is even harder to define Euroscepticism and the ideas it contains (Leruth et al., 2018).

Circumstances in which the term “Euroscepticism” has come up are also a source of problems with defining this notion. The term was created by British journalists who use academic jargon in their journalistic writing (Spiering, 2004). C. Flood and R. Soborski note that the usage of the suffix “-ism” creates a situation wherein many people think that Euroscepticism has some ideological content, which is not true (2018). Even though the first book about Euroscepticism was published in 1997 (Benoit, 1997), and the first

conceptualisation of it was done in 1998 by Paul Taggart (2003), it is still difficult to say that Euroscepticism as a concrete idea exists. However, the definition of Euroscepticism prepared by Krzysztof Zuba, who says that Euroscepticism is a political attitude that contests the integration process within any part of Europe (2006), is chosen for the foundation of this paper. This definition has weaknesses that are common to other definitions of the term because it emphasises its negative and blurry character. It does not speculate as to why this negative attitude exists, offer any alternatives to integration, or speculate what end it leads to, creating confusion over what exactly links Eurosceptic movements and groups, aside from a negative attitude towards the EU (Leruth et al., 2018). Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart confirm this problem, remarking that there is little research that analysis on the influence of Euroscepticism on EU politics (2018). For that reason, the main goal of this paper is to fill in the research gap in the area of the Visegrad Eurosceptics' influence on EU external actions.

3. Methodology: Discourse and discursive nodal points

The aforementioned amorphism of Euroscepticism is a problem for scholars. For many years, they have tried to find analytical tools and approaches that are useful in researching Eurosceptic parties and movements. In spite of these efforts, most publications concentrate on comparative analyses of political parties in EU member states (Vasilopoulou, 2018). Considering these methodological problems, this paper uses the potential of the constructivist approach to research far-right Eurosceptic attitudes towards EU external actions. This approach has many useful tools that help develop knowledge of Euroscepticism (Tereszkiewicz, 2016a). One of them is discourse analysis, which is used in this paper to catch discursive nodal points (DNP).

One of the definitions of the term *discourse* was created by Thomas Diez, who states that the discourse is a set of opinions about a particular subject created during a discursive process. He also notes that there is not one detached discourse about a particular thing or topic because there are simultaneous diversified discursive streams (1998). In conducting the study of the discourse about EU external actions, we can abstract the Eurosceptic discourse. It is possible to define many streams, one of which is the Eurosceptic discourse among politicians from countries that are members of the Visegrad Group (also known as the

Visegrad Four, or V4). The main goal of this paper is to study this discourse, and to identify within it DNPs.

T. Diez also states that knowledge about a topic presented by discourse participants does not present an objective substance, but creates a subjective picture of this substance. Therefore, this picture is not always consistent with facts, and various discursive constructions are possible (1996). Therefore, the V4 Eurosceptic discourse about EU external actions is not necessary consistent with facts. However, it shows how these Eurosceptic politicians perceive and conceive the EU's role on the global scene. Therefore, the analysis of V4E discourse surrounding EU foreign policy can help to capture their view about a place that, in their opinion, is predicted for the Union in the international arena. It also helps to research whether or not they allow the EU to be active in the global scene, and this enables the verification of the hypothesis that is established by the author.

The main goal for DNPs is to capture the common meaning shaped within the analysed discourse. According to this concept, streams that exist within one discourse are interweaving and thereby create new discourses in nodal points. Diez also states that the analysis of DNPs allows a construction from various discursive streams of a dominant discourse within a particular group or community (1998). Therefore, the reconstruction of DNPs found in V4E discourse allows us to develop our knowledge about Euroscepticism.

To construct this discourse, European Parliament debates and related literature about V4 Euroscepticism were analysed, including media such as websites and newspapers. Screening of the social media pages of politicians and political parties from this region was also conducted.

This paper is focused on political parties located on the far right of the spectrum. In the researched literature, they are named the *untidy right* (Lord, 1998, Brack, 2012) – their common feature is being in the opposition towards the EU and the integrating process within the continent mainly for political and cultural reasons. They stand in the contrast to far-left Eurosceptic parties that are against the EU mainly for economic reasons (Brack, 2012). We can count among the *untidy right* the following parties from V4 countries:

Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom, Jobbik (The Movement for a Better Hungary) from Hungary;

Wolność (Liberty), *Kongres Nowej Prawicy*, KNP (The Congress of the New Right), and *Ruch Narodowy*, RN (National Movement) from Poland;

Strana svobodných občanů, SSO (Party of Free Citizens) and *Svoboda a přímá demokracie*, SPD (Freedom and Direct Democracy) from Czechia; and

Slovenská národná strana, SNS (The Slovak National Party) and *Kotleba - Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko*, ĽSNS (The People's Party – Our Slovakia) from Slovakia.

4. Relations with Russia

Firstly, it is important to note that almost all *untidy right* parties are linked with Russia (ABE, 2018). They get financial or political support from the Kremlin and oligarchs linked to Vladimir Putin. Moreover, some of the V4Es, like Béla Kovács from Jobbik, Janusz Korwin-Mikke from Wolność, and Sylwester Chruszcz from RN, are accused of being Russian operatives (Krekó et al., 2016, Beswick, 2017). Therefore, members of these parties also present friendly attitudes towards Russia. In Russian-friendly Eurosceptic discourse, we can identify three streams regarding the neighbour to the east.

The first is the narrative that Russia only defends its interests in Ukraine and Syria, therefore Europe must understand its activity in these areas and take a neutral position. For example, Zlatan Balczó (Jobbik), Janusz Korwin-Mikke (Wolność) and Tomio Okamura (SPD) posit that Russia only defends itself from the supposed aggression stemming from American involvement in the Maidan revolution, as well as NATO's advances on Kiev (Balczó, 2015e, Balczó, 2015a, Balczó 2015, Balczó, 2014b, Korwin-Mikke, 2014, SPD, 2018). V4Es insist that Crimea belongs to Russia because in the past this peninsula was a part of the tsarist empire. Moreover, they uphold that people decided via a 2014 referendum that they want to be within the Russian state (Tesařová, 2017, 2017e), thus justifying the stance of their ally.

In the second stream, V4Es underline the ineffectiveness of sanctions that are used by the EU against Russia after the Crimea invasion; they state that the Russian economy is in good condition, by contrast to the EU and its member states (Fiala, 2017). According to V4Es, negative economic sanctions emasculate EU member-states' economies (Balczó, 2017b, Balczó, 2015e, Chruszcz and Dziambor, 2014, Švec, 2017, FTV, 2014, Mazurek,

2015, 2017b). Sometimes they highlight negative influence of sanctions for particular sectors (e.g. the Jobbik politicians' focus on farming (Balczó, 2017b), and SPD on tourism (FTV, 2014)).

The third stream is about economic links between Europe and Russia. V4Es stress that Europe must cooperate with Russia. According to them, instead of being in conflict, the two sides should trade with each other (Chruszcz and Dziambor, 2014, Fiala, 2017). They also state that Europe needs Russian fossil fuels (TASR, 2017) and, furthermore, insist that Europe needs the Kremlin to resolve crucial problems in the neighbourhood. They say it is impossible to win a war against terrorism (especially with Islamic state (Fiala, 2017)) and to stabilise the Middle East without cooperating with Russia (2017b, Hutko, 2017, SPD, 2018, Balczó, 2015e).

With these three discursive streams, we can construct a DNP. All V4Es emphasise that Europe and Russia are closely related to each other, stating that mutual problems should be resolved by using diplomatic negotiations instead of negative measures (TASR, 2017, Balczó, 2015e). For these reasons, V4Es call on the EU and its member states to reset its policy towards Moscow as Donald Trump did (Balczó, 2017b). If some countries perceive the Kremlin as a threat, politicians from these countries should work to change that opinion (Tesařová, 2017). Andrej Danko (SNS) also notes that the V4 and Russia have many things in common because of Slavic roots (except, of course, Hungary) (2017c).

5. The European Union defence policy

The EU defence policy issue, collaterally to the relationship with Russia, is an area where V4Es have a similar point of view. Primarily, they are against any EU-related cooperation in this field. Four reasons, or discursive streams, can be distinguished as to why they have such negative attitudes towards EU defence policy. First, which is common among Eurosceptics, is the fear that the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and any other cooperation in this area mark a step towards a European federal state. A crucial part of the Eurosceptic movement and party persuasion is directed against deeper integration within a potential European state, therefore they are against closer cooperation in the defence field (Balczó, 2017c, Gergely, 2016, Mach, 2015a, Mach, 2016e, SPD, 2017a, Korwin-Mikke, 2016b, Korwin-Mikke, 2017a, Marusik,

2017). The second reason has roots in their understanding of why the EU would need PESCO or a European army. Some parties like Wolność and SPD are convinced that the European army would be used to suppress member states if Eurosceptic politicians won the electoral competition and moved for their home countries to secede from the EU (SPD, 2017c, Korwin-Mikke, 2017c). The third, often used to explain resistance to increasing cooperation in EU defence matters, is concerned with lobbying. Some Eurosceptic politicians are convinced that PESCO was established because the military-industrial complex has persuaded the Commission that they need a new source of money (Kovács, 2016b, Kovács, 2015b). Others see PESCO as a good opportunity to take money by corrupt EU officials (Korwin-Mikke, 2015b, Korwin-Mikke, 2017b, Korwin-Mikke, 2016a). The final stream focuses on immigration, especially illegal immigration and any related Islamic terrorism, which, according to them, is now the most important threat to Europe. These politicians state that the EU has shown its incapability to resolve the last migration crisis, thereby it has no right to develop its own military capacity (Kovács, 2016b, Mach, 2016d, Okamura, 2017, Winnicki, 2017).

Two DNPs can be identified within these discursive streams. Some V4Es believe that the EU is weak and has no potential to effectively develop military cooperation between its member states. According to some politicians from Jobbik and Wolność, Brussels could be easily abused by the military-industrial complex and corrupt politicians to earn extra money. Other politicians state that the last immigration crisis shows that the EU is ineffectual in the use of its power, and the last thing it needs is more (Jobbik, SSO, SN, ĽSNS). The second DNP presents a different interpretation of this policy, wherein the EU is powerful and needs its own army to build a federal state and preserve its own interests, especially within member states (SPD, Wolność, KNP).

6. The environmental policy

The discourse about environmental policy shows that V4Es are divided into two groups. In the first one, there are politicians who support this area of EU activity. This opinion is common among members of Jobbik, SPD and SNS, whom we will call the “pro” group. They agree that climate change is a real global problem and that it should be resolved on the international stage (Balczó, 2014a, Okamura, 2014). In their opinion, the Paris

agreement that was made within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 21st Conference of the Parties (COP 21) is a good step towards international activity that helps limit greenhouse gases emission (Balczó, 2015c). Nevertheless, they think that all measures that will be conducted within the Paris agreement framework make no sense if the US and China, which are the two main greenhouse gas emitters on Earth, do not take part (Balczó, 2015f, Balczó, 2015d, 2017a, Balczó, 2017a).

Politicians who think that climate change is a fabrication of scientists, politicians and businessmen comprise the second, or "anti" group, which includes activists from Wolność, KNP RN, SSO and L'SNS. Polish Eurosceptics argue that these changes are not the result of human activity, which differentiates them from others V4Es (Marusik, 2016, Marusik, 2015, Iwaszkiewicz, 2017). According to members of these parties, the EU environmental policy is detrimental to the European economy and, more importantly, to its citizens. This policy brings higher energy costs as well as increases in taxes and prices of food, limits economic growth and discourages business in Europe (Mach, 2016b, Mach, 2016c, Iwaszkiewicz, 2017, Winnicki, 2016, RN, 2016b, 2013). Therefore, this policy increases poverty in Europe and in the rest of the world (Marusik, 2016, Marusik, 2015). EU environmental policy, by Polish Eurosceptic accounts, was devised by the "green industry," corrupt politicians, and scientists to make money (Iwaszkiewicz, 2017). This side also took part in discussions about the Paris agreement. In their opinion, this international accord is an effect of the lobbying conducted by corrupted politicians (Marusik, 2016, Marusik, 2015). However, Petr Mach (SSO) argued in his statement that the Paris agreement will be completely ineffective because this accord does not institute any sanctions for breaking its provisions (Mach, 2016c).

Only one DNP can be reconstructed into this discourse. Regardless of the opinion about climate change, all V4Es agree that EU policy in this area is ineffective and therefore needs revision. They also have a common opinion that this ineffectiveness brings higher costs for the European economy and societies. However, they are divided on what the EU should do. According to the pro group, the US and China must be involved in global activity in this area. In contrast, the anti group think that EU member states must, as fast as possible, move out of this policy. They also diverge in the assessment of which sources of energy should be developed. According to Jobbik, the atomic industry brings energy safety (Balczó, 2014a, Balczó, 2015f). Members of SPD assert that the future belongs to renewable energy sources

that should be mixed with fossil fuels (Okamura, 2014). In contrast, Polish Eurosceptics (Wolność, KNP and RN) focus on the coal industry as the main source of energy (2013), while members of SNS and ĽSNS maintain that the gas industry is good for the Slovak economy (2017a).

7. The development assistance policy

V4Es are also divided on the matter of the development assistance policy. The first group, similarly to the pro-environmental group in composition, are members of Jobbik, SPD and SNS, who generally think that this policy is necessary and useful (Kovács, 2015a). In their opinion, the main advantage of this policy is helping limit migration to Europe. If the EU and its member states help underdeveloped countries improve their economic situation, people would stay there. Therefore, according to this group of Eurosceptics, it is better to help abroad, especially in Africa, than have migrants at home (Balczó, 2016, Kovács, 2016c, 2017d, vef, 2017).

The second group, similar to the antis, stay on the position that development assistance policy is a waste of money. Within this group, two discursive streams can be distinguished. Some of these politicians criticise this policy from the liberal position, e.g. members of SSO think that Europe should develop economic relations with these countries rather that give them development assistance (Mach, 2016f, Mach, 2016g). According to them, Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) could compete with the EU if they employed a tax policy (Mach, 2016a). On this same side are members of Wolność and KNP, because they are against any state activity that need taxpayer money. The second group also criticises this policy, however, on social grounds. According to members of RN and ĽSNS, European governments should primarily give financial assistance to poor people at home rather than help people abroad.

V4Es are also divided in opinion over the development assistance policy, which was shown by the conducted analysis. A spectrum of opinion ranges from acceptance (because it stops migration to Europe and also helps bolster the international position of member states (Jobbik, SPD, SNS) (Kovács, 2016c, SPD, 2017b) to resistance (because it is seen as promoting European values like gay rights, gender issues, and political correctness (Wolność, KNP, RN, SSO and ĽSNS)). Regardless of that, we can identify a DNP within V4E discourse

about the development assistance policy. All politicians agree that this policy is ineffective, and within such a framework a lot of money is wasted (vef, 2017, SPD, 2017b, Mach, 2016f, Kovács, 2016a). However, they are divided over the recipe for this policy. One group argues that the rules that shape this policy should be changed to show transparency. Other politicians state that this policy, to save taxpayer money or increase social policy in their own countries, should be limited or abolished.

8. Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

V4Es are also divided on the issue of TTIP. However, in the aforementioned cases of the environmental and the development assistance policy, pro and anti groups have exactly these same members. In contrast, the TTIP issue creates a completely different division. Members of two parties (SSO and Wolność) support to some extent this EU-US agreement. The main reason for their support has ideological roots; they support economic freedom and international trade, so they agree with the concept of free trade with the USA (Mach, 2015b, Iwaszkiewicz, 2015, Korwin-Mikke, 2015a). Nevertheless, members of these parties have some reservations about TTIP. For them, this agreement will not create free trade between Europe and America, but will instead bring new restrictions (Mach, 2014, Korwin-Mikke, 2015a). They point to non-transparency in the negotiation process, voicing special objection to the arbitration mechanism (the investor-state dispute settlement, or ISDS). In their opinion, it puts member states' governments in a weak position during confrontations with international companies. Politicians form SSO and Wolność also state that European food standards could be undermined in competition with industrial and, thereby, cheaper US products (Mach, 2015b, Iwaszkiewicz, 2015, Korwin-Mikke, 2015a).

The rest of the V4Es (Jobbik, RN, SPD, SNS and ĽSNS) are against TTIP. In the discussion about the partnership with the USA, they use similar arguments, saying that the agreement is unfavourable for the European economy and profits only international companies (Balczó, 2014c, Balczó, 2015b, Okamura, 2016, Hrnčíř, 2016, ste, 2016a) (ste, 2016b). Moreover, they predict food security standards will be weakened in Europe because GMO products are legal in the US, and the American meat industry can use hormones during the breeding process (Okamura, 2016, Balczó, 2015b, RN, 2016a). They are opposed to TTIP because it will establish ISDS; in this manner, they are similar to politicians from SSO and

Wolność. V4Es emphasise that the arbitration mechanism could preclude the implementing of changes in economic policy when Eurosceptic parties take power in their respective countries. International investors could use ISDS if future governments make decisions that limit its gains (Balczó, 2014c, Okamura, 2016, Hrnčíř, 2016, Bosak, 2016).

In TTIP discourse, two common DNPs can be isolated. The first is anxiety about food standards that are higher in Europe compared to the US, where fears exist that the new agreement with the USA could decline the food security in their home countries (sometimes they use exactly these same reasons, e.g. introducing GMOs into the food supply). The second is the objection to the ISDS mechanism that could limit the potential of future Eurosceptic governments in member states.

9. Conclusions

The above analysis shows that Eurosceptic politicians from Visegrad Group countries are divided on their opinions about the EU's external actions. This divergence concerns two things: the salience of topics and participation in discussions and attitudes towards particular areas of EU foreign policy. The author's research shows two variables that increase the V4Es' presence in discussions about EU external actions, the first being representation in the European Parliament. Jobbik, Wolność and KNP all currently have seats in Brussels. Parliament members (also known as MEPs) frequently take part in debates about areas of EU policy because they must show their supporters that they fight actively and consistently for their interests. Eurosceptics are gathered into small factions (Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy, and Europe of Nations and Freedom Group) which are represented in debates, or are independent and have limited options to be visible. The second variable refers to individual interests of members of these parties, especially their leaders. If a V4E is focused on a certain issue, he frequently makes comments on it, as observed by Zoltán Balczó's (Jobbik) and Michał Putkiewicz's (SN) attitudes toward EU environmental policy, and Janusz Korwin-Mikke's remarks about CSDP.

If we try generally assessing V4E attitudes towards EU foreign policy, it is apparent that they are divided in their opinions on it. Some of them have a negative stance toward all issues (KNP, RN and L'SNS), and others (Wolność and SSO) have negative attitudes towards EU activity on the international stage while tolerating some activities such as

external trade policy (most notably TTIP). Others still have critical attitudes towards EU external actions, albeit not totally negative. Members of Jobbik, SPD and SNS support, to some extent, the role that is played by the Union in environmental and development assistance policies. Their objections are concerned with the ineffectiveness of EU institutions, and therefore they call for some changes in these EU policies.

V4Es have a similar stance on two issues: EU-Russia relations and the EU defence policy, to which they are opposed. Only one DNP can be distinguished in the discourse about Russia, largely dealing with mutual problems between Europe and Russia, and the need to solve them by using diplomatic negotiations instead of negative measures. Two DNPs are found in the EU defence policy issue, the first being that the EU is weak and has no potential to effectively develop military cooperation between its member states, and the second being that the EU is powerful and needs its own army to build a federal state and preserve its own interests. These DNPs indicate that V4Es are divided in their perceptions of the EU's potential in the defence area, although they are united against any EU activeness in this area.

DNPs can be identified within discourses about EU foreign policy as well, especially with regard to environmental and development assistance policies. There are, once again, two groups: one (Jobbik, SPD and SNS) has positive attitudes towards these policies (though they have objections about the effectiveness of these policies), while the second (Wolność, KNP, RN, L'SNS and SSO) has a wholly negative perception of these policies. Despite this split, one DNP about that EU policy in these areas being ineffective can be identified, which shows that some discursive coherence does exist among V4Es. This same situation can be observed within discourses about TTIP, although the groups consist of different members (Wolność and SSO are pro, the rest are anti). Two DNPs can be pinpointed in the TTIP issue: anxiety about food standards and the objection to the ISDS mechanism, though these also show coherence between V4Es rather than division.

This paper shows that V4Es are divided on their position towards EU external actions. Therefore, the working hypotheses are confirmed, which show that, to some extent, V4 Euroscepticism is similar to its Western European version. The division over the EU's external role can be observed in Euroscepticism in all EU member states, which shows that it is not a coherent political movement. Paradoxically, V4Es – and likely other Eurosceptics – are linked not in being in opposition towards the EU, but rather in having pro-Russian

attitudes and being against any activity that would go against the Kremlin's interests, such as sanctions against Russia and EU defence policy. Therefore, further research should be conducted in two areas: where Eurosceptic politicians see foreign policy competencies for the EU, and possible connections between Russia and Eurosceptic parties and movements.

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THE IMPACT OF THE MIGRATION CRISIS ON THE PROCESS OF SHAPING GOALS AND INSTRUMENTS OF THE EU IMMIGRATION POLICY.

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Abstract:
The aim of the article is the reconstruction of the nature of the EU immigration policy that emerges from the EU's activities in the migration crisis, undertaken from 2015 till 2017. The analysis is focused on the legislative and political measures adopted by the EU according to the European Agenda on Migration, which was presented in May 2015. The implementation of this political agenda was de facto the EU's response to the unprecedented inflow of asylum seekers and economic migrants to Europe. The article underlines that security is a factor which fundamentally determines the EU's immigration policy from its very beginning, but after 2015 the security-oriented aspects of the EU's immigration policy was furthered strengthened. The EU's intervention in the migration crisis, giving priority to security-driven concern, was focused on meeting a 'secure borders' demand, understood as increasing the level of their closing (as opposed to opening) and impenetrability. As a result, the EU's response to the migration crisis has been very narrow, fragmented and insufficient in the short-term, as well as in the long-term activities.
Keywords: European Union, border, security, immigration, asylum

1. Introduction

In recent years, immigration issues have dominated political debates and media reports in all European Union member states. Both in countries with significant shares of immigrants in their population and a relatively long and extensive history of migration policy and in countries with negligible numbers of immigrants and a poorly developed migration policy, the issues related to the rules and consequences of admitting immigrants and providing them with international protection have been added to the agendas of major state

institutions and have become an object of heated disputes between parties. This has been accompanied by incredibly deep interest in issues of migration and refuge seeking manifested by mass media, which – especially in 2015 – every day bombarded public opinion with reports, comments and opinions concerning the unprecedented scale of immigration to the EU.

This incredible "revival" of the migration topic in European politics soon adopted a formula of disputes and conflicts between member states, as well as between political parties and groups in particular countries or in the European Parliament, referring to different outlooks on the world and ideological options. On the one hand, European societies faced the tragedy of hundreds of thousands of immigrants escaping war and persecutions in Syria and other Middle East countries, but also Africans seeking in Europe refuge from famine and drought, anarchy and ethnic wars, or simply looking for a better way of life and earning prospects. The scale of this exodus, the images of immigrants often crossing Balkan states on foot, and finally the scale of the tragedy of hundreds of people drowning in the Mediterranean Sea triggered various, sometimes extremely opposite, social reactions. On the other hand, at the level of institutions, domestic and European decision-making bodies, heated debates and disputes were waged over the answer the unified Europe should give to these phenomena. For the EU institutions, this was undoubtedly the period of an important test of the values and ideals worshipped by the European Union and a test of whether the EU has enough power and authority to pass and implement its answer.

In 2015-2017, a series of political and diplomatic initiatives were formulated, as well as institutional and legal solutions and financial proposals which were to build this common European reply (Carrera, Blockmans, Gros and Guild 2015). Seeking consensus, formal and informal meetings were convened in regional and Union circles, European leaders met in summits, had meetings with leaders of neighbouring countries; numerous debates were held in the forum of the Council, the European Council and the European Parliament. Despite all these actions, it was usually the lack of any agreement that prevailed over agreements (Czachór 2016). The parties to the dispute which crystallized in the course of the debates waged presented different ways of perceiving and assessing the migration events themselves,

as experienced by the European Union at that time, and, consequently, different proposals on solving the matters considered "problematic"[§§§§].

In the atmosphere of strong tensions and controversies, the EU, forced by the situation of mass immigration and the expectations of the public opinion of all member states, adopted its position in May 2015 in the form of the European Agenda on Migration (EC 2015). This document, a political signpost of the EU's activities in the migration area, defined the EU priorities in this field, both concerning activities requiring *ad hoc* reaction and long-term plans. In another two years, the agenda was specified by means of various executive orders and developed in the shape of legislative proposals introducing modifications to the broadly understood European Union policy on migration.

This article aims to present the nature of the European Union's immigration policy emerging from the reply given by the EU to the migration crisis (which was, more precisely, a humanitarian and a political crisis). Of vital importance for the analyses below will be the indication of the fundamental paradigm in which the adopted solutions are rooted, as well as the way of perceiving reality in the area of migration, emerging from this EU reaction to the migration crisis. The analyses presented will comprise an attempt at synthetic reconstruction of this paradigm, which, by assumption, constitutes some kind of generalization. It is important to demonstrate which interpretation of the migration events present in the European dispute laid the foundations for the solutions adopted. What values are inscribed in this European reply? What ways of solving problems stem from them? The object of the analyses will not be detailed characteristics and interpretations of particular elements in the EU migration agenda and resulting modifications of EU legislation, but the presentation of the main vectors, proposed solutions and consequences brought by giving particular meanings to its elements for creating the shape of the European Union policy on migration.

The first part of the paper presents a short description of the theoretical framework in which the analyses below are rooted, by underlining the concept of securitization. Then, the article discusses a typical feature of the EU immigration policy, namely positioning it within

[§§§§] The analysis of the dispute over the migration crisis distinguished four main parties to the dispute, which forced different positions and arguments during the debates taking place in the European Council (or other EU forums): 1/ first-line countries (e.g. Italy and Greece) 2/ countries with a respectively high number of people applying for asylum and economic migrants (such as Germany, France, Sweden) 3/ Central and Eastern European countries (e.g. Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland) 4/ EU institutions like the European Commission and the European Parliament (Trojanowska-Strzęboszewska 2016).

the discourse on internal security in the European Union. This context accounts for focusing the EU activities towards migration on issues related directly and indirectly to ensuring security, which leads to prioritizing some matters at the expense of others, but it also accounts for the fact that all issues related to migration in the EU are perceived in categories of threats and risks. An exemplification of this presentation is the postulate of safe borders, which, from the position of an appeal in the discourse on the migration crisis, conducted by leaders of member states and representatives of EU institutions, shifted into the position of a key "solution", comprising various EU activities taken as a reaction in the inflow of thousands of immigrants to the EU in 2015-2017. The implementation of this postulate will be characterized in the third part of the article, leading to conclusions regarding the narrowed, fragmented and insufficient EU response to the migration problem.

2. What is securitization?

The theoretical framework in which all the analyses below are rooted is made of constructivist statements and post-structural discourse analyses, currently widely used in research on European integration (e.g. Diez 2001; Christiansen Jørgensen and Wiener 2001; Delanty 1995; Risse 2009). These approaches divert from the belief that Europe has a stable identity, claiming that it is rather a certain idea, continuously constructed and reconstructed, "involved in disputes over politics and identity" (Walter 2005:17). Social constructivism stands on the position that social reality is constructed and reproduced through daily practice by human agents, but, on the other hand, the agents do not exist independently from the social reality (e.g. structures, ideas, norms, values) and its collectively shared system of meanings. That is why, when describing the European reality (e.g. European identity), it is crucial to assume that the Europeanization process has its effects on social identities of Europeans, so 'Europe' is also constituted by "a political and social space in people's beliefs and collective understanding" (Riess 2009:159). According to these approaches, political debates held in the EU forum around the issue of migration, and the language used to describe the migration phenomenon are not something that reflects reality, but which, perforce, constructs it, thus becoming a constitutive dimension of this reality. The definition of migration and an immigrant "forced" by EU decision-makers, the features, attributes and

even intentions ascribed to them, they obviously influence political strategies adopted in the area of migration policy.

Another useful approach to the analysis below, starting from the theoretical assumptions of critical security studies (Bilgin 2012), developed within the constructivist approach to security (Buzan Wæver and Wilde 1998; Williams 2003), widely used in the area of international relations and political science, is that security and related issues also become social constructs, "a determined way of presenting reality" (Wæver 1996:106). This fundamental assumption of securitization theory means that it is impossible to ever fully assess whether security and security threats are 'real' or not. In its broadest sense, "the concepts of securitization implies that threats are not out there but constructed by social actors" (van Munster 2009:5). According to Ole Wæver and his colleagues from the so-called 'Copenhagen School', a security issue arises as a result of the discursive process that makes it very important and requiring immediate response. The creators of the securitization theory pointed out: "'Security' is thus a self-referential practice, because it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue – not necessarily because a real existential threat exists but because the issue is presented as such a threat" (Buzan, Wæver and Wilde 1998:24). Therefore, the securitization of the issue by a securitizing actor within a 'speech act' defines the issue – as part of the discourse – as an existential threat to the survival of a 'referent object' (such as a nation, a society, a state) and needs the acceptance as such by the 'audience' of the speech act (e.g. public opinion). In this approach, the EU policy towards immigration is not only an attempted reply to real and objective problems related to the growth of international crime, especially terrorism or the growing unwillingness of European societies to accept immigrants (which is difficult to deny), but also as a result of effective rhetorical "education" in which particular issues are interpreted as threats and risks to security.

What is also important it is that the securitized issue requires "emergency measures and actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure" (Buzan, Wæver and Wilde 1998:25). As Ole Wæver noticed, the securitizing actor "moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means are necessary to block it" (1995:55).

The original version of the securitization theory was further developed and redefined. Some scholars have retained the emphasis on the role of speech acts in the securitization processes and apply securitization as an approach to the study of public discourses (e.g. analysing political speeches). Others, led by Didier Bigo, have left the study of securitization through speech acts and shifted to the study of securitization through practice. Bigo assumed that some issues can be securitized "without speech or discourse and the military and the police have known that for a long time. The practical work, discipline and expertise are as important as all forms of discourse" (2000:194). Highlighting the role of practice, Bigo referred securitization processes mostly to practices of bureaucratic experts, acting in the frame of structures and networks linked to security practice and using specific technologies.

Advocates of this approach, like Sarah Leonard, add that "it is also more adequate to focus on practice, rather than discourses, when analyzing securitization processes (regarding not only migration and asylum, but also other issues) in the EU… The EU is evidently not the state; it has no government or president to make the kind of dramatic securitizing speech acts that can be identified in national contexts" (2011:236). On the other hand, the EU is not solely a bureaucratic body; it is at least equally a political community, plunging into emotions and tensions between member states (or between member states and European institutions). As Rens van Munster rightly notes, "the political and bureaucratic levels of the EU are mutually constitutive (..), and although the main security dynamics are located at the bureaucratic level (…), the political level often plays an important role in either authorizing, legitimizing, justifying, thwarting, dislocating or upsetting the enunciations of security professionals" (2009:6).

3. The EU migration policy in the frame of security

The main thesis of this paper is the acknowledgement that the EU immigration policy is shaped within the discourse on European security, which provides political narrations on migration with main explanation and interpretation schemes. The debate over the refugee humanitarian crisis or, more broadly, the migration crisis and the EU activities from 2015-2017 that followed it, not only emphasized these issues, but also gave the security dimension absolute priority in the EU agenda on migration.

The above can somehow be attributed to the fact that from its very origins, the development of the EU immigration policy was a consequence of freedom to cross borders within the Schengen zone. This policy was initiated as one of a whole range of compensation means, i.e. solutions aimed at improving security due to its potential weakening stemming from eliminating controls on borders between member states. This led to focusing the EU activities in the area of immigration on solutions concerning rules for foreigners' entry and stay in the Schengen area, which created various constraints and barriers from the very beginning.

Since 1999, when the Schengen area became part of the EU due to the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty, one of the key objectives of the Union has been to provide its citizens with an area for freedom, security and justice (European Union 2012: article 3). The process of accomplishing these goals has become a dynamic and important sphere of EU activities and, simultaneously, a daunting task, since it is related to strongly "nationalized" issues, such as security, citizenship or political identity. The treaty provisions offer a specific understanding of what this space of freedom, security and justice is. It has been assumed that it means that within it there are no internal borders and there is "the free movement of persons … in conjunction with directly related flanking measures with respect to external border controls, asylum and immigration, and preventing and combating of crime" (European Union 2012: article 61 point a). In other words, in order to ensure that EU citizens enjoy freedom understood as freedom of movement, some activities are undertaken, aimed at ensuring security and related to: controls of external borders, asylum, immigration, preventing and combating crime. Therefore, the issues concerning rules of crossing borders, asylum and immigration are, first of all, institutionalized in the same area as the issues of international crime (for example trans-border crime or terrorism), and secondly, they are placed in the space of potential threats to the internal security of the EU (Bigo 2002).

Moreover, in the Vienna Action Plan (the programme for the implementation of the provisions of the Amsterdam Treaty referring to the AFSJ), "the freedom to live in a law-abiding environment is in turn operationalized as the freedom from those who are identified as abusers of that freedom" (van Munster 2009: 74). Analysing the process of institutionalization and operationalization in the area of freedom, security and justice within the EU, as well as the disputes led in the European Council and during the intergovernmental

conferences over the issue, Munster points out that "freedom and justice are overdetermined by the meaning of security [and], freedom is discussed mainly in negative terms, as threats to freedom that should be neutralized" (2009:142).

Such an understanding of the triangle of objectives (and also values), rooted in the Treaty of the European Union, and its former revisions, and the political agendas referring to JHA (such as Tampere Agenda, Hague Programme, Stockholm Programme) has been maintained and even strengthened (as a reaction to some terrorist attacks in a few member states) for years on the basis of EU political and legal documents. Didier Bigo, examining the Hague Programme, concluded that we should change the title of that part of EU activities and "adapt the title to their actual content by renaming the three parts: 1. strengthening security, 2. strengthening security, 3. strengthening security" (2006:35). That explains why in the EU's discussions about migration, the emphasis is usually shifted from debates on immigration, including integration of immigrants, onto debates on security (Roos 2013).

As an effect of this, the EU migration policy was created and shaped in the security frame. Over the next – almost two – decades, focusing on security issues in immigration policy has led to the largest development of those policy aspects directly and indirectly related to general rules and conditions of entry and residence of foreigners in the EU. There were adopted and implemented regulations referring to selected specific areas in the scope of EU law, such as visas, border protection and control, fighting illegal immigration, returns and readmission, and fighting trans-border crime. The legal dynamics of the EU security-oriented migration policy was supplemented by a gradual development of an operational and institutional dimension. The EU created the second-generation Schengen Information System, Eurodac (a large-scale fingerprint database), Visa Information System, European Border Surveillance System (Eurosur), and Frontex (European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the EU), all of which are focused on the management of the external borders of the EU.

Border management became a core element of the EU immigration policy, developing under the narratives of the growing threat to internal security and public order, not solely from terrorist organizations and organized crime, but also form the massive flow of migrants and asylum seekers. In practice, this policy strengthens the syndrome of "Fortress Europe" (Gruszczak 2012) and is dominated by instruments preventing irregular entry to the EU and

expelling irregular migrants from the EU. As Andrew Geddes claims, the concentration on restrictive and exclusive migration policy and instruments referring to the EU borders justified the fact that the issue of immigrants' inclusion was "pushed aside" (2000). Moreover, immigrants are often left outside the networks of integration, socialization and needed protection, which can push them towards networks of alienation and radicalization, and even violence and crime.

4. The postulate of "secure borders" as a reaction to the migration crisis

It must be noticed that the way of presenting threats to security in the EU policy referring to immigration and asylum affects the interpretation of the concept of safe border. This is combined with the general process within which traditional recognition of secure borders as a manifestation of independence and sovereignty, associated most of all with military issues, has been extended to comprise a whole range of non-military threats. These processes are connected with the changes in reflections on security which took place after the end of the Cold War, indicating the growing role of such dimensions as political, economic, social and ecological (Buzan 1991). In this interpretation, the movement of people and goods through the borders may also constitute a challenge to security. Therefore, we may look at the development of policies directed at institutionalizing the movement of people and the flow of goods through borders, which has been progressing since the 1st World War, both in Europe and in other parts of the globe, as at creation of instruments for internal security defence in terms of domestic goods production markets, labour markets, social security systems, healthcare systems and, finally, cultural and social integrity as elements of cultural security.

As a result of these processes, borders become an instrument of many policies directly and indirectly related to the area of security. Secure borders are not only borders which can effectively protect us against invaders, an enemy army in the military sense; they are also borders which eliminate smuggling and other types of trans-border crime, but above all, their role in managing migration has developed. And since migrations in the European discourse and the EU policy "have become" the space bringing risk and threat, a natural instrument for managing them is found in borders, as obstacles and barriers protecting us from the undesirable and dangerous. Especially after the terrorist attacks in the USA in 2001, the

postulate of ‘secure border’ had become a key task to be accomplished by governments individually, and by the EU as a whole.

The climax of such appeals was observed in 2015, when – as Frontex submitted – along the external borders of the EU over 1.8 million instances of unauthorized border crossings were reported (2016:6), over one million more cases than in the previous six years combined (2009-2014). More importantly, the migration pressure accumulated along two migration routes: East-European (and its Balkan continuation) and Central European. This meant that the problem of unprecedented scale of immigration to the EU at that time was worsened by the uneven concentration of the immigrant and refugee flow in a few geographic bottlenecks.

This created a situation where some EU countries were particularly burdened with this problem and determined the forced ways of solving them. Representatives of European institutions and leaders of countries and governments in the centre of the EU demanded that the border countries, especially Italy and Greece, restored order on the borders and managed the chaos of mass and uncontrolled movements, including secondary movements (those between member states). In the EU institutional forum, these countries were blamed for insufficiently protecting the European external borders, which resulted in the growing uncontrolled immigration into the EU. The EU countries which were immigration destinations (for example Germany, France, United Kingdom) and the countries with a high rate of submitted asylum applications (Germany, Sweden, Austria) expected that the EU efforts should be concentrated on the immediate tightening of its external southern borders and reinstating the systematic registration of newcomers and abandoning activities resulting in secondary flows (inside the EU). For the failure to observe EU law in this scope – the activities of Greek authorities trying to cope with the mass inflow of migrants through the leaking border, which allowed to avoid registration of some of them and thus not to incur the costs of their reception – Greece was even threatened with removal from the Schengen zone (Taylor 2016). The Dutch prime-minister warned that as history teaches us, “even great empires fall when their borders are not well guarded” and argued that tightening the Greek-Turkish border was an absolute priority of the EU facing the refugee crisis (Bielecki 2015). Thus, the Netherlands, which took the lead in the Council, set as its goal the development and quick implementation of the common EU position on securing the EU external borders,

which translated into, inter alia, supporting the initiative of the European Commission from December 2015 on, and establishing a European Border Guard Agency (Borońska-Hryniewiecka 2016).

What is obvious is that also the first-line countries, those responsible for controlling external borders, directed their expectations towards joint EU activities at the improvement of border controls. In their appeals for security, Italians and Greeks demanded mostly financial support from the EU for staff and infrastructure improvements to protect their own borders (for example, providing them with state-of-the-art equipment for controlling and supervising). They also required the EU to join very costly search and rescue actions in the Mediterranean Sea, organized by the Italian navy (Brady 2014). Exceptionally, Italy's appeals concerning the involvement of the EU foreign and security policy in operations on the Mediterranean Sea were supported by the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security, Federica Mogherini. Moved by the tragedies occurring at sea, she declared at the beginning of 2015 that she intended to add migration matters to the agenda of the Council for Foreign Affairs and added that "the fight with smuggling and illegal border crossing, saving migrants at sea and protecting people seeking asylum are our common challenges" (Blockman, Russack 2015).

Whereas most countries of the so-called old EU more or less supported the proposals for revision of the asylum system in the EU, prepared at that time by the European Commission, which was to be an integral part of the EU answer to the migration crisis in 2015, new member states, most notably the Visegrad Group countries, concentrated on adopting solutions aimed at tightening borders. This tone can be found in their joint statement from September 2015, in which they demanded putting aside the plans for refugee relocation and, instead, intensifying activities for strengthening controls on borders and improving the system of sending immigrants back (Joint Communiqué 2015). In many statements, they emphasized that we need to look at the issue of the migration crisis through the prism of the

effective operation of the Schengen zone, particularly security on its borders, not from the perspective of developing common immigration and asylum policy[*****].

Therefore, in the particular crisis situation of 2015, where the scale of migration problems turned out to be unprecedented and where related conflicts between member states aggregated, security issues undoubtedly constituted a common denominator. In this perspective, borders became somehow a natural key instrument of the EU immigration policy and EU efforts were directed at protecting these borders against the unwanted inflow of immigrants. A postulate which in the space of sharp EU disputes and tensions concerning changes to the common asylum system and establishment of the relocation mechanism and organization of resettlement of immigrants from refugee camps gained unanimous approval of all parties to the discussion was the postulate concerning ensuring security on borders. Although for some (countries admitting the biggest numbers of refugees, international institutions), it was a postulate which should be accompanied by the simultaneous revision of the asylum system so that the countries could jointly be burdened with the costs of the inflow of thousands of people seeking asylum in the EU, other countries (Visegrad Group states) treated this postulate as the essence of EU solutions, which could be at most accompanied with intensified actions supporting (materially and financially) refugees in their countries of origin or their staying in camps located in third countries (Trojanowska-Strzęboszewska 2016).

The postulate of ‘safe borders’ has thus become a significant space of consensus, extremely needed by the EU during the aggravating political conflict over the migration crisis. But this postulate is only seemingly a specified reply, in fact being a capacious and plastic rhetorical figure, changing in time. Filling this postulate with some content is connected with the way in which we define security itself.

[*****] See *Orban: Europe must protect its border*, „Daily News Hungary” (24.04.2015), Available at: http://dailynewshungary.com/orban-europe-must-protect-its-borders/html. Also, the Polish vice minister of foreign affairs underlined in December 2015 that: “The Polish government does not understand why someone wants to combine two unlinked issues: the future of the Schengen area and immigration” (Denkova, Robert, Schwartz et al. 2016).

5. The European Agenda on Migration and its implementation

Taking into consideration the above postulates, we need to analyse the EU's reaction to the migration crisis, referring both to the common European agenda on migration, adopted in May 2015, and to what the EU actually managed to accomplish from the plan (European Commission 2016a). The European Commission, which proposed the European Agenda on Migration, included two groups of actions in it: *ad hoc*, to be implemented immediately, and long-term actions, related to the further development of the migration management policy. Among *ad hoc* actions, though admittedly they were rather slow and definitely delayed, the Commission indicated: 1/ increasing the abilities and means dedicated to joint supervision and rescue operations on sea borders conducted by Frontex, the so-called "Triton" (run by Italy) and "Poseidon" (Greece), 2/ the necessity to direct actions against smugglers' networks using the instruments of Common Security and Defence Policy, 3/ adopting the mechanism for the relocation of people applying for asylum to spread evenly the costs related to acceptance of waves of newcomers to the EU, 4/ implementation of the resettlement programme (20 thousand people) in order to create legal ways of reaching the EU for people seeking international protection, 5/ cooperation with third countries aimed at coping with migration in the areas of migrants' origin and transit, 6/ implementation of the so-called *hot spot* approach, that is establishing along Greek and Italian borders additional points of identification, registration and verification for people crossing external borders, 7/ providing additional financial means to satisfy the needs of the bordering member states (European Commission 2015).

On the other hand, in the long run, the European Union proposed concentrating on "four pillars of better migration management": 1/ limiting incentives for illegal immigrants, including fighting smugglers and human traffickers, and activating steps aimed at organizing returns of immigrants who irregularly stay on the EU territory 2/ managing borders – saving life and securing external borders (*inter alia* by strengthening the role and capabilities of Frontex, determining the EU norm concerning border management, strengthening coordination of domestic tasks of coast guards, putting forward once again the initiative of the so-called intelligent borders, supporting third countries in effective management of their own borders), 3/ a firm common asylum policy (including increasing the degree of coherence in implementing the asylum law in member states to fight abuses of the asylum system,

strengthening provisions concerning a safe country of origin, intensifying actions aimed at biometric identification of people seeking asylum and possibly a review of the Dublin system), 4/ a new policy towards legal migration (for example, changes to the blue card, establishing a platform for dialogue with social partners on economic migration, more actions combining migration policy with development, changes to priorities in financing integration policy) (European Commission 2015).

The next months showed that the Commission's above proposals, though developed as petitioned by the European Council and as an answer to the resolution of the European Parliament, were only fragmentarily accomplished.

Among *ad hoc* actions, the issues concerning the implementation of the relocation systems and refugees' resettlements have been met with strong resistance or tardiness of some countries, which brought on the collapse of both initiatives in practice. Thus, the EU efforts have been concentrated on the issues consisting of tightening external borders. But even in this respect, it should be noted that the military operations started in June 2016 in the south-central part of the Mediterranean Sea (taken up within the CFSP) to counteract human smuggling and trafficking were relatively quickly stopped. As it was explained then, "the chance of being rescued [offered to immigrants by the presence of ships and other military equipment – own comment] encourages the choice of the risky sea route" (Kingsley 2017:15).

The focus of EU migration activities on security issues becomes even more visible when we look at the current implementation of the long-term actions proposed by the Commission. On the basis of the presented provisions, the Commission prepared a few legislation proposals, aimed mainly at strengthening and tightening EU external borders. The first one, of vital importance, was – accomplished in 2016 – the establishment of the European Border and Coast Guards and transforming the Frontex agency into the Border and Coast Guard Agency, by strengthening and widening the competences of the Agency – directly and indirectly – in matters of controlling the external borders of the EU. Secondly, the European Commission proposed and the Council and European Parliament adopted a crucial change to the Schengen Border Code, particularly by introducing checks against the SIS II and Interpol databases on all persons (third country nationals, as well as persons who enjoy the right of free movement), both at entry to and at exit from the EU, fundamentally

widening the scope of the border control. Finally, at the end of 2017, the European Commission presented a legal proposal establishing the Entry/Exit System as part of the intelligent borders initiative. The system gained the European Parliament's and Member States' acceptance and – in the next years – should be applied to third-country nationals admitted for a short stay into the Schengen area. The idea of the system is to record information of time and place of entry, and the length of stay of migrants in the Schengen area, and to generate automatic alerts directly to the competent authorities in case of 'overstaying'.

An important supplement to the dominant viewpoint of securitizing immigration issues were also actions taken by a number of European countries on their own. They also involved the implementation of the postulate of 'secure borders', but were tested on the domestic level, when the EU actions were considered insufficient and taking too long. The most important issue in this respect was the erection of additional fencings and barriers along the borders by some countries. As early as June 2015, Hungary was the first to start building barbed wire entanglements along their border with Serbia, an external border of the EU, and when refugees turned to Croatian lands, they extended the programme of building border fencings also to the border with Croatia and Romania, both EU countries which do not belong to the Schengen area. Hungary was followed by Slovenia, which erected fences on part of its border with Croatia. Along with erecting these structures, border services were equipped with paramilitary appliances, such as drones or light planes, and finally, army forces were asked, as they informed, to provide security on borders.

Another variant of implementing the postulate of 'secure borders' were the actions introduced by the countries which were the final destinations for immigrants and refugees. Of vital importance was to restore – in line with EU law and as long as it was the ultimate measure, used when facing threats to the Schengen area and for a definite period of time – controls on internal borders, namely on German, Austrian, Slovenian, Swedish, Norwegian and Belgian borders (European Commission 2016b). In May 2016, five countries most affected by the problem of mass inflow of migrants (Austria, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Norway) prolonged for 6 months the restored proportional, temporary border controls as a reaction to "serious threats and in order to keep public order and public security in connection with secondary flow of irregular migrants" (Rada 2017). France also decided to

reintroduced border control on its land borders after the terrorist attack in 2015 in Paris. All these countries prolonged their border control a few times for the following months. Thus, these 'temporary' measures of reintroducing controls on internal borders have been used for more than two years. Thus, the European Commission proposed a new amendment to the Schengen Border Code, allowing countries to reintroduce border controls even up to 3 or 4 years.

To summarize, in reaction to the migration crisis, whose significant dimension was the refugee crisis, both at the EU and at the national level, the postulate of 'secure borders' was used. Border security generally boiled down to the care for the security of the receiving societies, practically omitting the issues of the persons who were crossing these borders. Secure borders were understood as tight borders, even impenetrable ones, those which prevent or at least limit significantly the inflow of threats and risks to European societies, as such threats and risks were perceived in unwanted immigrants. Tightening the borders thus gained two key interpretations. Firstly, it was implemented by means of intensifying controls on external borders by developing institutions, funds and specific instruments (including military ones) used for limiting the inflow of immigrants into the EU, or even through symbolically 'closing' the borders by erecting physical border defences, such as walls or barbed wire fencings. Secondly, tightening the borders also meant a 'restoration of borders', referring to the temporary reintroduction of personal controls on selected internal borders and establishing additional limits concerning, for example, the right to submit applications for international protection (like in Austria and Germany in 2015).

In all indicated actions, borders have become important elements protecting against mass and undocumented immigration, regardless of the fact that this group also included people seeking asylum. The functions of borders were narrowed down to creating a tight barrier protecting a particular society, community or political organism against the external forces that threaten its existence, survival, stable existence etc., and irregular immigration to the EU was considered to be such a major force.

6. Conclusions

The aim of the article was to present the nature of the European Union's immigration policy emerging from the actions taken by the EU as a response to the migration crisis

connected with the unprecedented inflow of great numbers of economic immigrants and people seeking asylum in the member states in recent years. The article shows that security has become the factor regulating the EU immigration policy, determining how it is conducted (and developed), whereas the notion of security itself and the meaning ascribed to it have fundamentally affected the shape and nature of the adopted solutions within this policy. In the crisis connected with the inflow of a large number of migrants into the EU, including potential refugees, the exemplification of adopting the paradigm of security in the EU immigration policy has been the implementation of the postulate of 'secure borders', understood as achieving the highest possible degree of their tightness and impenetrability.

As a result, the EU's reaction to the immigration crisis has proved to be a fragmentary, reductionist and, in the long run, insufficient approach to migration issues. First of all, this means that the top priority in EU activities towards immigration are the issues connected with rules and regulations governing immigrants' entry and stay in the EU. This issue is already reduced and concerns mostly actions aimed at limiting the inflow of unregulated immigration into the EU, through developing legal, institutional and financial instruments within the integrated management of the EU external borders and the policy of returns, deportations and readmissions. It should be noted that the very definition of what is and what is not unregulated immigration has not only been rendered relative, but also political. As a result, the issues concerning legal migrations, including potential challenges revealed in this area for many years, have been pushed out of the European focus.

Secondly, this brings about some consequences – marginalizing the issues from other areas of immigration policy, especially issues concerning the immigrants' integration policy. These issues, though mostly vital for internal security and public order in member states (for example, due to processes of radicalization of attitudes and growing terrorist threats), have not become the subject of EU debates or the area for which effective strategies and instruments are created at community level.

Thirdly, subordinating the EU immigration policy to the security paradigm results in the securitization of asylum policy and, so to speak, the 'suspension' of the humanitarian dimension of this policy. Bearing in mind the fact that border control and asylum policies are in fact inseparable, focusing EU actions on implementing the restrictive admission policy leads to deficits in the EU's legal, international and moral commitments concerning its policy

towards refugees. These processes were also associated with - well visible in many EU and domestic debates - blurring distinctions between people seeking asylum and irregular economic immigrants, which in practice translated into political postulates to deny these people entry into EU territory. In public rhetoric, the category of 'refugee', just like an economic immigrant before, was gradually subjected to processes of securitization and the refugee, from a person seeking shelter and international protection, escaping war and anarchy that threaten their life, has become a person who carries this threat with them and who threatens public security and order in the EU member states.

And fourthly, reducing the EU actions concerning immigration to the fight against irregular immigration by means of strengthening border controls or establishing additional barriers to migration means, in fact, the implementation of a highly ineffective policy. This is mainly because it is based on vain expectations that borders will become effective barriers to population flow. The approach consisting of identifying secure borders with their tightness denies the facts and regularities described by scientists for many years. There is no easy way of blocking the migrants' routes, but they can be better organized[†††††]. What is more, it will be difficult to stop desperate people who, regardless of whether they are welcome in the EU or not, will come here since – to put it short – they are subjected to very strong pushing factors. Finally, this approach denies the fact that porosity is an inherent feature of borders (Brunet-Jailly 2007:2). This feature makes the provision of 'secure borders' a special challenge to security policies. It is necessary in this respect to recognize that "security is not equal to freedom and cannot be treated as a goal itself" (Jeandesboz 2016:17). Security is a measure adopted to provide greater freedom and protection of fundamental rights.

[†††††] The activities limiting the inflow of immigrants in one migration route lead to the growing inflow via other routes, which can be seen in the period of 2014-2016 in the changing routes that refugees from Syria took when fleeing to Europe: first, in 2014, Syrians escaped through Jordan to Egypt and mostly to Libya, where they embarked on boats sailing to Europe along the so-called mid-Mediterranean route. In 2015, the situation changed, as the war broke out in Libya and Egypt – pressed by the EU – introduced stricter visa requirements. The Syrians started to flee to Turkey and then, through the Aegean Sea to Greece and then along the Balkan route to Central Europe. This East-European route was blocked by the agreement between the EU and Turkey, concluded on 16th March 2016. Refugees obviously did not disappear – merely one month later, the rates of Syrians trying to enter the EU via the Central European route increased significantly.

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LIFE SATISFACTION OF EAST EUROPEAN MIGRANTS IN THREE CLUSTERED EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS

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Abstract

This paper looks at the declared levels of happiness and life satisfaction of migrants from three East European countries: Bulgaria, Poland and Romania. The Inglehart–Welzel cultural map is used for grouping the main destination countries for East European (EE) migrants into three clusters: the Protestant cluster, the English-speaking cluster and the Catholic cluster. The well-being of East European migrants is compared between the three clusters and with that of natives using data from the first 7 waves of the European Social Survey. The article contains the following findings: both as a group and as distinct groups from the three countries of origin, EE migrants are most satisfied with life in the Protestant cluster and the least happy in the Catholic cluster; democratic structures are a key element for the life satisfaction of East European migrants.

Keywords: migration, Eastern Europe, well-being, culture, cluster

1. Introduction

Even before officially joining the European Union, large numbers of East Europeans migrated to the West in search of better paid jobs. Soon after the events of 1989 there was a large wave of Romanian emigrants to Germany, Austria and Israel, with a considerable ethnic character. Afterwards, joblessness, low wages, political turmoil, poor state of the healthcare system were push factors for many Romanians who looked to the West for better life and working conditions. In 2016, Romanian, Polish, Italian, Portuguese and British citizens were the five biggest groups of EU citizens living in other EU Member States (Fries-Tersch et al., 2016). In 2008, approximately 2,8 million Romanians were working abroad, most of whom in either Spain or Italy (Sandu, 2010) and recently, in the Romanian mass-media it was estimated that the number of Romanians living abroad is around 3.8 million. These millions of emigrants can be grouped in different typologies and based on several variables, different

profiles of the Romanian migrant have been constructed, depending on origin and destination community; in a recent study, Sandu (2017) showed that the portrait of the Romanian immigrants in Germany and Nordic countries is quite different from the portrait of the immigrants in Spain or Italy. Pour rural communities exhibit large shares of emigration towards Italy and Spain. These communities are also rather poor in educational capital. In opposition, most emigrants towards the German and Nordic countries come from an urban, richer background, and have higher educational capital (Sandu. 2017). Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom are the destinations most investigated by social researches studying the Romanian migration phenomenon (Bleahu, 2005; Anghel, 2008; Serban & Voicu, 2010; Marcu, 2015; Ban, 2012; Light & Young, 2009). As large numbers of Romanians have migrated constantly to Italy and Spain, does it mean that they are happier there when compared to other host countries? A large existing diaspora decreases the costs of migration for future immigrants Collier & Hoeffler (2018) but does the existence of a large immigrant community in established host countries make immigrants feel happy there or will they be happier in countries where the level of happiness in generally higher, even if they do not have many co-nationals around them? Does a small cultural distance between host and destination country influence the happiness of EE migrants?

To explore these questions, the present article makes use of the European Social Survey data regarding East European migrants in different European countries. For the purpose of statistical analysis, Romanian migrants are considered in this article in the context of a larger group of East-European migrants, consisting also of Poles and Bulgarians. Different social indicators are used in a regression model to see which of them is relevant for the life satisfaction of EE migrants. Drawing on suggestions from previous studies (Polgreen & Simpson, 2011, Arpino & de Valk, 2017), I wish to find out whether cultural distance between the origin and destination country has a large influence on the levels of happiness and life satisfaction of East European migrants.

2. Previous research on the happiness of East European migrants

Scientists have long been measuring and comparing happiness of individuals and groups, even while acknowledging the fact that happiness is subjective, and there is no objective standard for happiness (Veenhoven 1991). Social indicators are often used in

research as objective factors influencing happiness or rather wellbeing, as distinctions are made between cognitive evaluation of life and affective wellbeing [1] (Veenhoven, 1991; Arpino & de Valk, 2017). Research on the happiness of migrants so far has reached contradicting results, depending on the variables and the target migrant groups and destination countries considered in the analysis. Income (Easterlin, 1974), education (Verkuyten, 2016) and a high or low occupational status (Snel et al., 2015; 2011) have been previously studied as influencing factors on the variation of happiness and on return intentions of migrants.

Verkuyten (2016) showed that in some cases there is an integration paradox, meaning that highly educated migrants declare themselves to be less happy then their lower educated counterparts. There are multiple reasons for this paradox: migrants with higher education are more likely to compare themselves with the majority of the population, have more contact with the members of the majority population, develop higher expectations, and have a better understanding of their reduced opportunities (Verkuyten, 2016). Also, "the integration paradox seems most applicable to immigrants who have invested in host country education" (Verkuyten, 2016). An indicator of the fact that this might not be just a perception is found in the study by Andriessen et al. (2015) which shows that individuals with a foreign name are more often invited to an interview if they send their CV to a job opening where the application procedure allows for "blind" evaluation (without a name mentioned on the CV). On the other hand, Snel et al. (2015) explained that the low occupational status migrants are more likely to declare themselves happy because they consider themselves to be successful when compared to their situation in the origin country: "CEE migrants with uncertain jobs and a low occupational status may be less successful according to the standards of the receiving society and the prevailing academic classification schemes, but may be very successful in their own eyes" (Snel et al., 2015, pp. 18-19).

At a macro level, countries in Northern Europe are seen as happy countries, while happiness is quite low in many East European countries, at least in comparison to Western Europe. (Bartram, 2013). Scholars talk about cultures of dissatisfaction or happy and unhappy countries (Polgreen & Simpson, 2011). Based on data from the World Values Survey (WVS), that measures the level of happiness on a 4 point scale, as a response to the

[1] This paper uses the terms well-being, happiness and life satisfaction as synonyms, acknowledging however the different theoretical components of the phenomenon.

question *Taking all things together, would you say you are: 'Very happy'/ 'Quite happy'/'Not very happy'/ 'Not at all happy'*, East European origin countries of migrants are less happy countries - Poland (3.16) and Romania (2.79) than Western or Nordic destination countries such as Sweden (3.34), the Netherlands (3.24) or Germany (3.06). In very unhappy countries, emigration rates are high (Polgreen & Simpson, 2011), as is the case of Romania. However, other researchers (Ivlevs, 2015) have found a U-shaped relation between life satisfaction and emigration intentions, with the most and the least satisfied being the ones wishing to migrate.

Many studies on the happiness of migrants rely on comparisons between the scores of migrants and natives regarding happiness or life satisfaction. Based on data from the first six rounds of the European Social Survey (ESS) Arpino & de Valk (2017) found that, compared to natives, people with a migration background show lower levels of life satisfaction and that this difference is greater for first generation migrants. In other studies too (Voicu & Vasile, 2014), migrants were found to have higher levels of life satisfaction than stayers from their origin countries but lower levels of life satisfaction when compared to natives in their host countries.

As Arpino & de Valk (2017) suggest, life satisfaction is influenced by cultural values, depends on the congruence between achievements and aspirations and for migrants is influenced by the group with which they compare their aspirations (Arpino & de Valk, 2017). Happiness of migrants can be influenced both by levels of happiness in the host country and the origin country in complex ways (Bartram, 2013; Polgreen & Simpson, 2011), depending also on the comparison reference. One can assume that in many cases, migrants compare their former living conditions with the present ones or the present life conditions with those of natives around them. Veenhoven (1991) criticizes and refines the postulate that happiness results from comparison. He distinguishes between affective and cognitive components of happiness and shows that comparison plays a role only for the cognitive element of happiness, namely contentment, which represents the degree to which an individual perceives his aspirations to be met. Therefore, happiness in the sense of life-satisfaction depends only partly on comparison and partly on personal inclination (Veenhoven, 1991).

3. Methods, data and results

In appreciating the cultural distance between country of origin and destination country, I use a similar approach to that used by Brunner & Kuhn (2018), namely the division

of culture along the dimensions developed by Inglehart. The Inglehart–Welzel (IW) Cultural Map (2015) is a very useful instrument for culture comparison between countries. Here countries are placed on two scales: the survival-self-expression scale and the traditional - secular rational scale. Survival values are opposed to values oriented towards self-fulfilment, self-expression and subjective wellbeing, while traditional values represent the important role given to religion and authority, opposed to the secular rational values, promoting equality, tolerance and acceptance of diversity.

Romania and Bulgaria are in the same cluster of Orthodox countries, closer to survival values, while many West and North European countries are strongly oriented towards self-expression values. Bulgaria is closer than Romania to the secular-rational values, while Poland is closer to the middle of both scales and based on its values it is placed in the Latin America group on the IW Cultural Map developed by Inglehart (2015) and valid for the year 2014[2]. According to the IW Cultural Map, European countries are more different on the survival-self-expression scale than on the traditional - secular rational scale.

3.1. Data selection

Taking these cultural differences into consideration and keeping the ecological fallacy in mind, I want to see what the happiness chances are for East Europeans in Northern and Western Europe when compared to more traditional destination countries from the South of Europe. I took as reference the cultural divisions of clusters from the latest version of the IW Cultural Map, from 2013, available online. I looked at the main European destination countries for East European migrants, namely: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway and The United Kingdom. These are grouped on the IW Cultural Map into three clusters. Cluster 1 is the Protestant cluster[3], composed of Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland. Norway, Denmark and Finland. Cluster 2 is the English-speaking cluster

[2] This is an important observation, as countries tend to move on the IW Cultural map influenced by the change in values in a given society over time. Countries that are close to the middle of the two scales have sometimes moved from one Cluster to another, depending on the similarity of values.

[3] There are some variations in literature in the composition of these two clusters as some authors divide them between Western and Nordic states. Sandu (2017) analyses Romanian migration in a cluster formed by Nordic countries Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands plus Switzerland, and puts Germany and Austria together, based on proximity.

composed of The United Kingdom and Ireland. Cluster 3 is the Catholic Europe cluster, composed of Austria, Belgium, Luxemburg, France, Spain and Italy.

The analysis is based on data from the aggregated file of the first 7 waves (2002-2014) of the European Social Survey. I selected the main European migration target countries of East Europeans, mentioned above. I then selected all cases "not born in country" and with country of birth Bulgaria, Poland or Romania. The resulting sample contained 1437 observations from which 73 had both a father and a mother born in the country (62 respondents were living in Germany and 4 in Austria, countries where people with an ethnic German background emigrated (back) shortly after the fall of the iron curtain). As I wanted to look only at first generation East European migrants, I selected the cases with a father and mother not born in the country and, afterwards, 1300 cases resulted. I also looked at the languages mostly spoken at home and if this was neither (one of) the official language(s) of the host country nor of the country of origin, I eliminated those cases. In the end, the resulting sample had 1296 cases, with 76 respondents from Bulgaria, 858 from Poland and 362 from Romania. The Protestant cluster (Cluster 1) contains 543 respondents, the English-speaking cluster (Cluster 2) contains 422 respondents and the Catholic cluster[4] (Cluster 3) contains 331 respondents. In the case of the "natives"[5] comparison category, I used the same file, selecting from the target countries mentioned above the respondents "born in the country" and with a father and mother born in the country. This resulted in a sample of 149554 respondents.

[4] A sample size problem was identified in the case of Italy. Italy and Spain are the two largest destination countries for Romanian migrants (Sandu 2010; 2017; Fries-Tersch et al. 2016; OECD data), given the small language distance and chain migration. The number of Romanian migrants in Italy (OECD data available starting with the year 2008) is over 1 million and in Spain is ranges around 6-7 hundred thousand. However, in the first seven waves of the ESS, In Italy there were only 13 Romanian respondents included in the survey, resulting in an underrepresentation of the Romanian migrant community in the most important emigration country. In comparison, there were 117 Romanian respondents registered Spain and 73 in Germany. As Polgreen & Simpson (2011) suggest, first generation migrants could be underrepresented in ESS waves because only persons who speak the language of the host country are interviewed, resulting in an overrepresentation of highly educated people. Also, if migrants are not officially registered they cannot get selected based on population or household lists, resulting again in underrepresentation (Bălțătescu 2007).

[5] The category "natives" based on these three variables of the ESS has an instrumental purpose. In this article, the further use of "natives" serves only as a comparison instrument, refers to respondents without a first generation registered migrant background and does not imply any qualitative appreciation of the cultural integration or citizenship of a respondent.

3.2. Hypothesis testing and results

Geographical distance, language distance (Beenstock, et al., 2001) and cultural distance can influence the migration costs (Polgreen & Simpson, 2011) but larger difference in cultures per se do not constitute an obstacle to migration (Collier & Hoeffler, 2018). Therefore, this article does not assume that distance per se influences well-being of migrants, or that cultural distance discourages migration to the respective destination countries, but that distance in cultural values does influence the declared levels of well-being of migrants, as a large cultural distance requires more time and effort to bridge and fit in (Collier & Hoeffler, 2018). In this perspective, of the three clusters in this study, the Protestant cluster is furthest away from the three East European countries according to the IW Cultural Map, and according to the cultural dimensions of Geert Hofstede (2001). The **hypothesis** is that the further the host countries are on the IW map from the three origin countries, the lower the life satisfaction (H1a) and happiness (H1b) of East Europeans in those countries will be. Therefore, the subjective well-being of East Europeans in the Catholic cluster should be higher than the levels for the English-Speaking cluster and the latter should be higher than the levels of life satisfaction and happiness from the Protestant cluster.

As shown in Table 1, H1a and H1b are both invalidated: East Europeans are more satisfied with life and happier in the Protestant cluster, then in the English-speaking cluster and only third in the Catholic cluster. Statistically significant differences ($p<0.05$) were found in Post Hoc tests of the ANOVA (Appendix 2) for the two dependent variables between the Protestant and the English-speaking clusters and between the English-speaking and the Catholic clusters. However, the levels of subjective well-being of natives from the three clusters follows the same pattern: natives are most satisfied with life and most happy in the Protestant cluster, then in the English-speaking cluster and lastly in the Catholic cluster. There is a strong correlation (0.663, $p<0.01$), between life satisfaction and happiness for East European migrants in the sample, slightly lower than the correlation in the case of natives (0.0701).

Data in Table 1 and Appendix 1 shows that in all three clusters, East European migrants are less satisfied with life and less happy than natives. This has been explained by other authors also as an indicator that cultures of dissatisfaction can travel (Voicu & Vasile, 2014), as data from the 4th wave of the ESS for the happiness and life satisfaction levels in the three investigated East European countries shows that these are generally lower than in

Western, Northern or Southern Europe, leading some scholars to characterize East European countries as "unhappy" (Polgreen & Simpson, 2011). So, migrating to a happier country will make migrants happier than their national counterparts who remain in their origin country (stayers), but will not make them as happy as the natives from the country they are migrating to. Other studies have found however partially contradicting results: according to Bartram (2013), migrants from Poland are significantly less happy than stayers.

Based on the data presented in Appendix 2, the conclusions of some previous studies (Arpino & de Valk, 2017; Bălțătescu, 2007) that immigrants show lower levels of life satisfaction when compared to natives is not valid for all countries; exceptions for the life satisfaction level are Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom, and for the happiness level, Germany and Norway[6]. Looking at data from the first two waves (2002/2004) of the ESS, Bălțătescu (2007) found that East European migrants (all those who came from the post-communist countries in Europe, including from Southern Europe or from European Post-Soviet countries) declared lower levels of life satisfaction and happiness than natives. Comparing this conclusion with the findings from the present article, which shows how in some countries East Europeans are happier or more satisfied with life, exhibits that happiness is indeed not temporarily stable Veenhoven (1994).

Table 1. Averages for life satisfaction and happiness levels of natives and East Europeans.

	How satisfied with life as a whole are you?		How happy are you?	
	Natives	East European migrants	Natives	East European migrants
Cluster 1	7.75	7.48	7.84	7.67
Cluster 2	7.16	6.87	7.47	7.35
Cluster 3	7.02	6.63	7.39	7.20
Total	7.43	7.06	7.64	7.45

Where are East Europeans the happiest? As a group they are the most satisfied with life and the happiest in the Protestant cluster. Comparing the average scores of the three migrant groups, the group from Poland has averages over 7 for both dimensions of life satisfaction and happiness (7.18 and 7.50) and Romanian migrants are the least satisfied with

[6] In the case of Italy there is also a slight positive difference in the declared level of happiness of East Europeans when compared to natives, but based on the statistical observations presented above, this result should be considered with reservations.

life and the least happy (6.18 and 7.31).[7] The only statistically representative difference between the three East European migrant groups is between Poland and Romania when looking at life satisfaction level (mean difference 0.365 $p< 0.05$), while the other comparisons in the one-way Anova are not statistically representative. As shown by data in Appendix 2, East European migrants are most satisfied with life (8.09) and most happy (8.26) in Denmark, the country where also natives are the most satisfied (8.49) and most happy (8.35) of investigated countries.

If we look at the group of East Europeans who are less satisfied with life (answers 1 through 6 on the scale) there is a significant difference between the means of respondents in the first cluster (4.78) and the third cluster (4.22), of 0.557 based on Post hoc HSD, Scheffe and LSD tests ($p<0.05$). For the satisfied with life group (answers 7 through 10 on the scale) there is a small significant difference between the means of the first cluster (8.27) and second cluster (8.1), of 0.173 based on a Post hoc LSD test ($p<0.05$). Unhappy East Europeans in the Catholic cluster are unhappier than unhappy East Europeans from the Protestant cluster.

If cultural distance between origin and destination country does not predict life satisfaction of migrants, what are the variables that do have a representative impact on this dimension? In the remaining of the article such possible factors are tackled in descriptive analyses and afterwards in a linear regression model.

3.3. Satisfaction with social and economic conditions

The findings of Bălțătescu (2007) show that despite lower declared levels of life satisfaction of immigrants when compared to natives, the former are more satisfied with the social and economic conditions of their host country that the latter. An explanation given by the author is the fact that immigrants display higher levels of satisfaction regarding many societal domains as a social comparison effect between host and origin countries (Bălțătescu, 2007). Replicating this comparison with data from the seven waves of the ESS (2002-2014), we see that the conclusion is still valid and that East-European migrants have a higher satisfaction regarding the economic, social and political aspects than native respondents. If we look at the comparison between natives and East-European migrants regarding satisfaction with social and economic conditions (Appendix 3) we see that in almost every

[7] It would have been interesting to see in which country are Bulgarians, Poles and Romanians the happiest (if a statistical representative average difference would have been identified). However, due to the small number of respondents in each country from these categories, no such analysis is possible using the present ESS data.

case migrants are more satisfied than natives with the state of the economy, the national government, the way democracy works, the state of education and of health services. The largest difference between natives and East-European migrants is registered for the appreciation of the way democracy works in the host country, with an average difference of 0.7 in favour of the East-European migrants. If migrants compare their new surroundings with the ones in their origin country (Bălțătescu 2007), the fact that they are most satisfied with the way democracy works in the old democracies can be an indicator for dissatisfaction with democracy in their origin countries, which is sometimes part of the motivation to emigrate. As Collier & Hoeffler have also shown, "this gravity model of migration suggests that differences in income and political freedom between host and origin countries are important factors in the migration decision" (2018, p. 86). There is also a slight difference between the averages of the three clusters in the satisfaction with the democracy dimension, with the respondents from the Catholic cluster reporting a lower score, which is statistically significant ($p<0.05$) when compared with the Protestant cluster.

Compared with natives, East Europeans are much more satisfied with the state of the economy in the country in the UK (+1.81), Belgium (+0.8), Germany (+0.84) and Norway (+0.84). Compared with natives, East Europeans are much more satisfied with the national government in Belgium (+1.1), the UK (+1.86) and Norway (+1.35). East Europeans in Spain are much more satisfied (+1.76) than natives with the quality of education. Considerable differences between East Europeans and natives are found in many countries regarding the satisfaction with the state of health services[8]: Austria (+0.76), Germany (+0.91), Spain (+1.45), Ireland (+1.57). Based on average differences, East European migrants in the Protestant cluster are the closest to natives when it comes to evaluating their satisfaction with social and economic aspects. In line with the reference comparison idea, the above-mentioned positive differences regarding satisfaction with social, economic and political aspects can be interpreted as factors that pull East Europeans towards host countries, and that at the same time push them out of their countries of origin.

[8] For the item State of health services in country nowadays there is a statistical representative difference between Bulgaria and Poland (mean difference of 1.435, $p<.05$) and between Romania and Poland (mean difference of .921, $p<.05$).

3.4. Education and income

Based on the sample in the present study, of all East European respondents with tertiary education completed, the largest share (47.9%) is found in the Protestant cluster, followed by the English-speaking cluster (36.4%). If we look at the shares that respondents with a higher education have in each cluster, the Protestant and the English-speaking clusters have similar shares (38%) of East Europeans with a higher education. The largest group of respondents with a low education (less than lower secondary and secondary education) is found in the third cluster – 32%. A one-way ANOVA on the number of years of completed education shows a similar result. The highest average for years of full-time education completed is found in the English-speaking cluster (14.47). In the Post hoc tests there is a positive significant difference of 0.687 between the English speaking and the Protestant cluster ($p<0.05$) and of 1.643 between the English speaking and the Catholic cluster ($p<0.05$). This data supports the theory that higher educated East Europeans prefer to go to English-speaking countries or countries from the Protestant cluster.

Are well educated migrants less happy then their less educated counterparts, as the integration paradox would suggest? If we look at the portrait of the Romanian migrant in the Nordic countries, as described in the study of Sandu (2017), we see a positive relation between declared happiness and the level of education. In the Protestant cluster, East European migrants are the happiest, and have the highest educational capital, when compared to their counterparts from Italy or Spain. The integration paradox would therefore seem to be contradicted based on this data. East Europeans with a tertiary education in the present study sample have a similar level of life satisfaction and happiness to natives with tertiary education (mean and mode are 8 for both groups), average life satisfaction is 7.67 for natives and 7.32 for EE migrants. Average happiness is 7.83 for natives and 7.62 for EE migrants. When looking at the respondents with a low education level (less than lower secondary and secondary education) the differences become greater: natives have an average life satisfaction of 7.26 and East Europeans of 6.58. Natives have an average happiness level of 7.49 and East Europeans of 7.09. A low education level has a greater impact on life satisfaction and happiness than a higher education level. It seems indeed that *happy families are alike, while each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.*

On average, East Europeans in the Protestant cluster report higher income levels than their counterparts in the English speaking or Catholic clusters. 63% from respondents (valid,

N=1027) in the English-speaking cluster, 41.6% from the Catholic cluster and 34.6% from the Protestant cluster are in the first two deciles of income. On the higher end of the income scale, 38% from the Protestant cluster, 15.1% from the English-speaking cluster and 28.8% from the Catholic cluster are in the 4th and 5th deciles. Subsequently, respondents from the Protestant cluster also report higher levels of satisfaction with their income (measured as living comfortably on present income/coping on present income, difficult or very difficult on present income). Model 1 of the Regression in Table 2 shows that in the case of EE migrants only a very low income has a (negative) statistical representative impact on life satisfaction. In this case then also, wealth is subject to a law of diminishing returns and the correlation between wealth and happiness is curvilinear (Veenhoven, 1991). Veenhoven (1991) also showed that the Easterlin's paradox is not that straightforward and that the higher the gross national product, the lower the correlation between individual happiness and relative income.

3.5. Cumulative factors influencing life satisfaction

In order to see which indicators have a relevant impact on the life satisfaction of East European migrants, I used a linear regression model, where the dependent variable was "life satisfaction" (How satisfied would you say you are?), as life satisfaction mostly correlates to the cognitive evaluation of social indicators used as dependent variables. The dependent variables used in the linear regression model were introduced in steps. In step one, the demographic control variables were introduced (Model 1). Step two included two more dimensions: country of birth of respondent and cluster of countries the respondent was in. Step 3 introduced general trust and satisfaction with democracy. Satisfaction with the legal system, authorities etc. in host countries were also initially taken into consideration but this lead to multicollinearity. Also, the item "satisfaction with the way democracy works in country" theoretically includes aspects regarding the functioning of the legal system.

In all investigated countries, East Europeans are on average more religious than the natives, the difference between the two group averages being of 0.93. and the largest differences being in Belgium (+1.95), Germany (+1.51) and Spain (+1.48). East European migrants generally attend church more than the natives (38.3% of natives and 22.1% of East Europeans migrants never attend church). Church attendance is considered by some authors Rodrıguez-Pose & Berlepsch (2014) as an indicator of social capital, as attending religious services also has a socialising aspect. This is why I included frequency of church attendance

in the regression models with the factors influencing life satisfaction (Table 2). Model 3 of the regression included frequency of church attendance and socially meeting friends while model 4 excluded the frequency for church attendance in check for stability of socially meeting indicators.

Generalised interpersonal trust is another dimension considered by scholars when looking at happiness levels (Rodrıguez-Pose & von Berlepsch, 2014). In the ESS, generalised trust is measured with the items: *Most people can be trusted or you can't be too careful; Most of the time people helpful or mostly looking out for themselves; Most people try to take advantage of you, or try to be fair*. East European migrants have lower levels of generalized trust that natives. Compared with each other, Bulgarians are more likely than Poles and Romanians to say that most people can be trusted and try to be fair. Of the three groups, Romanians have the lowest levels of generalised trust based on all three variables. East European respondents from the Protestant cluster have the largest average differences when compared to natives in terms of generalised trust on all three scales. They also have significant larger averages then their counterparts from the Catholic cluster. Romania and Bulgaria are strongly oriented towards survival values, while Poland is only slightly over the midpoint on the survival-self-expression axis and as Inglehart explains, survival values place emphasis on economic and physical security and cultures in this group show low levels of trust. Natives in the Protestant cluster are also the most trusting group of the three clusters. It seems, therefore, that the level of generalised trust in the host country has more influence than the one of the country of origin.

Another factor that has been analysed as having an influence on both the decision to migrate and the levels of happiness of migrants is social capital, measured in the ESS as the frequency of socially meeting friends, relatives, colleagues. This variable was also entered into the regression. Three of the entered variables were considered as being measured on a scale: *How religious are you; Most people can be trusted or you can't be too careful and How satisfied with the way democracy works in country*. All other variables were transformed from previous ordinal or categorical variables into dummies. References for each category of dummy variables are presented at the bottom of the regression output table. Standardized and unstandardized coefficients for variables entered in different models can be seen in Table 2.

The variables in the first two sets (demographics, religiousness and cluster) explain 13% of the variation in life satisfaction. As it is generally the case, bad health and being

single have a negative impact on life satisfaction. The third group of variables (general trust and satisfaction with democracy) brings an additional significant change of 0.067 in the R^2. Believing people can be trusted and appreciating the democratic values from the host country have a positive effect on life satisfaction. The fourth group of variables in model 4 (social capital expressed as frequency of socially meeting others and church attendance) brings a change of only 0.013. in the R^2. Never socially meeting friends (B= -1.009) or meeting them less than once a month or once a month (B=-0.419), and several times a month (B=-.368) all have a negative and statistical significant impact (p< between 0.01 - 0.1) on life satisfaction when compared to meeting once or several times a week. However, socially meeting daily has no statistical significant impact, even if the B (0.038) is positive in this case. The strongest coefficient (β=0.221) corresponds to the variable for satisfaction with the way democracy works in the country (B= 0.212). Removing church attendance from the fourth group of variables – Model 5 - increases the R^2 to 0.207 (p= 0.061) and very slightly alters the unstandardized and standardized coefficients for the frequency of socially meeting others.

Satisfaction with the democracy in the host country is a key factor for the happiness of East European migrants in Europe. There is a significant correlation (0.319, p<0.01) between life satisfaction and satisfaction with democracy for all East European migrants in all three clusters.

The regression model was repeated separately for respondents from Poland and Romania. In the case of respondents from Poland, the following coefficients were significant in the fourth model: over 66 (B= 0.726, p<0.1), (bad health B=-1.153, p<0.05), widowed (B= -2.520 p<0.01), single (B= -673, p<0.05), how religious (B= 0.094, p<0.05) most people can be trusted or you can't be too careful (B= 0.75, p<0.1), Cluster 3 (B=-518, p<0.1), How often attend church - never (B= 0.643, p<0.1), socially meet friends - less than once or once a month (B= -420, p<0.1). For respondents from Romania, the following coefficients were significant in the fourth model: female (B= 0.569, p<0.1), very good health (B=1.662, p<0.05), arrived in the host country within last year (B= -2.257, p<0.05), most people can be trusted or (B=0.129, p<0.1), how satisfied with democracy (B= 0.175, p<0.05), socially meeting friends – never (B=-1.962, p<0.1).

Table 2: Factors influencing life satisfaction of East European migrants. Regression analysis

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4			Model 5		
	B	Beta	Std. Er.	B	Beta	Std. Er.	B	Beta	Std. Er.	B	Beta	Std. Er.	B	Beta	Std. Er.
15_20years [a]	.937**	.094	.425	.839**	.084	.425	.826**	.083	.408	.715*	.072	.413	.726*	.073	.411
21_34years	.300	.072	.198	.269	.064	.198	.280	.067	.190	.193	.046	.193	.201	.048	.191
Over 66	.632*	.079	.349	.617*	.077	.348	.577*	.072	.334	.644*	.081	.336	.626*	.078	.333
Female	.053	.013	.157	.057	.014	.157	.113	.027	.151	.133	.032	.152	.137	.033	.151
Income 1st quintile	-.543**	-.103	.235	-.489**	-.093	.237	-.408*	-.078	.228	-.369	-.070	.229	-.369	-.070	.228
Income 2nd quintile	-.116	-.024	.215	-.110	-.023	.215	-.079	-.016	.206	-.088	-.019	.206	-.082	-.017	.206
Income 4th quintile	.219	.039	.244	.206	.037	.244	.216	.039	.234	.238	.042	.234	.237	.042	.233
Income 5th quintile	.418	.066	.275	.332	.052	.276	.251	.039	.265	.290	.045	.266	.295	.046	.265
Less than lower education	-.431	-.051	.328	-.261	-.031	.332	-.270	-.032	.319	-.316	-.038	.320	-.305	-.036	.318
Lower secondary education completed	-.368	-.066	.229	-.296	-.053	.229	-.243	-.044	.220	-.231	-.042	.220	-.247	-.044	.219
Tertiary education completed	.097	.022	.181	.095	.022	.183	-.020	-.004	.177	-.008	-.002	.178	-.003	-.001	.177
Very good health	1.213***	.273	.250	1.258***	.283	.253	.915***	.206	.247	.856***	.192	.249	.841***	.189	.247
Good health	.731***	.175	.230	.743***	.178	.229	.558***	.133	.221	.530**	.127	.222	.517**	.124	.221
Bad health	-.868**	-.088	.403	-.918**	-.093	.402	-.793**	-.081	.386	-.832**	-.085	.388	-.825**	-.084	.385
Very bad health	-2.453*	-.073	1.255	-2.369*	-.071	1.251	-1.965*	-.059	1.201	-1.872	-.056	1.204	-1.818	-.054	1.199
Couple	-.519	-.035	.563	-.491	-.033	.561	-.202	-.014	.539	-.251	-.017	.542	-.251	-.017	.539
Separated	-.679	-.036	.703	-.764	-.041	.701	-.630	-.034	.673	-.518	-.028	.676	-.525	-.028	.673
Divorced	-.265	-.034	.302	-.343	-.044	.302	-.388	-.049	.290	-.444	-.056	.291	-.427	-.054	.289

Widowed	-2.184***	-.127	.675	-2.085***	-.121	.673	-1.942***	-.113	.646	-2.084***	-.121	.649	-2.060**	-.120	.646
Single	-.546***	-.125	.203	-.520***	-.119	.202	-.449**	-.103	.194	-.495***	-.113	.197	-.482**	-.110	.195
Suburb	-.292	-.051	.249	-.321	-.056	.253	-.234	-.041	.243	-.212	-.037	.243	-.219	-.038	.243
Town	.071	.017	.201	.028	.006	.205	.117	.027	.197	.121	.028	.198	.119	.028	.197
Village	.058	.011	.241	.064	.012	.240	.094	.017	.231	.091	.017	.232	.101	.019	.231
Countryside	.722	.060	.468	.553	.046	.471	.485	.040	.452	.499	.041	.452	.506	.042	.450
Within last year	-.640	-.061	.435	-.448	-.043	.447	-.569	-.054	.429	-.563	-.054	.430	-.570	-.054	.428
Between 1 and 5 years ago	-.109	-.024	.241	-.003	-.001	.247	-.188	-.042	.238	-.164	-.036	.239	-.150	-.033	.238
Between 6 and 10 years ago	-.104	-.021	.245	.042	.009	.252	-.107	-.022	.243	-.097	-.020	.243	-.095	-.019	.242
More than 20 years ago	.596**	.121	.259	.463*	.094	.262	.382	.077	.251	.347	.070	.252	.362	.073	.251
How religious are you	.028	.039	.028	.032	.044	.028	.033	.046	.027	.050	.068	.032	.032	.044	.027
Cluster 2				-.525**	-.118	.230	-.378*	-.085	.222	-.310	-.070	.224	-.345	-.078	.222
Cluster 3				-.580***	-.122	.219	-.450**	-.094	.211	-.477**	-.100	.212	-.479**	-.100	.211
Bulgarians				-.192	-.022	.339	-.387	-.044	.326	-.426	-.048	.327	-.402	-.045	.325
Romanians				-.128	-.028	.199	-.174	-.038	.191	-.201	-.043	.192	-.172	-.037	.191
Most people can be trusted or you can't be too careful							.100***	.109	.034	.095***	.104	.034	.094***	.103	.034
How satisfied with the way democracy works in country							.219***	.227	.037	.212***	.221	.037	.211***	.220	.037
Church several times a week or daily										.205	.018	.444			
Church at least once a month										.018	.012	.068			

Church less often							.237	.056	.235			
Church -Never							.310	.062	.286			
Meet socially -Never				B			-1.009*	-.068	.545	-.972*	-.066	.538
Meet socially- Less than once a month or once a month							-.419**	-.080	.201	-.426**	-.081	.200
Meet socially - Several times a month							-.368*	-.068	.207	-.373*	-.069	.206
Meet socially - Daily							.036	.006	.243	.045	.007	.242
(Constant)	**6.28*** **	**.370**	**6.58*** **	**.385**	**4.79*** **	**.441**	**4.79*** **		**.526**	**5.089*** **		**.455**
	R^2 adjusted=.123		**R^2 adjusted=.132**		**R^2 adjusted=.201**		**R^2 adjusted =.204**			**R^2 adjusted =.207**		

Dependent variable: How satisfied with life as a whole. (N=1288). Method: Enter. Missing- pairwise

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1

Reference categories: Age: 35-49 years; Gender: male; Income: Income 3rd quintile; Education: Upper secondary or post-secondary education completed; Health: Fair health; Marital status: Married; Residence: Big City; Came in host country how long ago: Between 11 and 20 years ago; Cluster: cluster 1; Country of birth: Poles; Church attendance ref: once a week; How often socially meet friends. Relatives or work colleagues: once a week or several times a week. a=excluded variable: 50_6

4. Conclusions

This article provided a comparative view of the well-being of East European migrants in three clusters of target migration countries from Europe. East European migrants represent a large share of the total migrating European population and research about this group based on a comparative approach is still underdeveloped. The main findings of the present article are summarised in the following.

East European migrants are most happy in the countries from the Protestant cluster (Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark and Finland) and in the UK. Unhappy East European migrants in the Catholic cluster are unhappier than unhappy East Europeans from the Protestant cluster.

Countries that are wealthy, well developed democracies, tolerant and well-governed tend to have happier citizens (Polgreen & Simpson, 2011). Based on the analysis in this study, the level of happiness and of life satisfaction of the host country has a greater influence on the life satisfaction of migrants than the cultural distance between origin and host country. Social and economic conditions matter more than cultural differences for the life satisfaction of East European migrants in Europe. Contrary to expectations, East European migrants are not most satisfied with life or most happy in countries with a small cultural distance to their own. Rather than cultural distance, satisfaction with democracy in the destination country has a greater importance.

As other studies have also shown, (Sandu, 2017; 2010) higher educated East Europeans prefer to go to the countries from the Protestant cluster and to the English-speaking countries. A low education level has a greater impact on life satisfaction and happiness than a higher education level. East European migrants are more satisfied than natives with the state of the economy in the UK, Belgium, Germany, and Norway, with the national government in Belgium, the UK, Norway, with the quality of education in Spain, and with the state of health services in Austria, Germany, Spain, and Ireland.

There are also differences between East European migrants regarding which factors have a greater influence on their subjective well-being. Based on the average for all three clusters, migrants from Poland are the most satisfied with life and Romanians are the least satisfied with life and the least happy. For respondents from Poland, religiousness has a

significant positive impact on life satisfaction. For Romanians the start of their life abroad seems to be a difficult time, as having arrived in the host country within last year decreases considerably their satisfaction with life.

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ANNEXES:

APPENDIX 1 Happiness of East European migrants and natives in target countries

Country		How satisfied with life as a whole		How happy are you	
		East Europeans	Natives	East Europeans	Natives
Austria	Mean	7.08	7.52	7.37	7.48
	N	73	7021	73	7029
	Std. Deviation	2.344	2.051	2.085	1.959
Belgium	Mean	6.70	7.49	7.15	7.77
	N	73	9963	73	9974
	Std. Deviation	1.949	1.749	1.838	1.490
Switzerland	Mean	7.52	8.16	7.52	8.10
	N	52	8079	52	8074
	Std. Deviation	1.502	1.610	1.527	1.433
Germany	Mean	7.37	7.03	7.60	7.30
	N	263	16954	263	16925
	Std. Deviation	2.050	2.191	1.783	1.881
Denmark	Mean	8.09	8.49	8.26	8.35
	N	35	9507	35	9482
	Std. Deviation	1.380	1.487	1.221	1.404
Spain	Mean	6.48	7.16	7.28	7.51
	N	134	12067	134	12090
	Std. Deviation	2.452	1.957	1.994	1.743
Finland	Mean	7.00	7.98	7.27	8.03
	N	11	13503	11	13497
	Std. Deviation	1.673	1.520	1.954	1.391
France	Mean	6.50	6.35	6.64	7.15
	N	22	10141	22	10141
	Std. Deviation	2.365	2.436	1.432	1.798
United Kingdom	Mean	7.25	7.14	7.51	7.47
	N	93	12651	95	12673
	Std. Deviation	1.679	2.084	1.669	1.933
Ireland	Mean	6.76	7.13	7.30	7.43
	N	323	12849	325	12861
	Std. Deviation	2.132	2.139	1.848	1.940
Italy	Mean	5.90	6.60	6.63	6.49
	N	20	3432	19	3452
	Std. Deviation	2.469	2.240	1.802	2.058

Luxembourg	Mean	6.56	8.03	7.78	7.97
	N	9	1605	9	1603
	Std. Deviation	3.539	1.909	1.856	1.788
Netherlands	Mean	6.95	7.66	7.30	7.78
	N	43	11420	44	11416
	Std. Deviation	1.851	1.531	1.407	1.363
Norway	Mean	7.89	7.88	8.10	7.98
	N	71	10122	71	10116
	Std. Deviation	1.573	1.652	1.406	1.498
Sweden	Mean	7.53	7.92	7.62	7.91
	N	66	10238	66	10221
	Std. Deviation	1.610	1.659	1.717	1.525
Total	Mean	7.06	7.47	7.45	7.66
	N	1288	149552	1292	149554
	Std. Deviation	2.082	1.978	1.792	1.724

Data Source: ESS aggregated file waves1-7

APPENDIX 2

Descriptives

						95% Confidence Interval for Mean			
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
How satisfied with life as a whole	Cl. 1	541	7.48	1.844	.079	7.32	7.63	0	10
	Cl. 2	416	6.87	2.048	.100	6.68	7.07	0	10
	Cl. 3	331	6.63	2.356	.129	6.37	6.88	0	10
	Total	1288	7.06	2.082	.058	6.95	7.18	0	10
How happy are you	Cl. 1	542	7.67	1.660	.071	7.53	7.81	0	10
	Cl. 2	420	7.35	1.809	.088	7.17	7.52	0	10
	Cl. 3	330	7.20	1.936	.107	6.99	7.41	0	10
	Total	1292	7.45	1.792	.050	7.35	7.55	0	10

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
How satisfied with life as a whole	Between Groups	171.105	2	85.553	20.326	.000
	Within Groups	5408.546	1285	4.209		
	Total	5579.651	1287			
How happy are you	Between Groups	51.579	2	25.790	8.116	.000
	Within Groups	4095.842	1289	3.178		
	Total	4147.421	1291			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable		(I) Cluster	(J) Cluster	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Er.	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
How satisfied with life as a whole	Tukey HSD	1	2	.606*	.134	.000	.29	.92
			3	.850*	.143	.000	.51	1.19
		2	1	-.606*	.134	.000	-.92	-.29
			3	.244	.151	.239	-.11	.60
		3	1	-.850*	.143	.000	-1.19	-.51
			2	-.244	.151	.239	-.60	.11
	Scheffe	1	2	.606*	.134	.000	.28	.93
			3	.850*	.143	.000	.50	1.20
		2	1	-.606*	.134	.000	-.93	-.28
			3	.244	.151	.271	-.13	.61
		3	1	-.850*	.143	.000	-1.20	-.50
			2	-.244	.151	.271	-.61	.13
	LSD	1	2	.606*	.134	.000	.34	.87
			3	.850*	.143	.000	.57	1.13
		2	1	-.606*	.134	.000	-.87	-.34
			3	.244	.151	.106	-.05	.54
		3	1	-.850*	.143	.000	-1.13	-.57
			2	-.244	.151	.106	-.54	.05
How happy are you	Tukey HSD	1	2	.326*	.116	.014	.05	.60
			3	.470*	.124	.000	.18	.76
		2	1	-.326*	.116	.014	-.60	-.05
			3	.145	.131	.513	-.16	.45
		3	1	-.470*	.124	.000	-.76	-.18
			2	-.145	.131	.513	-.45	.16
	Scheffe	1	2	.326*	.116	.019	.04	.61
			3	.470*	.124	.001	.17	.78
		2	1	-.326*	.116	.019	-.61	-.04
			3	.145	.131	.545	-.18	.47
		3	1	-.470*	.124	.001	-.78	-.17
			2	-.145	.131	.545	-.47	.18
	LSD	1	2	.326*	.116	.005	.10	.55
			3	.470*	.124	.000	.23	.71
		2	1	-.326*	.116	.005	-.55	-.10
			3	.145	.131	.270	-.11	.40
		3	1	-.470*	.124	.000	-.71	-.23
			2	-.145	.131	.270	-.40	.11

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

APPENDIX 3 Satisfaction with social and economic conditions. Natives*East-European migrants comparison.

Country		How satisfied with present state of economy in country		How satisfied with the national government		How satisfied with the way democracy works in country		State of education in country nowadays		State of health services in country nowadays	
		Natives	East-Europeans	Natives	East-Europeans	Natives	East-Europeans	Natives	East-Europeans	Natives	East-Europeans
Austria	Mean	5.40	5.68	4.01	4.58	5.76	6.45	5.72	6.37	6.62	7.38
	N	8403	71	8311	66	8335	69	8245	67	8577	71
	Std. Dev.	2.292	2.247	2.358	2.219	2.394	2.200	2.362	2.386	2.249	1.988
Belgium	Mean	5.00	5.81	4.60	5.74	5.45	6.66	6.54	7.04	7.36	8.22
	N	12379	73	12331	70	12359	73	12328	70	12530	73
	Std. Dev.	2.016	1.890	2.157	2.104	2.131	1.924	1.977	2.032	1.626	1.407
Switzerland	Mean	6.10	6.62	5.88	6.58	6.88	7.26	6.52	6.59	6.71	6.88
	N	12108	52	11961	48	12020	50	11574	46	12243	50
	Std. Dev.	2.065	1.795	1.931	1.674	1.954	1.816	2.005	2.237	2.108	2.246
Germany	Mean	4.58	5.42	3.96	4.72	5.33	6.15	4.62	5.15	5.00	5.91
	N	20189	261	19850	248	20210	257	19757	246	20296	258
	Std. Dev.	2.454	2.531	2.252	2.499	2.439	2.319	2.237	2.470	2.410	2.465
Denmark	Mean	6.40	6.58	5.34	5.93	7.25	7.27	7.48	7.53	6.38	6.57
	N	10558	33	10571	30	10613	30	10547	32	10693	35
	Std. Dev.	2.176	1.821	2.376	1.893	1.971	1.741	1.814	1.849	2.092	2.500
Spain	Mean	3.76	4.40	3.74	4.40	5.25	6.37	4.94	6.71	5.69	7.15
	N	13285	129	12965	121	12978	128	12752	124	13353	131
	Std. Dev.	2.327	2.566	2.453	2.502	2.358	2.279	2.201	2.319	2.322	2.354
Finland	Mean	6.06	5.89	5.70	6.20	6.48	7.30	7.88	8.10	6.82	6.60
	N	14106	9	14013	10	13867	10	14126	10	14233	10
	Std. Dev.	1.905	1.691	2.042	2.201	1.920	1.418	1.391	1.287	1.917	3.026
France	Mean	3.32	3.73	3.72	3.95	4.63	5.45	4.97	5.33	6.06	6.52
	N	12852	22	12838	22	12835	22	12800	21	12960	21
	Std. Dev.	2.029	2.272	2.229	2.400	2.387	2.444	2.127	2.176	2.183	1.940
United Kingdom	Mean	4.31	6.12	4.09	5.95	5.07	6.39	5.62	5.89	5.76	6.19
	N	15252	89	15323	85	14855	84	15035	80	15564	89
	Std. Dev.	2.282	2.142	2.358	2.176	2.389	2.094	2.111	2.176	2.345	2.467

Ireland	Mean	4.13	4.69	3.96	4.67	5.18	6.41	6.36	6.83	4.09	5.66
	N	15255	312	13140	267	14655	277	14940	258	15255	287
	Std. Dev.	2.656	2.358	2.472	2.280	2.417	2.072	2.219	2.022	2.534	2.574
Italy	Mean	3.60	3.47	3.58	3.17	4.65	4.82	4.90	5.65	4.73	6.40
	N	3577	19	3492	18	3541	17	3519	20	3648	20
	Std. Dev.	2.141	1.744	2.393	2.229	2.274	1.912	2.107	1.954	2.286	2.088
Luxembourg	Mean	6.55	7.38	6.27	5.88	6.73	6.14	5.37	5.67	7.07	6.29
	N	2946	8	2852	8	2894	7	2808	9	3116	7
	Std. Dev.	2.056	2.875	2.077	3.441	2.192	3.532	2.496	2.449	2.304	2.215
Netherlands	Mean	5.44	5.74	4.96	5.14	6.00	6.26	5.90	6.25	5.98	6.49
	N	13359	42	13265	36	13191	39	12674	36	13406	39
	Std. Dev.	1.843	1.951	1.973	2.180	1.826	2.173	1.700	1.746	1.923	1.684
Norway	Mean	6.97	7.82	5.02	6.38	6.69	7.59	6.51	6.77	6.06	6.69
	N	11621	71	11573	66	11566	68	11568	64	11673	70
	Std. Dev.	2.129	1.783	2.091	1.936	1.964	1.721	1.813	2.195	2.072	2.313
Sweden	Mean	5.65	5.81	5.25	5.68	6.42	7.44	5.45	5.86	5.75	5.70
	N	10956	67	10738	66	11048	66	10967	64	11252	66
	Std. Dev.	2.082	2.076	2.197	2.106	2.105	1.866	2.015	2.260	2.171	2.060
Total	Mean	5.07	5.42	4.60	5.07	5.80	6.51	5.95	6.26	5.93	6.36
	N	176846	1258	173223	1161	174967	1197	173640	1147	178799	1227
	Std. Dev.	2.439	2.443	2.357	2.383	2.334	2.167	2.246	2.316	2.347	2.435

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CRITICAL THINKING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the role of the university as an educational institution to encourage young people to express critical thinking. Critical thinking should become part of the teaching process so that students engage more in analyzing social problems that exist in society. Often, we see young people in audiences who discuss, interpret different social problems and do so based on personal judgment or personal experience and not on the basis of facts or arguments. At this point, there is a need for students to develop critical thinking skills as a necessity to understand and identify phenomena occurring in social reality. The focus of the paper is on the question: How much does the European University of Tirana enable the student to think critically? What are some of the basic skills you need to teach students to develop critical thinking and how much is critical thinking part of the curriculum? What are some skills that one needs to teach students for developing critical thinking and how much is the space of expressing critical thinking part of the curriculum? If critical thinking were to become more integrated in the teaching process, this would help students engage more in understanding knowledge, identifying social problems, and problem-solving abilities. The document focuses on the university as the main institution that should foster the power of critical thinking in students.

Keywords: critical thinking; curriculum; teaching method; education; students

1. Introduction

Facione argues that, teach people to make good decisions and you equip them to improve their own futures and become contributing members of society, rather than burdens to society. Becoming educated and practicing good judgment does not absolutely guarantee a life of happiness, virtue, or economic success, but it surely offers a better chance at those things. And it is clearly better than enduring the consequences of making bad decisions and better than burdening friends, family, and all the rest of us with the unwanted and avoidable consequences of those poor choices. (Facione, 2015, p. 2).

The study focuses on the effectiveness and the role of students with the development and expression of critical thinking as a necessary aspect to understanding our individual and social experiences. Critical thinking should become more part of the teaching process where students can engage in the identification, understanding and analysis of various social problems. But what are some of the basic skills that school should teach students to promote critical thinking? How much is part of curricula the space where students can express critical thinking? What are some of the methods used in teaching that stimulate critical thinking? This paper focuses on the university as the basic educational institution that should promote the preparation of students with the ability to express and apply critical thinking to every link of their student, professional, or academic performance in the future.

The paper will first address some of the key definitions provided for critical thinking, ranging from thinkers and classical philosophers, such as Bacon, Glaser, Paul, Scriven, Siegel etc. and other contemporary authors such as Crebert, Gardner & Marzano, Facione, McKeachie etc. who through undergraduate studies have identified new ways of understanding and defining the critical thinking concept.

Second, we will argue some of the critical thinking skills that a student must learn to manifest them, not only in educational processes but also in everyday life practice. Some of the teaching strategies that promote critical thinking are case studies, focus groups, various discussions, problem-solving, reflections on a phenomenon in the form of essays, commentaries, reportages, etc. How does school promote these strategies or teaching methods to students?

Third, the paper tries to answer the question, why does the development of critical thinking in students play an important role in their personal and social life? In this issue, the focus is on the impact and efficiency of critical thinking in students and the role it plays in society. Among other things, some teaching strategies or practices will be presented on how the concept of critical thinking in everyday academic life can be developed with students.

2. Classical definitions of 'Critical Thinking'

Critical thinking has been defined in many different ways. Very broad definitions include "thinking which has a purpose or reflective judgement". Basically, the term "critical" is related to the Greek word "criterion", or standard to judge. The term "critical" is essentially related to thinking, judgment and appreciation as forms of thinking. The main object of critical thinking is related *to determining the quality* and value of your beliefs. Thinking critically has nothing to do with *what you think*, but *how you think*. "Critical thinking does not focus on the causes of your conviction, but on whether this conviction is worth it. A conviction is worth and should be kept if we have solid reasons to accept it. Critical thinking offers a whole set of compelling criteria in the techniques, attitudes, and principles that we use to evaluate beliefs and determine whether they are based on sustainable reasons." (Vaughn & MacDonald, 2010, p. 3). "Francis Bacon (1561 - 1626), founder of modern science, articulated the basic principles and methods of science and propagated their use in the prudent acquisition of accurate knowledge. He also warned of the risk of common mistakes in thinking, which could ruin all the efforts of science and lead to deformed perceptions and heavy mistakes". (Vaughn & MacDonald, 2010, p. 35). According to Bacon, 'scientific thinking' is based on 'facts or as we call it critical thinking' which is a very important tool in seeking truth. "He called the 'icons of the mind' the mistakes, because according to him, people not only make mistakes, but also fetish them, just as we do fetish false gods" (Ibid.).

Eduard Glaser in 1941 argued that critical thinking is a human ability to create "a strong persistence in search of data that support any beliefs or assumptions we have." (Fisher, 2001, p. 3). Richard Paul in 1993 gives an interpretation other than Glaser's. According to him, critical thinking is the way of thinking about "any subject, context, problem, in which

the critical thinker in such cases proves his or her qualities of thinking and masterfully builds the natural structures of thinking and sets intellectual standards on them". (Fisher, 2001, p. 4).

Michael Scriven argued that “critical thinking is an academic competency akin to reading and writing. It defines it thus: critical thinking is skilled and active interpretation and evaluation of observations and communications, information and argumentation. He defines critical thinking as a ‘skilled’ activity for reasons similar to those mentioned above. To be critical, thinking has to meet certain standards – of clarity, relevance, reasonableness” (Ibid.)

Siegel has defined critical thinking as an "education in knowledge of rationality," McPeck in 1981 described the term "skepticism or reflective doubt," Barnett in 1997 with the term "Critical Self Reflection", while Toulmin, Rieke and Janick in 1984 linked critical thinking to reasoning to use it later as "central activity in introducing reasons in support of a particular issue or argument". (Vyncke, 2012, pp. 9-10). According to Ennies in 1985, critical thinking is an “reflective and reasonable thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do”. (Lai, 2011, p. 6).

3. Contemporary definitions of ‘Critical Thinking’

Gardner and Marzano are two research scientists who, in the study they have made, have observed the role played by the creation of an interactive lesson for successful student learning. According to them, "studies show that learning in an active, organized and well – thought out learning is often far more complete and fruitful. Learning fruitfully means that you can think of what you learn. To apply it to life situations, to use it as a basis for further learning and continuing to learn independently " (Temple, Crawford, Saul, Mathews & Makinster, 2006, p. 1).

Other authors have seen critical thinking as a cognitive ability regarding rational judgment (Vyncke, 2012). Critical thinking is *reasoning*, *reflection*, *responsiveness*, and *thinking ability* that is focused on what to believe or do. “We understand critical thinking to be purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based”. (Facione, 2015). “The ideal critical thinker is habitually inquisitive, well-informed, trustful of reason,

open-minded, flexible, fair-minded in evaluation, honest in facing personal biases, prudent in making judgments, willing to reconsider, clear about issues, orderly in complex matters, diligent in seeking relevant information, reasonable in the selection of criteria, focused in inquiry, and persistent in seeking results which are as precise as the subject and the circumstances of inquiry permit". (Ibid).

Tara DeLecce, a psychologist who in one of the online lectures held on critical thinking, argued that "additionally, critical thinking can be divided into the following three core skills: *Curiosity* is the desire to learn more information and seek evidence as well as being open to new ideas. *Skepticism* involves having a healthy questioning attitude about new information that you are exposed to and not blindly believing everything everyone tells you. Finally, ***humility*** is the ability to admit that your opinions and ideas are wrong when faced with new convincing evidence that states otherwise". (DeLecce, 2015).

Thinking is defined in different ways, some authors define it "as a psychic process, as a form of general reflection of reality on human consciousness through notions, judgments and reasoning". Authors call this "conscious thinking" because it is affected by pedagogical work of educators. (Jashari & Ballhysa, 2005, p. 23).

Kec and Ara (2005), provide another kind of definition of critical thinking as follows:

"Critical thinking is a process that brings a result. It is part of the thinking process, by which every person critically thinks, as a natural path of interaction with ideas and information; it is an active process that develops with a certain purpose or happens by chance, which permanently makes students control the information and meet the challenges; include; adapt or disseminate information. Critical thinking occurs when students begin to reflect on what they read, start asking questions, start linking knowledge that they know and learn new knowledge, select information, analyze behavior, actions and situations, argue and maintain attitudes assigned to them." (Gjokutaj, Shahini, Markja, Zisi & Muça, p. 38).

The concept of critical thinking in the age of modernity and in the history of philosophical thought of the 15th to the 16th centuries is mostly related to the concept of reflecting critically. Critical reflection helps to stay active, in our individual and social experiences. Critical reflection enables us to reconsider our previous judgments and assessments, and to complement them on the basis of what new facts suggest. "Critical

reflection makes each of us, at school or after its end, consistently, to remain an active student. By critically reflecting upon institutional organization, economic and cultural conditions, and on the problems of society, we reconsider our previous trials and assessments, adapt them, complement them, and enrich them on the basis of what the new facts we discover through our careful observations and through critical reflection on them" (Tarifa, 2014, p. 202).

Philosophy science was born from reflexion on the essence. Descartes (1981) is known for the formula "I doubt, I think, so I am". Hence, he integrated into the history of philosophy the notion of "methodical suspicion". According to him, suspicion allows him to find the required security. Descartes required the analysis of all elements of thought to the simplest ones. Sort these simple elements in an increasingly complex order, so that complex terms can be clearly understood. (Hersh, 1981, p. 95).

The features of a 'critical thinker' according to Crebert (2011) are listed as follows:

- Inquisitiveness about a wide range of issues;
- Desire to become and remain well-informed;
- Alertness to opportunities to use critical thinking;
- Trust in the processes of reasoned inquiry;
- Self-confidence in own abilities to reason;
- Open-mindedness towards divergent world views;
- Flexibility in considering alternatives and opinions;
- Understanding of the opinions of other people;
- Fair-mindedness in appraising reasoning;
- Honesty in facing own biases, prejudices, stereotypes etc.;
- Discretion in suspending, making or altering judgments; and
- Willingness to reconsider and revise views where necessary. (Crebert et al., 2011, p. 6).

4. The basic skills of a critical thinker

Almost everyone who has worked in the critical thinking tradition has produced a list of thinking skills which they see as basic to critical thinking. For example, Edward Glaser (1941) listed the abilities:

- To recognize problems;
- To find workable means for meeting those problems;
- To gather and marshal pertinent information;
- To recognize unstated assumptions and values;
- To comprehend and use language with accuracy, clarity, and discrimination;
- To interpret data;
- To appraise evidence and evaluate statements;
- To recognise the existence of logical relationship between propositions;
- To draw warranted conclusions and generalisations. (Fisher, 2001, p. 6)

According to Willison & O'Reagan (2006), they argued these abilities:

- determine the need for knowledge;
- find and generate the information;
- critically evaluate the information;
- organise the information;
- synthesise, analyse and apply the new knowledge; and
- communicate the knowledge. (Crebert et al., 2011, p. 13)

5. Teaching methods that promote the development of critical thinking

There are several methods that encourage critical thinking among students. One of the first activities known as the three phases or PNP model (Prediction, Knowledge Building, and Reinforcement) was created by authors Joseph Vaughn and Thomas Estes in 1986, and then the curriculum became more popular in pedagogical practices nowadays, like the ERR

structure (Evocation, Realization of Meaning and Reflection). (Temple, Crawford, Saul, Mathews & Makinster, 2006, p. 2).

According to Crebert (2011), using concept maps in planning a curriculum or instruction on a specific topic helps to make the instruction *conceptually transparent* to students. Many students have difficulty identifying and constructing powerful concepts and propositional frameworks, leading them to see science learning *as a blur of myriad facts or equations to be memorized*. If concept maps are used in planning instruction and students are required to construct concept maps as they are learning, previously unsuccessful students can become successful in making sense out of science and acquiring a feeling of control over the subject matter. The benefits of concept maps are that they enable students to:

- Establish connections between ideas they already have;
- Connect new ideas to existing knowledge; and
- Organise ideas in a logical, but not rigid, structure that can be updated. (Crebert et al., 2011, pp. 10-11).

Using debating to analyse and evaluate issues

Skills developed through debating	
Oral communication	Persuasive verbal arguments. Confidence and clarity in thinking. Language skills.
Structuring an argument	Big picture perspective. Ability to define topic, terms and premise. Stating what is to be proved, providing supporting evidence and examples. Countering opposing arguments.
Logical and analytical thinking	Clear lines of argument.
Teamwork	Collaboration on common task. Understanding of role in order of debate.
Time management	Succinct arguments presented in restricted time.

skills	Effective use of time to prepare and deliver arguments.
Research skills	Ability to find and utilise relevant and current literature/findings on the topic. Ability to identify key points and summarise.
Reading the audience	Knowing what the audience already knows/expects to hear on the topic. Tailoring the content, pace and tone of a presentation to the audience. Presenting information in an engaging and entertaining style.

Reading

Three important purposes of reading critically are:

♦ to provide evidence to back up or challenge a point of view;

♦ to evaluate the validity and importance of a text/ position;

♦ to develop reflective thought and a tolerance for ambiguity.

Strategies for reading critically

Ask questions about:	For example
Your purpose	Why?
The context of the text	Why written? Where? When? Who? How relevant?
The structure of the text	Is there a clear argument? Do the parts fit together logically?
The arguments	Are they fair? Do they leave out perspectives of certain groups?
The evidence used	Is evidence given to support the point of view from

	an authority in this field? Is the evidence evaluated from different perspectives?
The language used	Is the language coloured to present some things as more positive than others? Are claims attributed clearly?

If we want to generalize it, critical thinking has three parts:

1. First, critical thinking involves asking questions.
2. Second, critical thinking involves trying to answer those questions by reasoning them out.
3. Third, critical thinking involves believing the results of our reasoning. (‘What is critical thinking’, 2017, pp. 5-6).

Thinking critically about solving a problem, on the other hand, begins with asking questions about the problem and about ways to address it:

1. What is the purpose behind the problem?
2. What is a good way to begin?
3. Do I have all the information I need to start solving the problem?
4. What are some alternative ways of solving the problem assigned?
5. Can the problem be solved? Does it even make sense? (‘What is critical thinking’, 2017, pp. 5-6).

6. Impact of expressing critical thinking in society

According to authors Lau and Chan, qualitative knowledge is the student's ability to express critical and creative thinking, intellectual flexibility, competence to analyse information and integrate various sources of knowledge in problem solving. According to them, critical thinking is the basis of "science" and "democracy". Science requires the use of "critical reasoning" in different experiments and theoretical confirmations. The function of liberal democracies requires citizens who think critically about *social issues* to inform their *judgments about proper governance* and overcome *the various prejudices and disagreements that occur*. (Lau & Chain, 2016).

Critical thinking should be more focused on university curricula. Yanklowitz (2013) said that the goal of an argument curriculum is to enhance the development of the responsible citizens and the pedagogical methodology consists of cultivating argument skills, epistemic development, and moral development. Also, Calfee and Chambliss (1987) argue that "students are unlikely to develop critical thinking skills naturally when their class reading assignments consist only of narrative and explanatory texts, as opposed to argumentative texts". If the transmission of the knowledge of a lecture, text, or information of any kind were to take place according to the dialogue-questioning process, the students would be more involved in the learning process and begin to develop their own arguments on the themes discussed by the subject lecturer. (Yanklowitz, 2013).

So, a major part of learning how to think critically is learning to ask the questions—to pose the problems—yourself. That means noticing that there are questions that need to be addressed; admitting that there are problems. Often, this is the hardest part of critical thinking. This is true not just in school, but in daily life as well. People often do not ask themselves, "How can I best get along with my parents (my partner, my co-workers, my friends) in this situation?" Instead, they continue relating to them in habitual and unexamined ways. If your goal is to improve some aspect of your daily life, begin by asking yourself some questions: What are some concrete things I can do to get better grades? To meet new people? To read more effectively? To make the subject matter of this course meaningful in my life? To be effective, you need to really *ask* these questions. It is not enough just to say the words. ('What is critical thinking', 2017, pp. 5-6).

7. Data and Methods

The purpose of this study is to explore the role of the European University of Tirana, as an educational institution, in promoting the ability of young people to express critical thinking. Critical thinking should become part of the teaching process so that students engage more in analysing social problems that exist in society. Often, we see young people in audiences who discuss, interpret different social problems and do so, based on personal judgment or personal experience and not based on facts or arguments relying on them. At this

point, the need arises for students to develop this ability to think critically as a need to understand and identify phenomena occurring in social reality.

The objectives of this study are to:

- Identify critical definitions of the critical thinking concept.
- Analyse some of the basic skills of being a critical thinker.
- Introduce key methods that promote critical thinking in education.
- Analyse the importance of student learning with critical thinking in relation to life and society.

The research questions include the purpose and objectives of the study:

Research question 1: How much does the European University of Tirana enable the student to think critically?

Research question 2: What are the skills and methods that pedagogues use in the classroom to encourage critical thinking in students?

This work will support two hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The concept of thinking critically is not sufficiently cultivated at UET students.

Hypothesis 2: If critical thinking were to become more integrated in the teaching process, this would help students engage more in understanding knowledge, identifying social problems, and problem-solving skills.

In this study, a random sample was used. Sampling is (n = 200) students. Questionnaires were distributed to Bachelor students at the European University of Tirana. The process was conducted during the development of a joint teaching class which included students from various branches in social sciences such as Psychology, Sociology, Public Relations - Communication, Political Science and International Relations.

Two self-reporting questionnaires were designed to measure the level of critical thinking development. The questionnaire contains a total of 27 questions. Questions are encoded from 1 (never) to 5 (usually or very often). This questionnaire was accessed by a private organization such as the Foundation for Critical Thinking, which studies critical thinking. (Critical Thinking Interview Profile for Teachers and Faculty and Critical Thinking Interview Profile for College Students.)

Results

Following are the relevant findings, in an effort to answer research questions and to validate the hypotheses of the study: by gender 61.5% were females, 9% were male, and 29.5% abstained. The most involved age group was 19 - 21 years old with 63%, 22-25 years with 11%, 26-28 years with 3%, 35 years and over with 2%, and abstention resulted in 20.5% of responses. The student study program was listed as follows. 35.4% study for Psychology, 5% for Sociology, 8.5% Political Science, 12.5% in International Relations, 7.5% Public Relations - Communication, and about 32% abstained.

The level related to the explanation of the critical thinking concept to students by their pedagogues results from findings where 31% of students express themselves at the level several times but not often, 23% are neutral, 22.5% say that this concept is rarely explained, 12.5% are expressed usually or very often, and 11% say that this concept has never been explained to them.

In 29% of students the definition of the critical thinking concept has been developed several times, but not often along the course or course programme, 26.5% stated that definitions of critical thinking concept were rarely developed, 21% expressed neutrally, 12.5% never, and 11% with usually or very often.

Literature study on the use of critical thinking results in 29.5% rarely expressed, 27.5% expressed several times but not often, 22.5% expressed neutrally, 11% usually or very often, and 19% never.

The level of student encouragement for critical thinking by the lecturers results in 29.5% at several times, but not often, 24.5% more commonly or very often, 20% neutral, 17% less, and 9% never.

The level of use of teaching methods that promote critical thinking such as method of questioning, method of discussion and classroom debates, group collaboration method, oral presentation method in Power Point, method of problem solving, on the whole, appears to occur in 43.5% of cases with usually or very often, 23.5% with several times but not often, 14% with neutral, 13.5% rarely, and 5.5% with never.

The methods that most often use pedagogues in teaching, 38% express abstention regarding the use of a particular method of the sorted ones, 25.5% say that the method of

discussion and debate in the classroom is developed, 24.5% mention the method of oral presentations in Power Point, 5% the collaboration method in the group, 8% the method of questioning repeatedly, and 3% the problem-solving method.

The level of student learning by the professors to understand the text content occurs in 32% sometimes but not often, 24% neutral, 21% usually or very often, 18% rarely, and 5% never.

The level of information storage without understanding the true content, in view of receiving only a student's final assessment, results in 29.5% never occurring, 22% say it happens rarely, 19.5% think this happens several times but not often, 16.5% are neutral, and 14% say usually or very often.

Encouraging critical thinking in the learning process according to the findings are 29.5% with several times, but not often, 25.5% rarely, 23% expressed neutral, and 19.5% expressed usually or very often.

The level of student clarification by the professors to be precise, for questioning, problematic or a particular subject during teaching is 32% with usually or very often, 26.5% with several times but not often, 19% rarely, 18% neutral, and 4.5% with never.

The level of understanding in the organized way of the key concepts of the topic results in 30% at several times but not often, 26% usually or very often, 20.5% rarely, 19% neutral, and 4.5% never.

The level of the student's ability to draw conclusions based on data or information collected, according to findings, is 34.5% rarely, 25% neutral, 18.5% usually or very often, 18% few times but not often, and 4% never.

The level of student training to make the differences in the assumptions, conclusions and consequences of a particular phenomenon, is 27% several times, but not often, 26% neutral, 21.5% usually or very often, 20% rarely, and 10.5% never.

The level of students' ability to think logically according to the findings is 31% several times, but not often, 26.5% usually or very often, 20.5% neutral, 18.5% rarely, and 3.5% never.

The level of student training to maintain a personal attitude against the arguments that arise, results in 36% several times, but not often, 27% neutral, 16.5% rarely, 15.5% usually or very often, and 5% never.

8. Conclusions

This study was designed to investigate the perceptions of students about how the university as an educational institution encourages them to express critical thinking. But in this study we understand that critical thinking has difficulties in implementation in teaching and learning in students.

The difficulties in the implementation of critical thinking while teaching UET students are:

1. The level related to the explanation of critical thinking concept to students by their professors results in the majority of 62% thinking that this process occurs several times but not often, 25% of students argue that this concept is rarely explained, 13% are neutral about the explanation of the concept. This indicates that the concept of critical thinking should be given in some definitions where students need to be taught how to use it.
2. About giving definitions of critical thinking in teaching during course development, 58% of students said that definition of critical thinking was explained sometimes but not often, which can greatly affect the non-recognition of this concept. Only 22% said that this concept was developed usually or very often during teaching.
3. Increasing the level of understanding in organized way is the key due the concepts of structured creative abilities such as: student's ability to draw conclusions based on data or information collected; student’s ability to make the differences in the conclusions and consequences of a particular phenomenon; students' ability to think logically; student’s ability to maintain a personal attitude against the arguments that arise;
4. Encouraging critical thinking in the learning process according to the findings occurs 59% several times, but not often. And 40% are neutral. The data shows that encouragement is an indicator of the positive path of strengthening critical thinking in students, but more work is needed to keep the level of neutrality even smaller.

Lai has argued:

"Educators have long seen critical thinking as a desirable educational outcome. More recently, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills has identified critical thinking as one of several skills necessary to prepare students for post-secondary education and the workforce. Typically, critical thinking is believed to include the component skills of analysing arguments, making inferences by using inductive or deductive reasoning, judging or evaluating, and making decisions or solving problems. Critical thinking entails cognitive skills, or abilities, and dispositions. These dispositions, which can be seen as attitudes, or habits of mind, include open- and fair-mindedness, inquisitiveness, flexibility, a propensity to seek reason, a desire to be well-informed, and a respect for and willingness to entertain diverse viewpoints." (Lai, 2011, p. 42).

Why the Need for Critical Thinking?

According to Blunkett, we have entered in a new century, in which the structure and the way of learning will determine our lives as never before ... if we have success or salvation, either as individuals or as a state, this will depend on our knowledge, skills and understanding. The concept of 'getting used to learning continually' to prepare to live in a world with persistent and fast-paced changes is ruling on modern education policies. Accumulation of knowledge and competences of the purely technical nature of the type 'professional education' are now considered with less priority than critical intelligence, openness to change and quick adaptation to new ones, social competences, the logic of sustainable development. (Civici, 2013, p. 292).

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