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SELECTED ARTICLES FROM A DECADE OF THE WARSAW EAST EUROPEAN REVIEW



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Volume XI/2020

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**Warsaw
East
European
Review**

Volume XI/2020

**Selected Articles from a Decade
of the Warsaw East European Review**



W serii
„30 tomów na 30-lecie
Studium Europy Wschodniej”
tom N° 19



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Jubileusz. Studium Europy Wschodniej. 1990-2020 „30 tomów na 30-lecie”



zas biegnie niezwykle szybko. Tym na pozór banalnym stwierdzeniem chciałbym opisać odczucia moje własne, jako osoby od lat kierującej Studium Europy Wschodniej, a także i moich kolegów, którzy stwierdziwszy fakt zbliżającego się Jubileuszu 30-lecia, przyjęli to z ogromnym zaskoczeniem. To prawda, można się zastanawiać, jak to się stało, że 30 lat przebiegło tak szybko, ale ogromnie uspokaja nadzieja, wręcz przekonanie, że tego czasu nie zmarnowaliśmy.

Nasze 30-lecie to bowiem setki konferencji, to setki wydawnictw, to już tysiące absolwentów szkół i programów stypendialnych, to także rozległa współpraca międzynarodowa, która zaowocowała wręcz założeniem kilku Stacji SEW poza granicami. A wreszcie to przywrócenie, w 1998 r., po ponad półwieczu nieistnienia regularnych studiów wschodnich w Polsce (ostatni nabór studentów, w Wilnie i Warszawie, przeprowadzono latem 1939 r.). A dziś, w dniu Jubileuszu 30-lecia, Studium może się chlubić grupą już kilkuset absolwentów – młodych dobrze wykształconych specjalistów „od spraw wschodnich”, osiągających niekiedy już poważne kariery, pochodzących przy tym zarówno z Polski, jak i dzięki stypendiom rządowym, z całego regionu. Tu mogę jedynie potwierdzić – „kadry są najważniejsze”...

Zacząłem się zastanawiać, jak można i jak należy ten Jubileusz uczcić. Zbiegło się to z faktem, że rok 2020 jest naprawdę rokiem nadzwyczajnym. Rozwój epidemii koronawirusa przyniósł decyzję zamknięcia najpierw zajęć akademickich i przeniesienia ich do systemu on line, a następnie przejście całego Zespołu Studium na wiele tygodni do pracy zdalnej. To, wbrew pozorom, pomogło w decyzji o sposobach uczczenia Jubileuszu, albowiem pozwoliło zmienić bieżące obowiązki administracyjne na spisywanie, opracowywanie i korekty tekstów.

INTRODUCTION

Postanowiliśmy bowiem uczcić Jubileusz jednostki dydaktyczno-naukowej w sposób wzorcowo naukowy – przez wydanie serii książek. Początkowy plan obejmował jedynie edycję kilku podręczników profesorów wizytujących, którzy wykładali dla studentów Studiów Wschodnich w ciągu ostatniego 10-lecia. Ale następnie plany i ambicje stawały się coraz większe i rozległe. W ich wyniku seria podręczników profesorów wizytujących zajmie jedynie pierwsze 10 pozycji. Jest to seria bardzo ważna, bardzo znacząca, a książki te latami będą służyć studentom Studiów Wschodnich i zapewne nie tylko. Ale ta sytuacja wirusowa oraz kierująca niżej podpisanym ambicja nadzwyczajnego uczczenia Jubileuszu doprowadziły do rezultatu, jestem przekonany, również nadzwyczajnego. Oto w roku, w którym wirus zablokował lub uniemożliwił większość prac na uczelniach, nam udało się przygotować 30 tomów w ogromnej większości całkowicie oryginalnych, bądź na nowo opracowanych. Tak właśnie zespół Studium Europy Wschodniej przygotował i uczcił Jubileusz swego 30-lecia – „30 tomów na 30-lecie Studium”.

Dziękuję Redaktorowi, dziękuję wszystkim autorom artykułów niniejszego tomu, dziękuję Redakcji, dziękuję wszystkim Autorom całej serii, dziękuję wszystkim osobom, dzięki którym ten wspaniały plan udało się w tak trudnym czasie zrealizować. Składam gratulacje obecnym i dawnym Wykładowcom, Pracownikom i Współpracownikom Studium, którzy mają prawo do słusznej dumy z Jubileuszu.

JAN MALICKI
Studium Europy Wschodniej
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Tom niniejszy nosi numer 19



***30 years of the centre for east european studies
(1990–2020)***

„30 volumes for the 30th anniversary”



Time is running very fast. With this seemingly, I would like to describe my own feelings as the person who has been in charge of the Centre for East European Studies for years, as well as my colleagues who, having discovered the upcoming Jubilee, received it with great surprise. True, you may wonder how it happened that the 30 years passed so quickly, but it is extremely reassuring to hope, even to the belief that we have not wasted this time.

Our 30th anniversary means hundreds of conferences, hundreds of books published, thousands of graduates of schools and scholarship programs, as well as extensive international cooperation, which has resulted in the establishment of several Centre for East European Studies abroad. Finally, in 1998, after more than half a century of non-existence, the regular Eastern studies were restored in Poland (the last recruitment of students, in Vilnius and Warsaw, was carried out in the summer of 1939). And today, on the 30th Jubilee, the Centre can be proud of a group of several hundred graduates – young, well-educated specialists in „Eastern affairs”, already achieving serious careers, both from Poland and, thanks to government scholarships, from all over the region. Here I can only confirm – „Cadres decide everything”...

I began to wonder how this Jubilee could be celebrated and how it should be celebrated. This coincided with the fact that 2020 is truly an extraordinary year. The development of the coronavirus epidemic has resulted in the decision to first close academic classes and transfer them to the Internet, and then move the entire Centre team to work remotely for many weeks. Contrary to appearances, this has helped in the decision to celebrate the Jubilee, as it has allowed us to change the current administrative duties into writing, editing and correcting texts.

We have decided to celebrate the Jubilee of the teaching and research unit in an exemplary scientific way – by publishing a series of books. The initial plan was only to

INTRODUCTION

edit a few handbooks of visiting professors who have taught to students of East European Studies over the past 10 years. Nevertheless, then the plans and ambitions grew larger and larger. As a result, the series of visiting professors' textbooks will only take the top 10 positions. It is a very important, very significant series, and these books will serve students of East European Studies for years and probably not only them. But this viral situation and the ambition of the undersigned to celebrate the Jubilee in an extraordinary manner will also lead to, I am sure, an extraordinary result. Here is the year when the virus blocked or prevented so many activities in universities, we still managed to produce 30 volumes, the vast majority of them entirely original or reworked. This is how the team of East European Studies prepared and celebrated the Jubilee of its 30th anniversary – „30 volumes for the 30th anniversary of the Centre”.

I would like to thank prof. John Micgiel, to thank to all the authors of the articles in this volume, and all the authors of the entire series, all the people who made this wonderful plan possible. I would like to congratulate the present and former Lecturers, Employees and Associates of the Centre who have the right to be justly proud of the Jubilee.

JAN MALICKI
Centre for East European Studies
University of Warsaw



This volume is numbered 19



Foreword

Since 2004, the Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw has organized an annual, international "Warsaw East European Conference" with the aim of bringing together experienced academics as well as young researchers from all over the world. A printed anthology of some of the best papers presented through 2010 was published in 2011. Annually thereafter, the *Warsaw East European Review* was published to highlight the scholarship of researchers who assembled at the University of Warsaw to present the results of their research and to network. The COVID coronavirus pandemic prevented such a meeting in 2020 and so, instead of an annual WEER, a sampling of the previous nine years' papers has been compiled and is presented herein. Multi-disciplinary in nature, the selection reflects the geographical focus of the Centre for East European Studies and the work of a subsection of colleagues whose interaction during the conferences resulted in the enhancement of their presentations and subsequent publications.

Issued on the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of Warsaw University's Centre for East European Studies, this compilation is one of thirty publications it is hoped will appear to commemorate and celebrate the Centre's founding and activities. On behalf of the Centre, its faculty and students, I invite readers to sample the potpourri below.

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The Logic of Geopolitics in American-Russian Relations

Introduction

One of Zbigniew Brzezinski's first requests as President Jimmy Carter's National Security Advisor in 1977 was to ask the Pentagon for its plans – including targets – for nuclear war against "Russia". Brzezinski was outraged when he was presented with the plan for nuclear war against the Soviet Union. He could not believe that the U.S. military had no plans to specifically weaken the Russian core of the Soviet empire. For the Pentagon planners, Russia and the Soviet Union were one and the same.¹

I begin with this anecdote because it reflects well an enduring geopolitical logic to American-Russian relations: American policy toward Russia, whether it be in the Tsarist, Soviet, or post-Soviet period, has not been based on opposing a strong Russian state *per se*. (That state married to communist ideology was something else altogether.) In the aftermath of the Russian Civil War, for instance, the United States delayed recognition of Baltic independence until 1922, two years after Soviet Russia had recognized the independence of Estonia in the Treaty of Tartu, on the grounds that Polish and Finnish independence apart nothing should be done to call into question the territorial continuity of the Russian Empire.² Indeed, American officials seldom viewed the Soviet Union as an empire, as the Pentagon war plans just cited illustrate. Historically, the logic of geopolitics i.e., the influence of organization in space on international political relationships has often tended to frame American-Russian relations in terms of complementarities of interest. Of course, geopoliti-

¹ Allen C. Lynch, *The Cold War is Over—Again* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), 140, 157.

² *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1938), 870–874; see also Albert N. Tarulis, *American-Baltic Relations, 1918–1922: The Struggle Over Recognition* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1965).

tics is not the only logic in American-Russian relations; ideology, domestic politics, as well as vested institutional interests all play their role in varying degrees under varying circumstances. But historically, insofar as geopolitical factors have prevailed, American-Russian relations have generally been harmonious, if also remote and indirect in nature. (By indirect I mean that each sees the other mainly in terms of other powers or processes, e.g., the state of the balance of power in Europe and/or Northeast Asia.)

Let us recall that Russia, whether it be under Imperial, Soviet, or post-Soviet auspices, is an essentially continental Eurasian power. Its primary state interest for centuries has been to build and consolidate a trans-continental, multi-national and imperial state while also managing international power politics with a series of powerful adversaries throughout Asia and Europe. Above all, Russia sought to ensure that no powerful coalition of external (and in Europe technologically superior) powers could unite to challenge the Russian Empire's territorial or political integrity. Russian diplomats and rulers thus learned to play the European balance of power with considerable finesse (e.g., the Treaty of Nystadt, 1721, under Peter the Great; the Congress of Vienna, 1815, under Alexander I; the Treaty of Rapallo between Soviet Russia and Weimar Germany, 1922; the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, 1939; the Grand Alliance with the United States and Great Britain, 1941–45; and the Helsinki Final Act, 1975, to name just a few instances). As with Great Britain, maintaining a favorable European balance of power has been central to Russian statecraft.³

The United States, by contrast, is functionally an insular power (albeit on a continental scale) with respect to the rest of the world, surrounded as it is by two great oceans and militarily weak and isolated neighbors (i.e., Canada and Mexico). America's primary foreign policy concern throughout most of its history has thus been, like Russia's, to prevent the emergence of a hostile European hegemon that could threaten the country's expansion in North America and its own hegemony in the Western Hemisphere. Once the United States had stabilized its independence from Britain after the War of 1812, U.S. and British geopolitical interests tended to coincide.⁴

In this context, American and Russian interests have more often been complementary than antagonistic. It has been primarily the intrusion of ideological elements, reflecting for example Americans' global democratic aspirations or the Soviet Union's ultimate objective of the triumph of communism worldwide, that have rendered the bilateral relationship intransigent and even dangerous.⁵

Indeed, between 1989 and 1991, as it became apparent that the Soviet Union might actually fall apart, the Bush Administration did everything in its power to counteract these centrifugal tendencies. This was most ironic, since it had originally concluded that Reagan had moved too fast in relaxing tensions with Moscow and feared that Gorbachev's reforms at home and abroad were tactical rather than strategic in nature. The "freeze" that Bush placed on Soviet policy came to a sudden end by June 1989 when it became apparent that Gorbachev had set in motion forces that could not easily be reversed, including genu-

³ John LeDonne, *The Russian Empire and the World, 1700–1917: the Geopolitics of Expansion and Containment* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁴ Richard van Alstyne, *The Rising American Empire* (New York: Norton, 1974).

⁵ John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union and the United States: An Interpretive History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1990), 25–27.

ine elections in both the Soviet Union and Poland.⁶ It was now clear that when Gorbachev declared that communist ideology should not interfere with the operation of foreign policy, he meant it. Ongoing “round-table” talks in Poland between the communist governments and opposition leaders resulted in an electoral sweep for the anti-communist Solidarity bloc in Poland in early June 1989. Shortly afterward, a reform government in Budapest opened the border with Austria and for all intents and purposes, the Berlin Wall ceased to function. Gorbachev did nothing to intervene.

President Bush, tempered by the Tien-an Men Square massacre of democracy protesters in Beijing in early June 1989, approached these momentous events with caution. He feared that a too bold U.S. embrace of anti-communist forces in Eastern Europe might provoke a reaction against Gorbachev in the USSR that could undermine the remarkable transformation of the East-West landscape that was taking place before his eyes. Bush thus preferred dealing with the Polish (communist) General Wojciech Jaruzelski to Solidarity’s Lech Walesa. Bush now believed that it was critical to reinforce Gorbachev politically: at the Malta shipboard summit in December 1989, Bush promised Gorbachev that his government would not act to promote Baltic independence in spite of the long standing American refusal to recognize their annexation by the USSR—so long as Gorbachev refrained from the use of force in the region. Bush was as good as his word. Throughout 1990 and 1991, the U.S. government encouraged Baltic nationalist leaders to work out an evolutionary separation from the USSR, one that would not embarrass Gorbachev politically. As late as August 1, 1991, Bush warned Ukrainians in Kiev against “suicidal nationalism”. Remarkably, as in the 1920’s, the U.S. recognized Baltic independence only after the Soviet Union itself did, in the wake of the failed coup of August 19–21, 1991.⁷

Historical Patterns⁸

1989–91 was not the first time that U.S. leaders contemplated the disintegration of a Russian empire with ambivalence and even alarm. In late 1917, the advent of the Bolsheviks to power in Petrograd was seen in Washington at first through the prism of the balance of power: were Russia to withdraw from the Great War, the Western Front could be lost before substantial U.S. military power could be brought to bear. (In fact, this nearly came to pass with the Ludendorff offensive in France in the spring of 1918.) Moreover, while President Wilson dispatched some 5,000 U.S. troops to Arkhangelsk in 1918 to guard Allied military supplies and kept them there for a time after the Armistice, he consistently maintained that U.S. policy was not to interfere in Russian internal affairs, nor would the U.S. acquiesce in the alienation of Russian territory. Likewise, the arrival of more than 8,000 U.S. troops in Siberia was aimed at containing Japanese territorial designs on Russia, an ob-

⁶ Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: the United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), 423–431; Mark Haas, “The United States and the End of the Cold War: Reactions to Shifts in Soviet Power, Policies, or Domestic Politics?” *International Organization* 61 (Winter 2007), 145–179.

⁷ Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels: the Inside Story of the End of the Cold War* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1994).

⁸ For a more extensive discussion, see the entry by Allen C. Lynch, “American-Russian Relations,” *Oxford Companion to American Politics*, Kathy Smith, Will Walldorf, and David Coates, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

jective that the “idealist” Wilson shared with his “realist” predecessor Theodore Roosevelt.⁹ The latter had mediated the Treaty of Portsmouth (1906) ending the Russo-Japanese War on terms more favorable to Russia than the course of military operations warranted. This was aimed at maintaining a balance between Russia and Japan in Manchuria, thereby maximizing U.S. freedom of maneuver in the region.¹⁰

Relatedly, and as noted, the United States, which had not recognized Soviet Russia in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, delayed recognizing Baltic independence for more than two years after the Bolsheviks themselves had done so (*via* the Treaty of Tartu, 1920). In the process, the U.S. government maintained the view that Russia's temporary weakness could not justify the further territorial dismantlement of the country, while the State Department anticipated with equanimity that the Baltic territories would eventually revert to Russia.¹¹

Indeed, throughout the first century of American-Russian relations (1776–1881), balance-of-power considerations in Washington and St. Petersburg maintained ties on a reasonably even keel, in spite of mutually incompatible domestic political systems and ideologies. Consider as evidence:

Russian Empress Catherine II (“The Great”) refused Britain's request in 1775 to send 20,000 Cossack troops to North America to help combat the American colonists then in revolt against British rule. Catherine did this not out of any political sympathy for the Founding Fathers but because she deemed Britain's colonial policy in America imprudent, thought the colonists had a fair chance of winning, and did not want Britain tied down in a long colonial war overseas when her counterweight was necessary to Russia in balancing powerful continental powers like Austria and France.

In 1780, Catherine organized the League of Armed Neutrality with several European neutral countries in order to enforce freedom of the seas for neutrals. This measure was explicitly aimed against Britain, which had now become a threat to Russian commerce in the Black Sea. This initiative found wide resonance, as Catherine's League was joined by Denmark, Sweden, Prussia, Austria, Portugal, as well as the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and was supported by Spain and France, the latter by then an open ally of the American revolutionaries. While generations of Americans would assign historical significance to the League in helping to deliver American independence, Catherine herself coolly described her initiative as the League of “Armed Nullity.” Whatever benefit the Americans obtained from the Russian Empress's League flowed from her calculations of balance of power.¹²

In 1824, the Russian government, which by then had established outposts as far south as Fort Ross and Sebastopol along the Russian River just north of San Francisco, acquiesced to the Monroe Doctrine. Russia simply had not the resources to enforce a territorial claim so deep in North America and declared that the extent of its territorial interests lay

⁹ George F. Kennan, *The Decision to Intervene: Soviet-American Relations, 1917–1920*, volume 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); David S. Foglesong, *America's Secret War against Bolshevism: U.S. Intervention in the Russian Civil War, 1917–1920* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

¹⁰ John Stoessinger, *Nations at Dawn: China, Russia and the United States* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 127–131; Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union and the United States*, 32–41.

¹¹ *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, op.cit.

¹² N.N. Bolkhovitinov, *Rossiya otkryvaet Ameriku, 1732–1799* [Russia discovers America, 1732–1799] (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya, 1991).

along the line 54.40, thereby removing a likely source of future tension between the two countries.

In 1863, two Russian fleets made prolonged port calls in New York and San Francisco, in the midst of the U.S. Civil War. Hailed by Americans as a gesture of sympathy toward the Northern cause, the move was actually an attempt by Russia to avoid having its fleets bottled up by British and French navies in the event of war over the Tsar's brutal suppression of the Polish rebellion of that year. At the same time, President Lincoln affirmed his support for Alexander II's right to suppress Polish rebellion to Russian rule, not wishing to legitimize the principle of secession in the midst of the American Civil War: above all else, Lincoln wanted to avoid providing Great Britain and France with justifications to intervene on the side of the southern Confederacy. In each case, state interest in St. Petersburg and Washington prevailed over ideological and internal political differences.

In 1867, the Russian government sold Alaska to the United States for \$7.2 million. Driven mainly by recognition that Russia was hopelessly overextended in North America and would not long be able to retain the territory in any case, the Russian government also hoped that the transfer might introduce a bone of contention between the United States and Great Britain (suzerain in Canada) at a time when Britain and Russia were experiencing growing diplomatic tensions over Russian expansion in Central Asia, along the approaches to Afghanistan and British India. Once again, geopolitical imperatives in both Washington and St. Petersburg coincided to produce a mutually satisfactory outcome.¹³

By the late nineteenth century, however, the intrusion of ideological factors into diplomacy began to complicate the management of the bilateral relationship. Ironically, this happened at a time when Tsarist Russia had embarked upon the most comprehensive program of modernization along European lines in its history, signaled by the abolition of serfdom by Imperial edict in 1861. The resistance of the Russian crown to political accommodation with the new economic and social classes that its reforms had brought into being provoked a campaign of terrorism and assassination by radical members of the Russian intelligentsia; this in turn led to a series of increasingly repressive responses by the Russian government that culminated, in the decade after the Assassination of Alexander II in 1881, in a fully formed police state under his successor, Alexander III. The subsequent connivance of the Russian authorities in a series of brutal anti-Semitic pogroms triggered a massive emigration of Russian Jews to the United States; Russian authorities thereafter refused to treat American Jews of Russian origin returning to Russia as U.S. citizens. These events highlighted the repressiveness of the Russian government and witnessed for the first time the emergence of humanitarian and "human rights" considerations as significant factors in the Russian-American relationship.

Publication in 1891 of the vivid and shocking "Siberia and the Exile System" by George Kennan (uncle of the later diplomat and Russian scholar) had a galvanizing effect on American opinion toward Imperial Russia. While a bilateral extradition treaty would be ratified in 1894, it was a sign of the times that the treaty received widespread criticism in the United States on the argument that Americans would thus in effect become agents of the Tsar in returning political émigrés to Siberian exile. By 1911, such U.S. domestic political pressures

¹³ N.N. Bolkhovitinov, *Russko-amerikanskiye otnosheniya i prodazha Aliaski, 1834–1867* [Russian-American relations and the sale of Alaska, 1834–1867] (Moscow: Nauka, 1990).

led to Congressional repudiation of the 1832 trade treaty with Russia, against the strong opposition of the Taft Administration. Americans were now insisting that Russian governments conduct themselves within their own country in a manner compatible with U.S. political values. Geopolitical imperatives no longer had a monopoly in framing American policy toward Russia.¹⁴

Geopolitical Constraints in American-Soviet Relations During the Cold War

Much more dramatically, the consolidation of communist rule in Russia introduced an entirely novel ideological element into world politics and in many respects an international cold war broke out already in 1917. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the United States would be fully engulfed in that cold war, which became the driving force in the international system for the next four decades (1947–1989).

Yet even in the context of cold war, the logic of geopolitics asserted itself, often decisively. While the Grand Alliance (1941–45) reflected a temporary coincidence of negative interests in the thwarting of Nazi power, it nevertheless proved central to each side's vital state interests, leading both Britain and the United States to in effect abandon the Polish Government in London for *Staatsraison*.¹⁵ And even in the subsequent period of "High Cold War," U.S. actions over four decades made plain the compatibility – albeit a distasteful and even embarrassing one – of vital U.S. interests with the division of Europe. By the early 1950's, neither the United States nor the Soviet Union were willing to risk "their" half of Europe and of Germany for the chimera of unification of the continent. Each feared that the cold war might end on the other's terms.¹⁶

Thus, in June 1953, Allied troops stood down as Soviet occupation troops ruthlessly suppressed a revolt by East Berlin workers. In November 1956, President Eisenhower secretly informed Nikita Khrushchev that the U.S. would take no action in Hungary that would

¹⁴ David Foglesong, *The American Mission: the "Evil Empire" and the Crusade for a Free Russia Since 1881* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); George Kennan, *Siberia and the Exile System* (New York: Century Co., 1891), also available on-line at: www.books.google.com.

¹⁵ Without Soviet victories in the battles of Moscow (December 1941), Stalingrad (1942/43), and Kursk (summer 1943), the Allied invasion of Normandy could not have happened as early as June 1944 and with the decisive results that it produced. Likewise, U.S. Lend-Lease assistance to the Soviet Union played an essential role in sustaining Soviet participation in the war. For instance, Lend-Lease accounted for 30% of all military aircraft flown on the Russian front, 58% of high-octane aviation fuel, 33% of all wheeled motor vehicles, 93% of railroad equipment, 53% of ordnance explosives, 80% of the aluminum in T-34 tank engines, 30% of production-line machinery, 50% of copper wire and cables, food to feed 12 million people half a pound of food per day for four years, etc. U.S. and British strategic bombing of Germany also took 70% of the German air force off the Russian front to defend the German homeland, thereby giving the USSR air superiority over the Germans. Boris V. Sokolov, "The Role of Lend-Lease in Soviet Military Efforts, 1941–1945," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, volume 7, no. 3 (summer 1994), 567–586 (translated by David M. Glantz); idem, *Pravda o Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny* [The truth about the Second World War] (Moscow: Aleteiya, 1998), 160–190; and Albert L. Weeks, *Russia's Life Saver: Lend-Lease Aid to the U.S.S.R. in World War II* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010), 8–9, 107–127, 141–152.

¹⁶ John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1989).

threaten Soviet security interests in the country. The next year, George F. Kennan, intellectual father of the “containment” policy, was virtually shunned in Western Europe (including West Germany) and Washington after his BBC Reith lectures calling for Four-Power “disengagement” from Germany and opening the path to a unified, democratic and disarmed but neutral Germany. The cold war status quo seemed preferable to any likely alternative. While too bad for the East Germans and East Europeans, this was a situation that the United States could easily live with.¹⁷

In August 1961, President Kennedy waited ten days before responding publicly to the erection of the Berlin Wall, allowing for the efficient consolidation of the Soviet and East German position; Kennedy himself breathed a sigh of relief over this “defensive” solution to the East German problem and the division of Germany now became the all-but-acknowledged foundation for détente in Europe.¹⁸ In August 1968, the Johnson Administration withdrew U.S. military forces 100 kilometers from the Czechoslovak frontier in a symbolic but convincing signal to Moscow that, as in Hungary, the U.S. would not challenge the Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe.¹⁹ In effect, Basket One of the Helsinki Final Act (1975) codified this regime of geopolitical stability in European affairs.

Between 1979–1989, for all of the U.S. support for Afghan resistance to Soviet occupation, the United States government always refrained from challenging Soviet interests across the Afghan-Soviet frontier. Parrying Soviet intervention abroad was one thing; actively challenging the Soviet empire at home was quite another.²⁰ And to come full circle: When, between 1989–1991 the United States had a real opportunity to accelerate Soviet disintegration, the Bush Administration chose just the opposite policy, i.e., to reinforce Gorbachev economically and politically and encourage the non-Russian nations to negotiate their futures with Gorbachev in the context of a reformed but intact Soviet Union.²¹

The Atom, the Veto, and Location

One reason for this was to preserve a single nuclear power (and in effect partner) in Moscow. Here the Bush Administration was acting consistently with the thread of American nuclear policy since the Kennedy Administration: i.e., it was a vital U.S. interest to ensure effective command and control over Soviet nuclear weapons, to keep the “nuclear club” to as few members as possible, and to minimize the chance that nuclear weapons might ever be used. Beginning in 1963, the American and Soviet governments began to institutionalize a series of understandings about the role of nuclear weapons in their cold war relationship. In sum, these agreements, formal and informal, amounted to mutual recognition over time

¹⁷ George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1950–63* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 229–266.

¹⁸ Willy Brandt, *Begegnungen und Einsichten: die Jahre 1960–1975* (Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe, 1976), 9–41.

¹⁹ Bennet Kovrig, *The Myth of Liberation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); Stephen A. Garrett, *From Potsdam to Poland: American Policy Toward Eastern Europe* (New York: Praeger, 1986); Jiri Valenta, *Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia: Anatomy of a Decision* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979).

²⁰ The point is conceded even by Peter Schweizer, *Victory: the Reagan Administration's Secret Strategy that Hastened the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1994).

²¹ James Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, *Power and Purpose: U.S. Policy Toward Russia After the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: the Brookings Institution, 2003), 18–40.

that nuclear confrontations should be avoided, that nuclear weapons should not be used, that nuclear war was unwinnable, and that the American-Soviet relationship should be organized to reflect these assumptions. In an uncanny anticipation of post-cold-war developments, in 1963 President Kennedy even offered to share with the Soviet Union the special electronic locks ("permissive action links") that the American military had developed to prevent unauthorized use of nuclear weapons. While Khrushchev refused, Kennedy saw that effective Soviet governmental control over the country's nuclear weapons was a vital American national interest. An implicit nuclear community of fate had been established, one that would outlive the cold war itself.²²

Nuclear weapons, which reinforced the reluctance of the United States as well as the Soviet Union to challenge directly each side's sphere of vital interests, also generated their own geopolitical logic, one made plain in the course of Soviet collapse itself. By 1990, it became clear that nuclear possession reflected a Promethean political hubris: i.e., the breakup of the Soviet Union underscored that the half-life of states was very much less than the half-life of weapons-grade uranium or plutonium. Nuclear powers might also be unstable polities. Almost immediately, the U.S. government acted on this premise. The Bush Administration made U.S. recognition of post-Soviet states dependent upon their observing previous Soviet-American arms control agreements. The Clinton Administration worked mightily and effectively to remove post-Soviet nuclear weapons from Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine to Russia, thereby recreating a single nuclear interlocutor for the United States. The Nunn-Lugar program has committed billions of dollars to improving the infrastructure of the Russian nuclear program, while the United States continues to purchase hundreds of tons of Russian uranium for reprocessing in the United States.²³ (Fully 20% of all U.S. nuclear-power generation is now derived from Russian uranium.) The ratification of the "New START" nuclear arms control treaty in 2010–11 in Washington and Moscow underscores the continuity of American nuclear policy over the decades and the reality of an exclusive Russian-American security community.²⁴ For decades to come, the two countries will remain bound in a nuclear community of fate, one that commits the United States to reinforcing the grip on power of the Russian leadership, of whatever political coloration, in order to ensure the safety of Russia's nuclear archipelago. A strong Russian state is thus in the United States' vital national interest, confirming the long historical pattern that we have already identified. U.S. policy toward Russia's borderlands must inevitably take this reality into account.

The Russian-American nuclear partnership is just one, albeit a central component, of this bilateral relationship that acts as a prism through which American leaders assess tradeoffs in policy choices. Russia remains important to the United States not just because of the atom, as Robert Legvold has observed, but also because of its veto power in the UN Security Council and its central location bordering Europe, Central Asia and the Far East.²⁵

²² F. Stephen Larrabee and Allen C. Lynch, *Confidence-Building Measures and U.S.-Soviet Relations* (New York: Institute for East-West Security Studies, 1986).

²³ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*, 41–58, 157–182.

²⁴ Andrew C. Kuchins, "The Obama Administration's Reset for Russia," *Russia: the Challenges of Transformation (Possible Futures)*, Piotr Dutkiewicz and Dmitri Trenin, eds. (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 327–352.

²⁵ Robert Legvold, "Russia's Unformed Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2001), at: www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/57239/

Insofar as the United States seeks whatever legitimacy the UN Security Council provides, it is constrained to obtain Russian agreement, or at least Russia's abstention (as with the Libyan intervention). The weight of this fact of course varies with the relative importance attached to the UN by each US administration, but no administration can entirely ignore the costs of circumventing the Security Council. This allows Russia a degree of potential influence on American policy that no other state in post-communist Europe can hope to match.

Sheer geography also matters. In the fall of 2001, Putin's Russia emerged as the single most important ally of the United States in overthrowing the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Russia's "*Monrovszkaya doktrina*," defining Russia's security frontier as coterminous with that of the former Soviet Union, helped make this possible. Russian units in Tajikistan played a critical role in accelerating arms and other supplies to the Northern Alliance, and Putin opened Russian airspace to U.S. military overflights to bases in post-Soviet Central Asia. These were recently extended in the Obama "reset" to include military hardware.²⁶ Since early 2009, tens of thousands U.S. containers have traversed Russian territory by rail from Riga, Latvia to U.S. bases in Central Asia to reinforce combat operations in Afghanistan. And while the Russians prefer that the American stay in Central Asia remain temporary and on Russian terms, they recognize that American and Russian interests coincide in ensuring that Afghanistan not reemerge as a haven for radical Islamist terrorism.²⁷ This is a convergence of interests that American leaders cannot easily dismiss. *Nolens volens*, U.S. actions have reinforced Russia's claim that Russia has a preeminent national security interest in post-Soviet Central Asia.

Geography also matters with respect to a favored item in U.S. national security policy, i.e., ballistic missile defense (BMD). A simple look at the map underlines the centrality of Russia – whose security sphere encompasses one-sixth of the earth's surface spanning Eurasia in any global scheme of BMD. The same is true with respect to nuclear non-proliferation, including the ability to contain or channel Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Policy Implications

This is not to gainsay the considerable difficulties and tensions in contemporary Russian-American relations and the enormous well of suspicion that still prevails in national security bureaucracies and think tanks in both Washington and Moscow. This analysis does, however, suggest that the post-communist member-states of NATO should not expect the United States government to fully share their understandable preoccupations with potential or actual Russian ambitions along its historical borderlands. It would therefore be a major strategic error for regional governments to assume that, simply by being in NATO, they have resolved their most critical issues with Moscow. Geography and geopolitics continue to matter. Washington cannot simply be substituted for Moscow in terms of the post-communist region's foreign policy and national security orientation. This was the

²⁶ Pierre Lorrain, *L'incroyable alliance Russie-Etats-Unis* (Paris: Editions du Rocher, 2002).

²⁷ Jeffrey Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy: the Return of Great Power Politics*. Second edition (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011), 89–132, 219–262.

fatal mistake that Georgian President Saakashvili made in August 2008, when he walked into a Russian trap that was to a considerable extent of his own making.²⁸ By contrast, the current Polish-Russian commission on "difficult problems" is an excellent example of the insight that post-communist states need viable relationships with Russia as well as with the United States in order to maximize the satisfaction of their national interests.²⁹

In sum, the United States and Russia remain implicated in a complex web of mutual dependencies that extend from nuclear security—bilateral as well as multilateral— to geopolitical stability throughout central Eurasia. After the cold war, and absent an ideological spur, Russian-American relations have returned to a pattern more closely resembling the pre-cold war norm based on the complementarity of each state's geopolitical interests. To be sure, a number of factors complicate a complete normalization of Russian-American relations, ranging from psychological and institutional legacies of the cold war to objective conflicts of interest (for instance, concerning the flow of Central Asian and Caspian-basin oil and natural gas). But even the most suspicious of Russian national security elites are hard pressed to identify plausible specific threats emanating from the United States (or NATO); much the same is true of the United States. The United States retains a major interest in a capable Russian state, one able to enforce its jurisdiction throughout Russian territory as well as its influence in the fragile borderlands of post-Soviet Central Asia. Other post-communist governments that ignore this powerful centripetal tendency in American-Russian relations do so at their peril.

²⁸ Ronald Asmus, *The Little War that Shook the World: Georgia, Russia and the Future of the West* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 19–140.

²⁹ Timothy Garton Ash, "This Tortured Polish-Russian Story is Something We Can All Learn From," *The Guardian* (February 23, 2011), at: www.guardian.co.uk; "Regarding the Results of the Work of the Polish-Russian Working Group for Difficult Matters Session," at: www.msz.gov.pl (June 17, 2008), accessed May 31, 2012 (this is the Polish Foreign Ministry's web site).

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***Fluctuating Images of Enemies and Friends:
Abkhazia, With Turkish Cyprus' Lens¹***

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Since the 2008 Russian-Georgian war over breakaway regions, journalists talk about the undergoing colonization of Abkhazia by Russia through a number of processes: financial and military aid, missiles installation in the region, infrastructure and telecommunications control, Russian business and migration. Although, for various security reasons, welcomed by the Abkhaz elites while building their political entity *against* Georgians, one cannot but think of parallels with the Northern Cyprus developments over the last 30 years. In a similar process, Turkey sponsored the construction of the Turkish Cyprus *de facto* state. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, considerable resources were used to 'prove' the affinity with Turkey and Turks, to construct the enemy image of Greek Cypriots and, in so doing, to legitimate the separatist cause and friendship with the sponsor-State. However, anthropological studies in the North of the island show how living side by side with settlers from Turkey modified Turkish Cypriots' self-identification as distinct from their new neighbours. Turkish Cypriots of all political convictions are uncomfortable and count critical stories about "people from Turkey." They distinguish "us" Cypriots from "them" the settlers and simultaneously the image of former 'enemy', the Greek Cypriots, is vested with less hostile shapes. A civic identification develops as collective perceptions change. This, in turn, has implications for political cleavages as new options for (de)constructing the *de facto* state and new party programs emerge. How this identity transformation occurs? What triggers changing policies towards our enemies and friends?

The article's objective is to map and compare the 'colonization' process that took place in Northern Cyprus and the one observed in Abkhazia and to detect changes that occur in the image of 'friends and enemies of the nation' during this process and in the ethnic

¹ Previous version of this article was presented at the Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN), Columbia University, New York, April 2011, and at the Warsaw East European Conference (WEEC), Warsaw University, July 2011.

versus civic State-building endeavours. How external factors affect these transformations? Following Anthony Smith and George Schöpflin, enemies and friends are constantly rediscovered and re-interpreted, and their (re)construction account for "our" territory, justify collective claims and mobilize collective action. These fluctuations adapt to the needs of the moment, to an external threat, and to structural changes. When fluctuations in perceiving the 'Other' take place and how do they translate into the political construction of *de facto* states? Although the Abkhazian case is recent and in the making, establishing parallels with the Turkish Cyprus case may shed light on patterns of fluctuating nation-building processes, and by the same token, in (*de facto*) state-building.

Abkhazia and Northern Cyprus (TRNC), together with some ten other cases, constitute *de facto* States. Scott Pegg defines a *de facto* state as an "organized political leadership, which has risen to power through some degree of indigenous capacity, receives popular support and has achieved sufficient capacity to provide governmental services to a given population in a specific territorial area, over which effective control is maintained for a significant period of time"². *De facto* independent territories are thus entities which present a permanent population, a formally autonomous government over a defined territory, which are able to enter into informal relations with other states and which seek full constitutional independence and international recognition as sovereign states. The claim for Abkhaz and Turkish Cypriot self-determination collide with the territorial integrity principle claimed by the central state, Georgia and the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) respectively. The lack of solution to the violent conflict – ended with cease-fire agreements in 1993 and 1974 respectively –, accounts for these conflicts being labelled as 'frozen'. Indeed, when studying Abkhazia and Turkish Cyprus through the lens of geopolitical and international relations dynamics, which is the preferred perspective in the literature, led to over-emphasize institutional deadlocks and situations of disagreements between national elites. Most of the existing investigations are concerned with bilateral negotiations or with the role played by third-party mediators and international institutions to settle the political disputes.

As argued by Dov Lynch in 2004, although external and internal logics account for the survival of *de facto* States and for the continuous *status quo*³ *these conflicts are far from being static and understanding endogenous processes of state- and nation-building can contribute to modify the ways the frozen conflict evolves and the conditions under which political agreements can be reached. Frozen conflicts should not only be considered as diplomatic stalemates, but also as structures of opportunities for political elites and social actors in de facto independent territories to reinforce internal sovereignty – or to contest it – and to strengthen their own positions. State- and nation-building refer respectively to the "hard" and "soft" aspects of state construction, that is to say, to the "establishment of the administrative, economic and military groundwork of functional states" on the one hand, and to the "construction of a shared identity and a sense of unity in a state's population, through education, propaganda, ideology, and state symbols," on the other hand*⁴. The

² Pegg, Scott. *International Society and the de facto State*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998: 26.

³ Kolsto, Pal. "The Sustainability and Future of Unrecognized Quasi-States." *Journal of Peace Research* 43, no 6 (2006): 723–740; King, Charles. "The Benefits of Ethnic War. Understanding Eurasia's Unrecognized States." *World Politics* 53 (2001): 524–552.

⁴ Kolsto, Pal and Helge Blakkisrud. *Nation-Building and Common Values in Russia*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004.

aim of this article is to re-evaluate situations of frozen conflicts by concentrating on state- and nation-building processes on the ground. The mainstream literature treats *de facto* states as united entities and most studies take for granted the existence of a collective identity. Most ignore evolving social and political internal constraints, struggles for power, competition for alternative political avenues and/or resources, and say almost nothing of the erratic identity construction process. The purpose is to offer an analysis of the internal dynamics behind state- and nation-building processes. In doing so, the research aims at contributing to the transformation approach to conflict resolution (first section).

The article starts from the common assumption that, since the 2008 war and the recognition of Abkhazia by Russia, the Abkhaz conflict is more frozen than ever. It has set back the formal peace process with Abkhazia as this territory, along with South Ossetia, is almost certainly lost to Georgia for decades – if not for ever – and may become *de facto* part of Russia⁵. The aspects taken for ‘frozen’ are presented in the second section. The author notes, however, that the Turkish Cyprus case was judged in very similar terms: as frozen conflict with impossibility of reunification with the Greek Cyprus and as an entity *de facto* part of Turkey. And yet, in 2004, the referendum conducted in both parts of Cyprus gave a paradoxical result: the separatist Turkish north voted for reunification (while the Greek south voted against). Before that, in 2003, the new Turkish Cypriot government rewrote school history books shifting the Turko-centric narrative towards a Cypro-centric one and adapting a model of civic nationalism, preparing ground for a future Cyprus for all Cypriots – Greek and Turkish. How can we account for such a transformation? Are the conditions present in Abkhazia? To answer this question the article is proceeding with a comparative method *à la* Tocqueville⁶ (for Tocqueville’s own explanation of the method he employed, see his memoirs and letters published in 1961): by looking at Abkhazia through Turkish Cyprus. The latter case, shortly presented in the third section, serves us to identify the mechanisms of the transformation that occurred in the image of the enemy and friend⁷ (based on secondary sources and on the 2010 field research). The article proceeds then, in the fourth section, to examine Abkhazia through these mechanisms, exploring the similarities and differences of the two cases.

Transformative Approach to Conflict Resolution and to Identity

Faced with irreconcilable claims of self-determination and territorial integrity, international organizations based on academic research, tend to propose various forms of federal structures⁸. After over thirty years of trying to create some form of federal structures in

⁵ Cooley, Alexander and Lincoln Mitchell. “Engagement without Recognition: A New Strategy toward Abkhazia and Eurasia’s Unrecognized States.” *The Washington Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (2010): 59–73.

⁶ (De) Tocqueville, Alexis. *Memoir, Letters, and Remains of Alexis de Tocqueville*. 2 vols. Cambridge, 1961: 359.

⁷ Dembinska, Magdalena. “Societal Responsiveness to Top-Down Politics: Frozen Conflicts and Peace-building (in Cyprus).” Paper presented at the International Studies Association (ISA), Montreal, March 16–19, 2011.

⁸ Stepan, Alfred. “Federalism and Democracy.” In *Federalism and Territorial Cleavages*, edited by Amoretti U.M and Bermeo N, 441–456. Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 2004; Fearon, James D. and Laitin David. “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War.” *American Political Science Review* 97, no 1 (2003): 75–90; McGarry, John and O’Leary Brendan. “Federation as a Method of Ethnic Conflict Regulation.” In *From Power Sharing to Democracy: post-conflict institutions in ethnically divided society*, edited by Noël Sid, 263–296. Montreal and Kingston:

Cyprus and some fifteen years in post-Soviet frozen conflicts, one should consider some alternative ways out of the impasse. The failure of conventional institutional solution⁹ pushed some researchers to consider alternatives. Instead of putting structures in place, they propose to transform the context, structures, actors, objects of dispute and/or cultural elements, in order to transform relations between the communities in conflict at the societal level¹⁰. In sum, conflict transformation approach accounts for conflict's dynamic nature and puts emphasis on the alteration of relations, of interests and of discourses which are conducive to a resolution in the long-run¹¹.

This transformative perspective fits nicely the social-psychological approach to conflict resolution and reconciliation¹². Indeed, although strategic studies privilege rational and instrumental accounts of identity conflicts, some authors consider affective elements as constitutive of inter- and intra-societal wars. Recent work by Kaufman on symbolic politics¹³, Ross on the role of culture¹⁴, Crains and Roe et al. on collective memories¹⁵ and Petersen on hate, fear and resentment resulting from historical myths¹⁶ are some examples. Kaufman argues that ethnic conflicts are a result of "each side's goals, and expectations about the other, [which] came from hostile interpretations of history encoded in each group's myth-symbol complex¹⁷." If a group's myth-symbol complex encourages cooperation, the conflict won't arise. Therefore, in an effort of bringing groups together, ethnic conflict prevention has to take into account the underestimated peace building¹⁸ that is "changing the hostile myths and attitudes in the long run"¹⁹.

How can the transformation occur? Myths are narrations of a community's history by the community itself. They are not historical truth; they are interpretations²⁰. Myths constitute community's integrative elements because they create a sense of belonging and pride. They account for "our" territory, "our" Golden Age, for the causes of a nation's decline and victimization. Myths determine the borders of "us" versus "them," justify collective claims

McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005; Lijphart, Arend. "Political theories and the explanation of ethnic conflict in the western world: falsified predictions and plausible postdictions." *Ethnic conflict in the Western world (1977)*: 46–64.

⁹ Kaufman, Stuart J. "Escaping the Symbolic Politics Trap: Reconciliation Initiatives and Conflict Resolution in Ethnic War." *Journal of Peace Research* 43, no 2 (2006): 201–218; Ryan, Stephen. *The Transformation of Violent Intercommunal Conflict*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007:22.

¹⁰ Ibid, 16–24; Lederach, John Paul. *Building Peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. Washington, D.C: US Institute of Peace Press, 1997: 81–84; Väyrynen, Raimo. *New Directions in Conflict Theory*. London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1991.

¹¹ Miall, Hugh. "Conflict Transformation: A Multidimensional Task." In *Transforming Ethnopolitical Conflict: The Berghof Handbook*, edited by Austin Alexander, Martina Fischer and Norbert Ropers, 67–90. VS Verlag, 2004. Accessed June 4, 2008. www.berghof-handbook.net.

¹² Kelman, Herbert C. "Reconciliation as Identity Change: A Social-Psychological Perspective." In *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*, edited by Bar-Siman-Tov, Yaacov. Oxford University Press, 2004.

¹³ Kaufman, Stuart J. *Modern Hatreds. The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War*. London: Cornell University Press, 2001: 39.

¹⁴ Ross, Marc Howard. *Cultural Contestation in Ethnic Conflict*. Cambridge University Press, 2007.

¹⁵ Crains, Ed and Micheal Roe. *The Role of Memory in Ethnic Conflict*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

¹⁶ Petersen, Roger D. *Understanding Ethnic Violence*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.

¹⁷ Kaufman, *Modern Hatreds*, 20.

¹⁸ Ibid, 40.

¹⁹ Ibid, 215.

²⁰ Schöpflin, George. *Nations, Identity, Power*. New York: New York University Press, 2000: 98.

and mobilize collective action. Myths are inherent to group identity. However, myths are flexible. Nations – social constructions and imagined communities²¹ are not static entities but rather imbued with fluidities and change. In fact, “different myths receive emphasis at different times to cope with different challenges”. The salience of one myth over another at different times is strongly related to identity fluctuations, such as conceptualized by Hutchinson²². Constitutive elements of an ethnic identity undergo mutations: culture, language, accounts of history, traditions, rites modify in response to external stimuli. Our identity is composed of multiple identifications which form a whole but which are sometimes in conflict²³. Indeed, different stimuli transform our identity by transforming some of its dimensions or by acquiring additional identifications – identifications that may neutralize, without erasing, all/some other identifications. They all cumulate and co-exist. They co-exist and may collide when exposed to different contexts and choices. Depending on the needs of the moment, one identification takes precedence over others. We can thus observe over time ‘fluctuating salience of national identities with respect to other social allegiances’²⁴. Inspired by Hutchinson, Vural and Rustemli²⁵ write:

events that bear significance for people alter their perceptions and priorities leading to identity fluctuations. Identity fluctuation can be associated with a change in the prevailing components of identity. Such a change constitutes a departure from the crucial component of the existing collective identity leading to partial demotion or even elimination of the official or politically supported component of identity ... [Different] components may coexist in collective identity with differing degrees of significance for group members...both ethno-national and civic conceptualizations may be used separately by the members of the group ... fluctuations ... are likely to culminate in a radical or moderate shift in the hierarchy of collective identity components.

What elements may contribute to the change of myths and to the development of new layers/components of collective identity? Myths adapt to the needs of the moment, to an external threat, and to structural changes²⁶. Following Brubaker’s argument²⁷ developed subsequently by other authors, policies by external actors, such as the kin/patron-State and regional/international organisations, should be taken into the analysis together with the host-State²⁸. In sum, “external incentives – offered for example, by international organi-

²¹ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. New York: Verso, 1991.

²² Hutchinson, John. “Ethnicity and modern nations.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23, no 4 (2000):651.

²³ Hale, Henry. “Explaining Ethnicity.” *Comparative Political Studies* 37, no 4 (2004): 458–485.

²⁴ Hutchinson, “Ethnicity and modern nations,” 651.

²⁵ Vural, Yucel and Rustemli Ahmet. “Identity Fluctuations in the Turkish Cypriot Community.” *Mediterranean Politics* 11, no 3 (2006): 330.

²⁶ Schöpflin, *Nations, Identity, Power*, 98.

²⁷ Brubaker, Rogers. *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

²⁸ Smith, Anthony.D. *Myths and Memories of the Nation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999; Ieda, Osamu. “Post-communist Nation Building and the Status Law Syndrome in Hungary.” In *The Hungarian Status Law*, edited by Zoltán Kántor et al. Slavic Research Center. Hokkaido University, 2004. Accessed November 28, 2007. http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no4_ses/contents.html

sations or by economically, politically, or militarily powerful states – may favour trans-ethnic state- and nation-building strategies, oriented to the citizenry as a whole rather than to one ethnationally qualified segment of that country"²⁹. What threats and/or structural changes account for the Turkish Cypriot transformation? Are similar conditions reproduced in Abkhazia? Last but not least, identity transformation, i.e. developing a civic identification, needs responsiveness at the society level³⁰. Myths transformation is about a parallel reimagining process at the societal level. The society should be ready for alternating stereotypes, and this would depend on the real-life perceptions of the "other". Before exploring the question of when do fluctuations in perceiving the 'Other' take place and how do they translate into the political construction of *de facto* states, let's recapitulate in more detail the received wisdom about the frozen case of Abkhazia.

More Frozen than Ever: Ethnic Distance and 'Colonized' *de facto* State of Abkhazia

History and Conflict Narrative: Constructing Enemies and Friends

The Abkhaz and Georgians have coexisted in a common political space for centuries. Ghia Nodia affirms that the modern conflict cannot be traced back to any medieval grievances, although appeals to medieval history are common on both Abkhaz and Georgian sides in justifying today's political claims. Present day clashes are not incited by ancient memories or ethnic hatred³¹. The conflict is about statehood: about territorial integrity on the one hand and self-determination on the other. The Abkhaz see the Georgian state as 'imperialist' and ethnic Georgians living in Abkhazia before the war as settlers, sent by Stalin and Beria in order to outnumber the Abkhaz³². Indeed, Beria's resettlement programme in the 1940s dramatically altered the demographic balance in the region, resulting in the Abkhaz becoming a minority in their titular Autonomous Republic. This was in addition to perceived economic and political discrimination against the Abkhaz population by the Georgian titular elite and cultural oppression, including, for example, severe restrictions on the use of the Abkhaz language. Tensions continued, particularly with the growth of popular nationalist movements in both Georgia and Abkhazia in the 1980s, until relations finally came to breaking point in 1992 with the outbreak of war³³.

The elements of Georgian and Abkhaz national identities that are in collision, which are both myths justifying the claims and points of contention, are those concerning the 'ownership' of this indivisible territory, the role of each group in the medieval common state and the groups' civilizing role as expressed by the use of language³⁴. The Abkhaz trace their

²⁹ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, 47.

³⁰ Schöpflin, *Nations, Identity, Power*, 98.

³¹ Nodia, Ghia. "Causes and Visions of Conflict in Abkhazia." *Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies* (2007). Accessed December 31, 2007: 10–11. <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/4q0m8wn>

³² *Ibid.*, 4–5.

³³ Clogg, Rachel. "The Politics of Identity in Post-Soviet Abkhazia: Managing Diversity and Unresolved Conflict." *Nationalities Papers* 36, no. 2 (2008): 322.

³⁴ Dembinska, Magdalena. "Briser les logiques du 'gel': approche différenciée et transformative en Abkhazie et

presence in the region long before Jesus Christ and the founding political entity back to the Abkhazian Kingdom, and thus insist on "1200 years of independent statehood"³⁵. According to Georgian radical historiography, the presumed lack of terms "sea" and "boat" in the Abkhaz language is evidence of the Abkhaz late arrival in the region. The medieval state is presented, on the one side, as being dominated by the Abkhaz since it was an Abkhaz dynasty who reigned there, on the other side, dominated by Georgians as evidenced by the use of the Georgian language. According to Gigineishvili, the two accounts are heavily biased: first, Abkhazian language includes the terms 'sea' and 'boat' and, second, the medieval Kingdom an entity constituted by a multitude of diverse groups. It had been constituted in order to unite forces against common enemies. In addition, the use of the Georgian language was also a voluntary act since the Georgian was widely known; the Abkhaz language was missing script, while the Georgian was used since long in religious writings³⁶.

In today's Georgian school textbooks, language continues to be extensively employed to link Georgian ethnic group to the past of the disputed territories. For example, the Abkhazian language is listed in the same group as the Georgian language or, in other places, emphasize the use of Kartli (Georgian) language as lingua franca in the Western Georgia (including Abkhazia) as early as in 4–3 centuries BC (for school books' analysis see Rouvinsky³⁷). History textbook published in Abkhazia states on the contrary that, 'as it is widely acknowledged, the Abkhaz language is one of the oldest languages in the world' and is truly autochthonous to the territory of Abkhazia. There can be thus no linguistically-based claim of Abkhazia being a Georgian territory³⁸.

The civil war of 1992–93, a fresh memory, represents for Abkhazians a "cultural genocide"³⁹. The lack of apology for the destruction of Abkhaz cultural sites, including the Institute of Abkhazian Language, Culture and History as well as the National Archives of Abkhazia, is a major grudge⁴⁰. Abkhazian public spaces are full of visual reminders of war. As enumerated by Sabirova⁴¹, war-time graffiti and notices about ongoing land-mine clearance remain in public view; monuments and memorial plaques have been erected; books are published recording the memories of those who witnessed the fighting. The war is

en Transnistrie." *Études internationales* 40, no 4 (2009): 611–629; Nodia, Ghia. "Nationalism and Subnationalism in Georgia." Paper presented at the Caucasus Conference, University of California, Berkeley, May 2–3, 1997. Accessed September 17, 2006. <http://repositories.cdlib.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1016&context=iseees/bps>

³⁵ Dale, "The Politics of Representation in the Abkhaz Conflict," 59.

³⁶ Gigineishvili, Levan. "Conflicting Narratives in Abkhazia and Georgia. Different Visions of the Same History and the Quest for Objectivity." *Harvard Graduate School of Education* (2003): 5. Accessed April 14, 2007. http://gseweb.harvard.edu/~t656_web/peace/Articles_Spring_2003/Gigineishvili_Levan_ConflictingNarrativesAbkhaziaGeorgia.htm

³⁷ Rouvinski, Vladimir. "Ethnic Enclosure in Soviet and Post-Soviet School Textbooks." *IPSHU English Research Report Series* 20 (2007): 53–63.

³⁸ Ibid, 7.

³⁹ Dale, Catherine. "The Politics of Representation in the Abkhaz Conflict." Paper presented at the Caucasus Conference, University of California, Berkeley, May 2–3, 1997: 60. Accessed September 17, 2006. <http://repositories.cdlib.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1016&context=iseees/bps>.

⁴⁰ Euroclio. "Abkhazia and Georgia Mission History". *European Association of History Educators* (2005). Accessed January 25, 2007: 8. www.euroclio.eu/joomla/index.php/component/option,com_docman/Itemid,102/gid,62/task,doc_details.

⁴¹ Sabirova, Guzel. "Both War and Peace in the 'Country of the Soul': The Young People of Abkhazia on War, Tradition, and Independence." *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 26, no. 1 (2008): 51–68.

thus part of the everyday lexicon and is linked to 'victimization', 'heroification', 'romanticization', and 'patriotization'⁴². There is an enduring perception throughout the population of Abkhazia that the Georgians conducted the war of 1992–1993 with genocidal intent. Garb quotes Viacheslav Chirikba, a non-governmental activist in Abkhazia and present-day *de facto* Minister of Foreign Affairs, saying: 'During the war of 1992–1993, Georgians killed 4% of the entire Abkhazian population and destroyed the small republic's national archives, museums, monuments of culture, and socioeconomic infrastructure... [they were prepared] to exterminate the entire Abkhazian nation'⁴³.

The distance between Abkhaz and Georgians grew even wider after the 2008 war over South Ossetia. Disillusioned with years of never-ending peace talks, Saakashvili's government wanted quick results. As one Georgian civil society representative explained to Nicu Popescu: "The government wanted everything at once: accession to NATO, good relations with Russia, and reintegration of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. There was little patience for dialogue and long-term rebuilding of trust." But this only increased the mutual mistrust between Georgia and Abkhazia⁴⁴. Chirikba adds that 'if Saakashvili's war on South Ossetia had been successful and if he'd won, there is no doubt that the territory of South Ossetia would have been cleansed of its indigenous Ossetian population . . . and, whatever the Russian motives, Russia prevented this from happening'⁴⁵. As Western countries did not react for several days, they are seen as giving green light to Georgia to use force, and Russians are the only ones – for whatever reason – ready to protect the Abkhaz population⁴⁶.

Russia's Patronage and Presence

Abkhazians, fearing they would be Georgia's next target after South Ossetia, welcomed the reinforcement of Russian troops' presence. They regarded Russia as the guarantor of peace⁴⁷. Moreover, the presence of Russian forces gave Abkhazians the opportunity to re-conquer the Upper Kodori Gorge, lost two years earlier to Georgians. They also gained a strip of land along the Abkhazian side of the Inguri River⁴⁸.

De facto States need external support to develop and survive⁴⁹. The Russian presence in Abkhazia since the 1992 civil war is a well known fact and with the 2008 Abkhazia's unilateral recognition it deepens fast. In February 2010, the International Crisis Group (ICG) issued a report that documented the deepening dependence of Abkhazia on Russian security

⁴² Ibid, 52.

⁴³ Garb, Paula. "The View from Abkhazia of South Ossetia Ablaze." *Central Asian Survey* 28, no. 2 (2009): 238.

⁴⁴ Popescu, Nicu. "The EU and Civil Society in the Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict." *MICROCON Policy Working Paper*, no. 5 (2010):9.

⁴⁵ Garb, "The View from Abkhazia of South Ossetia Ablaze," 238.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 239–240.

⁴⁷ Ascherson, Neal. "A chance to join the world." *London Review of Books* 23 (2008). Accessed March 1, 2009. <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v30/n23/ascho1.html>

⁴⁸ Garb, "The View from Abkhazia of South Ossetia Ablaze," 241.

⁴⁹ Lynch, Dov. *Engaging Eurasia's separatist states. Unresolved conflicts and de facto states*. Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2004.

protection, budgetary subventions and investments⁵⁰. On 15 September 2009, the Russian and *de facto* Abkhazian authorities signed a military cooperation treaty that enables the Russian military to use, upgrade and build military infrastructure and bases in Abkhazia for the next 49 years. The former Soviet airfield facility at Bombora near Gudauta is probably to become the premier military airbase in the South Caucasus. A new Russian naval base on the Black Sea is also envisaged. Under the treaty, Russian troops will retain the right of unrestricted mobility throughout Abkhazia and will remain immune from Abkhazian criminal law as well as exempt from taxation⁵¹. Russian forces control the security of the *de facto* border with Georgia, with Abkhaz officials serving merely as control agents.

Russian state companies got many contracts to upgrade Abkhazian infrastructure. In May 2009, the plan to transfer the management of Abkhazia's railways and Sukhum/i airport to Russia has been announced in exchange for investment and loans. At the same time, the Abkhazia *de facto* Ministry of Economy signed an agreement with the Russian state-owned oil company Rosneft that ceded the rights to explore the Abkhaz continental shelf for five years⁵². A change to the law in June 2009 opened the way for Russian investors and others to purchase long-term leases to Abkhazian property⁵³. Russia and Abkhazia worked out "a complex plan of social-economic development of Abkhazia for 2010–2012" whose total cost is about 330 million US dollars⁵⁴. The Russian ruble remains Abkhazia's official currency. Since October 2009 Abkhazia has Russian telephone prefixes (7) replacing its Georgian ones. Russia is responsible for up to 95% of Abkhazia's trade⁵⁵.

In addition, Russia provides direct budgetary support to the Abkhaz state. In 2009, this was estimated at 60%⁵⁶. And in socio-economic terms, there seems to be improvement. Average salaries are ten times up compared to the 1997 level although 40% of the population lives beneath the official subsistence level. Without the Russian assistance, pensioners would live in destitution (about 80% of the Abkhaz have double citizenship⁵⁷. In sum, Abkhazia depend on Russia's support. Facing international isolation and the perceived Georgia's threat, Russia's involvement in security matters and in economy is judged necessary for the *de facto* state's survival. At the same time, this dependence on Russia's protection and patronage is interpreted by Georgia and external observers as a form of colonization, i.e. *de facto* integration of Abkhazia into the Russian Federation. But is Abkhazia merely Russia's puppet? Is the conflict frozen once and for all? Or is 2008 a turning year pointing to new dynamics with a potential to transforming actors and their perceptions and opening thus a new ground for politics and for the study of the conflict? I propose to take a loop by looking into the Turkish Cyprus case – a frozen conflict and 'colonized' by Turkey *de facto* State where changes can be traced over time – in order to detect similarities and differences with Abkhazia and the latter's potential to transform its seemingly 'frozen' enemies and friends.

⁵⁰ International Crisis group. "Abkhazia: Deepening Dependence." *Europe Report*, no 202 (2010): 1–22.

⁵¹ Cooley and Mitchell. "Engagement without Recognition," 64.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 65.

⁵³ *Nezavissimaya Gazeta*, quoted in O'Loughlin, John and Vladimir Kolossov. "Inside Abkhazia : Survey of Attitudes in a *de facto* State." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 27, no 1 (2011): 7–8.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁵⁵ Cooley and Mitchell, "Engagement without Recognition," 65.

⁵⁶ International Crisis Group, "Abkhazia: Deepening Dependence," 5.

⁵⁷ Kolsto, "The Sustainability and Future of Unrecognized Quasi-States," 494.

Similar Wisdom about Turkish Cyprus and Yet Dynamic Process of Identity Change

The 2004 referendum in Turkish Cyprus is puzzling. Although for external observers the conflict seemed frozen -with the enemy image fixed on Greek Cypriots and friends fixed in Turkey-, a transformation occurred. Not only the majority of the northern island voted for reunification but they elected a pro-peace government in 2003 which proceeded with the change of the official history narrative. What happened and how to explain the societal responsiveness to such a shift⁵⁸?

Ethnic Turkish narrative and its 2003–2004 shift

The Turkish Cypriot school textbooks used until 2003 present the history of Cyprus as part of Turkish history. They recount that Cyprus used to be attached to Anatolia but geological transformations broke it apart from Turkey⁵⁹. History begins with the arrival of the Ottomans in Cyprus and its account aims at proving that Cyprus has been Turkish until the British came in 1878. The Ottoman period is glorified: the Ottomans came to Cyprus in order to save the Greek Cypriots from Venetian cruelty. Then, Greek Cypriot revolts betrayed Ottoman tolerance. Turkish 1974 intervention equals glorious victory (in the Greek Cypriot narrative it is a tragic ending). "Our Motherland Turkey" is used throughout the books. Turkish Cypriots are presented as "Turks" and Greek Cypriots as the primary other, the occupiers, the invaders, the enemy⁶⁰. Pre-2004, there is no such thing as a purely Cypriot identity as the divide is fixed across the Greek-Turkish axis.

In July 2004, however, the Turkish-Cypriot Educational Planning and Programme Development Department recognized: 'Our texts encourage the student to make enemies'⁶¹. The new 2003 textbooks depart from the old enemy image and introduce a new strategy by redefining identity in order to sustain a united federal Cyprus. They do so by incorporating the territorial element into the collective identity and reducing 'self-other' confrontation⁶². The cover shows Cyprus map with no dividing line (previously, divided island was presented with Turkey included in the map). The usage of more inclusive terms such as "Cypriots" and "people" imply both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots⁶³. The

⁵⁸ The 2009–2010 shift back to the previous Turkish nationalist official narrative will be addressed briefly. The author addressed this puzzling return to the hard-line positions in her 2011 ISA paper. For the purpose of this article which aim is to 'extract' indicators for transformation in order to explore the Abkhaz case, only the 2004 Turkish Cyprus changes will be put forward. Note that the purpose is not to determine when and if peace settlement between the parties in conflict is possible, but rather when and how the context transforms and accounts for identity transformative fluctuations, developing thus a civic layer of group identity.

⁵⁹ Navaro-Yashin, Yael. *Faces of the State: secularism and public life in Turkey*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006 : 86.

⁶⁰ Calleja, Isabelle. "Education and the Teaching of History in the Light of Encouraging Conflict Resolution in Cyprus." *Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies* 13, no 2 (2008): 57.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁶² Vural, "Identity Fluctuations in the Turkish Cypriot Community," 133.

⁶³ Papadakis, Yiannis. "Narrative, Memory and History Education in Divided Cyprus: A Comparison on the 'History of Cyprus.'" *History and Memory* 20, n° 2 (2008):128–149.

two Cyprus people are presented as having many similarities and are divided because of nationalism and of the British "divide and rule" policies⁶⁴. How could such a shift from ethnic to civic perspective occur in the context of a frozen conflict and how could people be responsive to it?

External incentives for change

After years of putting forward the need for reunification as a condition for Cyprus to join the EU, the European Commission decided that the RoC should be accepted even if the island is split and even if Turkey is not accepted at the same time. Greek Cyprus position has been thus reinforced: knowing that they did not need to break a deal to gain EU membership, the South could allow itself to refuse the reunification. However, the force of Europeanization did have its effects: (1) because of the EU conditionality, Turkey changed its position towards the island; (2) EU economic incentives had their impact on the Turkish Cypriot society.

Turkey has always considered Cyprus as inherent part of Turkey. For decades Turkey supported financially, militarily and diplomatically the *de facto* State. However, the Turkish 2002 elections brought in a moderate reformist government, which recognized that Cyprus represented an obstacle to the ultimate Turkish objective: the EU accession⁶⁵. This objective accounts for a new external context. Another major element changed Turkey's role within TRNC: "the fallout of the 2001 financial crisis in Turkey led to further economic hardship in the TRNC, and accelerated the domestic discrediting of the political-economic foundations of the Turkish Cypriot state"⁶⁶. In the context of the economic crisis, material benefits of EU integration represented a great incentive⁶⁷. Massive demonstrations were organized in Northern Cyprus under the slogan 'This country is ours', denouncing the close relationship between the TRNC nationalist government of Rauf Denktaş and Ankara⁶⁸. This together with a general disenchantment with the kin-State patronizing policies contributed to the shift on the political spectrum.

⁶⁴ Chrysanthou, Anastasia. *A Comparative Analysis of the Teaching of History in the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Communities of Cyprus*. Masters thesis, Department of European Studies and International Relations, University of Nicosia, Cyprus, 2007: 64.

⁶⁵ Robins, Philip. "Turkish Foreign Policy Since 2002: Between a Post-Islamist Government and a Kemalist State." *International Affairs* 83, no 1 (2007): 297.

⁶⁶ Lacher, Hannes and Erol Kaymak. "Transforming Identities: Beyond the Politics of Non-Settlement in North Cyprus." *Mediterranean Politics* 10, no 2 (2005): 156–157.

⁶⁷ Bahçeli, "Saying Yes to EU Accession: Explaining the Turkish Cypriot Referendum Outcome." 63.

⁶⁸ Carkoglu, Ali and Sozen Ahmet. "The Turkish Cypriot General Elections of December 2003: Setting the Stage for Resolving the Cyprus Conflict?" In *Reflections on the Cyprus Problem: A Compilation of Recent Academic Contributions*, edited by Sozen Ahmet, 34. Cyprus Policy Center, Eastern Mediterranean University Printing-house, 2007; Bahçeli, Tozun. "Under Turkey's Wings. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the Struggle for International Acceptance." In *De Facto States. The Quest for Sovereignty*, edited by Bahçeli Tozun, Bartmann Barry and Srebrnik Henry, 283. London and New York: Routledge, 2004b.

Internal political splits

These external developments account for the results of the 2003 parliamentary elections in TRNC. The peace-oriented, left-wing opposition party CTP (Republican Turkish Party) defeated Denktash government with the slogan "Europe within sight"⁶⁹. Contrary to the received wisdom featuring the conflict as one between two homogeneous nationalist communities, identifying with their respective "motherlands," namely Greece and Turkey, the inner identity divisions are more complicated. On both sides of the island, right-wing political parties expressed the nationalist Greek/Turkish belonging (DIKO and UBP respectively) while left-wing parties (AKEL and CTP respectively) proposed a Cypriot-centred alternative⁷⁰. As argued by Loizides⁷¹, the growth of the nonviolent pro-peace movement among the Turkish Cypriots in 2002–2004 period against Denktash can be explained through the following TRNC internal politics. First, opposition grew when the nationalist party could not rely anymore on patronage through allocation of properties left by Greek Cypriot refugees and appointments in the Turkish Cypriot administrative structures⁷². Second, subsequent administrations failed to prevent the exodus of young Turkish Cypriots and to stop the influx of Turkish settlers. Third, Denktash's nationalism had limited appeal among the young Turkish Cypriots who did not experience violence. Finally, the Turkish Cypriots realized that the goal for independence and international recognition proved to be a chimera while at the same time they risked losing EU accession⁷³. CTP, leaded by Mehet Ali Talat, portrayed an all inclusive identity combining the vision of joining the EU with equal citizenship for all⁷⁴. Favouring reunification, CTP soon changed the history books that clearly promoted the Cyprus civic goals.

Identity transformation

Actually, the 2004 political shift would not have been possible was it not for "a reconstruction of patterns of individual and collective [Turkish Cypriot] identity [which] prepared the ground for ... pro-settlement parties"⁷⁵. In their concluding remarks of a statistical research of values of the Cypriots, Yesilada, Noordijk and Webster say that "while the island certainly contains distinct communities, they are more similar to one another than they are to their respective mainland counterparts... [R]ecent immigrants from the mainland prob-

⁶⁹ Diez, Thomas, Stephan Stetter and Mathias Albert. "The European Union and Border Conflicts: The Transformative Power of Integration." *International Organization* 60 (2006): 580.

⁷⁰ Papadakis, Yiannis. "Narrative, Memory and History Education in Divided Cyprus: A Comparison on the 'History of Cyprus.'" *History and Memory* 20, no 2 (2008): 262; Papadakis, Yiannis, Nicos Peristianis and Gizela Welz. *Divided Cyprus. Modernity, History and an Island in Conflict*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006: 9.

⁷¹ Loizides, Neophytos. "Ethnic Nationalism and Adaptation in Cyprus." *International Studies Perspectives* 8 (2007):181–182.

⁷² Lacher and Kaymak, "Transforming Identities," 154–156.

⁷³ Ibid, 156–157.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 158–159.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 149.

ably pushing intolerance scores in Northern Cyprus higher⁷⁶. Three reasons are usually referred to when speaking critically of the settlers from Turkey: (1) "they threw us out of here"⁷⁷; (2) they outnumbered us; (3) they occupy high administrative and military positions. Living for over 30 years in isolation from the Greek Cypriots but with people from Turkey, Turkish Cypriots distinguish "us" Cypriots from "them" the settlers; living together brought into light certain distinctive cultural traits, such as the different manner of wearing the head-scarf or of arranging gardens in the backyards. This is most obvious among young Turkish Cypriots who never lived with or even met a Greek Cypriot⁷⁸. Vural and Rustemli sustain that historically 'socio-economic interactions were the most important factors contributing to the development of the notion of 'territorial togetherness' which engendered the incipient concept of 'Cypriotness' as a common sense of belonging that provided a basis for civic conceptualization of collective identity⁷⁹. In 2009, "Cyprus 2015 – Research and Dialogue for a Sustainable Future" survey finds that⁸⁰

as far as the *perception of the other community was concerned* ... there was a very strong convergence between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots who preferred to view the current problem looking through the 'others' lenses and with the emphasis of the notion of compromise rather than a win-win stubbornness. This is a very promising finding for the future as the two Cypriot communities believe that 'empathy' is a *sine qua non* for the prospect for success of the settlement talks and negotiations.

Vural and Rustemli argue that

Turkish Cypriot identity encompasses various components and that identity descriptions opt to change in response to changing political environment⁸¹... There is thus a 'possibility of identity fluctuations that transcend an ethno-national construction of 'community boundaries' in the 'Turkish-Cypriot' community'⁸²... Despite official support to define and preserve collective identity in reference to ethno-national origin (Turkishness), a civic-territorial notion of 'Cypriotness' gained saliency⁸³.

In sum, the transformation of the Turkish Cypriot identity by the development of the Cypriot civic identification was possible because the perception of the mainland Turks and of the kin-State patronage had modified. For the transformation to be politically salient and expressed in the State-building policies, opportunity windows needed to open⁸⁴. This

⁷⁶ Yesilada, Birol, Peter Noordjik and Craig Webster. "Religiosity and Social Values of Cypriots." *Social Compass* 56, no. 1 (2009): 30.

⁷⁷ Lacher and Kaymak, "Transforming Identities," 155; Navaro-Yashin, Yael. *Faces of the State: secularism and public life in Turkey*, 87.

⁷⁸ Lacher and Kaymak, "Transforming Identities," 155.

⁷⁹ Vural, "Redefining Identity in the Turkish-Cypriot School History Textbooks," 331.

⁸⁰ Sözen, Ahmet. "A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges." *Turkish Studies* 11, no 1 (2010): 103–123.

⁸¹ Vural, "Redefining Identity in the Turkish-Cypriot School History Textbooks," 332.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 335.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 344.

⁸⁴ The Turkish Cypriots have been disappointed by the 2004 'No' from the Greek Cypriots and by the international community who failed to deliver its promises. Hence, they moved back in 2009 towards the preferred two-state

was possible because of the changed external configuration of influences and incentives. For these to be used however, an internal political split has to be in place. Is there any change in the external environment to the Abkhaz frozen conflict? Are political divisions taking place? How does the society respond? Is there any sign of developing a civic layer to the Abkhaz identity?

Turkish Cyprus' Dynamics in Abkhazia?

Since the 2008 war and recognition by Russia, re-integration with Georgia is less probable. But Abkhaz (perceived) security threat is diminished and that changes political dynamics. From security concerns and emphasis on Georgia's 'imperialism', people may now turn their attention to a set of so far scarcely addressed problems. There is a shift on the political agenda to cope with internal socio-economic issues, the issue of the degree of economic and security dependency, and on the issue of democracy and inclusion of the ethnic diversity among the Abkhaz population. This new context, similarly to the 2004 Turkish Cyprus case, is responsible for the search of a multi-vector foreign policy to distance itself from Russia (as Turkish Cyprus from Turkey), for internal political splits (as observed on the TC political arena) and for the process redefining the Abkhaz identity in both ethnic and civic terms (as the transformed TC identity where a civic identification has been developed over time and co-exists with the ethnic layer of identity).

Abkhazia between Russia-EU-Turkey Triangle Poles (along frozen relation with Georgia)

Notwithstanding its close ties with Russia, Abkhazia is eager to have options. Indeed, Abkhazia's interests do not always go hand in hand with Russia. Take for example the Kosovo precedent. Faced with its own separatist regions in the North Caucasus, Russia is opposed to Kosovo's recognition; Abkhazia, however, is naturally in favour of the ruling. O'Loughlin and Kolossov record their conversation with the *de facto* President of Abkhazia, Sergei Bagapsh, in 2009, who stressed that Abkhazia was "a European country" committed to a non-aligned policy⁸⁵. In fact, the isolation of Abkhazia from the global community, the quasi absence of Western presence in the *de facto* State, pushed Abkhazians increasingly closer to Russia⁸⁶. After interviewing a number of Abkhazian leaders and activists, Garb⁸⁷ asserts that:

Abkhazians are fairly certain that Russia does not want an independent Abkhazia that is recognized by any other country. Russia, they say, is happy that the rest of the world does not follow it in recognizing Abkhazia. This gives Russia exclusive rights to Abkhazia by default. It also prevents Georgia from having any influence over Abkhazia. If Abkhazia's isolation

solution. But the transformed identity offers an optimistic perspective for the future, whether within one state or two.

⁸⁵ O'Loughlin and Kolossov, "Inside Abkhazia," 37.

⁸⁶ Garb, "The View from Abkhazia of South Ossetia Ablaze," 244.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

continues, the people fear that eventually Russia will buy up and occupy Abkhazia like the former colony it once was. Abkhazians want to be a neutral buffer zone between their two neighbours. They want to dilute their dependence on Russia, and engage with the US and Europe to overcome their international isolation.

These findings concord with Clogg's observations: Abkhazia possesses a European identity, and aspirations for closer links with the political and cultural institutions of Europe; if by necessity it is dependent on Russia, Abkhazians wish for more room for manoeuvre⁸⁸. Although anti-Western sentiment was observed in the wake of the 2008 war as Abkhazians resented Western countries inaction while Georgia undertook violent actions against South Ossetia, Abkhazians still see the European Union as a potentially positive actor in the region⁸⁹.

For the purpose of lessening Russia's influence in Abkhazia while meeting local expectations, a new Western (EU and US) policy is embraced, at least at the discursive level: "engagement without recognition". According to this strategy, the isolation of Abkhazia would be lessened by creating opportunities to engage with the West on economic, social, and cultural issues, despite non recognition. Following Cooley and Mitchell, 'by separating the international legal dimensions of sovereignty from its governance aspects, the West can attempt to gain some needed strategic leverage over Abkhazia'⁹⁰. The EU engagement is meant to develop a "multi-vector" foreign policy, and offer Abkhaz decision-makers credible alternatives when negotiating with Russia⁹¹. The results of this policy are to be seen, but – if consequently applied – it has the potential to modify Abkhazia's opportunity structures.

But there is now another attracting pole in the region, Turkey. Abkhazia's economic exchanges with Turkey and its interest in the kin Abkhaz population living there, make the *de facto* State look increasingly in that direction. Moreover, Turkey – a NATO member aspiring to join the EU – has a record of good relations with Georgia mostly through the 1990s, and since mid-2000s has had friendly arrangements with Russia, making this country an attractive partner for peace-building and stability in the region. This is a new configuration in the Black Sea region.

After the 2008 war, Turkey has attempted to play a more active role in the South Caucasus, and proposed the Caucasus Security and Cooperation Platform for the region which failed, however, to gain adherence. As sustained by Taymaz⁹², there are two important factors behind Turkey's initiatives and policies in the region. First, Turkey is indeed in a strategic location for energy transportation between main user and supplier countries. There is a demand to build pipelines both in the East-West and in the North-South directions, and Turkey is located just at the intersection of these routes. Second, Turkey has adopted an active policy stance in international relations to become a regional player. The

⁸⁸ Clogg, "The Politics of Identity in Post-Soviet Abkhazia," 324.

⁸⁹ Garb, "The View from Abkhazia of South Ossetia Ablaze," 240.

⁹⁰ Cooley and Mitchell, "Engagement without Recognition," 60.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁹² Taymaz, Erol. "Economic Cooperation for Stability in the Caucasus. Prospects for Abkhazia-Turkey Economic Relations." *Caucasian Center for Strategic Studies Discussion Paper*, no. 0903 (2009): 7.

new policy adopted by AKP as of 2001 was based on the principles of "zero-problem" with neighbours and "multi-dimensional foreign policy". Turkish foreign policy seeks to maintain close ties with both the West and the non-Western world.

In the 1990s and 2000s, Turkey considered Georgia as a strategic ally. Georgia provided the only route for transporting Azeri oil/gas to Turkey because Armenia was not an option as a result of the Nagorno Karabakh problem. Turkey needs Georgia and seeks stability there. It has been nervous about the Saakashvili government's confrontational position towards Moscow⁹³. In fact, after the EU granted Turkey candidate country status in 2004, Turkey's Black Sea priorities were secondary. But when the Turkey-EU accession process has stalled, Turkey began paying attention to the Black Sea region, but this time in partnership with Russia⁹⁴. After decades of political competition, Turkey and the Russian Federation started to establish a new bilateral relationship. Since 2003, President Putin and Prime Minister Erdogan have held multiple meetings, and Russia and Turkey seem to have found common ground on once contentious issues⁹⁵. In fact, Russia became Turkey's second-largest trading partner, although Turkey's relationship with Russia is characterized by a mixture of competition and cooperation in the region⁹⁶.

Turkey established direct trade with Abkhazia. Even if the Georgian government intercepts Turkish vessels sailing to Sukhum/i, business relations between Turkey and Abkhazia have grown. For Abkhazia, it is a premium partner not only for the purpose of lessening dependence from Russia, but because 'direct links with Turkey could persuade thousands of Turkish Abkhazians to return to the land of their fathers and repopulate the empty countryside'⁹⁷.

So, there is interdependence between Turkey and Russia. At the same time Turkey needs Georgia. But Georgia needs a European Turkey too. Indeed, having an EU member state right on its border would be a huge boost to the country's economic and political development⁹⁸. Finally, Abkhazia needs Turkey. In line with Cooley and Mitchell's argument, if the West does not engage in Abkhazia, it may miss an opportunity to exploit Abkhaz reservations about their increasing ties and overwhelming dependence on Russia. These links are important to understand Turkey's role in the region and the potential for transforming relationships, including between Abkhazia and Russia, in the future.

2004 Abkhazia's stand against Russia and further internal splits

Similarly to the Turkish Cyprus case, Abkhazia enjoys a relatively open and democratic public space. It has opposition media critical of the administration and a number of different political parties along with influential public organisations (People's Party, Amtsakhara,

⁹³ Baran, Zeyno. "Turkey and the Wider Black Sea Region." In *The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century*, edited by Daniel Hamilton and Gerhard Mangott. Washington DC: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2008: 101.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 93.

⁹⁵ Hill, Fiona and Omer Taspinar. *Russia and Turkey in the Caucasus: Moving Together to Preserve the Status Quo?* Institut Francais des Relations Internationales, Research Programme Russia/CIS, 2006.

⁹⁶ Baran, "Turkey and the Wider Black Sea Region," 94–95.

⁹⁷ Garb, "The View from Abkhazia of South Ossetia Ablaze," 243.

⁹⁸ Hill and Taspinar, *Russia and Turkey in the Caucasus; Economy and conflict research group of the south Caucasus. From war economies to peace economies in the south Caucasus. Pensord: International alert. 2004: 61.*

Aytayra, United Abkhazia)⁹⁹. Following Lucan Way's argument on 'failed authoritarianism', the causes of such a pluralistic nature of the Abkhaz society lay maybe less in the 'robust, vibrant and good civil society' than in Abkhazia's weak regime, but that is not the point here. The 2004 presidential elections represent a test for the regime¹⁰⁰ and for the civil society:

The Abkhazian civil society community is proud of having stood up to Putin's government and the pro-Russian elites in Abkhazia during their presidential election in October 2004, when the pro-Russian party and its supporters in Moscow did not want to accept the defeat of their preferred candidate, Raul Khajimba. Abkhazia's tiny civil society stood by the voters who wanted a new leader, Sergey Bagapsh, who was subsequently elected¹⁰¹.

The first tour of the elections took place on 3 October 2004. No serious differences could be discerned in the candidates' programmes. They all embraced reforms in state institutions, independence of Abkhazia, a degree of pro-Russian orientation and hard-line approach to negotiations with Georgia. The election was thus about personalities rather than about ideas¹⁰² the then-prime minister Raul Khajimba was supported by the then president of Abkhazia Ardzinba and by Russia, as he was more sympathetic to the latter business interests¹⁰³. Khajimba was even campaigning with posters depicting him and President Putin shaking hands¹⁰⁴. However, Khajimba lost elections to Sergei Bagapsh (who won votes in Georgian-inhabited Gal/i region, apparently because of his more flexible attitude towards this ethnic group as his wife is Georgian), whose victory has been contested by the authorities. The dispute lasted two months with Russia firmly supporting Khajimba¹⁰⁵. It applied open pressure on Abkhazia requesting a re-run of the elections: threatening to close the border, to stop paying pensions, to stop the rail communications and blocking the import of agricultural goods to Russia. In the end a deal has been imposed on Bagapsh who accepted to run together with Khajimba for a new round of elections, where Khajimba would become vice-president. Bagapsh was re-elected in tandem with Khajimba in January 2005 and in time he managed to rebuilt his relations with Russia¹⁰⁶. Both candidates were pro-Russian, but the point is that Abkhazians resisted direct Russia's pressure showing that they are not mere puppet of its Northern neighbour. The election opens also a new space for contesting the degree of Russia's influence in Abkhazia.

Indeed, Abkhazia's overwhelming dependence on Russia raises concerns among Abkhaz politicians, media commentators, and civil society resulting in an emergence of political splits. For example, members of the opposition voiced some objections to the law allowing Abkhazians to apply for Russian passports, on the grounds of "reduced

⁹⁹ Skakov, Alexander. "Abkhazia at a Crossroads: On the Domestic Political Situation in the Republic of Abkhazia." *Iran & the Caucasus* (2005): 160.

¹⁰⁰ Popescu, Nicu. "Democracy in Secessionism: Transnistria and Abkhazia's Domestic Policies." *CPS International Policy Fellowship Program, Open Society Institute* (2006): 16–17.

¹⁰¹ Garb, "The View from Abkhazia of South Ossetia Ablaze," 240.

¹⁰² Skakov, "Abkhazia at a Crossroads," 177.

¹⁰³ Garb, "The View from Abkhazia of South Ossetia Ablaze," 244.

¹⁰⁴ Popescu, "Democracy in Secessionism," 14.

¹⁰⁵ Skakov, "Abkhazia at a Crossroads," 182.

¹⁰⁶ Popescu, "Democracy in Secessionism," 15.

sovereignty"¹⁰⁷ or the May 2009 border protection treaty which was signed without warning by the Abkhaz authorities and the Russian Ministry of Defence, and was not submitted to the Abkhaz parliament for deliberation, lead to criticisms by Abkhaz parliamentarians and journalists¹⁰⁸. These splits became salient during the 2009 presidential campaign and elections. Candidates, such as Beslan Butba of the Economic Development Party or Raul Khadjimba, accused the then President Bagapsh of eroding Abkhaz independence and selling Abkhazia's sovereignty¹⁰⁹. Ironically, even the Abkhazian opposition figures closer to Russia than Bagapsh, sought to make an issue out of deepening dependence on Russia in the these elections¹¹⁰. This indicates, however, the receptiveness of the electorate for such an 'anti-Russian' discourse.

Society responsiveness to Russia, to Georgia and to internal ethnic diversity

Open, public debates are possible and present in the Abkhaz society. Nicu Popescu finds the Abkhaz civil society quite active and developed given the circumstances and the size of the *de facto* state. As of his writings in 2006, there were some 10–15 active NGOs; civil society publishes its own periodic journal; has more or less regular civil society roundtables where political issues are discussed openly, and even monitored the 2004 elections by creating a broad NGO Coalition "For fair elections"¹¹¹. It is thus rather easy to observe changes in the perceptions of enemies and friends at the level of the society.

Perceiving Russia: self-interested protector and too much of a patron

Despite Russia being seen as the protector and security guarantor of the *de facto* state, as Turkey is for Turkish Cypriots, two other factors need to be combined in order to understand how Abkhaz people perceive Russia: the asymmetrical Abkhazian-Russian relations and past historical oppression. And these elements generate ethnic Abkhaz fears of domination¹¹². Looking only at the security question, one would not understand why Kadjimba's ratings went down; he is considered 'as someone who's put his coming to power ahead of the vital interests of his own people. At the same time, the clumsy rhetoric emanating from Russia is encouraging anti-Russian sentiments in Abkhazia'¹¹³. The post-2008 governmental deals with Russia, mentioned above, further add to 'increasing people's fears that the Russians have already decided that Abkhazia's resources *de facto* belong to Russia'¹¹⁴.

¹⁰⁷ Skakov, "Abkhazia at a Crossroads," 162.

¹⁰⁸ Cooley and Mitchell. "Engagement without Recognition," 64.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 66.

¹¹⁰ O'Loughlin and Kolossov, "Inside Abkhazia."

¹¹¹ Popescu, "Democracy in Secessionism," 16.

¹¹² O'Loughlin and Kolossov, "Inside Abkhazia," 37.

¹¹³ Skakov, "Abkhazia at a Crossroads," 182.

¹¹⁴ Garb, "The View from Abkhazia of South Ossetia Ablaze," 244.

Abkhazians did not forget Tsarist empire's russification policies and oppression forcing mass migration from Abkhazia to the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century¹¹⁵. Although their liberation movement was directed in the 1990s against the Georgian nationalizing state, Russian presence is resented. Abkhaz citizens expressed concern, for example, when during the 2009 presidential elections, Russia issued proposals to locate in Abkhazia dormitories for temporary workers installing 2014 Sochi Olympics infrastructures. Although this project may be helpful to boost the economy, ethnic Abkhazians fear for demographic consequences of this development¹¹⁶. Not representing majority population, but a mere plurality even after post-war massive displacements of Georgians, Abkhazians fear changing further demographic structures which would potentially render them a minority group within its titular *de facto* state (see below). Last but not least, the question of the development of the Abkhaz language is perceived as being endangered. It is in direct competition with Russian which is used as the region's lingua franca (most of non ethnic Abkhazians don't speak any Abkhaz) and which provides access to quality higher education¹¹⁷. Note that the Georgian language is no more on the agenda. The external context modified the scope of internal interests and fears.

Perceiving Georgia: a potential (trans-border) friend?

Georgians returning to an independent Abkhazia could live in peace: 'in all honesty, these people [those living in Abkhazia] could even live together with the Georgians as they once did, but only with the assurance of no more Georgian initiated fighting'¹¹⁸ 'In spite of the recent past, they still long for a close relationship with a stable, pacific, prosperous Georgia: two small Caucasian neighbours linked by a common interest in Europe, Turkey and the wider world'¹¹⁹.

Two studies deal extensively with the civil society question, one by Mikhelidze and Pirozzi¹²⁰ and the other by Popescu¹²¹. Since the mid-1990s, similarly to the Turkish Cyprus case, a number of international NGOs' projects permitted regular meetings between Georgians and Abkhazians. These included: the "Schlaining Process" (20 meetings between 2000 and 2007) organised by the Berghof Research Centre for Constructive Conflict Management and later by Conciliation Resources, London; meetings organized by the University of California Irvine that resulted in publications; the confidence-building initiative supported by the European Commission and run by the Toledo International Centre for Peace¹²². 'With time a network of Abkhaz and Georgian civil society representatives

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 244.

¹¹⁶ O'Loughlin and Kolossov, "Inside Abkhazia," 21.

¹¹⁷ Clogg, "The Politics of Identity in Post-Soviet Abkhazia," 310; Sabirova, "Both War and Peace in the 'Country of the Soul,'" 56.

¹¹⁸ Amza-Natia Hewitt quoted in Garb, "The View from Abkhazia of South Ossetia Ablaze," 247.

¹¹⁹ Ascherson, "A chance to join the world."

¹²⁰ Mikhelidze, Nona and Pirozzi Nicoletta. „Civil Society and Conflict Transformation in Abkhazia, Israel/Palestine, Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria and Western Sahara." *MICROCON Policy Working* November, no. 3 (2008).

¹²¹ Popescu, "The EU and Civil Society in the Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict."

¹²² Ibid, 7.

emerged. They met regularly and enjoyed some levels of mutual trust and understanding¹²³. But there are also active local NGOs meeting regularly with Georgian NGOs (and even officials) and producing together policy reports. Some carry out programmes for students in secondary schools and universities. Among these NGOs there are: Foundation for Citizens' Initiative and Future of Humankind, Centre for Humanitarian Programs, Center for Development of a Civil Society, Association of Women of Abkhazia, Rehabilitation Centre "Inva-Sodeistvie", Sukhum Media Club, Union of Businesswomen or the Fund of Civil Initiatives¹²⁴. One important initiative was a campaign – "Sorry/Hatamzait" – launched by Human Rights in Georgia NGO admitting and apologizing for past wrongs and thus trying to deconstruct enemy images¹²⁵. As in Cyprus, such dialogue with Georgia was controversial. Besides the above mentioned organisations, there are two other types of NGOs in Abkhazia: "socio-political organisations" and organization supported by Russia, some of which criticise the dialogue with the Georgians and the Western financing, i.e. presumed pro-Western orientation of the activities¹²⁶.

Direct Abkhaz-Georgian encounters do not constitute the only reconciliation medium. Documentaries have been produced by Studio Re in Georgia showing Abkhaz and Georgian views of the conflict as well as the daily live on the two sides, 'as an attempt to "humanise" the image of the "other" across the dividing line of the conflict'¹²⁷. Although, given the state control over TV, radio and the press, there are little mass media channels for information exchange, some journalists participate in bilateral meetings, trainings and seminars. There also exist at least two journal published independently by the Abkhaz civil society as well as a radio programme '*No Peace, No War*' on post-war life in the Abkhaz and Georgian communities. However, internet is quasi non-existent and Russian television is still the dominant source of information in Abkhazia, heavily influencing public opinion¹²⁸. Mikhelidze and Pirozzi note also that the above mentioned reconciliation initiatives have failed to ensure links and communications between top and grassroots levels¹²⁹.

Popescu has a bit more positive assessment of the civil society activities. The dialogue, constrained as it may be, allowed the dismantlement of some negative stereotypes about the other. "These dialogues created a strong nucleus of people who communicate with each other. If there will be a political process leading to a deal, this group of people will be key in re-building bridges among the two societies" (Georgian civil society representative quoted in Popescu¹³⁰); one may add: ... independently of the nature of the deal which may simply involve two neighbour political entities working for the stability in the region.

In a report, David Philips argues that, although there is not a lot of common ground between Abkhazia and Georgia, "business is the common language" and several projects, such as the Enguri Sand and Gravel Export Project, Black Sea Resorts and Project Enter-

¹²³ Ibid, 8.

¹²⁴ Mikhelidze and Pirozzi, "Civil Society and Conflict Transformation," 27; *ibid*, 11.

¹²⁵ Mikhelidze and Pirozzi, "Civil Society and Conflict Transformation," 28–29.

¹²⁶ Popescu, "The Eu and Civil Society in the Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict," 15–16.

¹²⁷ Popescu, "Democracy in Secessionism," 9.

¹²⁸ Mikhelidze and Pirozzi, "Civil Society and Conflict Transformation," 28; Popescu, "Democracy in Secessionism," 16.

¹²⁹ Mikhelidze and Pirozzi, "Civil Society and Conflict Transformation," 24.

¹³⁰ Popescu, "Democracy in Secessionism," 20.

tainment Centers and agri-business enterprises, offer the potential for mutual benefits¹³¹. Indeed, opinion polls show readiness for business relations. 63% of displaced Georgians are prepared to participate in joint projects, 24% believe even that such projects are needed and only 13% are doubtful as to their necessity¹³². 86% of managers and co-owners of large companies in Georgia are greatly motivated to make investments in the economy of the conflict regions. There also is a large consensus (80%) that the process of rapprochement of the Georgians and Abkhaz depends on not only on the involvement of government representatives and international organizations but equally on individual and collective members of society.

These frail signs of rapprochement notwithstanding, since 2008, Georgia is less on the Abkhaz agenda. Secured within the *status quo*, Abkhazians turned more attention to internal politics and internal diversity, including the issue of ethnic Georgians in Abkhazia.

Abkhaz ethnic identity and State: is there any place for a civic identity layer?

Although the Abkhazians in the political science literature appear to be one, unified whole, besides the political splits presented above, the question of group identity is far from the homogeneous image one gets. And although the Abkhaz *de facto* State is constructed by and for the Abkhaz titular people, Abkhazians themselves are aware of their fragile plurality and of the multi-ethnic character of their polity. Let's remember that in 1989 ethnic Abkhaz constituted 17% of the population (considered as the 'state-forming nation'); since then it has grown as a result of 1992–1993 war displacements and of out-migration. According to the 2003 census, 43.8% are ethnic Abkhaz, 20.8% are Armenians, 21.3% are Mingrelians/Georgians, and 10.8% are Russians¹³³. Skakov notes, however, that during the 10 years after the war, the number of ethnic Abkhazians has shrunk by 30,000¹³⁴. In this context, ethnic Abkhazians fear for their survival as a distinct ethnic group and make up policies ensuring their group's political dominant position – nationalizing policies in Brubaker's terms¹³⁵. They are thus reticent as to addressing the question of inter-ethnic relations within Abkhazia. The continued lack of resolution of the conflict with Georgia has tended to focus Abkhaz political attention towards external matters and only recently the issue of Abkhaz State-building with diversity and in civic terms gained attention. This is a difficult task as many people in Abkhazia still see their security as potentially undermined by the ethnic Georgian population in the Gal/i region¹³⁶.

Sociological research conducted by O'Loughlin and Kolossov shows the sense of pride among the Abkhaz, reflected among other things in their ability to identify by name Abkhaz writers and other cultural figures, being at a much higher level than the pride

¹³¹ O'Loughlin and Kolossov, "Inside Abkhazia," 10.

¹³² "Georgian and Abkhaz Perspectives on Human Security and Development in Conflict-Affected Areas," 67.

¹³³ Clogg, "The Politics of Identity in Post-Soviet Abkhazia," 307; Kolstø and Blakkisrud, "Living with Non-Recognition," 498.

¹³⁴ Skakov, "Abkhazia at a Crossroads," 174.

¹³⁵ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*.

¹³⁶ Clogg, "The Politics of Identity in Post-Soviet Abkhazia," 311.

vested in their ethnicity by other groups¹³⁷. Language is a particularly sensitive issue for the Abkhaz. Abkhaz is constitutionally the state language of Abkhazia. For practical reasons, Russian is, however, mentioned as an official language. After all, Russian is the lingua franca in Abkhazia and is often used at home by Abkhaz and non-Abkhaz. As in nearly all post-Soviet countries, debates concerning a language law have been very heated and reflect the internal debate regarding the nature of the state-building project. The law envisages a shift away from Russian. It stipulates that Abkhaz must be widely used in the media, that all meetings with the president, government and parliament should soon be held in Abkhaz, and that by 2015 all state workers must know Abkhaz¹³⁸. Based on language provisions as well as on the political representation of non-Abkhaz, many analysts identify Abkhazia in terms of 'ethnocracy', term first used by Smooha to describe Israel, re-appropriated by authors working on Estonia and Latvia. The general perception of the non-Abkhaz groups is that they are under-represented and that in the field of law enforcement, which is dominated by ethnic Abkhaz, different rules are applied to the Abkhaz and non-Abkhaz¹³⁹.

Given the rather fragile demographic position of the titular nation, it is not surprising to see Abkhazians preoccupied with the demographic structure of the state. The question of the return of the IDP – all ethnic Georgians – is certainly very sensitive, but Abkhaz fears do not concern that ethnic group alone. The influx of Armenians from Nagorno-Karabagh into the Gagra region, inhabited mainly by Abkhaz Armenians, is quite controversial since 2002 when National Security made public its displeasure with Armenian organisations "Krunk" and "Mashtots", which allegedly coordinated this immigration. The Abkhaz Internal Affairs Ministry puts the total number of "illegal migrants" in the district of Gagra at 2,000¹⁴⁰. Sabirova¹⁴¹ affirms that relations between the Abkhaz and the Armenians could become a source of tension and that the Armenian youth express concern about their future.

The perceived need for enhancing ethnic Abkhaz demographic superiority results in new policies turned towards the Abkhaz diaspora in Turkey. The *de facto* government invites and creates incentives for them to return to their historic homeland¹⁴². These Turkish Abkhazians are descendants of the 19th century migrants, forced by the Tsarist Empire to leave the region. If the return policies have any mass effect (which is not the case as yet), ethnic Abkhazians may constitute a majority. This, however, can have similar consequences on perceived difference as observed in the case of Turkish Cypriots distancing themselves from the settlers from Turkey. These returnees may come to represent another 'other', besides already present Georgians, Armenians and Russians.

The nation-building policies have their limits in the Abkhaz context. Abkhazia's secessionist movement has been defined predominantly in ethnic terms of a struggle against the Georgians¹⁴³, but on-the-ground research shows that there is a tension between an ethnic and a civic understanding of the Abkhaz nation. Research conducted by Sabirova shows

¹³⁷ O'Loughlin and Kolossov, "Inside Abkhazia," 26.

¹³⁸ Clogg, "The Politics of Identity in Post-Soviet Abkhazia," 315.

¹³⁹ O'Loughlin and Kolossov, "Inside Abkhazia," 28; Clogg, "The Politics of Identity in Post-Soviet Abkhazia," 317.

¹⁴⁰ Skakov, "Abkhazia at a Crossroads," 174.

¹⁴¹ Sabirova, "Both War and Peace in the 'Country of the Soul,'" 60.

¹⁴² Clogg, "The Politics of Identity in Post-Soviet Abkhazia," 319.

¹⁴³ Popescu, "Democracy in Secessionism," 18.

that there is no consensus in society as to whether 'Abkhazian' can be not only a marker of ethnic but also of a civically based national identity¹⁴⁴. Before 2008 nation-building policies were constructed to justify the separatist cause¹⁴⁵, but the new context made obvious that there are latent internal tensions surrounding the Abkhaz state-building project and that there is a need to address the issue of ethnic diversity.

One the signs of the policy reorientation is the government's position towards the Gal/i region and its Georgian inhabitants. Due to the unstable situation and hostile to the centre environment, this region was neglected by Sukhum/i. Government officials interviewed by O'Loughlin and Kolossov¹⁴⁶ in November 2009, however, indicated that 'development in Gal(i) was now a state priority, with the region's Georgian/Mingrelian population as Abkhazian citizens to whose needs and aspirations they should respond'¹⁴⁷. The new official position is confirmed by Clogg who notes that there is a more positive attitude and more attention focused on improving inter-ethnic relations, particularly with regard to the Gal/i population¹⁴⁸. Both studies note, however, that these policies have opponents: the work to promote reconciliation with the ethnic Georgian community and to reduce the enemy image is seen as placing Abkhaz at unnecessary risk¹⁴⁹.

It seems though that ethnic Abkhazians in general see the need to integrate diversity. Armenians, Russians and Georgians constitute an important portion of the electorate after all. Skakov remarks *a propos* that, 'as paradoxical as it may sound, the outcome of the 2004 presidential election in Abkhazia was in the hands of Armenian-Abkhazians and Megreles of the Gali district'¹⁵⁰. Abkhaz political parties cannot do without appealing to the diverse ethnic segments of society. This assessment together with the 2010 opinion polls conducted by O'Loughlin and Kolossov¹⁵¹, indicate a space for inter-ethnic integration and for integrating even Abkhaz Georgians into the political community of Abkhazia.

Asked by O'Loughlin and Kolossov which solution to the frozen conflict they favour, 79% of Abkhaz supported independence and only 19% preferred integrating Russia. Armenians and Russians were split. 44% of the former group opted for independence while 51% for integration with Russia. 58% of the latter group opted for independence with 38% preferring integration with Russia. The main explanation for that split within the Armenian and Russian communities lies within their non-satisfaction with their political rights in present-day Abkhazia¹⁵²: Arguably, their better inclusion within the political realm would shift the preferred options. Interesting results were gathered among Georgians/Mingrelians. Asked which solution to the frozen conflict they favour, 48% of them responded they preferred option was Abkhaz independence (28% opted for "hard to say" or "refuse to answer"). Integration with Russia was very problematic for quite obvious reasons: hostile relations between Georgia

¹⁴⁴ Sabirova, "Both War and Peace in the 'Country of the Soul,'" 59.

¹⁴⁵ Dembinska, Magdalena. "Briser les logiques du 'gel': approche différenciée et transformative en Abkhazie et en Transnistrie." *Études internationales* 40, no 4 (2009): 611–629.

¹⁴⁶ O'Loughlin and Kolossov, "Inside Abkhazia," 178–201.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁴⁸ Clogg, "The Politics of Identity in Post-Soviet Abkhazia," 234.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Skakov, "Abkhazia at a Crossroads," 175.

¹⁵¹ O'Loughlin and Kolossov, "Inside Abkhazia."

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 38.

and Russia and poor treatment of ethnic Georgians in the Russia. Surprisingly, integration with Georgia was also problematic. O'Loughlin and Kolossov explain this result noting that only half of Georgians/Mingrelians thought that the economic situation was better in Georgia, and that residents of the Gal/i district have been actually poorly treated by Georgian authorities. Sabirova confirms this result. She finds that young people from the Gal/i region 'project an image of themselves as marginal to both Georgia and Abkhazia. They belong neither here nor there. Some speak neither Abkhaz nor Georgian'¹⁵³.

Turkish Cypriots distance themselves from Turkey allowing for a civic Turkish Cypriot identification. Georgians from Gal/i feel distance towards their kin Georgian state leaving a space for constructing a civic Abkhaz identification (or a space in limbo in Gal/i). The configuration is somewhat different though. Cypriot civic identification allows of thinking of island's reunification. In contrast, in the Abkhaz case the civic identification is rather to construct a separate multi-ethnic Abkhazia. Nevertheless, both transformations would enhance peace-building in the respective regions.

The idea of developing a civic identification receives support. The question of the need for integrating minorities was first raised in 1999 in the independent press. One of the theses is that 'the success of the Abkhaz state relies directly on consolidating the various ethnic groups in Abkhazia in one "people of Abkhazia."¹⁵⁴ What might unite them? Ethnic Abkhaz rate the preservation of the memory of the 1992–93 war (43.7%) and of *apsura* (Abkhaz code of conduct; 43.7%) highest, while non-Abkhaz rate 'equality of all ethnic groups' highest (49.7%)¹⁵⁵. The memory of the 1992–93 war is chosen by 32.5% of non-Abkhaz, this however would be exclusive of Gal/i Georgians. Although the answers by young ethnic Abkhaz differ slightly from the answers given by youth from other ethnic communities, Sabirova's results indicate some common opinions. High percentage of both groups think that living on the same territory (both ca. 37%) and a strong government (both ca. 31%) should provide basis for integration. Inclusive policies, however, similarly to the question of refugees' propriety rights in Cyprus, are confronted with the dilemma of the Georgian IDPs.

Potential for Conflict Transformation and for Fluctuating Identifications

Similarly to Turkey's presence in Northern Cyprus, Russia's growing presence in Abkhazia seems already to trigger opposition. The changing perception of patronizing Turkey and its settlers in Northern Cyprus, accounts for the transforming image of enemies and friends. This change translated into the political realm and into changing state-building policies when oppositional pro-peace political party made its way into the government in 2003 while taking opportunity widow presented by the EU incentive and Turkey's government reorientation of policies towards Cyprus. The change of Turkish Cyprus state-building policies was made explicit when the government introduced Cypriot-centred school books. The civic layer of the Turkish Cypriot collective identity was made salient in the

¹⁵³ Sabirova, "Both War and Peace in the 'Country of the Soul,'" 61.

¹⁵⁴ Clogg, "The Politics of Identity in Post-Soviet Abkhazia," 324.

¹⁵⁵ Sabirova, "Both War and Peace in the 'Country of the Soul,'" 55.

public sphere and received a positive response from the society. This responsiveness is necessary and depends on the processes occurring prior to such an explicit shift: transformation of perceptions of the "other".

Extracting the above-mentioned mechanisms for conflict transformation allowed us to examine the Abkhaz case while exploring the question whether conditions for such an identity transformation exist there despite the frozen appearances. The year 2008 represents a turning point as Abkhazia does no longer perceive a security threat. This allows for a modified political agenda and for differentiated positions. Russia's presence is resented even if welcomed for security reasons. Turkey is a potential new ally and kin-State for the (small number) of returning Abkhazians. There is a political plurality, which allows for the institutionalization of opponent political parties, each promoting different degrees of friendship with Russia and adversity with Georgia; parties which seem to respond (instrumentally) to the electorate's needs and perceptions and to the economic interests. Integration with Georgia is still not an option, while informal cooperation at the societal level seems to receive some space. The perception of enemies and friends is not diametrically changed but some fluidity may be observed. The civic layer of the Abkhaz identity has some potential to develop, but with a quite different meaning for conflict transformation than in the Cypriot case. The Turkish Cypriot civic component allows for reunification with the former enemy, the Greek Cypriots. The Abkhaz civic identification, on the contrary, is constructed in separation from the Georgians in Georgia. It does not allow for reunification but rather for the Abkhaz independent state-building inclusive of other ethnic groups, significantly of the Georgian community in Gal/i also. Although not promising for the tenants if the territorial integrity of Georgia and the federative solutions proposed by the international organisations, such a transformation should be assessed positively for the region's stability as it dilutes ethnic components in conflict.

The transformative-fluctuating account offers an alternative to statist-institutional account of the frozen conflicts. It allows for internal dynamics and encompasses policy shifts, even the back-and-forth shifts, as in the Turkish Cypriot 2004 and 2009 case (the latter is studied elsewhere). It allows to study dynamic internal processes which evolve in response to changing contexts of choice. One of such processes consists in the development of a civic component of collective identity, transforming the nature underlying the 'frozen' conflict. The ethnic Turkish/Abkhaz and civic Turkish Cypriot/Abkhaz perceptions are not understood as 'either or'. Rather, they co-exist over long periods of time as different components of the same identity. They are not inherently contradictory but they can be in conflict when faced with difficult choices. Identity responds to political events 'choosing' one identity component over another in particular contexts. Identity transforms while acquiring additional identity layers or by a long process of replacing some identifications. It is not a panacea, though, as 'changing circumstances may trigger the old attitudes [ethnic hostile components] in their full force'¹⁵⁶, but it allows for switching and for eventual – although rare – dilution of the hostile layers.

¹⁵⁶ Kelman, "Reconciliation as Identity Change," 2-3

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Economic Transformation and Privatization

Background and Introduction

In its simplest form, privatization is de-statism – that is, removing the state as the owner of property and assets. From the outset of the transformation process in Poland, significant systemic limitations to the privatization process existed¹. A developed market infrastructure was absent. Businesses that were being prepared for privatization lacked the ability to conduct market research, and advisory and consulting services were in short supply. Procedures and benchmarks for property valuation were almost non-existent. The financial infrastructure was immature and data on the profitability of firms being prepared for privatization was problematic. In addition, both the quality and level of competency of civil servants (the *nomenklatura*) and private managers remained low—largely due to the negative legacy of Poland’s communist past.

Roman Frydman and Andrzej Rapaczynski, two major researchers in the field, delineated four major requirements of the privatization process that would guide future privatization activities:

- Privatization must be accomplished quickly;
 - Privatization must be socially acceptable and elicit wide-spread societal support;
 - Privatization must assure effective “private” control over the management of the newly privatized enterprises;
- and
- Privatization must assure access to significant foreign capital and expertise².

¹ For a discussion of early patterns and processes of privatization, see Richard J. Hunter, Jr. & John Northrop, “Management, Legal and Accounting Perspectives: Privatization in Poland,” *The Polish Review*, Vol. 38.(1993): 407–420.

² Roman Frydman & Andrzej Rapaczynski, *Privatization in Eastern Europe: Is the State Withering Away*, (Central European University Press, 1994), 14–15.

In order to assure the success of the privatization process, economists – most notably in the “Balcerowicz Team”³ and others – theorized about the overall objectives of the policies they would seek to implement. Thus, the privatization process was generally considered as one of the main components of the transformation process in Poland. Its success or failure would be based on meeting the following core *systemic objectives*:

- To move the economy from a centrally planned system to a fully developed market system, which would encourage the development of a competitive and dynamic private sector;
- To improve the economic performance of enterprises through more efficient use of the factors of production;
- To reduce the size of the public sector (termed *demonopolization*) and lessen and eventually eliminate the burden on the public budget caused by the payment of state subsidies to unprofitable and failing SOEs;
- To generate funds from the sale of state-owned-enterprises or their shares (termed *commercialization*) for use in the transformation process;
- To ensure a wide diffusion of ownership of privatized assets; and
- To provide an effective system of corporate governance of newly privatized enterprises.

A multi-Track Policy

The MPP

Several strategies were employed simultaneously in order to meet these systemic objectives. To these ends, the Mass Privatization Program (MPP) was initiated in December of 1994. It was the “brainchild” of Finance Minister Janusz Lewandowski⁴. The MPP ultimately resulted in the transformation of 512 state-owned-enterprises, which represented *10 percent of Poland’s national assets at that time*. How were the funds created? In December of 1994, the Ministry of the Treasury established 15 funds as joint-stock, limited liability companies, wholly owned by the Treasury. During the next two-year period, the Ministry transferred 60 percent of the shares of the selected state-owned-enterprises (SOEs) to the National Investment Funds (NIFS), retaining 25 percent in the Treasury and reserving 15 percent for employees of the individual enterprises. The main objective of the MPP was

³ The “Balcerowicz Team” consisted, among others, of Marek Dabrowski, later deputy in the Ministry of Finance; Stefan Kawalec, first chief adviser, responsible for financial institutions; Janusz Sawicki, responsible for foreign debt negotiations; Andrzej Podsiadlo, who oversaw state enterprises; and Grzegorz Wojtowicz, first deputy chairman of the Polish National Bank, and its chairman in 1991. All were graduates of the Faculty of Foreign Trade of the Central School of Planning and Statistics in Warsaw, Poland’s premier school for state planning and for producing “policy experts.” Wojciech Misiag and Ryszard Pazura were also deputies in the Ministry of Finance. In addition, the team included numerous *foreign advisers* – Jeffrey Sachs, David Lipton, Wladyslaw Brzeski, Stanislaw Gomulka, Jacek Rostowski, and Stanislaw Welisz – and *Polish ones* – Karol Lutkowski, Andrzej Bratkowski, Antoni Kantecki, Adam Lipowski, Andrzej Parkola, and Andrzej Ochocki. Many of the foreign advisers were of Polish origin – so called *Polonia academics*.

⁴ The mass privatization program was known in Poland by the acronym PPP, standing for *Program Powszechnej Prywatyzacji*.

to provide market access, capital, and technology to the privatized enterprises – as well as eventually increasing individual shareholder value⁵. Every eligible Pole was able to receive a Universal Share Certificate for 20 zlotys or approximately \$7.00, which could then be sold to another person or organization or exchanged for shares in any of the created National Investment Funds. *Around 27 million adult Poles took part in the program.* The NIFs were managed by a carefully constructed combination of Polish and foreign consulting companies, commercial banks, and consortia through tenders of NIF shares. The certificates were distributed from November 1995 through November 1996 and were collected by an astounding *96 percent of eligible Poles.* The funds themselves began trading on the WSE on July 15, 1997. A capital market thus literally rose from the ashes of the command-and-rationing system through the creation of the National Investment Funds.

Privatization Procedures

Other more limited privatization strategies were also established. Two major privatization methods were effected in Poland: *Indirect privatization* (often referred to as *commercialization*), accomplished through a publicly announced offer, a public tender, negotiations commenced following a public invitation, and acceptance of the offer by the subject announcing the privatization call,⁶ and *direct privatization* (mainly used in cases of small and medium sized companies), accomplished through sale of an enterprise, contribution of an enterprise into an existing company (traditional merger and acquisition activity), and “giving over an enterprise for use against payment” – a traditional lease arrangement. These arrangements may include enterprises in which a majority of employees are state employees⁷.

These strategies will be explained in greater detail in the following discussion.

Indirect Privatization⁸

Indirect privatization is the sale of State Treasury’s (government) shares in a company. The first step in the process is termed “*commercialization*.” The process may be commenced in a variety of ways: at the initiative of the director of the state-owned-enterprise

⁵ For a discussion of the early phase of the mass privatization program, see R. Puntillo & D. Ibsen, “Poland’s Mass Privatization Program,” *The European Journal of Finance*, Vol. 2, (March 1996: 41–55); Leo V. Ryan, C.S.V., Richard J. Hunter, Jr. & Artur Nowak, “The Zig-Zag Road to Polish Privatization,” in *International Business in the 21st Century*, (Khosrow Fatemi & Susan E.W. Nichols eds., 1995: 1079–1107). See also Iraj Hashi, “The Polish National Investment Fund: Mass Privatisation with a Difference?” *Comparative Economic Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 1, pp. 87–134; Richard J. Hunter, Jr. & Leo V. Ryan, C.S.V., “Privatization and Transformation in Poland,” *The Polish Review*, Vol. 49, (2004): 43. For a summary discussion of the Polish experience with privatization, see Richard J. Hunter, Jr. & Leo V. Ryan, C.S.V., “A Field Report on the Background and Processes of Privatization in Poland,” *Global Economy Journal*, Vol. 8, Issue 1, Article 5 (Spring 2008).

⁶ See Article 88, par. 4, Art. 154 of the Act of August 21, 1997 – *The Law on Public Conveyance of Securities*, Journal Item 447.

⁷ See “*An Act of August 30, 1996 on commercialization and privatization*,” No. 171, Item 1397, as amended.

⁸ Information on indirect and direct privatization is adapted from the website of the Ministry of the Treasury, “Privatization Procedures,” at <http://www.msp.gov.pl> (last accessed December 13, 2012). We are indebted to the Ministry for providing detailed information on the methods and procedures currently in use in the privatization process.

(SOE) and its employee board, or its founding entity, or at the initiative of the Minister of the Treasury. The entity may be transformed into a *joint stock* or limited liability company. In changing the legal and organizational form of the entity, the new company established through commercialization will now function according to the provisions of the Commercial Company Code, the Act of August 30th, 1996 on Commercialization and Privatization and individual company regulations/articles of incorporation.

In a company that has been established through the process of commercialization, the State Treasury takes over 100% of the shares (stakes) of the corporation. In order to assure transparency and secure the public character in the sale of the State Treasury's shares, the offer of the shares, the invitation to tender, or the invitation to enter into negotiations are required to be published in at least one national journal and in the Public Information Bulletin (*Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej*). The consent of the Council of Ministers is necessary for the sale of shares/stakes of the State Treasury by any manner other than the prescribed public procedure. A breach of the statutory requirements regarding the sale of shares in a company owned by the State Treasury will render the action invalid.

The legal authority for the process of commercialization may be found in the Privatization Act, the Commercial Company Code,⁹ and the regulation of the Council of Ministers of December 20, 2004, providing for detailed procedure for selling State Treasury shares,¹⁰ as well as the regulation of the Council of Ministers of December 14, 2004 on financing the sale of shares and the form and conditions of payment for shares acquired from the State Treasury¹¹. These enactments provide detailed regulations regarding the procedures for selling shares in State Treasury companies and the forms of payment for such shares.

Before the shares of a company established through commercialization are offered to the general public for sale, the legal status of company property, as well as a company's general financial condition and prospects for future development, will be analyzed in detail. In addition, a company's value will be assessed and the performance of duties relating to environmental protection requirements will be evaluated. Especially relevant is the regulation of the Council of Ministers of June 3rd, 1997 on the scope of analysis of a company or state enterprise, the procedure of its commissioning, preparation, submission, and financing, and the conditions, which, when fulfilled, might allow the entity to forego the analysis¹². This provision provides information on the scope of analysis as well as other relevant issues.

⁹ See, e.g., Anna Flick and Gerhard Lang, "New Polish Commercial Company Code," *International Business Lawyer*, Vol. 28, No. 11 (2000), available at <http://www.archive.ibanet.org>. There are three main forms of conducting business in Poland:

- *Spółka akcyjna (SA)* – Join-Stock Company;
- *Spółka z ograniczoną odpowiedzialnością (z o.o.)* – Limited Liability Company; and
- *Spółka komandytowa*- Limited Partnership.

In general, citizens of foreign countries who hold the right of permanent residence in Poland may make use of the same rights as Polish citizens in terms of undertaking and conducting a business activity in Poland. Foreign persons may undertake and conduct business activity in Poland according to the principle of *reciprocity*, provided that international agreements ratified by Poland do not stipulate otherwise.

¹⁰ Journal of Laws, No. 286, item 2871.

¹¹ Journal of Laws, No 269, item 2666.

¹² Journal of Laws, No 69, item 408.

a. A publicly announced offer

The offer of sale of the State Treasury's shares will include the following: information identifying the seller; the legal basis for the sale; the firm, registered office and company address; the nature of its business activity; the number and kind of shares offered; the beginning and ending of the offering term; the place where written declarations accepting the offer shall be submitted; and the value of the any deposit required of a prospective buyer.

When the first declaration accepting the offer arrives, a *sales agreement* is concluded. In the event that the price for shares is not paid on time, the agreement ceases to be binding and the deposit paid is forfeited.

b. Public tender

A public tender involves publicly inviting potential purchasers to submit offers for the purchase of State Treasury's shares. An announcement on a public tender will specify with specificity the number and kind of shares, their nominal value, a minimum sales price of one share, the maximum term for which a tender's participant is bound to the offer, and the form, venue and procedure of providing a deposit. During the time specified in the invitation, potential purchasers, having fulfilled the initial tender requirements, will receive written information about the company. After the lapse of the term provided for submitting the offers, the Minister of Treasury will open all the offers submitted by potential purchasers, assess their compliance with the announcement, and then will choose the most advantageous offer. The Minister may also decide to reject a tender offer. If accepted, the Minister of the Treasury signs a "shares purchase agreement" with the successful offeror.

c. Negotiations commenced following a public invitation

An invitation to enter into negotiations will specify in particular information relating to the seller; the legal basis for the sale; data regarding the company; the number and kind of shares; their nominal value; and the place, procedure, form, and time allowed for responding to the invitation. The seller is entitled to reserve the right to withdraw from negotiations without giving a reason or to change the procedure and schedule of negotiations.

Negotiations with a potential purchaser will primarily concern the number of shares, sales price, payment conditions, investment obligations, and any required "social package" of benefits for company employees. Negotiation procedures provide for the possibility of granting "negotiating exclusivity" to one party. However, during any negotiations, employees of the Ministry of the Treasury, as well as professional privatization advisers, are obligated not to inform "third persons" about other potential purchasers and the course of negotiations. Only information agreed upon with the purchaser will be publicly announced following the conclusion of the sales agreement.

Direct Privatisation

The main goal of direct privatization is to provide tools for effecting "fast ownership changes" in state enterprises, generally characterized as small or medium size businesses. Direct privatization is accomplished through the sale, or merger of a company or enter-

prise into another company, or "giving an enterprise for use against payment" – i.e., a traditional "use" or lease agreement. This type of privatization is *direct* in the sense that it is implemented without a state enterprise assuming a legal and organizational form of a sole shareholder company of State Treasury.

Both physical (individual) and legal persons may participate in the direct privatization of state enterprises. A distinguishing feature of direct privatization is the fact that is "carried out by state enterprises' founding organs on behalf of and with the consent of [the] State Treasury."¹³ The process of preparing and implementing direct privatization is generally *decentralized*; however, the so-called "founding organs" play a decisive role in the form of the sixteen Polish *voivods* or governors. The Minister of the Treasury, within the statutorily defined scope, controls and supervises direct privatization by consenting to launch the implementation of individual privatization projects. At the beginning of 2002, the Minister of the Treasury authorized the directors of the Ministry's Regional Offices to have the authority to grant on his behalf the consent for the direct privatization of state enterprises supervised by *voivods*. This decentralization may be viewed in direct contrast to the period of communism in Poland where the *nomenklatura* – a quintessentially "top down" organizational structure – controlled all aspects of Polish economic life. As we have reported on many occasions, "By the late 1980s, the system had virtually elapsed into a "lunatic collage of incompetence, privilege, pandering and outright corruption," based on a "principle of underqualification and a 'perverted practice' of negative selection."¹⁴ The role of the *voivod* is in sharp contrast.

The *voivods* are responsible for initiating the direct privatization process, preparing a state enterprise for privatization, soliciting and selecting investors, and defining the terms of transaction. Once the *voivods* have obtained the consent of the Minister of the Treasury for the privatization of a given state enterprise, the *voivod* will finalize the privatization process and sign appropriate agreements with the investor on behalf of the State Treasury.

Direct privatization is carried out with a recognition of the obligations towards employees (for example, retaining workplaces, assuring adequate social welfare and benefit packages for employees), and the "social aspects" of investments, including taking into account environmental protection considerations in the investment.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ See Lawrence Weschler, *Solidarity: Poland in the Season of Its Passion*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 46. The role of the *nomenklatura* is still hotly debated in Polish society. A pattern was common in transition economies throughout the region. Not surprisingly, members of the *nomenklatura* almost immediately became active in private businesses and banks – especially as the prospects for advancing their bureaucratic careers in the "new system" appeared more limited. The particular type of privatization carried out by the *nomenklatura* in the early period has sometimes derisively been referred to as "spontaneous privatization," but was in reality theft of public assets and property. For a discussion of the phenomenon of "spontaneous privatization," see Richard J. Hunter & Leo V. Ryan, C.S.V., *From Autarchy to Market*. (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1997), 112–113. Directors and managers exercised their new authority to split up state companies or to spin off or divest units into limited liability companies or other new joint ventures. Skilled workers were often transferred to the new enterprises to the detriment of their former enterprises. Members of the *nomenklatura* have also greatly benefited politically and economically from popular discontent that is practically unavoidable during economic reforms started under very difficult economic conditions and circumstances. Members of the *nomenklatura* have been major "winners" in the transformation process. The issue of winners vs. losers in post-communist Poland is discussed at length in Richard J. Hunter, Jr., Leo V. Ryan, C.S.V. & Andrew Hrechak, "Out of Communism to What? The Polish Economy and Solidarity in Perspective," *The Polish Review*, Vol. 39, (1994): 328–329, 334–335.

a. Sale of an enterprise

This form of direct privatization may be used for all enterprises and especially for an enterprise that might require the infusion of investment capital. Payment for the enterprise may be in a lump sum or may be effected in installments. However, pursuant to requirements of the Acts on Commercialization and Privatization, the first installment is required to amount to at least 20% of the agreed price of an enterprise. The remaining portion of the agreed upon price may be paid in installments, with interest over a five year period.

b. Contribution of an enterprise into a company

A second form of direct privatization is the contribution (effective merger) of the enterprise into an existing company. This form relies on the State Treasury making a contribution "in kind" in the form of the enterprise and in return taking over an appropriate number of shares in the newly established enterprise. This form of privatization is designed to assure the access of credible and financially sound *strategic partners* (both Polish or foreign). In addition, employees, creditors, or other individuals may enter into similar agreements.

c. Giving an enterprise for use against payment

With regard to the leasing option, provisions generally favor Polish domestic corporations composed of physical persons that might also include employees of a state enterprise. The leasing option may be concluded for the maximum period of *fifteen years* and will involve both rental (installment) and additional fees¹⁵ negotiated on purely commercial terms. The lease option is designed mainly for enterprises in "good economic-and-financial standing." Corporations seeking to benefit from the lease option are required to meet a number of conditions concerning the accumulation and availability of appropriate "registered" capital, enterprise structure, and the development of a realistic action plan that will indicate that the corporation will be able to function effectively and will be able to fulfill its financial and contractual obligations, including those obligations towards the State Treasury. In order to protect workers' rights in the leasing option, and to assure an appropriate "investment and managerial mix," the law introduced a condition stipulating so that at least 20% of registered capital of a corporation owned or controlled by employees should be taken over by physical persons who are not employed in the privatized company, i.e., external investors.

Developments and Prospects Under The PiS

The *Warsaw Voice* reported that "Privatization proceeded at snail's pace in the two years the Law and Justice (PiS) party was in power."¹⁶ Gross revenue derived from privatization efforts in 2006 was zł.622 million and zł.1.95 billion in 2007¹⁷. These amounts were

¹⁵ Regulation of the Council of Ministers of December 15, 2004, Journal of Laws, No 269, item 2667.

¹⁶ See "Privatization Must be Transparent" (An interview with then Treasury Minister Aleksander Grad), *The Warsaw Voice-Business*, February 10–17, 2008, 40.

¹⁷ For a listing of privatization projects in 2006 and 2007, see Ministry of the Treasury, "Privatization in 2007," at http://www.msp.gov.pl/index_eng.php?dzial=49&id=333.

lower than projected revenues, resulting in higher taxes in the Polish economy due to the increasing cost of servicing Poland's public debt. What were some of the challenges and opportunities that faced the government and Polish society in the area of privatization during this period? Then-Minister of the Treasury Aleksander Grad offered some interesting insights that would be helpful in refiguring privatization plans for the period 2009–2011 that would involve *670 companies in 40 sectors – most especially power, chemical, and finance*:

- Privatization was no longer only the area of interest for managing and supervisory boards – employees and trade unions were now heavily involved in privatization efforts;
- The value of real investments by investors who took part in the privatization process was “many times more than investors were obliged to invest,” raising the question of “insider deals” and special economic relationships and arrangements in the privatization process;
- Civic Platform (PO), the main opposition party to PiS was committed to making the privatization process more open and *transparent* by “declassifying” certain contracts, creating specialized “privatization files” for each privatization process accessible to the general public, providing information concerning when the process is to begin, the parties who are involved, and the time when decisions were required to be made;
- The government was committed to the separation of supervisory boards from politics to assure accountability of the process;
- Privatization revenues were expected to grow to zł.2.3 billion in 2008; and
- The government was committed to take a “long range” view of privatization, designing a four- year privatization program that was designed to instill long-term investor confidence in the process.

The list of companies to be fully privatized in 2008–2009 contained over 300 enterprises, many of which had actually been privatized in the past but in which the Treasury still held a minority stake. These included companies involved in agriculture, and in the furniture, tourist, leather, publishing, and printing sectors. However, the list of companies did *not* include so-called “strategic companies” in the fuel and energy sector such as PKN Orlen,¹⁸ Lotos,¹⁹ KGHM,²⁰ and PGNiG,²¹ in which the state was still a major stakeholder.

¹⁸ The following is taken from the website of the company:

“PKN ORLEN fuel stations form the largest retail network in Poland and one of the largest in Central Europe. *ORLEN* offers fuels and non-fuel products of the highest quality, new card programs for institutional and individual clients, competitive prices, quick and friendly service.

Sales in Poland currently run at 1,922 fuel stations operating under two main brands: *ORLEN* and *Petrochemia Plock*. Within the Polish network, 1,393 outlets are ORLEN owned, whereas 428 are dealer operated and 101 are franchised.”

The company also has retail stations in Lithuania, Germany, and the Czech Republic. See <http://www.orken.pl> (the website of PKN Orlen).

¹⁹ From the website of Lotos: “Grupa LOTOS S.A. (Rafineria Gdańska SA till 2 June 2003) is one of the largest Polish companies, and the largest company in Pomeranian Region. Activities include processing of petroleum, distribution and sale of a wide range of petroleum products, such as lead-free fuels, diesel oils, heating oils, aviation fuel, lubricating oils, asphalts, and gases.” See <http://www.lotos.pl/en/>.

²⁰ KGHM is involved in copper mining and production. See <http://www.kghm.pl>.

²¹ PGNiG is a Polish company involved in gas exploration and production. See <http://www.pgnig.pl>.

Under the plan enunciated by PiS, the government would continue to control several important areas of the economy. This list included companies involved in Poland's energy infrastructure (supplying oil refineries), and companies and institutions that fulfill important "public roles," such as public television and radio. Minister Grad included *Lasy Państwowe*²² in this category.

All of these plans changed dramatically with the election of the Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska or PO) to majority status in November of 2007.

The 2008–2011 Privatization Plan²³

The **Privatization Plan for 2008–2011**, prepared by the Ministry of Treasury and approved by the Council of Ministers in April 2008 provides for the privatization of 802 companies. The program has been underway for the last 18 months. The program is based on the government's decision to increase the pace of privatization considerably. The Ministry of Treasury developed a program, involving the selection of 58 key companies to be privatized in the years 2009–2010; 19 companies by the end of 2009; and the remaining 39 companies in 2010.

The information found in this section encompasses the period 2009–2010. It includes plans that had previously been developed by the Ministry of Privatization. As found on the website of the Ministry of Privatization, the key privatization project offer includes:

1. Energy Sector

Enea S.A. has been listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange since 17 November 2008. The Ministry of Treasury owns 76.48% of the shares and intends to sell 67.05% of this amount in 2009 through negotiations. On 27 July 2009, the Ministry of Treasury announced an invitation to negotiations and on 17 August 2009 it decided to invite a potential investor to the next stage of privatization of Enea. PGE Polska Grupa Energetyczna S.A. is a parent company of the largest Polish capital group in the energy sector and one of the largest groups in Central and Eastern Europe. The Treasury owns 100% of the shares, and intends to sell up to 10% of this amount on the Warsaw Stock Exchange in 2010 as a stake of shares to be sold in several lots. The first phase of privatization involves the listing of PGE shares on the Warsaw Stock Exchange in 2009. Consisting of 94 companies, Tauron Polska Energia S.A. is Poland's second-largest provider of electric power. The Treasury owns 100% of the shares and intends to sell a part of its stake to the level enabling to retain the state control over the company, in the IPO on the WSE or through negotiations with sector investors on the basis of public invitation. Energa S.A. controls a capital group of 44 companies. The Treasury owns 100% of the shares and intends to sell 85% in 2010 through negotiations with industry investors. Zespół Elektrowni Pątnów Adamów Konin S.A. is Poland's second-largest provider of electric power obtained from brown coal. The privatization process

²² See http://www.lp.gov.pl/media/biblioteka/in_english.

²³ The information that follows is taken directly from the website of the Ministry of Privatization. It is found in edited form. The Appendix to the paper contains information on one company from each of the mentioned sectors.

will involve the sale through negotiations of the entire stake of 50% shares owned by the Treasury in 2010.

Other energy companies intended to be sold in 2009 include: Wojewódzkie Przedsiębiorstwo Energetyki Ciepłej S.A., Elektrociepłownia Zabrze S.A., Nadwiślańska Spółka Energetyczna S.A. and Zespół Elektrociepłowni Bytom S.A., in which the Treasury will sell through negotiations 85% out of 100% of shares, as well as Zespół Elektrociepłowni Wrocławskich Kogeneracja S.A. (3.68%, sale on the regulated market). Thirteen more companies from this sector are intended to be privatized by 2011.

2. Chemical and Plastics Sector and Chemical Resources Mines

Intended to be privatized in 2009 are the companies forming the so-called First Chemical Group of the Great Chemical Synthesis: Ciech S.A., Zakłady Azotowe Kędzierzyn S.A. and Zakłady Azotowe Tarnów. The Treasury owns 36.68% of the shares in Ciech and (together with Nafta Polska S.A.) 86.28% and 52.56% of the shares in ZA Kędzierzyn and ZA Tarnów respectively. Respectively 36.68%, 86.28% and 52.15% of the shares of these companies are intended for sale. Privatization of the companies forming the group shall take place in 2009 through negotiations conducted by Nafta Polska S.A. pursuant to the agreement with the Treasury. On 26 June 2009, Nafta Polska published the invitation to negotiations. The deadline for submitting written responses was 15 September 2009.

Intended for sale through negotiations in 2010 are two further Great Chemical Synthesis companies, i.e. Zakłady Azotowe Puławy S.A. (50.12% out of 50.70% of shares owned by the Treasury) and Zakłady Chemiczne Police S.A. (59.23% out of 59.41%). Intended is also the sale through negotiations of 85% out of 100% of shares owned by the Treasury in Azoty-Adipol S.A. and Kopalnie i Zakłady Chemiczne Siarki Siarkopol w Grzybowie S.A. 12 companies from these sectors will be sold in 2009–2011.

3. Financial Institutions

Giełda Papierów Wartościowych w Warszawie S.A. (Warsaw Stock Exchange), in which the Treasury holds 98.82% of shares, was scheduled for privatization in 2009. Currently, the process of verification of initial offers placed by 4 investors is underway. In 2010, the sale of 3.68% in the bank BPH S.A. and 2.49% in Bank Handlowy w Warszawie S.A. is planned (most probably on the regulated market). The list of privatization projects for the years 2009–2010 also includes PKO BP S.A., in which the Treasury holds 51.49% of the shares. As part of its expansion plan, the bank will issue new shares to increase the share capital. By 2011, the Ministry of Treasury also plans to privatize another 6 financial institutions.

4. Coal Mines, Mining Related Industry and Coke Industry

Lubelski Węgiel Bogdanka S.A. – one of the Poland's largest coal mines, debuted on 25 June 2009 on the Warsaw Stock Exchange. Following an initial public offering the Treasury retained a majority stake. Upon registration of increase of the company's share capital, the Treasury's share will be 65.50%. Also earmarked for privatization in 2010 are Kopalnia Węgla Brunatnego Konin S.A. and Kopalnia Węgla Brunatnego Adamów S.A., in which the Treasury intends to sell through negotiations 85% of its 100% stake. By 2011, the Treasury plans to privatize another 8 companies from these sectors.

5. Pharmaceutical Sector

In 2010, the sale through a public tender of 41.65% out of 49.00% stake held in Cefarm-Rzeszów S.A. is planned as well as privatization of Tarchomińskie Zakłady Farmaceutyczne Polfa S.A. (16.71%) and Warszawskie Zakłady Farmaceutyczne Polfa S.A. (5.14%), as well as 5 more companies from the pharmaceutical sector.

6. Petroleum Industry

In 2010, the Treasury plans to sell a part of its stake in Grupa Lotos S.A. (63.97% together with Nafta Polska) with retaining a majority stake by the Treasury, and through negotiations 85% of its 100% stake held in OBR Przemysłu Rafineryjnego S.A. By 2011, another 3 companies from the Polish oil industry will be privatized.

7. Iron, Steel and Non-Ferrous Metallurgy and Rock Materials

Earmarked for sale in 2009 on the regulated market is 4.52% of the Treasury's share in Grupa Kęty S.A. In 2010, the sale up to 10% of the Treasury's stake held in the company KGHM Polska Miedź S.A. is planned while retaining ownership control over the company, and 85% out of 100% held in Centrozłom Wrocław S.A. (negotiations) and Zakłady Górniczo-Hutnicze Bolesław S.A. (sale on regulated market). By 2011, the privatization of another 19 companies from these sectors is planned.

8. Defense industry

In 2010, the sale of the entire stake held by the Treasury in Huta Stalowa Wola S.A. (56.82%, through negotiations) is planned and 85% out of 100% held in Zakłady Tworzyw Sztucznych Gamrat S.A. (negotiations, initial offers shall be filed by 15 September 2009).

In the years 2009 and 2010 the Treasury plans to privatize its entire stake held in Wytwórnia Sprzętu Komunikacyjnego PZL-Kalisz S.A. (53.94%, through negotiations). By 2011, the privatization of another 28 companies from the defense sector is planned.

9. Construction, building industry and ceramics

In 2009, the Treasury will sell 2.12% of its shares held in Cersanit S.A. and 3.50% in Elektrobudowa S.A. By 2011, the Treasury will sell its shares in about 50 more companies in these sectors.

10. Trade enterprises and enterprise development agencies

In 2009, the sale of 33.21% shares in Kopex S.A. is planned on the regulated market. In 2010, the State Treasury will sell through a response to a call preceded by negotiations its whole 55.07% stake in Ruch S.A., the largest Polish press distributor and one of the largest distributors of FMCG articles, and through the public offer 85% of its 100% stake in Towarzystwo Obrotu Nieruchomościami Agro S.A. and Intraco S.A. The Ministry of Treasury also plans to sell its whole stake in Nadwiślańska Spółka Mieszkańcowa Sp. z o.o. (96.47%, through negotiations). By 2011, it is planned to sell another 15 trade enterprises and 12 enterprise development agencies.

11. Wood, paper and furniture industries

Mondi Packaging Paper Świecie S.A. (5%, sale on the regulated market) and Fabryka "Sklejka-Pisz" S.A. (85% out of 100%, through negotiations) are earmarked for privatization in 2009. By 2011, it is planned to privatize another 12 companies from these sectors.

12. Tourism

In 2009, the privatization of Gliwicka Agencja Turystyczna S.A. (100%, through an auction) and Wojewódzkie Przedsiębiorstwo Usług Turystycznych Sp. z o.o. (85% out of 100%, through negotiations) is due to be carried out. The 4-year privatization plan also envisages privatizing another 11 tourism companies.

13. Metal and machine industries

In 2010, the State Treasury intends to sell on the basis of negotiations its 85% out of 100% shares in Remag S.A. For Zakłady Górniczo-Metalowe Zębiec S.A. various privatization methods are considered. By 2011, it is planned to privatize about 60 more companies from these sectors.

14. Food, sugar, meat, distillery and farming-related industries

In 2010, the State Treasury plans to sell its stake in Warszawski Rolno-Spożywczy Rynek Hurtowy S.A. (59.32%), for which, along with Fabryka Ostówek Białkowych "Fabios" S.A., various privatization methods are considered. By 2011, it is planned to privatize about 50 more companies from these sectors.

15. Transport and transport means industries

The Ministry of Treasury list of privatization projects includes Polskie Linie Lotnicze LOT S.A., in which the State Treasury holds 67.97% of shares. The 4-year privatization plan also envisages privatizing 115 companies from the transport sector, including about 80 public road transport enterprises (the so-called Przedsiębiorstwa Komunikacji Samochodowej).

16. Other sectors

In 2009, the State Treasury will sell its shares in Telekomunikacja Polska S.A. (1.04% out of 4.15% of shares owned, on the regulated market). In 2010, the remaining 3.11% of the shares will be sold. By 2011, the State Treasury shares in another 3 telecommunication companies will be sold. In 2010, the State Treasury intends to sell through negotiations 85% of the shares in Polska Żegluga Baltycka S.A. (and by 2011 another 10 companies from this sector), Zakłady Graficzne "Dom Słowa Polskiego" S.A. (and by 2011 another 18 companies from the publishing and printing sector), Zespół Uzdrawisk Kłodzkich S.A. (and by 2010 another 11 health resorts) and Lubuskie Zakłady Aparatów Elektrycznych Lumel S.A. (and by 2011 the remaining 16 companies from the electrical and electronic sectors) as well as Dipservice w Warszawie S.A. It is also planned to privatize Mennica Polska S.A. through the sale of the whole 31.64% State Treasury stake on the regulated market. The Privatization Plan for 2008–2011 also envisages the privatization of 7 companies from the shipbuilding industry, 16 from the farming and breeding sector, 23 from the clothing industry, 26 of service entities, 29 companies from the NIF programme, as well as other residual stakes, not mentioned above.

Privatization "Realities" in 2012

In December of 2011, Polish Treasury Minister Mikołaj Budzanowski announced that 300 companies will be included in the government's privatization program for the 2012–2013 period, including ZE PAK (Państw – Adamów – Konin Power Plant Group) and Polski Holding Nieruchomości (Polish Real Estate Holding Group).

The following represents a survey of Polish companies being prepared for privatization:

19.12.2011: Invitation to a public tender to purchase shares of Fabryka Maszyn Introligatorskich INTROMA sp. z o.o. with its registered office in Łódź. The final date for submitting Offers for purchase of the Company share is 20 January 2012 at 2:00 pm (Warsaw time).

19.12.2011: Invitation to a public tender to purchase shares of Wytwórnia Filtrów "PZL-Sędziszów" S.A. with its registered office in Sędziszów Małopolski. The final date for submitting Offers for purchase of the Company's shares is 19.01.2012 at 2.00 pm (Warsaw time).

14.12.2011: Invitation to a public tender to purchase shares of Przedsiębiorstwo Komunikacji Samochodowej w Myszkowie spółka z o. o. with its registered office in Myszków. The final date for submitting Offers for purchase of the Company share is 18 January 2012 at 2:00 pm (Warsaw time).

13.12.2011: Invitation to participate in the auction concerning the purchase of the shares of Fabryka Przyrządów i Uchwyków. Auction applications should be submitted by 10 January 2012. The auction will be held on 13 January 2012 at 10:00 am.

12.12.2011: Invitation to negotiations regarding the purchase of shares of Fabryka Maszyn "BUMAR. The deadline for submitting written responses is 23 January 2012, 2:00 pm.

12.12.2011: Invitation to a public tender to purchase shares of Przedsiębiorstwo Komunikacji Samochodowej w Siedlcach S.A. with its registered office in Siedlce. The final date for submitting Offers for purchase of the Company's shares is 16 January 2012 at 2.00 pm Warsaw time.

12.12.2011: Invitation to a public tender to purchase shares of Elektrocarbon spółka z o. o. with its registered office in Tarnowskie Góry. The final date for submitting Offers for purchase of the Company share is 12 January 2012 at 2:00 pm (Warsaw time).

05.12.2011: Invitation to negotiations regarding the purchase of shares of Przemysłowy Instytut Maszyn Budowlanych Sp. z o.o. with its registered office in Kobyłka. The deadline for submitting written responses is 3 January 2012, 2:00 pm.

05.12.2011: Change in the terms of the auction for the purchase of shares of Przedsiębiorstwo Budownictwa Elektroenergetycznego "ELBUD" Gdańsk S.A. with its registered office in Sopot.

A Privatization Update: 2012²⁴

The Ministry of the Treasury announced in its 2012–2013 Privatization Plan that the Polish government will continue selling down stakes in the listed, large-capitalized companies it controls, such as PKO Bank Polski SA (PKO.WA) and insurer PZU SA (PZU.WA), but will maintain operational control over them.

The current plan, which covers 300 companies, aims to raise 10 billion zlotys (\$3.2 billion) in 2012, compared with privatization income of PLN13.1 billion in 2011, and PLN22 billion in 2010.

It should be recognized that in 2012 – after more than 20 years of economic change and transformation – Poland still owns about PLN100 billion worth of companies across various sectors.

The 2012–2013 program continues a policy of selling stakes in large companies and selling controlling stakes in small companies – a policy that has been in place since 2008. The current plan includes proposals to sell stakes in coking coal miner Jastrzebska Spolka Weglowa SA (JSW.WA) and other, unlisted coal miners, as well as power utilities and hundreds of smaller companies.

In addition to the sale of 279 companies controlled by the Treasury Ministry, the plan includes the sale of 15 companies overseen by the Defense Ministry, four companies overseen by the Economy Ministry and two overseen by the Transport Ministry.

As of 2012, the Ministry of the Treasury listed 49 companies the government deems “strategic,” including PZU, PKO BP, refiners PKN Orlen SA (PKN.WA) and Grupa Lotos SA (LTS.WA), gas company PGNiG SA (PGN.WA), copper miner KGHM Polska Miedz SA (KGH.WA), power companies PGE Polska Grupa Energetyczna SA (PGE.WA) and Tauron Polska Energia SA (TPE.WA), but also a music publisher, radio and television stations, and tourist favorite the Wieliczka salt mine.

It should be noted that power utilities Energa SA and Enea SA (ENA.WA) were absent from the strategic list, suggesting the ministry plans to sell off its entire holdings in these two companies.

Some Concluding Comments

As can be demonstrated, privatization has been a core component of the Polish process of transformation begun in 1989. Privatization has been the engine providing capital to underpin many of the important systemic changes accomplished in the Polish economy. Perhaps more importantly, privatization has been the key to de-statism in Poland and to creating a fully operational private economy. Through de-statism, Poland has been able to join the family of Western nations that have embarked on a calculus that private ownership of the factors of production – most especially of the major industries in Polish society – is the key measure of assessing success.

²⁴ See Dow Jones Newswire, “Poland Continues Privatization Drive with Plan Through 2013,” <http://www.foxbusiness.com/news/2012/03/27/poland-continues-privatization-drive-with-plan-through-2013/#ixzz1sZvbVM2O>, March 27, 2012.

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Micro level factors leading to a migratory decision: Migrant groups in the Czech Republic¹

Introduction

Multidisciplinary work has yielded a variety of attempts to formulate unified theoretical frameworks to aid our understanding of the complex flow of individuals under the rubric of migration. While these attempts have greatly enhanced our understanding of determinates of aggregate flows comparatively little is known about remigration trends, second generation returnees or migrant resettlement during multistage migratory phases. Taking into account the reality that migrant itineraries are continuously under development and are subject to change, this work seeks to clarify our understanding of migratory flows into the Czech Republic with a particular focus on highly educated migrants². This has been made possible by analysis of the responses collected from a snowball sample of migrants in the Czech Republic³.

In the interest of developing a better understanding of the complex web of flows and micro flows within and across the target region the researchers have targeted several distinct migrant groups. These groups have been divided into distinct linguistic groupings; Slovak speakers, Russian speakers (including Ukrainians and Belarusians) and English Language speakers (from a variety of source countries)⁴.

¹ Co-financed from the Research Grant of the Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Social Sciences (SVV Nr. 263 507).

² Jean Louis Rallu "One-way or both-ways migration surveys." In *International Migration in Europe : New Trends and New Methods of Analysis.*, ed. Corrado Bonifazi, Jeanette Schoorl and Marek Okólski, 289. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 289.

³ We avoid the use of the term 'Highly Skilled' as it is often used as bureaucratic label utilised by the state.

⁴ We recognise the difficulty associated with using 'linguistic' groupings however it is necessary considering the wide range of nationalities involved. (Table 2 Nationality) We also note that we have been unable to include the

Keeping in mind that the flow of particular groups (Ukrainians) is largely understood to be part of a larger regional system we have focused attention on the less mobile (non-transient) migrant population in the Czech Republic⁵. Recent work illustrates how 'mobility' has spawned dynamic streams of human movement based on an litany of personal choices, motivations and external factors, including but not limited to the state and society⁶. Taking up this theme this work will attempt to clarify factors which impact upon select flows within the Czech Republic.

Kaczmarczyk & Okólski have deemed the Czech Republic to be a 'new migration pole' part of a larger network of CEE countries exhibiting unique country specific mobility patterns which together form a unique and separate migratory system within Europe⁷. Within this specific case we seek to determine the migration related intentions of migrants, both past and potential. Understanding the reality that current migrants have greater potential to re-migrate than non-migrants and that individual migration experiences are an ongoing process the researchers look to the underlying rationale for the original mobility decision, the potential for remigration (onward or return) as well as the current state of the individual's life situation in the Czech Republic⁸. This work will explain the project methods and intentions, discuss limitations of such an approach and seek a deeper understanding of migratory trajectories within the results.

Theory

We find that typical theoretical approaches applied to migratory streams often fail to be clearly applicable to the multiple migratory streams which have been included in this study. While network based explanations of social capital theory are applicable in the vast majority of cases their application varies in explanatory power depending on the linguistic group under study and appear to be most applicable to Russian speakers⁹. Similarly economic rational choice models are applicable but do not always clearly encompass the primary 'push' utilised in individual rationalizations. A model of rational expectations seems to provide the best 'fit' to the multiple streams under study. With individuals making rational decisions based on personal preferences or calculated risk aversion strategies in the

Vietnamese migrant community in this work; a group which is highly visible in the Czech Republic and relatively well integrated into society. See, for example: Barbora Schmitter Heisler. In *Migration Theory: Talking Across Disciplines*, ed. Caroline B. Brettell and James F. Hollifield, 239. New York: Routledge, 2000. 80.

⁵ We do include so called sojourners within our case, however, the majority of subjects included in our work are in full time employment and have regularized status in the country.

⁶ John Salt "Managing new migrations in Europe: Concept and reality in the ICT sector." In *International Migration in Europe: New Trends and New Methods of Analysis.*, ed. Corrado Bonifazi, Jeanette School and Marek Okólski, 289. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008)

⁷ Paweł Kaczmarczyk and Marek Okólski. „International Migration in Central and Eastern Europe- Current and Future Trends." *United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development. Department of Economic and Social Affairs*, July 5, 2005. 16.

⁸ Barry R. Chiswick "Are immigrants favorably self-selected? An economic analysis" Edited by Caroline B. Brettell and James F. Hollifield. In *Migration Theory: Talking Across Disciplines*. 239. New York: Routledge. 2000. 69.

⁹ Douglas Massey et al., *Worlds in Motion. "Understanding International Migration at the End of the Millennium*. Oxford: Clarendon Press., 1998

face of regional economic imbalance, life satisfaction and the expectation of improvement after a migration decision has been made¹⁰.

Often arguments which purport to explain migration include the supposed 'pull' of available jobs which need to be filled by migrants. The segmented labor market theory as espoused by both Piore and Sassen describes the structural labour demand which act as a pull factor leading to migration¹¹. This approach is somewhat applicable to the Czech labour market which has exhibited stronger growth over the past decade than surrounding countries. However, the secondary labour market as described by Piore and Sassen is not clearly applicable to all migrants groups within the Czech labour market. Due to the nature of our sample we find that in the case of well-educated migrant populations there is no single theoretical approach which evidences adequate explanatory power in the case of the Czech Republic.

Methods and Limitations

The original survey was distributed to Slovak speakers via online media. After the first round of data had been analysed the Russian, Ukrainian and English versions of the survey were released during spring 2013.

The survey design utilised an extended form of snowball sampling, wherein individuals known to the researchers were asked to inform their contacts about the survey and to distribute a link to the online questionnaire. By virtue of the sampling method the majority of respondents tended to be from the same social group or network/cohort; leading to a convenience sample of respondents¹². This sampling method led to over representation of highly educated individuals. Unfortunately, limitations imposed upon the research project prevented the implementation of a more balanced distribution

Respondents indicated via a variety of demographic questions details which have provided the researcher with rich content related to their living conditions and experience in the workplace. The English and Russian samples are composed of 121 individuals the Slovak Sample is comprised of 222 respondents¹³. Individuals were presented with the option of completing the survey in one of four language versions; English, Russian, Slovak and Ukrainian¹⁴. The vast majority of respondents were highly educated; with 88 per cent hold-

¹⁰ Douglas Massey, et.al., *Worlds in Motion. "Understanding International Migration at the End of the Millennium.*

¹¹ M.J. Piore *Birds of passage: migrant labor industrial societies.* New York: Cambridge University Press. , 1979. and also S. Sassen and R. Smith "Post-industrial employment and third world immigration: casualization and the New Mexican migration in New York." New York, N.Y: Columbia University, Institute of Latin American and Iberian Studies, 1991. Series: Papers on Latin America #26

¹² Social media used include: *LinkedIn* for the English Language group, *somvprahy* for Slovak nationals and *email.ru* list servers for the Russian language speakers.

¹³ Not all samples were gender balanced with Females dominating one linguistic group (Russian Females 76 %) and Males dominating another. (English Males 60 %) The Slovak sample was 52% Female, 48% Male.

¹⁴ A Ukrainian version of the survey was provided alongside the other Language versions however only one individual took advantage of this translation. There were however a number of Ukrainians respondents to the Russian Survey who came primarily from Kiev.

ing a University degree¹⁵. Such over representation was not unexpected given the fact that the majority of respondents are employed in the capital region or other large commercial centers in the Czech Republic where employability often depends on education level. Much in line with research from other European countries we find that migrants exhibit high participation rates in the labour market¹⁶.

Target groups

Before the transition in the early 1990's the Czech Republic was incorporated into a heavily regulated regional migratory network which was based on historical relationships and political calculation¹⁷. These historical flows were disrupted during the period of transition in the early 1990's but were later rapidly re-established and often expanded in scope. The most significant historical migrant groups include Ukrainian and Slovak nationals.

Ukrainian nationals have been employed on the Czech labour market for decades as temporary or 'pendular' migrants often spending several months a year at home in the Ukraine. Slovak nationals have historically been granted, and still utilise, special status to live and work in the Czech Republic as a result of a variety of bilateral agreements agreed upon after the velvet divorce¹⁸.

In addition to the large numbers of Slovak and Ukrainian nationals in the Czech Republic there are also a number of other nationalities who play a significant role within the local labour market. In fact the number of foreigners registered in the Czech Republic has doubled in the past 10 years and now totals nearly half a million individuals with the capital of Prague hosting the largest number of foreign nationals. Foreigners now make up 14 per cent of the total population of the city¹⁹. This work focuses our attention upon three primary groups; Russian language speakers²⁰, Slovak Nationals and English Language

¹⁵ English speakers more likely to have BA, Russians more likely to have MA as a result of conventions in their country of origin.

Russian – BA –12.7% MA 49.3% PhD 5.6%

English – BA –27% MA 35.4% PhD 7.3%

Slovak – BA –11.7 % MA 61% PhD 4.5%

¹⁶ No data is available which would allow us to compare the qualification level of migrants across regions although it is often mentioned that the highly qualified are more likely movers than others. V. Baláž and A M Williams. "Been there, done that: International student migration and human capital transfers from the UK to Slovakia." *Population Space Place* 10, 2004: 217–237 and also Douglas Massey.et.al., *Worlds in Motion. "Understanding International Migration at the End of the Millennium.* And also Jan Niessen and Yongmi Schibel. *Immigration as a labour market strategy; European and North American Perspectives.* Migration Policy Group. German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2005

¹⁷ Paweł Kaczmarczyk and Marek Okólski. „International Migration in Central and Eastern Europe- Current and Future Trends.”

¹⁸ Milada Horáková, *Legal and Illegal Labour Migration in the Czech Republic: Background and Current Trends.* Geneva: International Labour Office, 2000. And also Wadim Strielkowski "A living worth leaving? Economic incentives and migration flows: The case of Czechoslovak labour migration." *Prague Economic Papers*, 3., Prague: University of Economics, 2007.

¹⁹ Total foreign population of the Czech Republic is 449,450. The population of Prague is 1,272,690 of which 178,177 are foreigners. Czech Statistical Office. "Preliminary results of the 2011 population and housing census." *Czech Statistical Office. January 2012*

²⁰ Most choose to complete the survey in Russian even though the survey was also provided in the Ukrainian language

speakers, which is a catch all group representing European and non-European Westerners. This division has resulted from time and financial constraints which limited our ability to include other groups. (Table 2)

The English language survey includes a number of individuals from North America and Europe while the Russian language survey includes individuals from the Russian Federation, the Ukraine, and several other post-soviet states. We believe that this cross section, including differing linguistic groups, provides a deeper understanding of the lived experience of individuals who have migrated. We do not include analysis of the economically active Vietnamese community due to constraints on the research project, although future work should focus on this migrant community.

It would appear that Prague as the capital city and the Czech Republic in general is seen as an ideal location for the majority of migrants from the proverbial 'East' as it is *less different* than further West but still '*West*' of the old soviet divide yet it is perceived from the other side as being an *exotic* eastern city which has a dynamic economy and is '*safe*' for westerners²¹.

Groupings

Retrospective analysis of responses clearly indicates that within the various groups included in the data there are several distinct subgroupings. Those who are living in the Czech Republic and plan *to settle for the long term*, those who are more *flexible* and are *unclear as to their future* migration (remigration) intentions and those who are what have been deemed *transient migrants*. Within these three groups we see a clear distinction between; those who came as part of, or with the intention of participating in a *study program* leading to a degree, those who moved for *personal reasons* (lifestyle migrants)²², those who moved in order to gain international experience, and those who sought out a more stable environment in which to *further their professional and personal growth*. There also exist several sub groupings of individuals who left their home country under some form of duress (for political reasons) or who 'returned' (astronaut²³ migrants or second generation returnees).

In brief we find that a large majority of respondents fit the category of lifestyle migrants, especially those from Western Europe and North America who take advantage of the lower costs of living in the Czech Republic or the freedom living abroad entails. Indeed the opportunity potential for ambitious youth is very positive looking forward as unemployment has historically been very low in the Capital region²⁴. Another significant

²¹ Inverted comma's and italics indicate that these terms often have a loaded (often pejorative) meaning.

²² Karen O'Reilly, *International Migration and Social Theory*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Discusses lifestyle migration in terms of British retirees along the Spanish Coastline. Here the concept is more apt to apply to young Westerners who do not intend to stay for the long term and may be taking advantage of the permissive social environment of the country. One individual went so far as to say he was in the country because of 'escapism plain and simple'.

²³ See Jean Louis Rallu "One-way or both-ways migration surveys."289, for a more detailed description of Astronaut migrants; Those whose have a business or property in one country but live in or attempt to gain a second citizenship and as a result spend a great deal of time in different countries.

²⁴ Unemployment in the Capital hovered around 2% before the recent economic crisis and remains low even today with average unemployment in the county at roughly 7%. Eurostat. *Gender pay gap statistics*. January 2013.

portion of respondents fits to the category of student migrant, those who have studied or are studying for a local degree. Relatively few respondents fit the categorization of transient migrant, although a number of Western Europeans and North Americans indicated that this is only a 'stop' along the way or a sort of 'gap year' in their life plans. In addition we have seen the demonstrable influence which networks have on some groups, in particular the Ukrainian and Russian speaking respondents who indicate dependence on their compatriots for finding employment. English respondents are more dependent on acquaintances than on friends when seeking employment; the so called strong and weak informal networks which link migrants together in destination states²⁵. This difference may be a result of historical flows which resulted in the established of a network for Ukrainian and Russian speakers which then provides a springboard for newcomers, while for other groups there is less of an established network given the more transient character of many of the westerners' migration patterns. The case of highly educated is unique as it would be anticipated that they would be less dependent on a network of kin or compatriots for settlement and employment given their skill set and personal ambitions. Although data indicates that this is true for most groups there are some cases which do not conform, primarily Russian speaking men who are reliant on friends when seeking employment in the Czech Republic²⁶.

Reason for Leaving One's Home Country

The more traditional 'push factors' generally utilised in migration research such as economic factors or imbalances in living conditions are apparently of little significance to individuals. In essence we see common explanations for leaving one's home country are related to employment or the desire for change. Although employment is a significant factor we find that explanations for leaving one's home country are as often related to family reunification or a need for change as they are related to work. There are, however, significant differences within subgroups. Variation in the relative importance of each factor is highlighted when groups are separated along linguistic lines. Family reunification was important for Russian speakers while interpersonal reasons were given more often by English speakers. Study was indicated as an important factor for between 12 and 26 per cent of all respondents while family reunification was relevant for Russian speakers but negligible within other groups. (Table 1)

Although intragroup differences based on gender were not always clear as a result of the relatively small sample size of each subgroup Russian speaking females did indicate that they migrated in order to seek out change whereas English speaking men were far more likely to indicate employment as a primary rationale. Similarly Slovak men more often claimed to have moved due to work while Slovak females were more likely to indi-

²⁵ Ewa Morawska, *International Migration: Its Various Mechanisms and Different Theories That Try To Explain It*. Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare (MIM): Willy Brandt Series of Working Papers in International Migration and Ethnic Relations 1/07, 2007.

²⁶ Oliver Bakewell, Hein de Haas and Agnieszka Kubal. Working Papers Paper 48 *'Migration Systems, Pioneers and the Role of Agency'*. Oxford: THEMIS University of Oxford, 2011. 17

cate that they moved due for family reunification, need for change or interpersonal relations. 'Need for change' was an important factor was for all groups, in particular for Russian speakers which may be a reflection of the difficulties individuals indicated that they have had in Russia, both politically and personally. Several individuals indicated that they enjoy the freedoms associated with the European project and would only return to their home country if there was significant political change or a serious family crisis which demanded return.

Table 1
Reasons for leaving home country by per cent valid

	Total	English	Russian	Slovak
Interpersonal		17.5%	1%	6.5%
Family reunification	7.3%	1.6%	14.9%	3%
Work	27.3%	34.8%	17%	28%
Business	5.5%	6.3%	6.4%	0%
Study	12.7%	14.3%	8.5%	26%
Need for change	22.7%	15.9%	31.9%	15%
Number Valid	285	63	47	175
**Valid per cent within group. May not equal 100				

While a significant portion of respondents are focused on work or a need for change it should be noted that a large numbers of students have remained after completing their studies in the Czech Republic. In the case of the English speakers a large number participated in the European mobility program *Erasmus* or similar exchange programs and then choose to stay on or returned after completing their degrees. The case of Slovak and even Russian speaking students is unique to the region as they are able to take advantage of the fact that education is provided free of charge in the Czech language at public schools if the individual can pass the entry exam in the Czech language²⁷. Even though many individuals claimed to have moved in order to study even more moved immediately after completing their education. A sizable portion of respondents migrated immediately after their studies ended; roughly 30 per cent of Slovak, 23 per cent of English and 17 per cent of Russians indicating that they were students before leaving their hometown. We find that employment is a primary factor leading to a migratory decision for some groups, however, we find that personal reasons play a significant role leading up to a migratory decision. We hypothesize that within the younger cohort lifestyle choices and adventurism play a significant role in driving migration decision making; irrespective of the fact that many explain their decision via the utilization of the socially acceptable explanation 'work'.

²⁷ Nearly four per cent of university students in the Czech Republic are Slovak according to; Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "Czech universities continue to improve the quality of their offer to foreign students." Jan 26, 2010

Remigration Trends

In an attempt to better understand the potential for remigration survey respondents were asked to clarify their future plans and their willingness to return to their home country in the case that they were unemployed for an extended period of time. Additional questions related to potential migration onwards to other EU states. We find that Russian speakers are strongly resistant to the idea of returning home whereas other groups are more amenable to the idea even when underemployed on the local market. We find that satisfaction is highly dependent on an individual's frame of reference, with those coming from the east being more satisfied even taking into account their lower than average salaries. The impact which networks have on employability and wages is of interest; our findings indicate that different linguistic groups depend to varying degrees on friends and family when seeking employment. There is an indication that those who rely on close friends earn, on average, less than those who are directly employed by companies or those who depend on business acquaintances for employment. There is clear differentiation between linguistic groups in this respect and indicate that network effects may have a constraining influence as much as they facilitate integration into the workforce, an influence discussed in more detail by de Haas²⁸.

Return home if unemployed

From what respondents indicated the majority intend to remain in the Czech Republic for the foreseeable future. In the case of uncertainty only 31.5 per cent would return home if they were to be unemployed for more than 6 months. By the far the majority 68.5 per cent would not return home even if threatened with extended unemployment. There is variation between groups; with Russian speakers being more unwilling to return home in the face of unemployment²⁹. This may reflect the availability of unemployment benefits for those with full time contracts, the limitation imposed on mobility for those 'settled' in the Czech Republic or the simple fact that 'things are worse at home'. Statistically there is no correlation between the number of years an individual has been in the Czech Republic and their willingness to return if unemployed. There is, however, a correlation between language group and willingness to return home³⁰. This may also be related to the fact that some migrants have 'human and social capital specific to the origin that has not fully depreciated in their absence'³¹. In this case of highly educated coming from the west may perceive that there is an opportunity for continued success in their home country, while those coming from the east may not have such a positive view of return. There is conflict in responses with Russian

²⁸ Hein de Haas, "Migration and Development: A Theoretical Perspective." *International Migration Institute Working Papers no.9*, University of Oxford, 2008

²⁹ Unemployed more than 6 months return home

Russians	Yes 17.5 %	No 82.5 %
English	Yes 42.3%	No 57.7%
Slovak	Yes 42%	No 58%

³⁰ Pearson Chi-Square is 6.446 at the 0.01 level (two tailed) for English speakers

³¹ Barry R. Chiswick "Are immigrants favorably self-selected? An economic analysis" 69

speakers being unwilling to return while Slovaks would return even considering the comparative high unemployment in their home region. We presume this has to do with political reasons when discussing Russian speakers and the familial support available to returnees in the case of Slovak nationals.

Wage Length of Residence and Perceptions

Salary is not clearly linked to length of residence as those living in the Czech Republic the longest do not tend to earn more on average than those who are relative newcomers. Of course our sample is composed of mainly those who have been in the country less than 10 years which limits generalization. In line with expectations wage levels follow well established trends, at least in relation to age, with young people (21–30 years of age) earning low or average level wages which rise progressively with age (at least for male respondents). Wages for older female respondents (41–50 Years of age) are lower than would be expected given their experience; however, this may be explained by the limited sample size and its diverse character³².

The limited impact of length of residence on salary level may have something to do with deskilling or the stability of income once settled. It is possible that individuals are likely to 'fall into' a job and then become dependent on that position once employed. (i.e. They are unlikely to seek out other employment even if there is potential for greater earnings elsewhere and also when taking into account the existing social system which provides six months insurance against unemployment) The authors are of the opinion that this effect has something to do with individual perception. Individuals from 'eastern' countries integrate into the Czech labour market with limited difficulty yet their salary expectations are moderated by the fact that they seek only to improve their standards in comparison to their (relatively poor) country of origin. In contrast those coming from the west have a different benchmark from which to compare. (i.e. the market in the country of origin is 'stronger' with higher wage standards). That is to say that the large number of 'eastern' respondents have lower expectations thus earn lower than average salaries, yet are paradoxically more satisfied with their decision to live in the Czech Republic than the higher paid 'westerners' who are less satisfied on the whole. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction stem from the difference in their frame of reference)

Social Capital

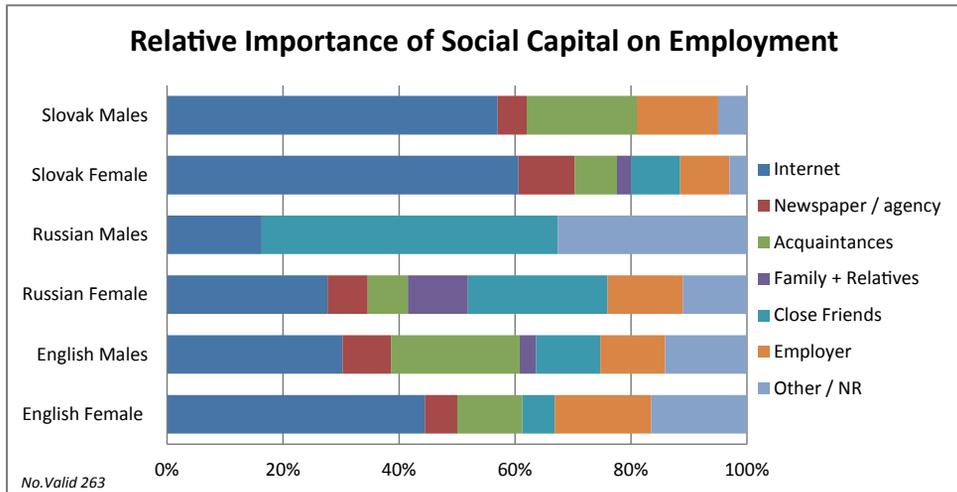
The importance of connections when searching for employment was significant for some individuals. It would appear that an individual's connections with the community play a significant role in settlement and in the stabilization of an individual's living situation. While it is not possible to clearly determine the importance of these personal connec-

³² A small sample of those over 40 years of age limits generalization and in terms of diversity we see: Two housewives, one accountant, one retiree, one manager, one salesperson, one executive.

tions for settlement they are clearly important for ensuring employment for a quarter of respondents.

When asked how they found their current employment in the Czech Republic 31 per cent indicated that they found work via the internet, 9.1 per cent via acquaintances, 17 per cent via close friends, 4.5 per cent from agents and only 12 per cent direct from their employer. The dependence on the internet as a source of jobs was expected and is in line with the youthful character of the cohort.

Figure 1
Relative Importance of Social Capital on Employment



Interestingly there is significant variation between groups in terms of reliance on *connections* for employment. Taking a look at Figure 1 we see that the relative importance of what has been called 'social capital' varies significantly between groups³³. Russian speakers were far more likely to depend on 'close friends' when seeking employment in the Czech Republic. (female 24% males 50%) English speakers (males) were more likely to utilise acquaintances (22%) while English females were more dependent on the internet (44.4%) or direct contact with the employer. (16.7%) This variation indicates that social capital may be more important for some groups than others; indeed the type and strength of connections also play a role. English speaking males on average earn more than other respondents, which may be linked to their position in firms, or may be reflective of the importance of connections for success in particular industries. The reliance of Russian speakers on friends and other acquaintances lends itself to the supposition that dependence on social capital hinders potential for some migrants but not others. Relying on those you know can be a boon in terms of employment but may also relegate individuals to lower

³³ Robert D Putnam "E Pluribus Unum : Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century. The 2006 Johan Skyttte Prize Lecture." *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol. 30 - No. 2., 2007, 138

end jobs (in the case of Russians who rely on close friends and family) whereas it may be more beneficial to depend on acquaintances who can provide better jobs within ones area of expertise. (as is seen with the English speakers

Plan to Move: Rationale

When asked 'What about the current situation makes you think of moving?' A quarter of respondents indicated that their low income was a major factor pushing them to consider moving. Less important was the idea that moving would allow individuals to save money (10.7%) or would ameliorate their poor living conditions. (7.4%) However, when asked the question 'What would be the advantage of moving to another state?' responses were highly varied with 36 per cent of respondents indicating that it would be 'nice to get to know another country' very similar to 'higher potential income'. (30.6%)

Thus traditional explanations of 'push' and 'pull' factors leading to migratory decision-making provide less explanatory power than would be expected. An explanation based on rational choice is far more persuasive when discussing the potential for remigration.

Satisfaction

In connection with wage earning and intentions to move we looked at satisfaction levels within the groups under study. We seek to compare satisfaction levels in terms of income, stability of income and satisfaction with the original decision to make a move to the Czech Republic.

In terms of stability of income a large number of respondents (35%) are unsatisfied with the stability of their income, only 7 per cent are very satisfied. Russians are generally more dissatisfied with the stability of their household income (48.6%) which may be connected to the significant number earning below the Czech average wage. Interestingly while it would be expected that the higher average wage for English speakers would lead to higher satisfaction levels the truth is more mixed with a quarter of English respondents being unsatisfied. It is clear that Russian Speaking men are the least satisfied (and exhibit less variation in opinion than other groups) in clear contrast Female English speakers are the most positive group yet with the greatest degree of variation in responses.

Stability of income is of concern to many respondents, even for those earning above average salaries. This insecurity may stem in part from *perceived* instability in the market, due to the recent financial crisis or, for some, instability in their income if they are self-employed (~22% of total respondents). Statistical evidence supports the mixed results we see among groups with a relative weak negative correlation between 'Satisfaction with stability of household income' and 'Take home Wage'³⁴.

While it is expected that individuals who earn less than average would be less satisfied with the *stability* of income there appears to be significant variation between and within groups also when asking about their satisfaction with their original migration related deci-

³⁴ Pearson's correlation (two-tailed) -0.330 with significance at the 0.01 level.

sion to move to the Czech Republic. As an example we find that the most satisfied group are those female Russian speakers in the mid to low income category. We understand this to be linked to the fact that they are able to, and indeed do, compare their income with the relatively low income levels at 'home'. In addition we find that gender differences are significant. Wealthy males tend to be more dissatisfied while lower income females tend to rank their satisfaction level higher on the scale.

What is noteworthy is the fact that a large portion of wealthy English speakers are often dissatisfied with their decision to move. Indeed there are a number of outliers within the English Language group who are extremely dissatisfied with their decision to move to the Czech Republic. We note that there is some disjuncture between satisfaction with individual *decision to move* and satisfaction *overall* (with salary and employment) it appears that some individuals claim to be very unsatisfied with their *decision* but then claim to be satisfied in terms of their salary level, work environment and the like. Leading us to believe that further study of 'relative' satisfaction is necessary to better understand this discrepancy³⁵.

Bifurcation on the Labour market

Previous research has indicated that economic factors weigh heavily on migratory decision making. Economic rationalizations and structural factors lead individuals to make migratory decisions while also constraining choice in employment; within either the primary or secondary labour market. Thus we would anticipate that migrants pushed by economic factors would be more likely to accept employment outside of their intended occupation. The data, however, indicates a far more complex picture.

Bifurcation of the labour market in the Czech Republic fits with the segmented labour market theory of Sassen and Piore³⁶. Anecdotal evidence indicates widespread participation of Ukrainian nationals in the secondary labour market, both officially and unofficially, however, this project has shown that highly educated migrants participate mainly in the primary labour market³⁷. This we surmise from the large number of self-employed who earn above average salaries in addition to the large percentage employed in large to mid-size enterprise.

Change Employment

Individual responses indicate that a significant portion of respondents would be willing to change professions in the event that they were to move to another country. The difficulty associated with verification of intentions without extended multistage surveys

³⁵ In this regard we have no information related to individuals' satisfaction in the domestic sphere.

³⁶ M.J. Piore *Birds of passage: migrant labor industrial societies*. and also S. Sassen and R. Smith *Post-industrial employment and third world immigration: casualization and the New Mexican migration in New York*.

³⁷ Milada Horáková, *Legal and Illegal Labour Migration in the Czech Republic: Background and Current Trends*. As well as the Association for Integration and Migration 2012. And Eva Valentová, "Legal Aspects of Employment of Migrants as Domestic Workers in the Czech Republic." *Gender, rovné příležitosti, výzkum*, Vol. 13, 2012

is well known. Authors differ as to the actual outcome of migration intentions although evidence indicates that nearly a quarter of those who claim an intention to move actually make a move after 2 years³⁸.

Respondents indicated that 49.4 per cent would be willing to change profession in the case that they moved to another country. Delving deeper along this strand we see juxtaposition between linguistic groups. Our previous work found that a majority (53%) of Slovak nationals living in the Czech Republic would be willing to 'completely change their profession' in the event that they moved to another state within the EU. This fit clearly with our understanding that Slovak nationals do not consider the 'near abroad' as an actual migratory experience. That is, they would be willing to make a significant change in profession for the purpose of earning money, or improving their experience or language skills while abroad in a western country but not while in the Czech Republic

However, English speakers were more willing to change profession (57.7%) than Russian speakers. (37.8%) We anticipated that this was a reflection of the young age of many respondents in the English cohort and their relative mobility (being recent arrivals). In contrast Russian speakers indicated that on the whole they intend to stay in the Czech Republic which may be related to the fact that they are generally well integrated in the local market and have little inclination to move again given their deeper societal integration, familial connections and ties to the community. Willingness to change employment and even sector, does not, however equate to the actual situation. (see Figure 4)

We find that both Slovak and English speakers tend to be employed, primarily, in similar sectors to that which they studied for when in the Czech Republic. Russian language speakers, in contrast, are more likely to be employed outside of their 'expected' profession. As part of the migratory experience they are pushed out of their comfort zone and risk being employed in other professions. We see significant variation between linguistic groups when comparing education experience and current employment by sector when data is charted graphically.

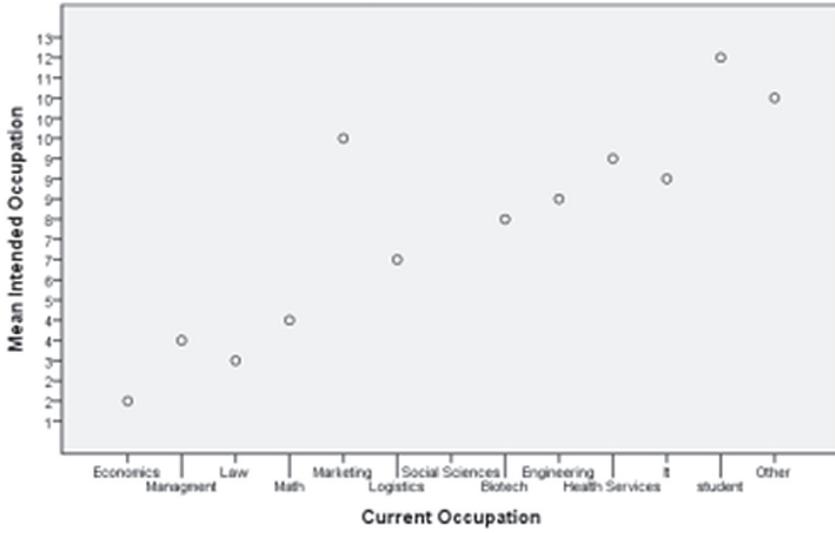
A detailed analysis of the data allows us to see aggregate variation between individuals 'intended' profession and 'actual' or current profession. (refer to Figure 2) It is clear when we compare the outputs that in distinct contrast to Slovak speakers who track clearly along the expected midline (when expected and actual professions align) English and Russian speakers tend to cluster in particular professions; such as 'management', 'biotech' or 'other' professions which are non-standard but highly specialised³⁹. Clustering along the midline would support the supposition that those who intend to stay are likely to attempt to remain in their chosen profession. Those who do not 'fit' the midline are either employed in non-standard professions or have taken a job outside of their profession of choice⁴⁰.

³⁸ Hendrik P van Dalen and Kène Henkens. "Emigration Intentions: Mere Words Or True Plans? Explaining International Migration Intentions And Behavior." *Center for Economic Research: Discussion Paper 2008-60*. Tilburg: University of Tilburg, 2008

³⁹ Nonstandard as a large number of English Respondents are employed in professions or indicated professions which are difficult to code. (i.e. Retired, Telco, COS coordinator, analyst etc)

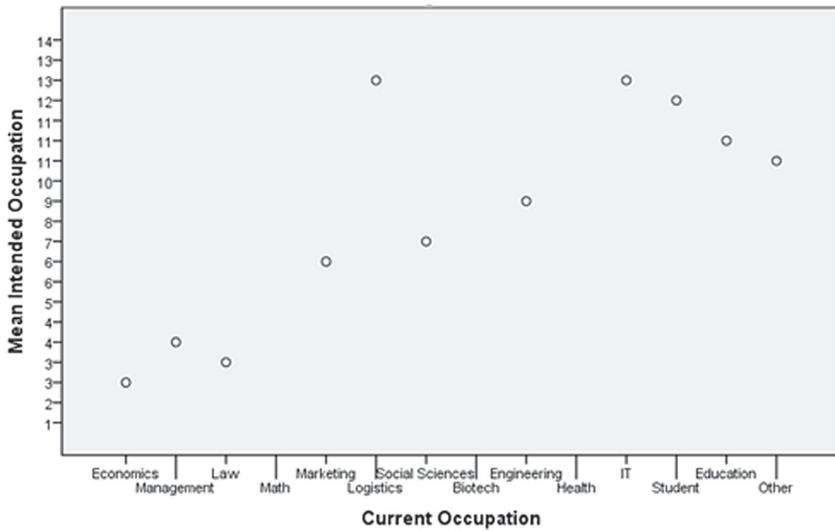
⁴⁰ Some professions are, of course very similar, Economics and Management for example, however many professions are not. We have plotted the Mean Occupation in order to clean the data of spurious cases.

Figure 2
Sector Studied vs Sector Actual Slovak Speakers



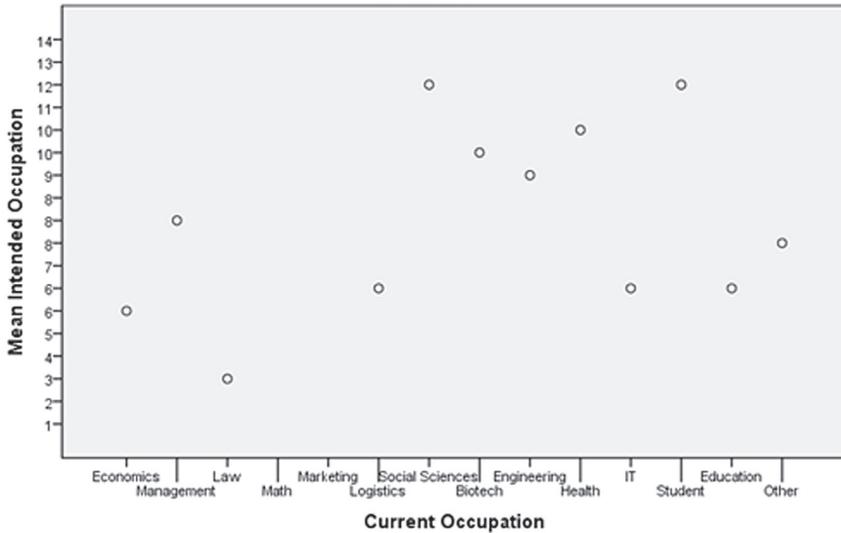
No. Valid 203

Figure 3
Sector Studied vs Sector Actual English Speakers



No. Valid 66

Figure 4
Sector Studied vs Sector Actual Russian Speakers



No. Valid 55

Lack of Bifurcation

In contrast to indicated 'willingness to change profession' during migratory experiences we find that when employed on the Czech labor market Slovak nationals are highly likely to be employed in jobs similar to their intended profession or field of study.(see Figure 2) This links in well with the aforementioned bifurcation of the labour force, with Slovak nationals being employed in both the primary and secondary market in the Czech Republic, with the majority of respondents to this research being employed as highly skilled labour in the primary market.

English language speakers appear to 'fit' essentially the same trend. Although English speakers indicate a willingness to change professions (57.7%) when in the Czech Republic English language speakers are only somewhat more likely to be employed outside of their 'expected' profession than Slovaks. (see Figure 3) It was anticipated that as part of the migratory experience they would be willing to step out of their comfort zone and risk being employed in other professions much as Slovak nationals who, when abroad, would be willing to change professions. Although a portion are employed in differing professions than that which they studied for, for the most part English speakers are employed in similar professions for which they studied. We believe that this is due to the large portion of respondents who are employed in the primary labour market and are thus less inclined to change professions.

Russian speakers do not conform to the trend seen among other linguistic groups. Russian speakers indicated a general unease with changing professions 'if they moved to another EU state.' With only 37.8 per cent of Russian speakers being willing to change

professions upon a future move. Yet, even with this rejection of change we find that there is significant deviation from intended and actual professions among Russian speakers in the Czech Republic. We would predict that this is due to employment in the secondary labor market but that is not the case, with a large portion of Russian speakers being highly skilled and employed in the primary labour market. What we see instead is the resulting impact of two key factors; chiefly the influence of networks which Russian speakers are more dependent upon for finding employment and secondly the large number of Russian speakers employed in professions which do not 'fit' normal categorization, such as non-governmental organizations, non-profits, and research institutions⁴¹.

Findings

We can hypothesize that those who consider their work to be relevant for the long term are not willing to deviate from their profession of choice; however, those who are not planning to remain (short term migrants) are more willing to take on the challenge of jobs outside of their professional qualifications. Thus we find a link between the segmented labour market theory and human capital models for some groups under study. Those who have invested themselves in gathering human capital via education and networking are more likely to have a vested interest in staying in higher level positions in the primary market. In contrast those with less education or weaker skillsets are pushed to adapt to the local market. Deskilling is a distinct possibility for some migrants, however, we do not see true deskilling within this research project, yet underemployment or employment outside of individuals intended profession.

When comparing groups and even within groups we find significant variation in human capital development and intention to change profession. It is possible that the specific human or social capital utilised in daily life is not lost during short term migratory experiences but, on the contrary, may be enhanced. Thus some individuals would be willing to take the risk of de-skilling in the case that their migratory trajectory had a limited time horizon, i.e. working for 6 months in England. The same individual would not, however, be willing to deskill if they were intending to 'stay' for any given period of time. Thus we postulate that individuals who make short term, experiential, migratory moves are willing to deskill as a result of the fact that work experience is not their key objective. Those who make such moves are focused on enhancing their language skills, networking, traveling and the like⁴². Factors confirmed by work undertaken by Baláž and Williams in their study of Slovak student migration from Bratislava⁴³. Of course this applies predominantly to those who do not 'intend' to stay for the long term. The case of 'settled' migrants or 'grounded' individuals is

⁴¹ This is reflective of the snowball sampling method used as part of this projects methodology.

⁴² European Commission. "European citizenship – cross-border mobility. Qualitative studies. Aggregate Report." European Commission, 2010

⁴³ V. Baláž and A M Williams. "Been there, done that: International student migration and human capital transfers from the UK to Slovakia." And Williams, Allan M, and Vladimír Baláž. "Trans-border population mobility at a European crossroads: Slovakia in the shadow of EU accession." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* Vol. 28, No. 4, October 2002: 647–664.

the opposite, with their intention to stay precluding deskilling whenever possible as evidenced by the Russian speakers in this study.

We see that Russian speakers are employed in a variety of fields, yet remain underpaid. One assumption would be that they are deskilling, however, this is not likely the case as the majority are employed in standard businesses yet with (as of now) limited potential for advancement or are self-employed. A more likely explanation is that our sample contains a large cohort of fresh graduates who earn less than average due to their lack of experience and who are willing to work across sectors. In the case of those who are well established we find that they are primarily engaged as researchers in education and research facilities. (well known for their stability yet lower than average wages)

For purposes of clarification we can compare the responses from the English language group which indicate that individuals fit one of three categories; (1) well established long term residents involved in the high tech industry or upper management; (2) recent arrivals who are employed in skilled positions as researchers, analysts etc.; (3) the less skilled (teachers, interns) who tend to earn less than average wage due to the market conditions in the country⁴⁴. The majority of the English language subgroups are employed in industries which require transferable skills. (human capital) Thus the English language group is perhaps prone to consider taking another migratory decision due, in part, to the flexibility of their particular skillset and the applicability of their human capital elsewhere. English speakers are also the least able to integrate into the local cultural milieu due to linguistic difficulties which form a significant barrier to integration, this is a particularly acute issue for those who only intend to stay a short time.

Future Trends

Taking into consideration the multifaceted nature of each of the migratory streams under discussion we assume that each linguistic group will exhibit differing characteristics and potential for onward or repeat migration. The English speaking group is more likely to consider taking another migratory decision and to change profession in the process as a result of the flexibility of their particular skillset and the transferability of their human capital elsewhere. This is in contrast to Russian or Slovak speakers who may have the human capital but are not willing to risk a move or to change profession. For the Slovak group this is partly due to fact that they often do not perceive this current migratory experience as migration. Russians perhaps perceive moving to the Czech Republic as being a 'safe' move; considering the similar mindset, linguistic structures etc. which they encounter in the receiving society. They are less likely to consider moving onwards and are even less likely to consider moving 'home' so to speak, given the political issues which many respondents indicate limit their willingness to return.

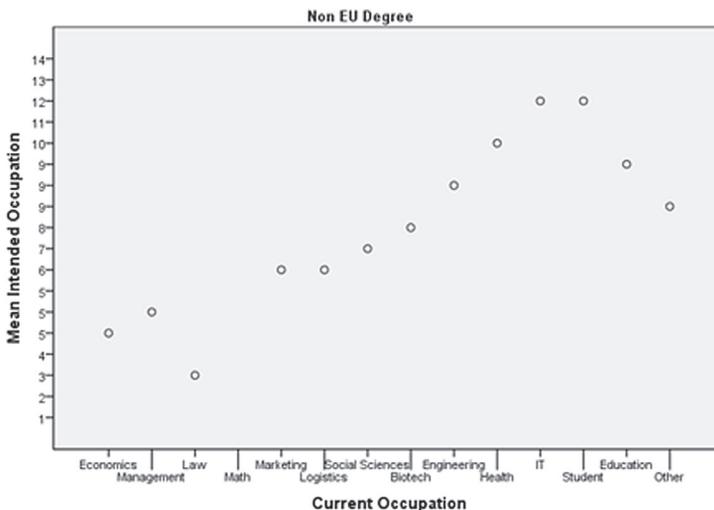
Clarification of the variation which exists between linguistic groupings has required interpretation of several variables which impact upon individuals. A more detailed examination of other micro level factors which impact upon decision-making may further clarify our understanding of individual experience. Whereas individuals indicated a willingness

⁴⁴ Non-salaried hourly wage earners.

to change professions perhaps a more precise indicator of the likelihood of being employed within ones specialization is where one studied. We find that when data from all non-Slovak respondents is aggregated those who obtained a degree from within the EU are less likely to work in the occupation for which they studied while those with a degree from outside of the EU (Non-EU) were more likely to be employed in their occupation of choice. (See Figure 5) Something which is counter intuitive if we accept the premise of the segmented labour market, which presupposes that migrants will be pushed into the secondary labour market.

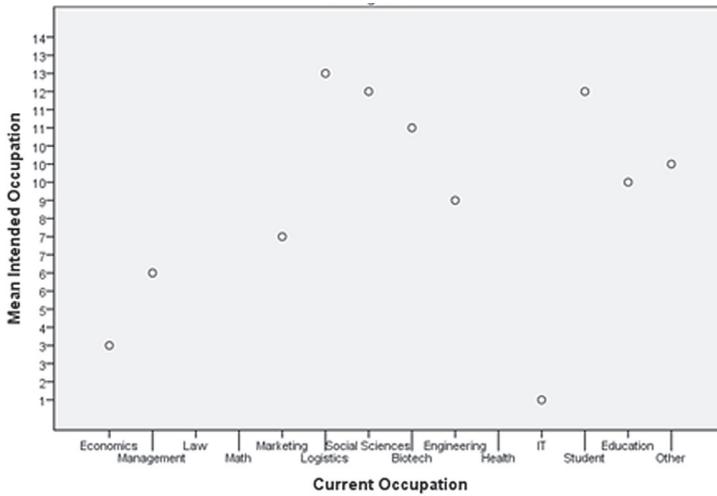
This variance with traditional explanations which stress how structural factors push migrants to de-skill is surprising, yet may result from the purposive nature of the sample which is composed largely of highly educated individuals. Respondents are from this snowball sample are more likely to be successful migrants, likely to participate in the primary labour market and who fit the 'highly skilled' categorization. We assume that those who migrate into the Czech Republic after completing their first degree as highly skilled migrants are more likely to search out employment in their sector or have employment offers before entering. In contrast those with an EU degree may be more willing to take risks and work outside of their intended occupation. Our data indicates that a large number of EU graduates are employed in the primary labour market, yet not in the specific sector they studied for. We take this as indicative of the transferability of their skill set although further work would be needed to clarify this. We assume that the non-EU graduates are more focused in their specific area of expertise due to visa restrictions, demand in the local market and as one observer astutely put it 'they come here because local specialists moved to Germany.'

Figure 5
Sector Studied vs Sector Actual Non-EU Degree



No. Valid 54

Figure 6
Sector Studied vs Sector Actual EU Degree



No. Valid 42

Concluding Remarks

Understanding that the migratory experience of individuals is a complex multistage process under constant re-visitation we find that the complexity of the migratory system of the Czech Republic defies generalization. Decision making falls into multiple categories and reflects the social position of the actor, educational level, life history as well as longer term intentions. Micro level factors play a significant role in the process itself i.e. intention to settle, employment prospects, the presence or absence of family, strength of networks, connection to the destination as well as the level and ease of integration into the social milieu.

The complex of flows included in this project can be broken down into several distinct groups; those who came due to reasons of family reunification, those who migrated as students and stayed, (or returned after graduation) lifestyle migrants those who migrated for personal reasons (may they be politically driven or a result of a need for change) and labour migrants. (both short and long term) Other forms of migration are understood to exist but are not covered within this research project. (tourism, asylum seekers, 'pendular' migrants or transitees)

Within these flows we find that income or earning potential plays a significant role in the decision making process but is not the only factor of relevance. Quality of life, potential for new experiences, job opportunities and the presence of friends or family in potential destinations all play a significant role. Given the limited scope of this project we are not able to determine the likelihood of remigration or onward migration; follow up research is necessary in this respect.

Of interest is the understanding that some groups are more willing to undertake the risk of working in professions or positions which are not directly related to their original field of study. As an example Slovak nationals are unwilling to work outside of their target profession while in the Czech Republic (close to home) but claim to be willing to deskill or work in jobs unrelated to their field of study while abroad. The same has been found in the case of English speakers who, while in Prague are willing to take on jobs outside of their field if necessary yet do not exhibit this in reality. We understand this to relate to general inclinations towards settlement and as part of long term planning in terms of the utilization of human capital.

Some individuals are willing to take risks while 'abroad' as the primary reason for employment abroad is language skill development, travel or life experience. In contrast decisions about work 'at home' in the Czech Republic are informed by longer term interests such as career planning, stabilization of living conditions or the establishment of a family. We find that those who graduated from non-EU institutions are more likely to remain within their field than those who have graduated from EU institutions, something that perhaps reflects the flexibility allowed to 'locals' and their willingness to take risks associated with being employed in different professions than they are trained for. The availability of a social safety net may allow for this flexibility as it provides something to fall back onto, in contrast third country nationals do not have this option and thus are pushed to stay within their field of expertise. Additionally, variation between groups may be a reflection of their education trajectory and employment history and less an issue of deskilling.

Established theories of migration offer weak explanatory power in relation to the mixed migrant flows in the Czech Republic as clear generalization are difficult if not impossible considering the complexity of mixed flows in this region. Application of several theoretical approaches may provide greater insight; however, the risk of generalization is a loss of detail leading to fuzzy assumptions which are applicable only to some cases. A deeper understanding of the varied flows requires in-depth knowledge of the local market and legal issues which are only glossed over during this study but which should be taken into consideration in future. Further study may benefit from an enhanced understanding of the complexity of these flows as well as an expansion in scope to include other migrant groups.

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Appendices

Table 2
Nationality

	Total	%	English Language Group	%	Russian Language Group	%
Total respondents	120	100	66	100	53	100
British	14	11.7	14	21.2		
Other EU	20	16.5	20	30.3		
Other Non-EU	14	11.6	8	12.1	6	11.3
American	11	9.2	11	16.7		
Russian	32	26.7			32	60.4
Ukrainian	11	9.2	2	3	8	15.1
Belarusian	7	5.8			7	12.7
Dual	3	2.5	3	4.5		
Czech	1	0.8	1	1.5	2	3.6
Italian	5	4.2	5	7.6		
Canadian	2	1.7	2	3.0		
Missing	1	0.8				

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Stereotypes of the political left and right in Hungary

1. Introduction

1.1 General preview and goals

The meaning, perception and psychological correlates of liberal-conservative or left-wing – right-wing ideologies are very popular topics in political psychology. This direction of research focuses on the affective/ motivational background of party and ideological preferences, assuming essential psychological differences behind them. These differences were detected by multiple methods in previous studies. Some, using self-reporting questionnaires, focus on the personality, attitude or value differences between participants with a left-wing or right-wing orientation^{1, 2, 3}, while others place the emphasis on the general perception of differences between leftist-rightist orientation and the attributions given to them^{4, 5}. The latter approach is related to the concept of stereotype.

The present paper has two aims. First, our goal is to test the structure and content of stereotypes of leftists and rightists in Hungary, building on the wider political psychology literature of the probable differences and investigating whether factors of stereotypes –

¹ J. T. Jost, *The end of the end of psychology*, *American Psychologist*, 61, 651–670., 2006.

² Carney D. R., Jost J. T., Gosling S. D., Potter J., *The Secret Lives of Liberals and Conservatives: Personality Profiles, Interaction Styles, and the Things They Leave Behind*, *Political Psychology*, 2008.

³ G.V. Caprara, S. Schwartz, C. Capanna, M. Vecchione, C. Barbaranelli., *Personality and politics: Values, traits, and political choice*, *Political Psychology*, 2006.

⁴ Huddy, L. Young, E., Martin, D. *Political ideology as social identity*. Ppt presented in the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, March 31- April 3, 2011.

⁵ L. Farwell, B. Weiner, *Bleeding hearts and the heartless: Popular perceptions of liberal and conservative ideologies*, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26, 845–852, 2006.

that appeared mainly in research conducted in the US – can be identified in the East-Central European context. Since these factors are mostly tested separately, we test them together, assuming that they can be placed within a comprehensive theoretical framework suggested by the literature. Second, we test the assumption that socio-political context can change the contents of these ideological stereotypes by examining the extent to which actual power relations are reflected in them. This highlights a related process pertaining to how external relations can be internalized through stereotypes, which verifies both their significance and practical implications.

In the introduction, the general stereotype concept that we have primarily drawn upon is reviewed. Afterwards, more specific political stereotype research and then a wider, methodologically more heterogeneous overview of the ideological differences that were used to capture the dimensions and contents of the stereotypes are discussed. In the end of the introduction, assumptions based on the specific Hungarian context and hypotheses are proposed.

1.2 The stereotype concept

Stereotypes are defined in many different ways in social psychology, but according to the standard viewpoint, stereotypes are beliefs about the characteristics, attributes and behaviors of members of certain groups⁶. There are debates regarding to what extent the stereotypes are exaggerated, dysfunctional and harmful to groups, and therefore similar to prejudices. Initial theorists including Katz and Braly⁷ (1933) and Allport⁸ (1954) defined stereotypes as incorrect generalizations that attribute stereotyped characteristics to 100% of the members of the stereotyped group. The modern understanding of stereotypes is that they are probabilistic perceptions of group differences⁹. Thus, stereotype is not an essentially negative construct, but is functional, stemming from the perception of categories and its limitations in validity¹⁰. Exaggeration can occur, when the perceived groups are enemies or oppositional. Therefore, when it comes to political stereotypes, this bias is unavoidable, because opposing identities of partisanship or ideologies are strongly connected to in-group-out-group bias in stereotypes¹¹.

The stereotype content model is a comprehensive modern theory emphasizing the functional and adaptive nature of stereotypes, suggesting that they are consistently consti-

⁶ J. L. Hilton, W. von Hippel, *Stereotypes*, Annual Review of Psychology, 1996.

⁷ D. Katz, K. Braly, *Racial stereotypes of one hundred college students*, Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1933.

⁸ G. W. Allport, *The nature of prejudice*, Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books, 1954.

⁹ C. R. McCauley, *Are Stereotypes Exaggerated? A Sampling of Racial, Gender, Academic, Occupational, and Political Stereotypes*, In Lee, Yueh-Ting, Lee J. Jussim, and Clark R. McCauley (Eds.). *Stereotype Accuracy: Toward Appreciating Group Differences*. Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association. Pp. 215–244., 1995.

¹⁰ Gy. Hunyady, D. Hamilton, L. Nguyen, *Csoportok percepciója*, In: Hunyady Gy. & Hamilton D. L.(ed.): *Csoportok percepciója*, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1–27., 1999.

¹¹ P., Krekó, Gy., Hunyady, *Pártok szavazóiról kialakult sztereotípiák és előítéletek a magyar közgondolkodásban*. Alkalmazott Pszichológia, X évf., 1–2 szám, 31–50., 2008.

tuted along two dimensions: warmth and competence¹². The warmth factor is considered as the strongest¹³, as it has a social aspect, giving information of the intentions of others. Conversely, competence gives information on the capability of the group-members¹⁴. The stereotype content model was tested in connection with several groups, who are generally targets of prejudices. The authors identified four types of stereotypes, along the two dimensions, where different social groups are placed: admiration (high warmth, high competence), a paternalistic stereotype (high warmth, low competence), an envious stereotype (low warmth, high competence) and a contemptuous stereotype (low warmth, low competence). The model was applied to groups like rich people or professionals but was not tested for groups connected to politics, like politicians, liberals- conservatives or leftists-rightists. The present research aims to fill this gap, assuming that the stereotype content model can be an organizing framework for the previously investigated dimensions in political stereotype-research.

1.3 Dimensions of political stereotypes (auto- and hetero-stereotypes)

We consider a research conducted in Hungary in 2006 to be the antecedent of our study, building on similar theoretical background, using similar methods, and referring to the stereotype content model as relevant theory in political stereotypes. This research showed that envious stereotype (meaning low in warmth and high in competence) was held by participants assessing the opposing parties' supporters¹⁵, in line with the general pattern in the assessment of opposing, competitive groups¹⁶. This research underlies the significance of bias stemming from one's own political preference (namely, an in-group-out-group bias: a preference for the in-group and negative perception toward the out-group¹⁷ in political stereotypes and provides opportunity to test the change of this envious stereotype since 2006.

Research dealing with specifically political stereotypes emphasizes mainly the morality dimension. According to these, the main differences lie in the diverse interpretations of morality by liberals and conservatives, as different aspects of morality are important to them: liberals prioritize a general fairness, while for conservatives in-group preference and authority are more primary¹⁸. This can be viewed as if liberals and conservatives use

¹² A. J. C., Cuddy, S., T., Fiske, P., Glick, *Warmth and Competence as Universal Dimensions of Social Perception: The Stereotype Content Model and the BIAS Map*, *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 2008

¹³ S. T. Fiske, A. J. C., Cuddy, P., Glick, *Universal dimensions of social cognition: warmth and competence*, *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 11, 77–83., 2006.

¹⁴ S., T., Fiske, A. J. C., Cuddy, P., Glick, J., Xu, *A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content: Competence and Warmth Respectively Follow From Perceived Status and Competition*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2002.

¹⁵ Krekó P.: Hunyady Gy. *Pártok szavazóiról kialakult sztereotípiák és előítéletek a magyar közgondolkodásban*, *Alkalmazott Pszichológia*, X évf., 1–2 szám, 31–50., 2008.

¹⁶ A. J. C., Cuddy, S., T., Fiske, P., Glick, *Warmth and Competence as Universal Dimensions of Social Perception: The Stereotype Content Model and the BIAS Map*, *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 2008

¹⁷ N. Cavazza, A. Mucchi Fainax, *Me, us or them: Who is more conformist? Perception of conformity and political orientation*, *Journal of Social Psychology*, 148, 335–345., 2008.

¹⁸ J. Haidt, J. Graham, *When Morality Opposes Justice: Conservatives Have Moral Intuitions that Liberals may not Recognize*, *Social Justice Research*, 20, 98–116., 2007.

different „moral stereotypes”¹⁹ that function as a framework concerning social responsibility, making it difficult for each side to understand the others' viewpoints. Instead, leftists consider rightists as indifferent, and rightists consider leftists as immoral.

Social responsibility seems to be an important dimension, as another study showed the general stereotypical pattern of „bleeding heart liberals” and „heartless conservatives”²⁰.

The common points of the discussed studies are that political stereotypes cannot be investigated without considering the bias stemming from one's own political preferences. Thus, it is not general stereotypes, but hetero-stereotypes (stereotypes of the out-group) and auto-stereotypes (stereotypes of the in-group) that are investigated.

1.4 Possible contents stemming from essential differences between leftists-rightists

After discussing the literature of political stereotypes, research on the real differences between liberals and conservatives are overviewed, assuming that these factors can appear in the stereotypes as well.

With respect to the questions as to whether essential differences between liberals and conservatives exist, Jost and his colleagues argue that ideological distinctions are unquestionably relevant²¹ and have many implications on different life domains, from basic motivations to personality and lifestyle differences.

All these differences can be explained by motivated social cognition, suggesting that the basic needs and preferences of liberals and conservatives differ²². Differences can be found in preferences for conformity, tradition, hierarchy order and stability by conservatives, as opposed to those for progress, flexibility, feminism and equality²³.

These differences can be summarized with the openness- closedness dimension that is investigated both within a cognitive and an affective/value/motivational perspective. Many studies show differences in the cognitive information processing style (namely, a higher need for cognitive closure for conservatives in comparison with liberals)²⁴; while a difference is found also in values connected to dimensions like “*Openness to change*” and “*Conservation*”²⁵, and in the BIG Five Personality Questionnaire's fifth dimension called

¹⁹ J. Graham, B. A. Nosek, J. Haidt, *The moral stereotypes of liberals and conservatives: Exaggeration of differences across the political spectrum*, PLoS ONE, 7, 2012.

²⁰ L. Farwell, B. Weiner, *Bleeding hearts and the heartless: Popular perceptions of liberal and conservative ideologies*, Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26, 845–852, 2006.

²¹ J. T. Jost, *The end of the end of psychology*, American Psychologist, 61, 651–670., 2006.

²² J. T. Jost, J. Glaser, A. W. Kruglanski, F. J. Sulloway, *Political conservatism as motivated social cognition*, Psychological Bulletin, 129, 339–375., 2003.

²³ J. T. Jost, B. A. Nosek, S. D. Gosling, *Ideology Its Resurgence in Social, Personality, and Political Psychology*, Perspectives on Psychological Science, 2008.

²⁴ Jost, J. T., Glaser, J., Kruglanski, A. W., Sulloway, F. J., *Political conservatism as motivated social cognition*, Psychological Bulletin, 129, 339–375., 2003.

²⁵ G.V. Caprara, S. Schwartz, C. Capanna, M. Vecchione, C. Barbaranelli., *Personality and politics: Values, traits, and political choice*, Political Psychology, 2006.

„Openness to Experiences”^{26, 27, 28}. Consequently, openness – closedness is a dimension that is expected to be relevant even in the stereotypes of political sides.

Conscientiousness, another Big Five personality dimension, is often identified as part of the differences between liberals and conservatives. Conservatives tend to score higher in this dimension than liberals, which is connected to conservatives' firm work ethic and accuracy^{29, 30}.

The above mentioned studies tried to capture the real psychological differences between liberals and conservatives, while in our paper, we focus only on perceptions of these differences as expressed by stereotypes. According to our assumption, real differences are conveyed and represented in stereotypes. This was underlined by a study in which stereotypes were collected through open-ended questions, asking participants to describe liberals and conservatives. Traits were most commonly mentioned (in comparison with beliefs or issues), and the main dimensions were openness, work ethic, and being extreme or moderate³¹.

Therefore, we have built on findings of previous research in collecting the possible themes for the questionnaire that could be relevant in the assessment: we expected warmth and competence to be the underlying dimensions that can contain sub-dimensions like morality and conscientiousness. Other factors, like social sensitivity, open- and closed- mindedness and being moderate-radical are assumed to form a third dimension, a political one, which can be relevant in political stereotypes.

1.5 Contextual considerations

Critical assumptions must be taken with respect to the social and political embeddedness of the research. In many of the cited studies the liberal-conservative dimension was used, while in the present research we apply the leftist-rightist dimension which is more commonly used in Hungary. Although in current political discourse a liberal/left-wing and conservative/right-wing dichotomy is prevalent, the meaning of these ideologies in Hungary, as a post-communist country are not equivalent to their meanings in Western democracies³². There is a „left-wing bias” in post-communist countries, referring

²⁶ A. Van Hiel, I. Mervielde, *The need for closure and the spontaneous use of complex and simple cognitive structures*. Journal of Social Psychology, 143 (5), 559–568., 2003.

²⁷ D. R. Carney, J. T. Jost, S. D. Gosling, J. Potter, *The Secret Lives of Liberals and Conservatives: Personality Profiles, Interaction Styles, and the Things They Leave Behind*, Political Psychology, 2008.

²⁸ M. Vecchione, H. Schoen, J. L. G. Castro, J. Cieciuch, V. Pavlopoulos, V. G. Caprara, Personality correlates of party preference: The Big Five in five big European Countries. Personality and Individual Differences, 51, 737–742., 2011

²⁹ G.V. Caprara, S. Schwartz, C. Capanna, M. Vecchione, C. Barbaranelli., *Personality and politics: Values, traits, and political choice*, Political Psychology, 2006.

³⁰ D. R. Carney, J. T. Jost, S. D. Gosling, J. Potter, *The Secret Lives of Liberals and Conservatives: Personality Profiles, Interaction Styles, and the Things They Leave Behind*, Political Psychology, 2008.

³¹ Huddy, L., Young, E., Martin, D. *Political ideology as social identity*. Ppt presented in the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, March 31- April 3, 2011.

³² Y. Piurko, S. H. Schwartz, E. Davidov, *Basic personal values and the meaning of left-right political orientations in 20 countries*, Political Psychology, 32(4):537–561., 2011.

to a trend, that democratic, young voters tend to keep distance from the left-wing (as a consequence of anticommunism), and prefer rightist parties³³. Still, there are reasons to expect some similarities in Hungary with the general liberal-conservative dichotomy, because Hungarian politics is polarized to a great extent, and left-wing and right-wing partisanship – namely, strong commitment to one party, leading to strong partisan identities- are also pronounced. These opposing identities can be the core of the differences in auto- and hetero-stereotypes as well^{34, 35}.

Therefore, we can't assume the same correspondences between ideologies and psychological variables which were found in Western researches, because these connections are always mediated by the societal context of the study³⁶.

Another important aspect is the actual political status of left- and right-wing political forces, also expected to influence stereotypes. At the time of data collection, autumn 2012, this context included a two-third conservative-right-wing government and a fragmented left-wing. A representative Gallup poll conducted in December 2012 -shortly after our data collection- suggested 32% support for the leading right-wing party, Fidesz (Hungarian Civic Alliance), and 11% support for leading left-wing party, MSZP (Hungarian Socialist Party), that reinforces the assumption of imbalanced power relations³⁷. The polarized and balanced political struggle between MSZP and Fidesz was broken since 2006 because of a scandal of MSZP prime minister that led to the loss of popularity and previous status of MSZP, and to the rise of Fidesz. This imbalance of power relations was expected to appear in stereotypes, so the reciprocity of envious stereotype (assuming a balanced political competition) was questioned. However, we maintained the assumption of in-group and out-group bias due to pervasive political polarization.

1.6 Hypotheses

As indicated before, our aim was two-fold: to test the general organization of political stereotypes, and to test the presumed changes of political hetero-stereotypes and auto-stereotypes since 2006 in the Hungarian context.

Our hypotheses were therefore the following:

I. Structure of political stereotypes in general

1. hypothesis: The stereotype-content model (warmth and competence), supplemented with a political factor can be identified as an organizing framework of

³³ G. Pop-Eleches, J. A. Tucker, *After the Party: Legacies and Left-Right Distinctions in Post-Communist Countries*, Estudios / Working Papers, 2010.

³⁴ Krekó P.; Hunyady Gy. *Pártok szavazóiról kialakult sztereotípiák és előítéletek a magyar közgondolkodásban*, Alkalmazott Pszichológia, X évf., 1–2 szám, 31–50., 2008.

³⁵ Huddy, L., Young, E., Martin, D. *Political ideology as social identity*. Ppt presented in the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, March 31- April 3, 2011.

³⁶ M. Vecchione, H. Schoen, J. L. G. Castro, J. Cieciuch, V. Pavlopoulos, V. G. Caprara, Personality correlates of party preference: The Big Five in five big European Countries. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 51, 737–742., 2011.

³⁷ Gallup Poll conducted by Nézőpont Intézet : 20. December, 2012. Downloaded: <http://nezopointintezet.hu/tag/kozvelemeny-kutatas/>

stereotypes about the political left-wing and right-wing people, integrating most of the dimensions suggested by previous research.

2. hypothesis: Items connected to morality and conscientiousness are expected to appear within the warmth factor.
 3. hypothesis: The political factor is expected to contain the items reflecting the political contents, (e. g. liberal-conservative, open-minded- closed-minded, socially sensitive- indifferent and moderate- radical).
- II. Contents of the leftist and rightist auto- and hetero-stereotypes in Hungary
1. hypothesis: In-group-out-group bias is expected in the warmth and the political dimensions.
 2. hypothesis: Due to the assessments expected along the competence factor, envious hetero-stereotype (low warmth, high competence) is expected by only the leftists. toward rightists, but not by the rightists toward the leftists.

2. Methods

2.1 Questionnaire

The semantic differential scale was used³⁸, that consists of pairs of adjectives (a positive adjective paired with its opposite, e.g. *active-passive*, *dominant- submissive* etc.), along that participants had to indicate their assessments. This method is very prevalent in stereotype- research^{39, 40, 41}.

Participants were asked to assess both a left-wing and a right-wing person with the following instruction: „Please, imagine a person, who supports or prefers the political left-wing / political right-wing, and assess this person across the given pairs of adjectives.” They indicated their opinion on a six-point Likert- scale, from 1 to 6. The positive adjective was placed at the 1-end of the scale, while its negative pair was placed at the 6-end of the scale.

Twenty-seven pairs of adjectives were used that were compiled on a theoretical basis. Multiple items were collected for each dimension. Morality was presented by the items *fair-unfair*, *honest-dishonest*, *reliable-unreliable* etc., while competence consisted of the following items: *dominant-submissive*, *confident-uncertain*, *determined-undetermined* etc. The Big Five dimension *conscientiousness* was presented by *conscientious-negligent*, *diligent-lazy*. *Openness – closedness* was tested by the following items: *open-minded-closed-minded*, *traditional-innovative*, *narrow-minded – broad-minded*. Items were used referring to literacy/cleverness (*schooled-unschooled*, *clever- dense* etc.), and to a political dimension (*socially sensitive- indifferent*, *moderate-radical*, *liberal- conservative*). Some single

³⁸ C. E. Osgood, G. Suci, P. Tannenbaum, *The measurement of meaning*, Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1957.

³⁹ R. Udolf, *Liberal and conservative stereotypes in terms of belief response hierarchies*, *Psychological Reports*, 32, 275–284., 1973.

⁴⁰ D. Coutant, S. Worchel, D. Bar-Tal, J. van Raalten, *A multidimensional examination of the “Stereotype” concept: A developmental approach*, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35, 92–110., 2011.

⁴¹ S. T. Fiske, A. J. C. Cuddy, P. Glick, *Universal dimensions of social cognition: warmth and competence*, *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 11, 77–83., 2006.

items not connected to dimensions were added as well, like *religious- not religious* and *young-old*. Finally, participants were asked about their socio-demographics and political views; a seven-point political left-right self-placement scale was applied.

2.2 Sample

A convenience sample was used, with the aim of collecting participants among university students and those with a university degree regardless of age. Sociology students recruited participants in person, informed them about the ethical considerations on anonymity and voluntary participation, and asked them to fill out the questionnaire in autumn 2012.

The sample consisted of 449 participants, of which 45% were men. The participants are heterogeneous of age ($M: 37, STD: 14$), educational attainment and type of residence, but there are strong tendencies that determine the groups that results are mainly relevant for. University students made up 27% of the sample, while professionals were 41%. The vast majority, 49% of participants are from the capital, 30% are from towns and 31% are from smaller towns or villages. According to the left-right self-placement 40% placed themselves to the left-end of the scale (1–3), 32% have chosen the middle (4), and 28% have used the right-end of the scale (5–7), so rightist people were underrepresented. Consequently, the ratio of leftist and rightist orientation is biased in the sample.

3. Results

3.1 The structure of stereotypes

Factor analysis was conducted on the twenty-seven items in order to identify the organization and structure of stereotypes. The method of extraction was principal axis factoring, because the items do not show a normal distribution. Oblique rotation (Direct Oblimin), which enables the factors to correlate was chosen, because factors were not expected to be completely independent.

3.1.1 The scale of the leftist

An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each factor in the data. Five components had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination, explained 57.02% of the variance. Only the first three factors were accepted, since the last two explained only a very low percentage of the total variance. Principal component analysis was repeated, this time with fixed three factors to extract.

Several items were dropped from the final three scales, because they fit in more than one factor by their eigenvalues – limitation for the eigenvalue was to be double or higher to be accepted. Items and their eigenvalues that fit in more than one factor are the following: *interesting-boring* (Factor1: .397 and Factor2: .406), *schooled-unschooled* (Factor1: .252 and Factor2: .491), *clever-dense* (Factor1: .538 and Factor2: .299), *open-minded- closed-minded* (Factor1: .501, Factor2: .260 and Factor3: -.370).

These three factors explained 49,234% of the total variance. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .887 ('great' according to

Field⁴²). Bartlett's test of sphericity is $\chi^2(231)=3368.674$, $p < .001$, indicated that correlations between items were sufficiently large for factor analysis.

3.1.2 The scale of the rightist

An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each factor in the data. Six factors had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination, explained 59.101% of the variance.

Only the first three factors were accepted since the last two explained very low percentage of the total variance. Factor analysis was repeated with fixed three factors to extract.

Several items dropped out from the final three scales because they fit in more than one factor by their eigenvalues. These are the following:

interesting-boring (Factor1: .449 and Factor2: .372), *schooled-unschooled* (Factor 1: .276 and Factor 2: .501), *learned-illiterate* (Factor 1: .466 and Factor 2: .424), *clever-dense* (Factor 1: .533 and Factor 2: .407), *open-minded-closed-minded* (Factor 1: .515 and Factor 3: -.561), *narrow-minded-broad-minded* (Factor 1: -.442 and Factor 3: .273), *young-old* (Factor 2: .332 and Factor 3: -.321), *optimist-pessimist* (Factor 2: .566 and Factor 3: -.355), *religious-not religious* (Factor 2: .337 and Factor 3: .441), *diligent-lazy* (Factor 1: .490, Factor 2: .291 and Factor 3: .307).

These three factors explained 52.628% of the total variance. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .853. Bartlett's test of sphericity $\chi^2(136) = 2356,603$, $p < .001$, indicated that correlations between items were sufficiently large for factor analysis.

The three factors by both assessments can be interpreted as a warmth, a competence and a political factor (Table 1 and Table2).

Table 1.

Scale of the leftist

Factor loadings after rotation in the scale of the leftist

	Factors		
	1. Warmth	2. Competence	3. Political
Cronbach's alpha	.899	.801	.381
Variance explained (%)	30.143	11.256	7.834
Items and component loadings			
Fair - Unfair	.838		
Honest - Dishonest	.805		
Modest - Arrogant	.798		
Reliable - Unreliable	.764		
Conscientious - Negligent	.726		
Socially sensitive - Indifferent	.715		

⁴² Field A., *Discovering Statistics using IBM SPSS Statistics*, SAGE Publications Ltd., 2009.

Friendly – Unfriendly	.635		
Moderate – Radical	.624		
Diligent – Lazy	.541		
Learned – Illiterate	.553		
Dominant – Submissive		.783	
Confident – Uncertain		.779	
Determined – Undetermined		.779	
Active – Passive		.657	
Successful – Unsuccessful		.552	
Social – Asocial		.550	
Optimist – Pessimist		.461	
Young – Old			-.467
Liberal – Conservative			-.488

Table 2.

Scale of the rightist

Factor loadings after rotation in the scale of the rightist

	Factors		
	1. Warmth	2. Competence	3. Political
Cronbach's alpha	.876	.749	-.699
Variance explained (%)	27.986	16.424	8.218
Items and component loadings			
Fair – Unfair	.813		
Reliable – Unreliable	.796		
Honest – Dishonest	.774		
Modest – Arrogant	.736		
Conscientious – Negligent	.705		
Moderate – Radical	.653		
Socially sensitive – Indifferent	.648		
Friendly – Unfriendly	.639		
Confident – Uncertain		.683	
Determined- Undetermined		.666	
Active – Passive		.639	
Successful – Unsuccessful		.628	
Dominant – Submissive		.609	
Social – Asocial		.589	
Schooled – Unschooled		.501	
Liberal – Conservative			-.688
Traditional- Innovative			.636

3.2 Testing the effect of party preferences: in-group-out-group bias

A mixed design ANOVA was carried out to investigate the interactions among the two within subject variables, like factors (warmth, competence, political factor) and the evaluated sides (leftist person, rightist person), and between-subject variables, like the participants' political preference (leftist, rightist, neutral). Almost all the applied dependent variables met the normality criteria: warmth, competence and political dimensions assessing the leftist, and warmth and competence assessing the rightist (One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov, $p > .05$). Only the political factor assessing the rightist does not have a normal distribution (One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov: $p = .01$).

There was no significant relation neither between the factors and the evaluated sides (mixed design ANOVA, $F(2, 449) = .18$; $p = .83$; $\eta_p^2 = .000$), nor between the factors and the political preferences (mixed design ANOVA, $F(4, 449) = 1.56$; $p = .18$; $\eta_p^2 = .008$), suggesting that participants from all political orientations have used the three factors for the evaluation similarly.

The strongest connection is between the evaluated sides and one's own political preference, showing that political perception is not at all objective, but seriously biased (mixed design ANOVA, $F(2, 449) = 74.31$; $p < .001$; $\eta_p^2 = .28$).

3.3 Contents of the auto- and hetero-stereotypes: Differences and Common Points

A paired samples T-test was used in order to compare the evaluations given by the three groups (neutrals, leftists, rightists), and whether they perceive the sides along the three factors differently.

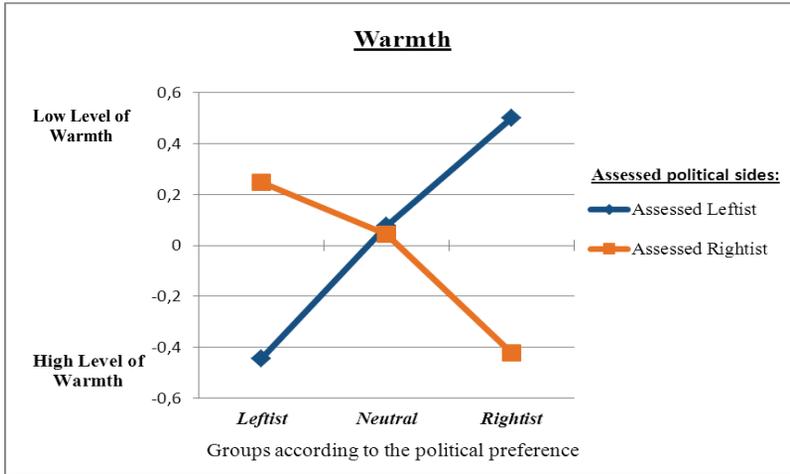
Groups determining the political preferences were formed by the following method: the seven-point left-wing – right-wing self-placement scale was split into three parts: the leftist group consisted of the ones placing themselves between 1–3 ($n = 177$), rightist group consisted of the ones with 5–7 self-placements ($n = 124$), while those standing in the middle, at 4, were considered as the neutral group ($n = 140$).

There were no significant results by the neutral group: they have not perceived leftists and rightists to be different in warmth (Paired Samples T-test: $t(119,140) = 0.35$; $p = 0.72$), competence (Paired Samples T-test: $t(119, 140) = -1.69$; $p = -1.14$) or the political dimension (Paired Samples T-test: $t(119,140) = 1.56$; $p = .12$).

In contrast, both the leftist and rightist groups perceived significant differences in almost all the dimensions. There was only one exception: leftists' assessments of the in-group and out-group along the competence dimension are closer to each other, so the difference is not significant (Paired Samples T-test, $t(155, 177) = -1.69$; $p = .09$) while rightists perceive the in-group and out-group significantly differently in all the three factors (warmth: Paired Samples T-test, $t(105,124) = 6.48$, $p < .001$; competence: Paired Samples T-test, $t(105,124) = 3.61$, $p < 0.001$; political factor: Paired Samples T-test, $t(105, 124) = 2.41$, $p < .01$). Differences of auto- and hetero-stereotypes are presented in Graph 1, Graph 2, and Graph 3.

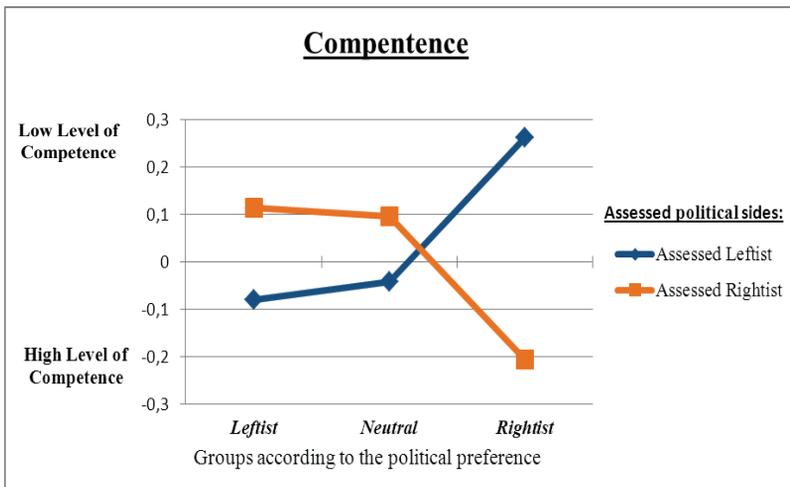
Graph 1:

Stereotypes of leftist, neutral and rightist groups along the Warmth dimension
 Factor scores are presented on the graph. Positive items were placed at the left-end of the scale (at the minimum: score 1), while negative items were placed at the right-end of the scale (at the maximum: score 6).



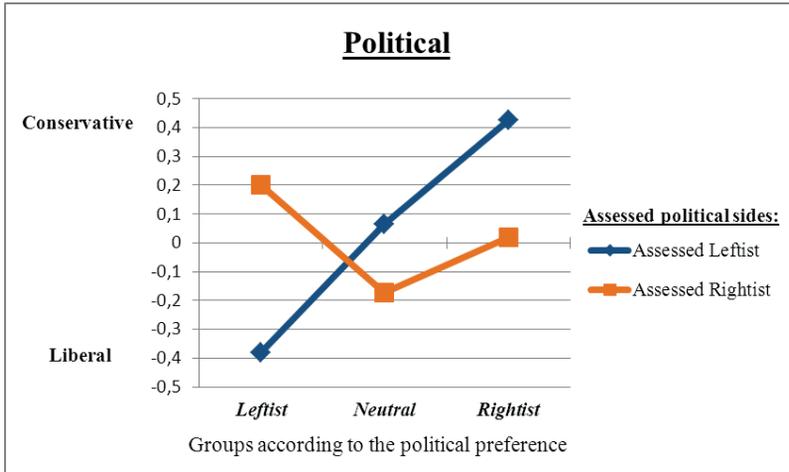
Graph 2:

Stereotypes of leftist, neutral and rightist groups along the Competence dimension
 Factor scores are presented on the graph. Positive items were placed at the left-end of the scale (at the minimum: score 1), while negative items were placed at the right-end of the scale (at the maximum: score 6).



Graph 3:

Stereotypes of leftist, neutral and rightist groups along the Political dimension
Factor scores are presented on the graph. Positive items were placed at the left-end of the scale (at the minimum: score 1) , while negative items were placed at the right-end of the scale (at the maximum: score 6).



3.4 Items that broke the ingroup-outgroup bias and led to envious stereotype by leftists

By the rightist group, there were two exceptions where no significant difference was found in the auto- and hetero-stereotypes: these are items *socially sensitive-indifferent* and *moderate- radical*. Though these traits belong to the warmth factor in the assessment of leftists, the general assessment of leftists by the rightists are still negative (warmth: Paired Samples T-test, $t(105, 124) = 6.48, p < .001$; Graph 1)

As for the leftist group, dimensions yielded no differences in in-group and out-group perceptions are the following: *active-passive*, *successful-unsuccessful*, *young-old*, *determined- undetermined*, *confident-uncertain*. All these items (except *young-old*) belong to the competence factor, so these items are accounted for the lack of significant difference between the auto- and hetero- stereotypes by the leftists (Graph 2). This result also means that leftists perceive rightists along the envious stereotype, as they think they are high in competence and low in warmth. The same is not true for rightists, who perceive leftists as low in both warmth and competence.

4. Discussion

4.1 Results interpreted along the hypotheses

1. Structure of political stereotypes

Our first hypothesis, concerning that stereotype content model, supplemented with a political dimension gives the structure of political stereotypes, is supported. The first dimension is a general warmth dimension, and the second one is unambiguously a competence factor, so the classic stereotype-content model can be used. The third, political factor is much weaker in comparison with the other two, and is the one that has a slight difference in its meaning by the assessment of the leftists and the rightists.

As it was assumed in the second hypothesis, morality proved to be a sub-dimension of warmth, containing items like *fair-unfair*, *honest-dishonest*, *reliable-unreliable*. So as is suggested by the literature, morality plays an important role in the assessment of political sides. Besides morality, the item *modest-arrogant* also appeared which refers to a different aspect of the warmth dimension. *Conscientiousness*, a trait often investigated in political context also appeared within the warmth factor. The third hypothesis was only partly supported, because the dimensions *socially sensitive-indifferent* and *moderate-radical* are still a part of the warmth dimension for both sides, though they were expected to be perceived as a political content.

The underlying contents of competence for both sides are *confident-inconfident*, *determined-undetermined*, *dominant-submissive*, *active-passive* and *successful-unsuccessful*. This refers to the classic interpretation of this factor, expressing abilities and aptitude to succeed. *Social-asocial* was an element that was still associated to competence that proves the social aspect of this factor.

The only structural difference is in the political factor, where the item *liberal-conservative* correlates with other meanings: by leftists, being old and conservative are connected, while by rightists, being conservative is related to being traditional. The item *open-minded-closed-minded* was not kept in the final factor structure as expected, since it was related almost equally to both the warmth and the political factor. However, we found a tendency for closed-mindedness to be related to being conservative in participants' minds. The third hypothesis concerning the political dimension can be partly rejected, as not all the assumed dimensions appeared.

2. In-group-out-group bias and the envious stereotype

The evaluations given by the two political groups were similar to each other and different from the evaluation of the neutrals. The politically committed participants considered the leftists and rightists to be different in warmth and the political dimension, as it was assumed in the fourth hypothesis. Generally it can be said that both leftists and rightists tended to evaluate the in-group more preferably compared to the out-group on every count, and that this bias caused the significant differences, referring to the crucial effect of political preference. There are just a few exceptions, in which auto- and hetero-stereotypes do not differ significantly. By leftists these were items connected to competence: being active, successful and confident. By rightists, items in which they did not perceive a difference were being socially sensitive and moderate.

An envious stereotype (not warm, but competent) can be found only toward the rightists by the participants with a left-wing orientation who acknowledge the competence of rightists, and at the same time, are critical about their own competence. This is the reason for not finding a significant difference between the assessment of the in-group and out-group by leftists (Graph 2). In contrast, this envious stereotype does not appear in the evaluations given by the rightists, who perceive leftists as significantly less warm and less competent which indicates the presence of a contemptuous stereotype (Graph 1, Graph 2). Therefore, our fifth hypothesis is supported. They only had two exceptions where rightists were „permissive” with the left-wing out-group, and the large distance between the auto- and hetero-stereotypes disappeared: these were the items *socially sensitive-indifferent* and *moderate-radical*. These can be interpreted like features that are traditionally connected to central leftist ideology, which can be a reason for the rightists to acknowledge it in the evaluation of leftists.

4.2 Interpretation of the contextual aspects

The common points show that leftists acknowledge the rightists competence, and rightists acknowledge the leftists to be socially sensitive and moderate. Though the lack of envy by rightists suggests that there is a change in the competition of left-wing and right-wing since previous investigations reported a balanced political struggle between Hungarian political sides in 2006⁴³. Stereotype contents must be investigated taking the social context into account, because changes in stereotypes can capture the changes in public opinion and in the society as a whole⁴⁴. These changes in stereotypes can be interpreted by the change that political parties went through since 2006. At the 2010 elections, Fidesz became the governing party with a two-third majority in the parliament, and in 2012 (the time of data collection) they represented a powerful status against the fragmented, newly organizing left-wing parties. These events have shaped the image of political groups and were reflected in the stereotypes of them: especially because the political left and political right are closely connected to the parties representing them in Hungary⁴⁵. Therefore, changes in the status of these groups might influence this perception, even if the questions used in the research did not specifically target political actors. According to our results, the meaning of left-wing was mainly connected to MSZP and its supporters, as it was also found by a recent Hungarian qualitative study⁴⁶. Neutrals and rightists consider the leftists to be conservative. This is supported by the third factor in the assessment of leftists, where being old and conserva-

⁴³ Krekó P.; Hunyady Gy. *Pártok szavazóiról kialakult sztereotípiák és előítéletek a magyar közgondolkodásban*, Alkalmazott Pszichológia, X évf., 1–2 szám, 31–50., 2008.

⁴⁴ Gy. Hunyady, D. Hamilton, L. A. Nguyen Luu, *Csoportok percepciója*, In: Hunyady Gy. & Hamilton D. L.(ed.): *Csoportok percepciója*, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1–27., 1999.

⁴⁵ G. Tóka, *Vezérek csodálói. A magyar választói magatartás nemzetközi összehasonlításban*, In: Karácsony Gergely (szerk.) *Parlamentari választás 2006. Elemzések és adatok*, Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem Politikatudományi Intézet, 2006.

⁴⁶ B. Fehér, Á. Szabó, J. Fodor, Á. Szabó, N. Miklós *Associating Left and Right. The Meaning of Ideology in a Hungarian Context*. Paper presented at the „Humanities and Social Sciences 2011” Conference 24–26. November, Lviv, Ukraine, 2011.

tive are connected, referring to the common critic mostly declared by rightists, that MSZP is connected to the old socialist regime (Graph 3). These findings are in accordance with the „left-wing bias” that despite the actual changes in the political left, with new, younger left-wing parties appearing, there is still a negative, conservative connotation of the left-wing⁴⁷.

In general, the present study confirms that stereotypes can reflect the changes of groups' actual status and the changes of public opinion, so they can be treated as useful means of investigation.

4.3 Conclusions and limitations

The stereotype-content model was found to be the organizing frame within which the other, often investigated dimensions could appear. The most salient was the morality factor which functioned as a sub-dimension of warmth. Other factors were less dominant, but still, conscientiousness, social sensitivity and being moderate proved to be relevant items in the assessment of political objects. The political factor and the *openness-closedness* dimension partly related to it, suggested meaningful differences in the assessment of political sides.

The limitations of the study lay in its simple method: complex categories were tested with simple pairs of adjectives, but this may not be enough to grab the exact organization between each dimension within the main stereotype-content factors. However, it was enough to place them in a comprehensive, meaningful frame. The significance of this study is to be able to show special correspondences that reflected the current political context in Hungary, suggesting that further investigations in the changes of political stereotype- contents are worthwhile.

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Georgia's Road to NATO: Everything but Membership?

Introduction

The ongoing crisis in Ukraine continues to jolt the architectural plans of Euro-Atlantic security developed over the past 25 years. Predictions of a "new Cold War," and anxiety over Russia's ambitions in its neighborhood, have led to calls for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to step up efforts to ensure security on the European continent and protect its newer members in close geographic proximity to the Russian Federation. After more than two decades, during which NATO was transforming into a military alliance focused on out-of-area missions, the collective defense at the heart of the 1949 Washington Treaty has suddenly appeared to regain its relevance.

Since the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and the escalation of military conflict in Ukraine's Donbas region a year ago, NATO has demonstrated its commitment to the security of its Eastern European member states through reassurance measures that have included increased air and maritime patrols, as well as the rotation of ground forces. There are however countries partnering with NATO – but not covered by its collective defense protective umbrella – which fall into a gray zone of influence between Russia and the Euro-Atlantic allies. These countries, including Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine itself, are particularly concerned by Russia's strategic objective of keeping a sphere of influence and preventing their alignment with Western political and security structures.

Georgia has been the most adamant and persistent country of the former Soviet Union to have sought membership in NATO. It has taken on wide ranging reforms of its defense sector and military, and has significantly contributed to the Alliance's largest military mission to date, the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF). Since 2008, the question of whether to grant Georgia a clear timetable and roadmap for accession to NATO has been on the organization's agenda, and has led to a split between those

Allies that favor extending security guarantees to additional members in Eastern Europe, and those that advocate a cautious approach to Russia's geographical sphere of interest.

This paper looks at Georgia's road toward closer integration with NATO from the early stages of the country's independence to the Rose Revolution, August 2008 War, and beyond. It is aimed to analyze the inter-links between Georgia's attempts to gain NATO membership and its foreign and security policy *vis-à-vis* the Russian Federation. In the final section and conclusion of this paper, we examine the outcomes of the NATO summit in Wales in September 2014 from a Georgian perspective and the options open to the Georgian government in ensuring security and further reform of the defense sector.

The Early Years: from Independence to the Rose Revolution

When the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) collapsed two years later, the landscape of European security – characterized for half a century by the two opposing military alliances of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact – began to shift. NATO had been formed in 1949, as relations between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union turned antagonistic over the detonation of a Soviet atomic bomb in August of that year and the incorporation of territories the USSR had occupied at the end of World War II into the Soviet Bloc. Ever since then, NATO's core mission has been collective defense, as declared by Article V of the Washington Treaty: "An armed attack against one or more of them [*the Allies, author's note*] in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all."¹ With the USSR's collapse and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, NATO's Cold War enemy had all but vanished. In its stead, the Alliance was faced with instability and ethno-political conflicts along the Eastern and Southeastern edges of Europe, as well as with the request of former Soviet Bloc states in Central Europe to be incorporated under its protective umbrella.²

At its Rome Summit in 1991, NATO established the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), which would in 1997 be transformed into the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). The NACC was a political forum, holding annual meetings at the ministerial level with representation of all the former Warsaw Pact members.³ At this time, the Eastern expansion of the Alliance, which would eventually lead to NATO membership for all former Soviet Bloc countries in Central-Eastern Europe, plus Slovenia, Croatia, and the Baltic states, was far from a foregone conclusion – especially among U.S. decision-makers, whose opinions carried predominant weight in the Alliance. Proponents of enlargement in the Clinton Administration argued that including the Central European countries in NATO would help extend the benefits of peace, freedom, and security to all of Europe, thereby erasing the Cold War's dividing lines, and create an institutional framework to resolve

¹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization "The North Atlantic Treaty," last modified December 9, 2008, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm

² cf. C. Tim Carlsson, "Unraveling the Georgian Knot: The United States, Russia, and the New 'Great Game' in the Caucasus" (Master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, 2009) 37; and Henry J. Kyle, *The Relevancy of NATO Membership in Russia's Near Abroad*, 2nd edition (Damascus, Md: Penny Hill Press Inc., 2012), Kindle Edition

³ cf. James M. Goldgeier, *Not Whether But When. The U.S. Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Brookings Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 1999), 17f

disputes between nations. Considering the violence Europe was facing at the time in the Western Balkans, this constituted an important argument for NATO expansion.⁴ Enlargement opponents, on the other side, argued that expanding NATO into Eastern Europe would antagonize Russia and endanger progress on a key security issue, namely U.S.-Russian cooperation on nuclear disarmament. The U.S. military was primarily concerned by the capabilities of potential new NATO members and argued that it was vital to first institute patterns of cooperation that would lead to resilient military-to-military relationships, enabling these countries to one day integrate into the Alliance.⁵

The result of the bureaucratic and presidential decision-making process in Washington was a two-track enlargement policy, unveiled by President Clinton in 1994. One track consisted of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) as a mechanism focused on supporting defense reforms in partner countries with the aim of building their capabilities and interoperability with NATO forces. The PfP was open to all of the former Soviet Bloc and Soviet successor states and allowed these countries to participate in multilateral peace-keeping operations with NATO members, such as those in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. Through the second track, NATO set up a bilateral mechanism of engagement with Russia under the NATO-Russia Founding Act that was eventually signed in 1997.

Georgia joined the NACC in 1992 and the Partnership for Peace in 1994, three years after it had gained independence from the Soviet Union in a process accompanied by internal strife that culminated in armed confrontation between opposing political forces in the center of its capital city Tbilisi, at the turn of 1991-92. In addition, secessionist wars raged on the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Both of these regions had enjoyed autonomous status within the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, and sought independence from Georgia after the collapse of the USSR. Since early 1992, Eduard Shevardnadze, the former Foreign Minister of the USSR, who had significantly contributed to the peaceful reunification of Germany, was President of Georgia. He entertained excellent personal relations with important Western decision-makers, such as James Baker III, U.S. Secretary of State in the George H.W. Bush Administration, and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, former German Foreign Minister. By integrating Georgia into Western structures of cooperation and assistance, he sought support for the recognition of the country's territorial integrity, as well as material help to rebuild its shattered economy.

In the early 1990s, Georgia's armed forces were in a deplorable state. When the Soviet Union collapsed, its 15 successor states had proportionally inherited parts of the assets of the Soviet Army that had been stationed on their territories. Due to the chaotic nature of the disbandment of the Red Army and the volatile situation in Georgia, many of these assets were misappropriated and trafficked to various sides in the conflicts rattling the country. The armed forces were disorganized and largely consisted of paramilitary formations more loyal to political entrepreneurs or warlords, than to any unified national command; in addition, there had been relatively few Georgian personnel serving in officer positions in the Soviet Army who could pass on their expertise to structure the young state's

⁴ cf. Carlsson, *Unraveling the Georgian Knot*, 37

⁵ cf. Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When*, 26f

security and defense institutions.⁶ Joining the PfP provided Georgia international support in defense reform, especially once an Individual Partnership and Cooperation Program with NATO was elaborated and Georgia had joined the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP) in 1999.⁷

Major progress in military transformation came through bilateral security assistance provided by the United States in the form of the Georgia Train and Equip Program (GTEP), an 18-months effort funded at more than USD 60 million. In the words of Lt. Col. Robert E. Hamilton, who served as the chief of the U.S. Office of Defense Cooperation in Georgia from 2006 until 2008, by the time GTEP started in 2002, the Georgian armed forces “were a collection of loosely organized, poorly disciplined units with famously corrupt leadership and few modern combat skills.”⁸ The program trained and equipped four Georgian battalions in light infantry airmobile, mechanized and mountain tactics, as well as medical and logistical methods. It was linked to the George W. Bush Administration’s counter-terrorism efforts and ostensibly aimed at enabling Georgia to counteract Chechen formations operating in the Pankisi Gorge, an area straddling the Georgian border with Russia’s Chechen Republic. Russia had repeatedly accused Georgia of harboring Chechen terrorists and thus reluctantly acquiesced to the U.S. security assistance program.⁹

While in the 1990s and early 2000s, Georgia had sought Western orientation, since 1993 it had also been a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) – the regional association of the USSR’s successor states – as well as on CIS’s Council of Defense Ministers. The attempt to balance its foreign and security policy reflected the Georgian government’s thinking that a solution to the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia – which by 1994 Georgia had eventually lost control over – would not be possible without Russia’s positive influence. This approach would change dramatically in the wake of the events of November 2003.¹⁰

The “New Georgia”: Single-Vector Foreign Policy

In that month, mass protests rocked Georgia’s capital city of Tbilisi. Crowds demonstrated against the perceived falsification of the parliamentary elections of November 2, 2003, and against the corrupt and ineffective government of President Eduard Shevardnadze. They were led by a triumvirate of three young political leaders headed by Mikheil Saakashvili, a former Minister of Justice, who had resigned from his position in protest against government corruption. On November 23, the bloodless Rose Revolution deposed President Shevardnadze. Saakashvili was elected the new head of state in a landslide vic-

⁶ cf. Nakia J. Summers, “Georgia’s Quest for NATO Membership: Challenges and Prospects” (Master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, 2010), 22

⁷ cf. “NATO-Georgia Partnership Mechanism,” Ministry of Defense of Georgia, accessed May 25, 2015, <https://mod.gov.ge/p/NATO-Georgia-partnership>

⁸ Robert E. Hamilton, “Georgian Military Reform—An Alternative View,” CSIS Commentary, February 3, 2009

⁹ cf. Carlsson, “Unraveling the Georgian Knot,” 39; Summers, “Georgia’s Quest,” 22

¹⁰ cf. Jakub Kufčák, “Policy recommendation for the Georgian NATO membership,” Prague Security Studies Institute 2013, http://www.academia.edu/5630413/NATO_and_Georgia_in_2014_is_MAP_an_Option_Again

tory in early January 2004, and his political party, the United National Movement, won almost 70 percent of votes in the March election that year.

The new president entered office with the firmly set goal of anchoring Georgia's foreign and security policy more firmly in a Western political and security structures alliance. He also promised that during his term in office, the country's territorial integrity would be reestablished through the "reintegration" of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. As we have seen above, the previous government had followed a pro-Western course, but at the same time links with Russia and multilateral institutions in the post-Soviet space had been kept intact. Not so Mr. Saakashvili. As an avowedly pro-American president, he had a vision of profoundly transforming Georgian society and "fast-forwarding" the country to a new mode of social relations, governance, and cultural values. The approach chosen for these aims was to reject all post-Soviet labels *in toto* and align Georgia with the United States, NATO, and the European Union politically, economically, militarily and culturally.

The Rose Revolution also coincided with the increased focus of the George W. Bush Administration on the promotion of democracy after 2001. The Georgian political leadership soon started to portray Georgia as a poster-child for the transformation of a former Soviet state with weak governance and a largely informal, poorly developed economy, to a beacon of democratization and market economic reforms in its region. In addition, Saakashvili positioned his country as a key ally of the United States in the "war against terror." GTEP was wound up by April 2004, but was replaced the following year by the Georgia Sustainment and Stability Operations Program. Georgia SSOP was designed to solidify and build on the achievements of GTEP by implementing modern standards in the Georgian armed forces in order to enable them to operate jointly with Western (primarily U.S.) forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom. By 2007-2008, about 2,000 Georgian soldiers had served in Iraq, which made Georgia the third-largest troop contributing nation after the U.S. and the United Kingdom.¹¹

The more solid Georgian relations became with the United States, the more they deteriorated with Russia. Presidents Saakashvili and Putin quickly developed a personal dislike for each other. This animosity was exacerbated by what Saakashvili called Russian meddling in Georgia's break-away regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while Putin countered that Georgia was turning itself into a fifth column of Western (read: American) power projection in Russia's immediate vicinity. President Saakashvili made no secret of his desire to integrate Georgia into NATO. His country had been the first, in October 2004, to agree an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with the Alliance, followed two years later by the establishment of an Intensified Dialog. In the same year, President Saakashvili took Georgia out of the CIS Council of Defense Ministers, arguing that the country could not simultaneously be part of two military structures.¹²

In April 2007, the U.S. Congress approved the NATO Freedom Consolidation Act, urging NATO to grant Georgia a Membership Action Plan (MAP). The MAP process had been

¹¹ cf. Carlsson, "Unraveling the Georgian Knot," 39; Jim Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," Congressional Research Service Report, 2 April 2014, 5

¹² cf. "NATO-Georgia Partnership Mechanisms"; also Róbert Ondrejcsák, "Perspectives of NATO-Georgia Relations," accessed May 25, 2015. <http://cena.org/analysis/perspectives-of-nato-georgia-relations/>; Summers, "Georgia's Quest," 29

instituted to help NATO candidate countries, during the second round of post-Cold War enlargement (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia), achieve the military and political standards required to join the Alliance. If Georgia were granted a MAP during the 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest – so the government reasoned – its eventual accession to membership was all but guaranteed. In order to underline Georgia's commitment, President Saakashvili organized a referendum in January 2008 on NATO integration, held simultaneously with pre-term presidential elections triggered by the violent suppression of large-scale public protest in Tbilisi a few months prior. 77 percent of voters endorsed NATO membership for Georgia in this referendum.¹³

Georgian aspirations for NATO membership, which were supported by the Bush Administration and most of the new Central-Eastern European NATO member states, turned into a major bone of contention at the Bucharest Summit. Russia, which loomed large in the discussions, viewed NATO's expansion into its sphere of influence as an expression of hostile intent. This hostility was perceived to be confirmed by events such as the recognition of Kosovo's independence earlier in the year, and U.S. plans for missile defense development, which Moscow considered to be directed against its own strategic missile arsenal. Those NATO Allies who opposed granting Georgia a MAP – primarily Germany, France, and Italy – argued that further Eastern expansion (also to possibly include Ukraine) would endanger peace and stability in Europe. In addition, many of the countries NATO had taken in as members during its two rounds of post-Cold War enlargement had only small and somewhat antiquated militaries, whose inclusion had not strengthened the Alliance's capabilities. There was concern about stretching NATO even further to embrace additional members that clearly saw the Alliance as a way to counteract Russia's strategic designs and meddle in their internal affairs. In Georgia's case, particular apprehension remained about potential Georgian attempts to regain control over its break-away regions by force, possibly drawing Russia into a conflict and – in case of Georgian NATO membership – triggering the invocation of Article V of the Washington Treaty and thus dragging the Alliance into a military confrontation with Moscow.¹⁴

Eventually, Georgia did not receive a MAP in Bucharest in April 2008. In August, an increase in tensions and armed incidents resulted in a full-scale military assault by Tbilisi on the break-away region of South Ossetia and retaliation by Russia that went beyond that region. While Russian ground troops pushed the Georgian military out of South Ossetia and advanced further into Georgian territory, its air force bombed military infrastructure and the navy ferried Russian troops via the Black Sea to break-away Abkhazia, who from there moved into western Georgia. The war was swift and decisive, ending after five days with a French-brokered ceasefire. By that time, the Georgian military had lost a third of its equipment, three out of five brigades were destroyed, the country's two main military bases in Gori and Senaki had been devastated, and its navy and coast guard virtually annihilated. Within two weeks of the end of armed hostilities, Russia had recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, thus paving the way for the establishment

¹³ cf. Carlsson, "Unraveling the Georgian Knot," 40; Ondrejcsák, "Perspectives of NATO-Georgia relations"

¹⁴ cf. Kufčák, "Policy recommendation;" Ondrejcsák, "Perspectives of NATO-Georgia Relations;" Kyle, *The Relevancy of NATO Membership*

of Russian military infrastructure in both regions and the deployment of Russian border guards at their boundary lines with Georgia.¹⁵

Russia has advanced different motivations and objectives for its intervention in Georgia, including the protection of its peacekeepers and citizens in South Ossetia, as well as self-defense. Eventually, however, the five-day war in August 2008 demonstrated that Russia was prepared to and capable of using its "hard power" option to counter NATO and U.S. presence in its immediate neighborhood, while the West, including the U.S., were ultimately unwilling to provide tangible military support, let alone risk a direct confrontation with Moscow over Georgia.¹⁶

The armed conflict also put a lid on Georgia's ambitions to integrate into NATO. Even though the Alliance set up a NATO-Georgia Council (NGC) in September 2008 to oversee NATO assistance to Georgia and to supervise progress toward eventual membership, the Allies that had previously been most vocal in supporting Georgia, now had to toe the line set by Germany and France on the question. In addition, the incoming U.S. President, Barack Obama, made clear that during his tenure, the "reset" with Russia – i.e. renewed dialogue and pragmatic cooperation focused on crucial theaters of instability such as Afghanistan-Pakistan, Iran, and Israel-Palestine – would take precedence over U.S.-Georgia relations. This point was driven home during the NATO summit in Strasbourg-Kehl on April 3-4, 2009, where Alliance heads of state reaffirmed Georgia's aspirations to join NATO, but stated implicitly in their declaration that such a step would have to be preceded by a peacefully negotiated solution to the disagreements with Russia, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia. In reaction, Tbilisi developed a strategy of "non-first-use" of military force, which was formally pledged by President Saakashvili in an address to the European Parliament in November 2010.¹⁷

Despite these setbacks, the Georgian government maintained and arguably even strengthened its single-minded foreign policy focus on approximation to Western institutions. Following the August 2008 War, the Georgian Parliament voted unanimously to withdraw Georgia from the CIS and declared Abkhazia and South Ossetia "Russian-occupied territories."¹⁸ Cooperation with NATO, on the other side, was further intensified, even though subsequent Alliance summits did not grant Georgia the hoped for MAP. Georgia's National Security Strategy of 2011 described NATO as the basis for Euro-Atlantic security and declared increased interoperability of Georgian with Allied forces a corner stone of defense reform.¹⁹

Since 2008, the country has benefited from various NATO assistance facilities, such as the Defense Enhancement Program, the Professional Development Program and the Building Integrity Initiative. These facilities are focused on education and training to professionalize security and defense structures, as well as to enhance sector transparency

¹⁵ cf. Pierre Razoux, "What future for Georgia?" NATO Research Paper No. 47, June 2009, 2f

¹⁶ cf. Carlsson, "Unraveling the Georgian Knot," 32, 57ff; Kyle, *The Relevancy of NATO Membership*

¹⁷ cf. Paul Belkin, Derek E. Mix and Stevel Woehrel, "NATO: Response to the Crisis in Ukraine and Security Concerns in Central and Eastern Europe," Congressional Research Service Report, 31 July 2014, 2f; also Carlsson, "Unraveling the Georgian Knot," 11,29; Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia," 14; Ondrejcsák, "Perspectives of NATO-Georgia Relations;" Razoux, "What future for Georgia?" 2f

¹⁸ cf. Carlsson, "Unraveling the Georgian Knot," 14

¹⁹ cf. Ondrejcsák, "Perspectives of NATO-Georgia Relations"

and accountability, *inter alia* by building up the National Defense Academy and encouraging best-practice sharing through peer-review mechanisms. In 2010, the Mountain Training School in Sachkhere, central Georgia, received the status of NATO/ PfP Mountain Training and Education Center, enabling it to conduct mountain training courses for the military personnel of NATO member and partner nations. Georgia also participates in diverse new NATO initiatives that aim at increased interoperability and burden sharing, such as Connected Forces and Smart Defense.²⁰

The country's most visible and perhaps strategically calculated element of cooperation with NATO has been its engagement in the NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Since 2004, small contingents of troops had served under German command and with a Lithuanian-led Provincial Reconstruction Team. But in fall 2009, with a NATO MAP seemingly a long way away, the Georgian Government sent a company-sized unit to be stationed in Kabul under French command. Starting from April the following year, an infantry battalion each would serve six-monthly rotations alongside U.S. Marines in the volatile southern Afghan province of Helmand until summer 2014, when security responsibility in the area was handed over to Afghan national security forces. In October 2012, Georgia's ISAF contingent was doubled to 1,560 troops serving in-theater at any time, thus making the country the largest troop-contributing non-NATO member besides Australia, with roughly the same number of personnel deployed. What was more, Georgia placed no national "caveats" (restrictions of use) on its soldiers, which meant Georgian forces were stationed in areas considered amongst the most perilous in Afghanistan. 29 Georgian soldiers had been killed in action by the time ISAF was wound up at the end of 2014.²¹

Participation in ISAF provided Georgia not only with an opportunity to demonstrate that it could be a "security provider" (as opposed to a "security consumer") in a NATO framework, but also with a rationale to continue and extend another, albeit interlinked, strategic plank in its security policy: close cooperation and partnership with the United States. Since 2009, the preparation of Georgian troop contingents for the ISAF mission was supported by U.S. Marine Forces Europe through the Georgia Deployment Program.²² It thereby fell within the scope of the U.S.-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership signed in 2009, whose provisions on security and defense are focused on cooperation for the promotion of peace and global stability that at the same time increase Georgian capabilities and thus strengthen Georgia's candidacy for NATO membership.²³

Despite the undeniable capability gains of its soldiers, one of the lessons Georgia learned during the 2008 war was that participation in military missions focusing on counter-insurgency as part of an international coalition, did not necessarily translate into defense structures and armed forces able to deal with the type of conflict they were most likely to face at home. Bilateral defense consultations with the U.S. following the war had revealed, in the words of then-Assistant Secretary for Defense Alexander Vershbow, "many previously unrecognized or neglected deficiencies in the various required capacities of

²⁰ cf. "NATO-Georgia Partnership Mechanisms"

²¹ cf. Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia," 6, 44.

²² cf. *ibid.*

²³ cf. Carlsson, "Unraveling the Georgian Knot," 37f; Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia," 7

the Georgian Armed Forces and Ministry of Defense [...] In practically all areas, defense institutions, strategies, doctrine, and professional military education were found to be seriously lacking."²⁴ Therefore, Georgia was now seeking more comprehensive assistance in military transformation. This included support for education and professionalization initiatives (such as the strengthening of the National Defense Academy mentioned above), strategy and doctrine development, defense institution building, and joint training of the two countries' navy and coastguard units. The U.S. has been particularly instrumental in helping Georgia rebuild its coastguard, completely destroyed by Russia in 2008, by supplying patrol boats, constructing repair facilities, and providing new communications and observation equipment, as well as a maritime information center.²⁵

A particularly and continuing point of contention was (and remains) the inability of Georgia to procure defensive weapons (primarily anti-aircraft and anti-tank systems), which the government argues it needs to deter a recurrence of a Russian attack and invasion of the country. Analysts have described this situation as a *de facto* Western arms embargo against Georgia;²⁶ and U.S. political and military leaders have repeatedly testified in Congress that no lethal military assistance or high-end defensive weaponry have been provided to the country post-2008.²⁷ On December 31, 2011, U.S. President Obama signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2012, Section 1242, which called on the Defense Secretary to submit a plan to Congress for the normalization of U.S. defense cooperation with Georgia, including the sale of defensive weapons systems. The attached signing statement, however, stipulated that if the provisions of the section conflicted with the U.S. President's constitutional authority to conduct foreign relations (for instance, the Administration's "reset" policy with Russia), they would be considered non-binding. Despite reports about an "enhanced defense cooperation" program that was agreed between Presidents Obama and Saakashvili in January 2012, there is no evidence that Georgia has been successful in procuring the weaponry it is seeking to date.²⁸

In the wake of the 2008 conflict, the U.S. have cooperated closely with Georgia in the realm of defense and military reforms, and have tried to advance the country's chances for NATO integration through the NATO-Georgia Council and the provisions of yet a new tool (instead of the MAP) called the Annual Action Program (AAP). Under this confusing formula, Georgia would be able to work towards Alliance membership without formally undertaking the MAP, but would still be tasked with meeting the requirements of the MAP, and was advised to exercise "strategic patience" by its Western partners.²⁹

However, by fall 2013, NATO membership seemed no closer for Georgia than five years earlier – despite the considerable efforts and the ultimate sacrifice of its servicemen in Afghanistan. With the end of the ISAF mission looming, the new Georgian government that had come into power the previous year was searching for ways to continue

²⁴ quoted in Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia," 46

²⁵ cf. *ibid.*, 47f; also Ondrejcsák, "Perspectives of NATO-Georgia Relations"

²⁶ cf. Taras Kuzio, "What Signal Does Washington's Arms Embargo against Georgia Tell us About US Policy towards Ukraine?" The Jamestown Foundation Blog on Russia and Eurasia 12 July 2010, accessed June 1, 2015, http://jamestownfoundation.blogspot.de/2010/07/what-signal-does-washingtons-arms_6060.html

²⁷ cf. testimonies detailed in Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia," 46ff

²⁸ cf. *ibid.*

²⁹ cf. Carlson, "Unraveling the Georgian Knot," 35

demonstrating its relevance to the Alliance; it declared its continued support to the ISAF follow-up mission "Resolute Support", as well as to the retrograde of personnel and materiel from Afghanistan through Georgian territory, and also announced Georgia would be joining NATO's new Response Force (NRF). And yet, the regional security situation seemed to predict that NATO had settled into an uneasy *modus vivendi* with Russia, oscillating between cooperation on international crisis hotspots and competition in Moscow's "Near Abroad". Most of the Allies appeared content with the prospect that Georgia would "one day" become a member – provided that the specifics of that date remained hazy.

"More Georgia in NATO, more NATO in Georgia." Past Crimea and the Wales Summit

NATO leaders were planning their September 2014 summit in Wales to focus on taking stock of the achievements, challenges, and lessons learnt from ISAF Afghanistan, as well as on planning for the follow-up "Resolute Support" mission, slated to start by January 2015. With most stakeholders agreeing that ISAF would be assessed as having had, at most, mixed results, and the Alliance clearly lacking the appetite for taking on similar engagements in the foreseeable future, it seemed like NATO would once again be pressed to define a new *raison d'être* for its continued existence.

The turmoil engulfing another country at NATO's eastern flank, Ukraine, was at the time more of a conundrum for the European Union. In November 2013, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich had refused to sign an Association Agreement with the EU, instead opting for closer ties with Russia. This led to public protests, escalating to civic unrest in Kyiv and a months-long occupation by demonstrators of the capital city's central square and thoroughfare. The situation reached an apex in February 2014, when police used lethal force against protestors who responded with violence against law enforcement personnel. The Yanukovich government fell on February 22, sparking a political crisis on the Crimean peninsula; part of Ukraine since 1954, but inhabited by a large ethnic Russian population and hosting the home base of the Russian Black Sea fleet at Sevastopol. Unidentified paramilitary forces, later openly supported by Russian troops stationed on the Crimean Peninsula, gradually took control of key public buildings. The regional government was changed, declared independence from Ukraine, and then held a referendum on whether Crimea should become part of the Russian Federation. According to the data released by the new Crimean authorities, almost 97 percent of votes were in favor of joining Russia. The Kremlin announced its annexation of Crimea on March 18, 2014.

At around the same time, unrest arose in Donbas, the south-eastern region of Ukraine bordering Russia. Pro-Russian separatists took control in late March and early April of the oblast centers of Lugansk and Donetsk. Both regions proclaimed their independence from Ukraine in April, which led to the escalation of armed conflict between Ukrainian security forces and pro-Russian militias. While Moscow did not recognize the independence of either Lugansk or Donetsk, there is strong evidence that Russia supplied the separatists with weapons and other equipment, and apparently also with military personnel, including members of their Special Forces

The emerging developments in Ukraine had caught NATO off-guard. Collective defense on the European continent had not been a concern since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Defense spending by European NATO allies had continued plummeting ever since, while the Obama Administration's "pivot to Asia", hinted at an increasingly relaxed U.S. commitment to European security.³⁰ But once the extent of Russian involvement in the military conflict in the Donbas became more obvious, NATO members from Eastern Europe, particularly Poland and the Baltic States, pressed the Alliance leadership to take steps that would deter Russia from any possible military incursions into NATO territory. In response, the White House announced in June the European Reassurance Initiative, providing close to USD 1 billion in order to bolster U.S. military presence in Eastern Europe.

At the NATO summit in Wales in September, the Alliance adopted a Readiness Action Plan, including measures to enhance the number of fighter jets for Baltic air policing, deploy two maritime groups to patrol the Baltic and Mediterranean Seas and increase the frequency of military exercises in Eastern Europe. The Plan also foresees the establishment of a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) as a "spearhead" of the NATO Response Force (NRF), consisting of about 4,000 troops, ready to deploy and react to emerging crises within a few days.³¹

Once again, as in the case of Georgia in 2008, NATO made clear that it would not intervene directly in Ukraine to counter Russia. The Alliance suspended cooperation with Russia under the framework of the NATO-Russia Council and has since dispatched military trainers to Ukraine. Nevertheless, leaders of NATO member states have publicly spoken out against delivering lethal military aid to Ukraine, as such steps would risk escalating the conflict. Ukraine's request to NATO to be granted a road map towards NATO membership was also rebuffed at the Wales Summit.³²

The Georgian government initially perceived the evolving situation in eastern Ukraine as a game-changer in its efforts toward NATO accession. Already in February 2014, a bipartisan group of 40 members of the U.S. House of Representatives had sent a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry, urging the Administration to support granting a Membership Action Plan (MAP) to Georgia in Wales.³³ Any hopes this might have stirred in Tbilisi were dashed early on, however, when U.S. President Obama declared on March 26 in Brussels that neither Ukraine nor Georgia "are currently on a path to NATO membership".³⁴ Nevertheless, Georgian diplomacy in the run-up to the Wales Summit portrayed the military conflict in Ukraine as a logical continuation of Russia's intervention in Georgia in 2008. Visiting Georgian political leaders urged Alliance member states to rein in Russian inter-

³⁰ cf. Belkin, Mix, and Woehrel, "NATO: Response to the Crisis in Ukraine," 1f

³¹ cf. *ibid.* 3, 14; also Jakub Kufčák, "NATO after the Wales Summit: Readyng the Alliance for the Future," Association for International Affairs, Policy Paper 3/2014, October 2014, 4; "NATO's Readiness Action Plan. Factsheet," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, December 2014, http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2014_12/20141202_141202-factsheet-rap-en.pdf; "FACT SHEET: European Reassurance Initiative and Other U.S. Efforts in Support of NATO Allies and Partners. 3 June 2014", The White House, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/06/03/fact-sheet-european-reassurance-initiative-and-other-us-efforts-support>

³² cf. Belkin, Mix, and Woehrel, "NATO: Response to the Crisis in Ukraine," 2f

³³ cf. *ibid.* 16; also Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia," 52

³⁴ quoted in Will Cathcart, "Obama tells Georgia to Forget About NATO After Encouraging It to Join," *The Daily Beast*, 27 March 2014

ference in its neighbors' domestic affairs and to protect Georgia's geopolitical choice of further approximation to the Euro-Atlantic community.

Eventually, Georgia again was not granted a MAP in Newport. However, the European Reassurance Initiative announced by the U.S. Administration also foresaw USD 35 million of funding for Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, part of which was used to tie up a "substantive package" of support for Georgia's NATO approximation. This package includes an increased Georgian presence in NATO exercises, as well as occasional NATO exercises in Georgia, and the set-up of a NATO military training center in the country.³⁵ In addition, Georgia (together with Moldova and Jordan) was offered a Defense and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative, aimed at reinforcing NATO's "commitment to partner nations" and to help the Alliance "project stability without deploying large combat forces."³⁶ The Capacity Building Initiative will essentially provide expertise and training to the Ministry of Defense and the Joint Staff of the Georgian armed forces. Acknowledging Georgia's contribution to the ISAF mission, Georgia was also included in a group of five countries (together with Australia, Finland, Jordan, and Sweden) seeking enhanced opportunities for cooperation with the Alliance. In the words of James Appathurai, the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, there would be "a lot more Georgia in NATO and lot of NATO in Georgia."³⁷

While Georgian political leaders stressed the importance of the "substantive package" for the country's progress toward eventual NATO membership, the failure to obtain a roadmap and timetable was a political blow to the government. Probably for this reason, top U.S. political and military leaders made visits to Georgia during and after the Wales Summit: then-Marine Corps Commandant James Amos was in Tbilisi on September 4-5; then-Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel arrived on September 6, followed on September 20 by Secretary of the U.S. Army John McHugh and NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe and finally, U.S. Air Force General Philip Breedlove in October. Still in September, the U.S. Senate accorded Georgia major non-NATO-ally status, which will give the country improved access to U.S. military assistance, including for the transfer of U.S. excess defense materiel.³⁸ These developments raised expectations that Tbilisi might be able to procure the defense weaponry it had been seeking unsuccessfully so far.

In the nine months since the conclusion of the Wales Summit, Georgia has announced its willingness to participate in the VJTF of the NATO Response Force and has sent rotations consisting of approximately 750 soldiers to participate in the "Resolute Support" mission in Afghanistan. The troops take on force protection and rapid reaction tasks in Kabul,

³⁵ cf. Belkin, Mix, and Woehrel, "NATO: Response to the Crisis in Ukraine," 5; Luke Coffey, "NATO Summit 2014: An Opportunity to Support Georgia," The Heritage Foundation Issue Brief No.4260, August 13, 2014; Joshua Kucera, "U.S. Proposes Boost In Military Aid For Georgia," Eurasianet.org, July 27, 2014, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/69216>; Kufčák, "NATO after the Wales Summit," 9; "NATO Chief Lays Out Package to 'Bring Georgia Closer' to Alliance," Civil Georgia, September 1, 2014, <http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=27631>

³⁶ NATO Wales Summit Declaration, referenced in "Georgia in NATO Wales Summit Declaration," Civil Georgia, September 5, 2014, <http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=27643>

³⁷ "NATO Envoy, Georgian Officials Discuss Implementation of 'Substantial Package'," Civil Georgia, December 4, 2014, <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=27880>

³⁸ cf. "U.S. Senate Committee Backs Major Non-NATO Ally Status for Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine," Civil Georgia, September 19, 2014, <http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=27672>

as well as at Camp Marmal in Mazar-i-Sharif (northern Afghanistan) and at Bagram Airfield in Parwan province.³⁹ The government has also undertaken steps to implement the "substantive package" of assistance promised by NATO during the Wales Summit, particularly with regard to the establishment of a NATO Training and Evaluation Center in Georgia. A proposal has been submitted to the Alliance on a possible location for the center (at Vaziani military base in the vicinity of Tbilisi) and is currently pending a response from NATO decision makers.⁴⁰ The center will be hosting training and certification for allied and partner military units, in particular for units committed to the NATO Response Force, as well as exercises in support of NATO's Connected Forces initiative. It is not clear, however, whether its focus will be on command-post exercises or whether there will also be capacities for field exercises with the participation of multinational troops. Russia has termed the training center a "provocation" and has warned against the installation of NATO military facilities in Georgia. In response, NATO officials have stressed repeatedly that the center will be solely dedicated to training purposes and not entail the positioning of NATO installations in Georgia.⁴¹

In parallel, defense and military cooperation between Georgia and the U.S. has remained close and has been stepped up recently when joint military drills ("Noble Partner 2015") were held at Vaziani base to increase the interoperability of Georgian troops with the NATO Response Force. While U.S.-Georgian military exercises had been a regular feature over the past years, the scope of the drills and the fact that the U.S. military had shipped heavy military equipment – including infantry fighting vehicles – from Eastern Europe to Georgia for that specific purpose was a novelty and interpreted by analysts in light of the ongoing crisis in Ukraine.⁴²

On the other side, Georgia has not made much visible progress yet in procuring its long sought-after defensive weapons system despite its new status as a major non-NATO ally of the United States. During the visit of U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel to Georgia in September 2014, he announced that the Administration was moving forward

³⁹ cf. "Военные Грузии приступили к контролю базы коалиции в Афганистане," *Caucasian Knot*, November 11, 2014, <http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/252140/>; "Georgian Troops Head to Mazar-i-Sharif," *Civil Georgia*, December 16, 2014, <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=27911>; "MPs Endorse Georgia's Contribution to NATO's New Afghan Mission," *Civil Georgia*, December 24, 2015, <http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=27937>; "Рота пехотинцев Вооруженных сил Грузии прибыла в Афганистан," *Caucasian Knot*, March 13, 2015, <http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/258793/>; "Батальон грузинских военнослужащих вернулся на родину из Афганистана," *Caucasian Knot*, April 15, 2015, <http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/260610/>

⁴⁰ cf. "MoD: Georgia to Push for MAP at NATO 2016 Summit," *Civil Georgia*, June 2, 2015, <http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=28318>

⁴¹ cf. "NATO Deputy Secretary General on Planned Training Center in Georgia," *Civil Georgia*, January 30, 2015, <http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=28318>; "Russian Diplomat: NATO's Planned Training Center in Georgia 'Provocative'," *Civil Georgia*, February 6, 2015, <http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=28028>; "Russian response to joint Georgia-NATO training centre likely to focus on border restrictions, escalation unlikely," *IHS Jane's Intelligence Weekly*, 9 February 2015, <http://www.janes.com/article/48841/russian-response-to-joint-georgia-nato-training-centre-likely-to-focus-on-border-restrictions-escalation-unlikely>

⁴² cf. Giorgi Menabde, "What Does the Arrival of American Military Equipment in Georgia Mean?" *Jamestown Foundation Eurasia Daily Monitor* Volume: 12 Issue: 95, May 21, 2015, [http://www.jamestown.org/regions/thecaucasus/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=43938&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=54&cHash=4fc7222e752cf56779e2421ec5329a2f#.VWMK-KIKi3Ls](http://www.jamestown.org/regions/thecaucasus/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=43938&tx_ttnews[backPid]=54&cHash=4fc7222e752cf56779e2421ec5329a2f#.VWMK-KIKi3Ls); "США направили тяжелую военную технику для учений в Грузии," *Caucasian Knot*, May 4, 2015, <http://georgia.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/261736/>

Tbilisi's request to purchase UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters.⁴³ It is not clear at this point, how far the negotiations on the helicopters have progressed and how the Georgian Ministry of Defense will be able to finance their procurement and maintenance; in any case the helicopters constitute a reinforcement of the logistical, but not necessarily the defensive, capabilities of the Georgian armed forces. Even though there appeared news reports in late 2014 and early 2015, concerning the possible delivery of French anti-aircraft systems to Georgia, France has categorically denied that any agreement on this question has been achieved. For the time being, it appears that the NATO "substantive package" for Georgia remains primarily focused on defense sector professionalization and increased military interoperability.

Everything but Membership?

During the Wales Summit, Georgia received a commitment from NATO for more cooperation on the democratization, transparency and accountability of defense institutions, the improved capability of Georgian military forces to work within the framework of the NRF, and an enhanced status that provides for more Georgian involvement in NATO planning processes. The Georgian government has responded by moving forward these initiatives, like the Joint Training and Evaluation Center, that would help the country utilize the "substantive package" of support in the best possible way.

At the same time, it has been clearly indicated that NATO will not enlarge in the area of the former Soviet Union in the foreseeable future. The crisis in Ukraine has emphasized for most NATO Allies that taking on new members on the territory of the former Soviet Union might bring them into direct conflict with Russia. While NATO would still have an overwhelming military advantage over the Russian Federation, there is currently no consensus in the Alliance on providing Article V security guarantees to countries that would be difficult and costly to defend. Even more so as NATO can reap most of the benefits of partnership – such as increased cooperation and interoperability – even without offering full membership. Georgia is a visible example of a partner that significantly contributes to NATO missions without receiving a near-term membership perspective in return.

For Georgia, this situation creates a strategic dilemma. As a small country with a historical narrative of invasion and aggression by larger neighboring powers, successive Georgian governments have seen NATO's Article V as the ultimate protection against its most menacing neighbor: the Russian Federation. A majority of the Georgian population clearly follows the government in this rationale. However, through its continuous – and highly publicized – efforts to gain a Membership Action Plan (and, to a smaller extent, to procure defensive weaponry), Georgia has exacerbated a security dilemma in the South Caucasus region and has given its break-away regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia even more opportunities to hijack the rhetoric on threat perception. Arguably, the MAP has been "fetishized"⁴⁴ by all sides in the debate: for NATO members it is a "carrot" to incentiv-

⁴³ cf. Joshua Kucera, "Hagel In Georgia To Discuss Helicopters, ISIS," Eurasianet.org, September 8, 2014, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/69896>

⁴⁴ Kufčák, "Policy recommendation"

ize Georgia's military and geopolitical cooperation and arguably even its domestic democratic behavior. For Russia, granting Georgia a MAP would be the continuation of what it perceives as Western hostility and provocation in its "Near Abroad." For Georgia, MAP has turned into a badge of merit and achievement, which every government since 2003 has banked an increasing amount of political capital on.

By staking its success on attaining the MAP, the government has maneuvered itself into a losing position that becomes more evident with every Alliance summit which turns Georgia down on the question of a clear path to membership. The country remains committed to supporting NATO peace-keeping and out-of-area missions, but to the minds of the Georgian public, it has little to show for the blood and treasure expended. Portraying the ultimate goal of its commitment to NATO membership and Article V protection against a possible Russian intervention, turns the road toward Alliance integration into an all-or-nothing proposition. It is hard for the Georgian government to frame the "substantive package" and items like a defense capacity building mission or the establishment of a training center, as a success in the public eye, even though they have real potential to contribute to military transformation. Consequently, the population's support for Georgia's pro-Western course is slowly but surely ebbing – between November 2013 and April 2015, backing for NATO membership dropped from 81 percent to 65 percent.⁴⁵

While the new Georgian Defense Minister has already declared that Georgia would again seek a MAP at the Warsaw Summit in 2016,⁴⁶ it is very unlikely that such efforts will succeed; either in 2016 or over the medium term. While NATO keeps reiterating that Georgia will "one day" gain membership in the Alliance, it is evidently not considering further enlargement anytime soon, despite or (perhaps more likely) because of Russia's actions in eastern Ukraine. Even if there would be political support for enlargement, analysts have cautioned that NATO might find it hard to militarily defend Georgia, due to its geographic isolation from Alliance territory and its proximity to Russia. This concern has only grown with the increase of Russian military capabilities in the South Caucasus, through its refurbished bases in break-away Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as well as the build-up of the 102nd Russian military base in Gyumri, Armenia.⁴⁷

NATO's ambiguous stance toward Georgia need not be seen as deliberate prevarication to keep Georgia out of the Alliance, but rather as a reflection of geopolitical realities and changes. Alliances and organizations choose their members based on a sober analysis of the costs and benefits of their decisions in light of the present circumstances. It may be worthwhile for Georgian decision-makers (and Georgian society) to emulate this process: instead of regarding NATO and the Western institutions as their protectors, accept

⁴⁵ cf. Vasilii Rukhadze, "European Union Snubs Georgia on Visa Free Travel Rules, as Pro-Russian Sentiments Grow in the Country," Jamestown Foundation Eurasia Daily Monitor, Volume: 12, Issue: 100, May 29, 2015, [http://www.jamestown.org/regions/thecaucasus/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=43971&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=54&cHash=50a0db08757da78bccd4b87c8ca10a79#.VWmPWIKi3Ls](http://www.jamestown.org/regions/thecaucasus/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=43971&tx_ttnews[backPid]=54&cHash=50a0db08757da78bccd4b87c8ca10a79#.VWmPWIKi3Ls)

⁴⁶ cf. "MoD: Georgia to Push for MAP at NATO 2016 Summit," Civil Georgia, June 2, 2015, <http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=28318>

⁴⁷ cf. Cathcart, "Obama tells Georgia to Forget About NATO After Encouraging it to Join"; Armen Grigoryan, "Russia Increases Military Capacity in the South Caucasus," Jamestown Foundation Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 61, [http://www.jamestown.org/regions/thecaucasus/single/?tx_ttnews\[pointer\]=2&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=43732&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=54&cHash=cb885492041bb202bc5144eec8b8d3c6#.VUnfjFKi3Ls](http://www.jamestown.org/regions/thecaucasus/single/?tx_ttnews[pointer]=2&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=43732&tx_ttnews[backPid]=54&cHash=cb885492041bb202bc5144eec8b8d3c6#.VUnfjFKi3Ls)

them as no more than partners. It will be crucial to establish priorities and strategies that are formulated on the basis of realistic analysis and assumptions, so that they produce the maximum benefit for the country's engagement with these partners. It will also necessitate an official rhetoric that does not inflate public expectations or further exacerbate tensions with Russia. It may be a bitter pill to swallow, but geography is a reality that no country is able to escape.

List of Abbreviations

AAP	Annual Action Program
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
GTEP	Georgia Train and Equip Program
IPAP	Individual Partnership Program
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MAP	Membership Action Plan
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NRF	NATO Response Force
NGC	NATO-Georgia Council
PARP	Planning and Review Process
PfP	Partnership for Peace
SSOP	Sustainability and Stability Operations Program
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VJTF	Very High Readiness Joint Task Force

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***Where are We on the European Map?
Comparing Public Service Motivation in Central
and Eastern Europe with Neighboring Countries***

Introduction

Despite some similarities within regions, the composition of the public sector differs across the world. This also applies to the working culture of this sector. While recognizing the desire to help others and to improve one's personal financial situation as essential work motives, all around, the public sector, employees emphasize the importance of these purposes with varying degrees of strength in different areas.

Shaped to a large extent by the communist past, the public sector of Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries continues to stand out amongst other countries on the continent. Much has been said about the historical determinants that have shaped the motivation of people from the region. While acknowledging the significance of the former regime, this article aims to analyze the current state of the public sector workforce in CEE and to examine its present distinctions from the private sector.

The main research question of this article is what type of motivation drives public sector employees and whether this motivation is different from the private business sector. Thus, the article compares intrinsic and extrinsic work motives of both sectors within the region and contrasts them to other European countries. Being a part of a larger comparative research project, this particular piece is devoted to CEE countries from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc, namely, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine.

The article is based on results from a large comparative research project on public service motivation in 25 European countries.¹ The findings of the project suggest that em-

¹ Palina Prysmakova, unpublished manuscript (2013). The main project was conducted at the Department of Public Administration at Florida International University and examined work attitudes of European employees in the public and private sectors.

employees in the public and private sector across different European countries have different attitudes towards helping others and enriching themselves. The research also provides some evidence that public-employee reward preferences in CEE not only significantly differ from those in the private sector, but also that the group of CEE countries reveals similar results. The aim of the article is to look closer at the work motives of respondents from nine countries from Central and Eastern Europe.

The data for the project was taken from the fourth and fifth round of European Social Survey 2008-2012, available through the Norwegian Social Science Data Services website.² The total European sample after data cleaning is around 38,000 respondents, where almost one third – 12,240 respondents – are from nine CEE countries.

The article focuses on the latter group by examining its descriptive and inferential statistics. Firstly, it discusses the theory of motivation in the public sector, which forms the research, and presents some results from previous studies. This is followed by a brief methods section. Next, the article reveals some interesting results when comparing the composition of the two sectors in separate CEE countries and contrasts them to the European average. The subsequent section investigates the work attitudes of the public and private sectors in separate CEE countries and shows how employees from these countries fit into the general European results. The article concludes that the composition and attitudes of public sector employees from the CEE region resemble other European countries in many regards. At the same time, strong female domination, comparatively small significance attached to helping others and increased importance to becoming rich, distinguishes the public sector of these countries from the rest of Europe.

Theoretical Background

The following research is based on the theory of public service motivation (PSM), which assumes that a person's choice to work in the public sector is determined, to a large extent, by a personal desire to help others. The definition of PSM varies among authors, depending on the focus of a study; whether a researcher looks at different correlations to PSM, its origins or variations. Every study, however, is imbued with the idea to do good for others and shape the well-being of society^{3,4} with motives that are primarily, or uniquely, grounded in public institutions^{5,6}.

² There are 25 countries that have participated in both the fourth and fifth round of the ESS: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

³ James L. Perry and Annie Hondeghem, "Building Theory and Empirical Evidence about Public Service Motivation," *International Public Management Journal* 11(1)(2008): 3-12.

⁴ Kim and Vandenberghe, "A strategy for building public service motivation", 701-709.

⁵ David J. Houston, "Public-Service Motivation: A Multivariate Test," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 10(4) (2000): 713-27.

⁶ James L. Perry, "Antecedents of Public Service Motivation," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 7(2) (1997):181-197.

The working definition of PSM in this study is the following: "More broadly, public-service motivation can be characterized as a reliance on intrinsic rewards over extrinsic rewards."⁷ Thus, intrinsic pro-social motives are contrasted to extrinsic incentives, which are provided by the employing organization. The basic form of extrinsic rewards in market economies is monetary incentives that lead to an employee's improved financial prosperity.

As the public sector comes in to correct for market failure,⁸ preference for rewards that satisfy pure self-interest should not dominate among its employees. Several studies have confirmed that employees indeed rank social/personal rewards higher than monetary rewards, whereas the opposite is true for private sector employees^{9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17}. Other studies have found public employees to possess more altruistic attitudes than private sector workers,¹⁸ and that they possess a higher sense of civic duty.¹⁹ At the same time, there is a number of studies that show equal values to earnings and psychological rewards across public and private sector employees^{20, 21, 22, 23}. The results of previous research lead to ambiguous conclusions, which are usually explained by the weak design of the given study, small sample size and the cultural peculiarities of a country/region.

⁷ Philip E. Crewson, "Public-Service Motivation: Building Empirical Evidence of Incidence and Effect," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 7(4) (1997): 499–518.

⁸ Kenneth J. Arrow. 1969. *The Organization of Economic Activity: Issues Pertinent to the Choice of Market versus Non-market Allocations*. In *Analysis and Evaluation of Public Expenditures: The PPP System*. Washington, D.C., Joint Economic Committee of Congress.

⁹ John D. Jr. Dilulio, "Principled agents: The cultural bases of behavior in a federal government bureaucracy," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 4 (1994): 277–318.

¹⁰ Sangmook Kim, "Individual-Level Factors and Organizational Performance in Government Organizations," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 15(2) (2005): 245–61.

¹¹ David J. Houston, "Walking the walk" of public service motivation: Public employees and charitable gifts of time, blood, and money," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 16 (2006): 67–86.

¹² Houston, "A Multivariate Test," 713–27.

¹³ Carole L. Jurkiewicz, T.K. Jr. Massey and R.G. Brown, "Motivation in public and private organizations: A comparative study," *Public Productivity & Management Review* 21(3) (1998): 230–250.

¹⁴ Franklin Kilpatrick, Milton C. Cummings and M. Kent Jennings, *The Image of the Federal Service* (Washington D.C.: Brookings, 1982).

¹⁵ Jay A. Schuster, "Management Compensation Policy and the Public Interest," *Public Personnel Management* 3 (1974): 510–23.

¹⁶ Dennis Wittmer, "Serving the People or Serving for Pay: Reward Preferences Among Government, Hybrid Sector, and Business Managers," *Public Productivity and Management Review* 14(4) (1994): 369–83.

¹⁷ Crewson, "Building Empirical Evidence of Incidence and Effect," 499–518.

¹⁸ Hal G. Rainey, *Understanding and Managing Public Organizations*, 2d edition (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997).

¹⁹ Margaret Conway, *Political Participation in the United States* (Washington, DC: congressional Quarterly Press, 2000).

²⁰ Sean Lyons, Linda Duxbury and Christopher Higgins, "A comparison of the values and commitment of private-sector, public-sector, and para-public-sector employees," *Public Administration Review* 66 (2006): 605–618.

²¹ Ebrahim A. Maidani, "Comparative Study of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction Among Public and Private Sectors," *Public Personnel Management* 20 (1991): 441–48.

²² Norman J. Baldwin, "Are We Really Lazy?" *Review of Public Personnel Administration* 4(2) (1987): 80–89.

²³ Gerald T. Gabris and Gloria Simo, "Public Sector Motivation as an Independent Variable Affecting Career Decisions," *Public Personnel Management* 24 (1995): 33–51.

By examining a large representative sample, this study aims to define the importance of extrinsic and intrinsic motives for public employees in CEE countries. The core research questions are whether personal wealth matters for them and whether it is important for them to help others. In order to guard against cultural peculiarities, public employees are compared to private employees of a given country. Two major hypotheses are tested in this study: (H1) public sector employees are less likely than others to act out of mere monetary interest (or more simply put, for money) and (H2) public service employees are more likely than others to perform their job responsibilities due to their willingness to lend a helping hand to others.

Methods

Since the study focuses on individual reward preferences, the unit of analysis is the individual. The dependent variables are extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, which are operationalized by using items from the European Social Survey as proxies. They are:

- It is very important for me to help people around me. I want to care for their well-being;
- It is important for me to be rich. I want to have a lot of money and expensive things.

By its very nature, "Importance of being rich/helping others" is a continuous latent variable that has certain threshold points and whose value determines what the observed ordinal variable equals. In the ESS, the two observed ordinal variables have six response categories indicating to what extent an individual identifies themselves with the person described: (1) Very much like me (2) Like me (3) Somewhat like me (4) A little like me (5) Not like me (6) Not like me at all.

A key independent variable is whether a person works in the public or private sector. The ordinal logistic regression model is used to check for causality between dependent and independent variables, controlling gender, age, number of people in a household, living with partner/spouse, and the size of the organization. The following sections present the results of descriptive and inferential analyses of the data.

Public vs. Private Sector in CEE Countries

The table below presents descriptive statistics for an average employee in the public and private sectors in CEE countries, as well as similar statistics results for European averages across 25 countries. A public employee is most often a woman in her mid-forties, who has fourteen and a half years of education, is not single and lives with two other members of her family. A typical private employee tends to be a less educated male, usually five years younger than a public employee. While the majority of private employees are not single either, the results of the survey suggest that there are more single employees in the private sector, as compared to the public sector.

Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics for CEE Countries by Sector

: the lowest results, : the highest results

	Age		Education in Years		Male		Lives w/ partner		Size of Household	
	public	private	public	private	public	private	public	private	public	private
Bulgaria	48.5	43.0	13.5	12.3	0.26	0.51	0.69	0.68	2.9	3.0
Czech Republic	44.3	41.2	14.0	12.8	0.33	0.64	0.67	0.63	2.8	2.7
Estonia	46.3	42.7	15.0	13.2	0.26	0.52	0.67	0.69	2.8	2.9
Hungary	43.4	39.7	15.1	13.0	0.30	0.58	0.69	0.64	3.3	3.1
Poland	42.2	37.1	15.4	13.4	0.36	0.61	0.68	0.67	3.2	3.5
Russia	43.3	39.0	14.0	13.3	0.25	0.53	0.60	0.58	2.7	2.7
Slovakia	46.1	42.2	14.8	13.2	0.25	0.53	0.70	0.65	3.0	3.2
Slovenia	42.3	38.2	14.6	12.8	0.29	0.59	0.74	0.63	3.6	3.6
Ukraine	43.5	38.7	14.0	12.9	0.26	0.51	0.68	0.61	3.1	3.1
CEE average	44.4	40.2	14.5	13.0	0.28	0.56	0.68	0.64	3.0	3.1
European average	44.2	40.5	15.0	13.0	0.34	0.57	0.70	0.65	3.0	3.0

Age

In general, in CEE countries, public sector employees are older than private sector employees. This corresponds with the European average. The Czech Republic has the smallest age difference between public and private employees, which is a little less than three years between mean ages for both sectors.

The oldest public employees are found to be in Bulgaria (on average: 49 years old), while the youngest public employees are in Poland and Slovenia (on average: 42 years old). A possible explanation could be that women constitute the majority of the public sector. In Poland and Slovenia, they retire earlier, as compared to other CEE countries in the study. Bulgarian women retire later than others in CEE countries.²⁴ In the case of Poland, it can also be explained to a certain extent by lustration: after the fall of the Communist Bloc, Poland adopted several laws, which limited the participation of former communists in succeeding governments or even in civil service positions. This has eliminated many older employees from the public sector.

As for the private sector, the youngest employees are also found in Poland. This might be due to the fact that the Poles retire earlier. The oldest private employees average 42.5 years old in Estonia, which makes them even older than average public sector employees in Poland.

²⁴ OECD, The Average Effective Age of Retirement versus the Official Age in 2012 in OECD Countries (2012). Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/els/emp/Summary_2012_values.xls

Education

The time spent on education among employees of both sectors in the researched CEE countries echoes with the average European results. On average, public sector employees are more educated than private sector employees. Yet, the most educated private employees are found in Poland. At the same time, on average, they still possess less formal education than the less educated public employees in Bulgaria.

Referring to Poland, on average, both private and public sector employees have more formal education than any other CEE country contained in the study. This might be caused by the fact that the Poles start their compulsory education relatively earlier than in other CEE countries – namely at the age of 5 – and, on average, continue to be enrolled in tertiary education longer than in other countries in the region.²⁵ Thus, the fact remains that employees in Poland spend more time in school than anywhere else in the studied CEE countries.

It is a general trend that enrollment rates in higher education include more women than men.²⁶ Taking into consideration that the public sector in CEE is heavily dominated by women (see the following subsection), public sector employees are, on average, also expected to be more educated.

Gender

The public sector in Central and Eastern Europe remains heavily populated by women. The mean number of men employed in the region is significantly lower than the average for the public sector in Europe. It is only in the Czech Republic and Poland where the average percentage of men employed in the public sector is close to the European average. Yet, they constitute only 30% and 36% of the employees respectively. Most of all, women dominate in the public sectors of Bulgaria, Estonia, Slovakia and Russia, where they constitute 75% of the total number of those employed.

Gender wise, the private sector is more balanced. The tendency is that this sector consists of equal numbers of women and men. Yet, in the Czech Republic and Poland, the male population prevails in the private sector with 60–65% male employees in this sector, on average.

Partners and Household Size

In this study, family constitution is represented by two variables, namely, whether a respondent lives with a partner and how many people this individual shares their household with. The means for the CEE countries resemble the means for an average European country: in both sectors, the majority lives with a partner or spouse, with 68% and 64% for public and private organizations, respectively. At the same time, there are slightly more singles among private sector employees, than among public employees, which is close to the European average difference of 5%.

²⁵ Education at Glance 2013: OECD Indicators. Indicator C1 Who participates in education? (OECD Publishing): 269.

²⁶ Ibid: 265.

The public sector in Slovakia and Slovenia has the largest percentage of respondents, who live with a partner/spouse, with 70% and 74% of individuals, correspondingly. The largest percentage of individuals who live by themselves is found in Russia and this is true for both sectors. This might be explained by the fact that Russia has the highest divorce rate in the world.²⁷ In the Russian private sector, about half of the employees do not share their homes with their partner.

The statistics shows that, on average, for both sectors, employees in the study share their households with two people, which is equally true for the CEE region, as it is for the European average. Slovenia has the most extended families: most employees live with their partners or spouses and two other members of the household. The smallest households are found in the Czech Republic and Russia. This can be explained by the high level of urbanization in these two countries, where the majority of people live in apartment complexes in big cities. In Russia, taking into consideration that 40-45% of employees do not live with their partners, the two additional members of the household could either be the employee's parents or children.

The largest households are found in Slovenia, Hungary and Poland, which can also be explained by the high percentage of people living in rural areas. Contrary to the Czech Republic and Russia - Slovenia, Hungary and Poland are known to be rural, which allows for the fact that the majority of individuals living in private housing accommodate more people under one roof. In Slovenia, for instance, 51% of the population resides in rural areas, as compared to 27% for Russia.²⁸

Establishment Size

Resembling an overall European trend, the size of an employer's establishment is larger in the case of public organizations than in private ones. This is true for all the CEE countries with the exception of Slovenia. There, despite being smaller in size compared to other CEE countries, private organizations tend to have a larger number of workers than public organizations. This interesting fact requires further investigation.

Helping Others and Becoming Rich

The statistics above reveal some interesting peculiarities of demographic characteristics of average employees in the public and private sectors in CEE countries. At the same time, the main interest of this study remains their attitude towards work motives -- their desire to help others and their itch for monetary gain. Firstly, this section compares the attitudes of CEE public and private employees to other European countries by analyzing countries' means. Secondly, a regression analysis is conducted to contrast average results for each country in order to control the demographic peculiarities discussed above.

²⁷ United Nations, Demographic Yearbook (2012): 610-67.

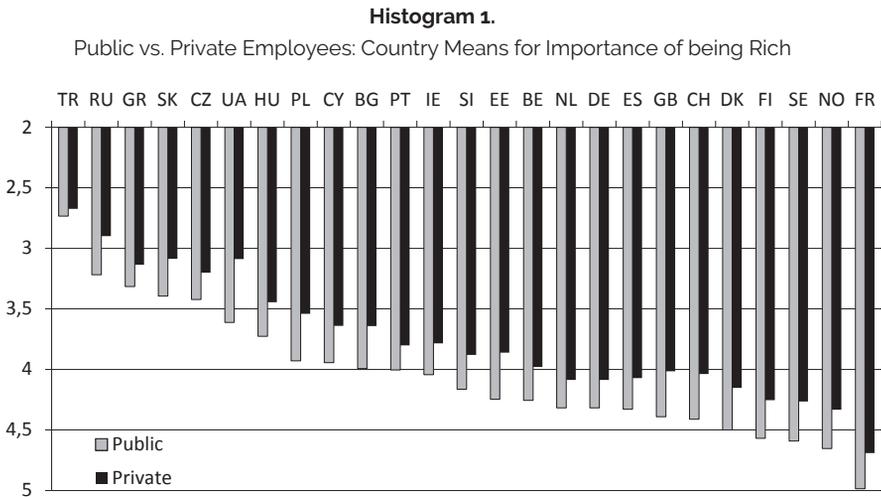
²⁸ Ibid: 134-42.

Descriptive Statistics

Histogram 1 depicts the average responses to the importance of being rich for public and private sector employees in 25 European countries. It allows us to observe where CEE respondents are in their attitudes as compared to other Europeans. In the majority of the CEE countries, on average, public sector employees consider being rich as important. Namely they are Eastern European countries Russia and Ukraine, and Central European countries of the former Eastern Bloc: Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Bulgaria.

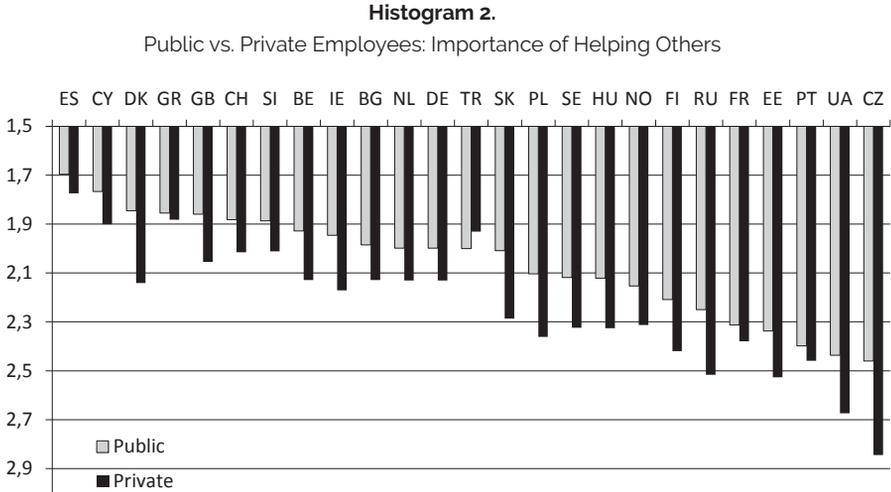
The average answer for the importance of being rich appears to always be higher for public, rather than private employees. It designates that, on average, public sector employees across Europe emphasize material wealth as less important than private employees do. These findings support the initial hypothesis of the study; that public sector employees are less likely to be led by extrinsic motives than their private counterparts. The sectoral difference in means, however, varies from country to country. Some CEE countries, namely Ukraine, Poland, and Estonia, reveal the largest differences between sectors, compared to the rest of the Europe.

Another dependent variable of the study, which reflects the difference between the public and private sectors, is helping others. Overall, public sector employees across Europe consider helping others as a very important characteristic that properly describes them. The mean responses vary between the following: (1) Very much like me (2) Like me (3) Somewhat like me.



At the same time, employees from European countries still differ, depending on how much they stress the importance of taking care of others. Only one CEE country – Slovenia – finds itself among other European countries, where public employees emphasize helping others as very much important. The evident trend is that the respondents in the majority of CEE countries tend to emphasize helping others as less important than in other European countries. With the exception of Bulgaria, they are located at the right end of the

histogram, where respondents put less emphasis on helping. While still considered important, Ukrainians and Czechs do not place as much emphasis on helping, as compared to other counties.



When answering the question to do with the importance of helping others, private sector employees tend to be in the “less likely” category for almost all the considered countries. Slovakia, Poland, Russia, Ukraine and the Czech Republic reveal the most drastic differences between the two sectors in Europe: employees in the private sector on average tend to emphasize the importance of helping others much less than their counterparts in the public sector.²⁹ The least caring individuals working for the private sector are found in Eastern Europe Russia and Ukraine, as well as in the former Eastern Bloc Czech Republic and Estonia.

Inferential Statistics

A better comparison of employee attitudes across the sectors requires multivariate analysis, since it allows for controlling a number of factors that might determine the differences between the means across countries and sectors. As mentioned in the previous sections, the model controls for age, gender, education, living with a partner and the total number of household members.

The results for the CEE countries obtained from the regression are expressed in the ordered log-odds estimates.³⁰ Overall, the signs of the coefficients indicate that public employees are more likely to place a higher value on the intrinsic reward of helping others and

²⁹ The only exception of other European countries is Denmark, where the sectoral difference is also very high.

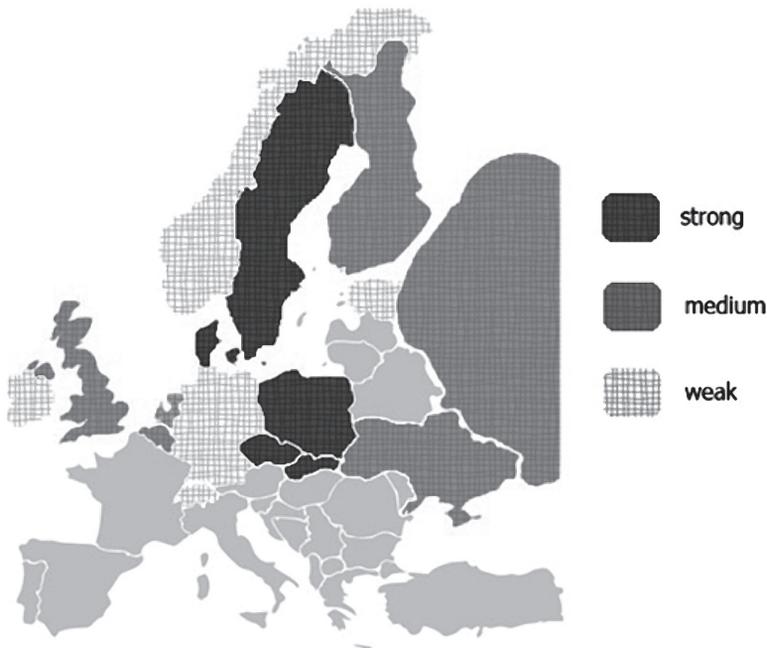
³⁰ The detailed analyses of the results of the CEE countries obtained for the independent and control variables as well as tables representing these results are available upon request.

a lower value on the extrinsic reward of being rich than their private counterparts. Since the log-odds coefficients are relatively difficult to interpret, Figure 1 presents a visualization of statistically significant results for the importance of helping others. The more intensive color represents stronger differences in the importance to help others between employees in the public and private sector. Thus, for instance, public sector employees from Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia are among those European countries that put the strongest emphasis on helping others, when compared to their counterparts in business. Estonia found itself among the European countries with the mildest differences between the two sectors in the attitudes towards the importance of helping others. Responses from the two sectors in this country are quite similar, meaning that this country showed the least statistically significant sectoral variation when keeping other factors constant.

Public service motivation (PSM) emerged as a characteristic that distinguishes public sector employees from private sector employees in their desire to perform actions that benefit society. The strongest PSM in Europe is found in several CEE countries: the public sector employees in Central Europe - Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic – have the largest gap in their attitude towards helping others, compared to private employees. Such a large gap was found only in some Nordic countries.³¹

Figure 1.

Helping Others: Statistically Significant Differences between Public and Private Sectors



³¹ Prysmakova, 2013.

Poland and Slovakia not only have the largest gaps between the public and private sectors, but also group together in their mean values for the importance of helping others, which are close to the median of the average European response. The attitudes differ between sectors, not only in their magnitude when controlling for other factors, but also whether the responses are in a low or high importance category. For example, simultaneous analyses of Histogram 2 and Figure 1 allow for the conclusion that the Polish and Slovakian private sectors, compared to their respective public sectors, resemble each other in questions of the importance of helping others. In these countries, public sector employees usually view "it is important to help others" as (1) Very much like me and (2) Like me. Whereas, private sector employees emphasize the importance of helping less; answering the same question as (2) Like me and (3) Somewhat like me. These sectoral differences are statistically significant.

Czech public employees, on average, place the least stress on helping others when compared to any other European country. Moreover, the results for this country show the largest statistically significant gap between the sectors, suggesting that the private sector employees are even more indifferent to helping others. These results describe Czech private employees as the least caring individuals across all the countries and sectors that showed significant results during the regression analyses.

The results of public-private comparison for being rich support the initial hypothesis that public sector employees put less stress on the importance of being rich, than individuals employed in the private sector. The results for Estonia reveal a large gap in responses between the two sectors, which also exists in Scandinavian countries, and some Western European countries, such as France or Switzerland. The Czech Republic has one of the smallest differences between people in different sectors in stressing material well-being across the whole of Europe. The chance that a public employee will report being rich as less important is higher than the chance of a private employee. These results are considerably smaller, for instance, in Ukraine.

Analysis suggests that the largest statistically significant difference between public and private employee responses across Europe is found in Ukraine. Public sector employees in Ukraine show that differences with the private sector regarding material wealth are the largest for any individuals working in the public and private sectors across Europe. Ukrainians working for public organizations value extrinsic rewards much less than individuals employed in private companies. The gap between sectors is explained by the fact that private sector employees value material wealth more than public sector employees. Analysis of the means suggests that Ukrainians in the private sector are in the group of countries that value wealth the most in Europe. However, wealth is still important for public sector employees in Ukraine, with the mean for this country located near the first quartile of responses for all European countries in the study. The means for Ukraine suggest that Ukrainian public sector employees feel that being rich is still very important, when compared to the mean responses for the public sector in other countries.

Bulgaria and Slovenia also grouped together, according to the differences between the public and private sector. The views on the importance of being rich for public and private employees in these countries differ considerably less than, for instance, in Scandinavia. Even smaller differences between sectors are found in Central European countries, such as Poland and the Czech Republic.

Figure 2.

Being Rich: Statistically Significant Differences between Public and Private Sectors

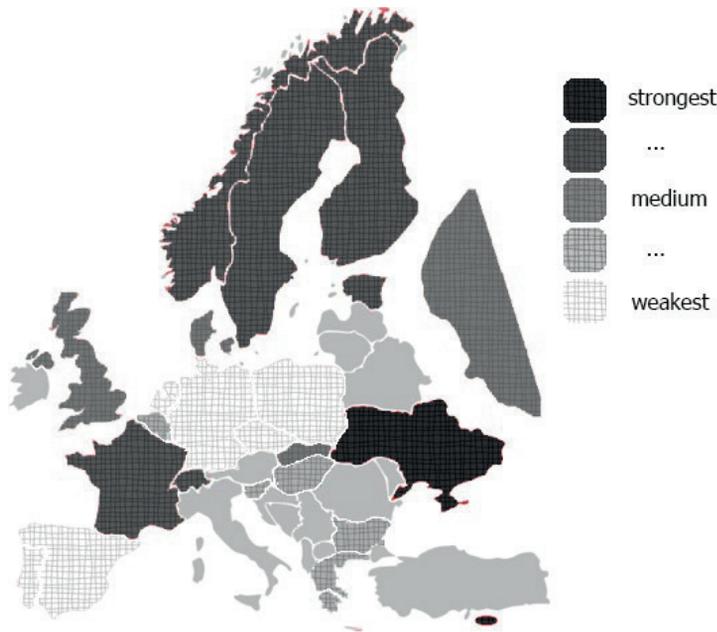


Figure 2 presents a visualization of differences among the sectors showing statistically significant results for the importance of being rich and possessing expensive material objects. The more intensive color represents stronger differences in the importance of being rich for employees in the public and private sector. Thus, for instance, Ukraine is one of the countries in Europe where public sector employees put the least emphasis on the importance of being rich, as compared to their counterparts in business. The smallest statistically significant difference between the public and private sector in the importance of being rich is found in Central European Poland and Czech Republic, with similar results found in Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal. This shows that in some countries in CEE responses among individuals employed in the different sectors can be fairly similar, despite differences in age, gender and level of education.

Conclusion

The results of the study allow us to conclude that sectoral differences in extrinsic and intrinsic motivation exist in Eastern and Central Europe, similarly to other European countries. Both descriptive and inferential statistics supported the hypotheses that within a single country, public sector employees put greater emphasis on the importance of helping others and less strong emphasis on the importance of being rich, than individuals employed in the private sector.

At the same time, the countries from the former Soviet Bloc exhibit some special features. In the majority of these countries, the employees tend to be more concerned with material wealth and less concerned with helping others, when compared to the means of other respective European countries. The gaps between sectors in the importance of helping others are often larger across the CEE countries, when compared to the rest of Europe, whereas the sectoral differences in importance of material wealth are not so univocal. Eastern European Russia and Ukraine have shown larger sectoral gaps, while differences between the public and private sectors regarding the importance of being rich are often marked from moderate to low, when compared to other European countries and controlling for additional factors.

The findings for control variables suggest that in the CEE countries, the public sector consists of more women than men and more educated employees, than the private sector. Undoubtedly, a high level of formal education is an advantage, although the translation of that education into applicable practice is arguably more important.

Some interesting findings concerning the relativity of public service motivation emerge when the responses for both sectors and all the countries are compared simultaneously. The analysis of the means shows similar results for employees in Russia, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. Individuals employed in the public sector in these countries are, on average, less concerned with being rich when compared to private employees in the same countries, but they are still more concerned about money and material wealth than private sector employees in the majority of other European countries. With regard to questions of material enrichment, public sector employees differ greatly from their private counterparts in Estonia and Ukraine. Estonians in the public sector consider personal wealth as significantly less important. So do Ukrainians, however, employees in this country, in both sectors, firmly believe that money matters.

One of the unexpected findings is that Poland stands out from the rest of the CEE countries in the study in many demographic dimensions, which make the public sector of this country quite exceptional. The Polish public sector has the largest number of male employees. Employees of this sector have spent more years on education than anywhere else in the CEE region, but on average, still remain one of the youngest.

The study reveals many single individuals among public sector employees in Russia. The public sector employees in this country also tend to be highly concerned with individual wealth and less with caring for others, than in any other CEE country. These findings combined, suggest the high importance of family socialization and mutual learning of caregiving. Divorce rate should be included as a control variable for further studies of PSM, since through sharing a household with others a person seems to learn how to care for others. The evidence from Russia in this study supports the ideas that, in fact, the country has the highest divorce rate and the declared importance to help others is among the weakest in the region. The divorce rate is also very high among Ukrainians and Czechs. Thus their emphasis on the importance to help people around them is also correspondingly weak. Positive examples of family socialization are Slovakia and Slovenia, where employees tend to live together with their partners/spouses and with their extended family. In Slovenia, public sector employees emphasize helping others more strongly than anywhere else in CEE.

The level of urbanization is another variable that should be included in the models examining the relations between sectors and helping others. In the present study, this variable is very closely correlated to the size of the household. Dense European cities tend to be less able to accommodate extended families in one place, than countryside towns and villages. Thus, living on one's own or sharing a small household is typical for cities. This situation makes citizens stronger individualists. Indeed, the urbanized populations in Russia and the Czech Republic emphasize helping others less than respondents in other, more rural, CEE countries.

With the exception of Slovenia, and to a certain extent Bulgaria, CEE public sector employees consider helping others as less important when compared to other European countries. In the desire to take care of others, the public sector is very much different from the private sector in Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. While in Poland and Slovakia they are willing to help more than employees from the private sector, Czechs from both sectors weakly emphasize helping others as important, with a significantly lower importance for the private sector.

The main limitation of the study is that European Social Survey items are used as proxies for PSM and, thus, the construct validity is highly debatable. However, this detracts little from the main argument that intrinsic rewards are, indeed, more important for public employees in CEE countries than for private employees. Individuals employed in public administration and defense, compulsory social security, education and, health and social work score significantly higher on the question asking about the importance of helping others, than individuals employed in other more business-type industries. The employees in these public sector industries find wealth less important than their private counterparts, and score significantly lower on the question concerning the importance of being rich.

In summation, the findings suggest that citizens in CEE countries can trust their public sector employees to serve the best public interest, even at the cost of their own individual wealth. In these countries, individuals employed in public organizations are the best match for this sector. Even in places where public service motivation appears to be weaker, the public sector employees still remain the most caring and least voracious individuals in the country.

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Reconsidering Russian Foreign Policy in the 21st Century

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The Russian occupation of Crimea in February-March 2014, marked the beginning of a new phase of tension between the Western world and Russia. Although it was predicted several years prior to the conflict that Ukraine would be Russia's next victim,¹ nobody paid much attention to these warnings. Thus, the Russian moves proved surprising for most Western societies, especially for the leaders of Western countries. It effectively ended

¹ Then Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, along with some other experts, made numerous warnings both before and after the Russian-Georgian War of 2008. He made those assertions not only in interviews, but in the talks with the US officials too. These are two examples (emphasis added – T.P.) of his warnings: "This order was based on principles that borders are inviolable and small states have the same rights as great ones. What we see now is that Russia and Prime Minister Putin exactly undermine these principles. We see a policy of repartition, which dates from the 19th century, according to the motto: We are back on stage, now we show you how strong we are. And because we are so strong, we must get more than others. Georgia is just the beginning. Tomorrow it will be Ukraine, the Baltic States, Poland." ("Diese Ordnung beruhte auf Prinzipien: Dass Grenzen unverletzlich sind und kleine Staaten dieselben Rechte haben wie große. Was wir aber jetzt sehen, ist, dass Russland und Ministerpräsident Putin genau diese Prinzipien untergraben. Wir sehen eine Politik der Umverteilung, die aus dem 19. Jahrhundert stammt, nach dem Motto: Wir sind zurück auf der Bühne, jetzt zeigen wir Euch, wie stark wir sind. Und weil wir so stark sind, müssen wir mehr bekommen als andere. Georgien ist nur der Anfang. Morgen ist es die Ukraine, dann die baltischen Staaten, Polen." – WELT ONLINE: Georgien wirft Russland Zaren-Gebaren vor. Das Interview mit Michail Saakaschwili, 26.06.2008, accessed May 15, 2016, <http://www.welt.de/politik/article2145974/Georgien-wirft-Russland-Zaren-Gebaren-vor.html>); "Saakashvili stressed repeatedly that he expected Russia to follow its 2008 invasion of Georgia with intervention in Crimea. He predicted that Russia would incite tension in the peninsula and then make a generous offer to Yanukovich (presumed as the next president) to help solve the problem. Saakashvili said that Putin wants to keep the pressure on Ukraine and Georgia as a lesson and a warning to others in the former Soviet Union." – *Georgia: Misha Tells ASD Vershow Georgia Is Committed to Peaceful Integration and a Long-Term Defense*. Confidential. From American Embassy in Tbilisi (Georgia) to Department of Defense, Group Destinations European Political Collective, National Security Council, Secretary of State, United Nations (New York). November 2, 2009, accessed May 15, 2016, https://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09TBILIS1965_a.html.

the inefficient policy of “reset”, which was actually stillborn, because of the inability of the American administration to understand Vladimir Putin’s person and his goals. In June 2001, Putin met US President George W. Bush, who said after this meeting: “I looked the man in the eye. I found him to be very straightforward and trustworthy. We had a very good dialogue. I was able to get a sense of his soul; a man deeply committed to his country and the best interests of his country.”² President Bush was ridiculed for these words, yet even nine years later, he did not acknowledge his mistake. In 2010, he said: “I did not make a mistake in [my] assessment of Russian leader Vladimir Putin [...] Putin became a different person [...] I think, to a certain extent, he changed.”³ It seems that George W. Bush was not able to figure out that it was not Putin who had changed. It was the fact that U.S. and European leaders did not grasp which country Vladimir Putin was “deeply committed” to. For the Russian president, “his country” meant the Soviet Union, not the Russian Federation. He even officially declared that, “the collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century.”⁴ (Emphasis added – T.P.) This phrase was not just mere nostalgia for the “good old times”, otherwise no one in his right mind would ever call the break-up of the Soviet Union “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century.” When talking about the 20th century, during which two world wars cost more than 80 million lives combined, the break-up of one empire with nearly no casualties cannot be considered “the greatest catastrophe.” Therefore, those words meant that Putin’s intention was to restore, at least, to some extent, the “old greatness” of the Soviet Empire.

Vladimir Putin pronounced those words in 2005, but he actually utilized this style from the beginning of his political career. When Vladimir Putin was appointed prime minister of the Russian Federation in August 1999, he was little known to both Russians and foreigners. The question, “Who is Mr. Putin?”, asked by American journalist Trudy Rubin in Davos, in February 2000, quickly became one of the most popular questions regarding the new Russian leader.⁵ The first impressions were not favourable for Putin. Shortly after his appointment, the second campaign in Chechnya began. As it later turned out, the main goal was to show Putin as a worthy successor to Boris Yeltsin and to increase his popularity.⁶

² Press Conference by President Bush and Russian Federation President Putin, Brdo Castle, Brdo Pri Kranju, Slovenia, June 16, 2001, accessed May 15, 2016, <http://georgewbushwhitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/06/20010618.html>.

³ Bush explains his comment about Putin’s soul, says Russian leader ‘changed’, *The Daily Caller*, December 14, 2010, accessed May 15, 2016, <http://dailycaller.com/2010/12/14/bush-explains-his-comment-about-putins-soul-says-russian-leader-changed>.

⁴ Putin deploras collapse of USSR, *BBC News*, April 25, 2005, accessed May 15, 2016, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/4480745.stm>. BBC made the correct translation from the Russian transcript: «Прежде всего следует признать, что крушение Советского Союза было крупнейшей геополитической катастрофой века.» Послание Федеральному Собранию Российской Федерации, 25 апреля 2005 года, accessed May 15, 2016, <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/22931>. It should be noted that the official English translation of the speech differs from the Russian transcript. Putin’s words were transformed to “the collapse of the Soviet Union was a major geopolitical disaster of the century” in the official English text of his speech (“Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, April 25, 2005,” accessed May 15, 2016, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/22931>). This change seems definitely deliberate and marks the attempt to lessen the significance of Putin’s words.

⁵ Trudy Rubin, “The world keeps asking: Who is President Putin?” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 20, 2001, accessed May 15, 2016, http://articles.philly.com/2001-07-20/news/25316631_1_putin-critic-president-putin-vladimir-ryzhkov.

⁶ Today there is little doubt left that it was Putin, who organized the bombings of houses in Russia prior to the second Chechen campaign. The bombings in Buynaksk, Moscow, and Volgogradsk were followed by the Ryazan

Russian methods used to conduct the war against the Chechen rebels made the Western community angry and were followed by condemnations from the UK and the US governments.⁷ The European Union and the US briefly considered the possibility of economic sanctions, but failed to even initiate talks on the issue.⁸ This was a poor sign, since it demonstrated to Putin that he could get away with anything. Western condemnation had virtually no effect on him. Therefore, he could continue his policy.

Meanwhile, the situation changed, as the war in Chechnya was won and in May 2000, Putin became president of the Russian Federation. But Putin's finest hour came with the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US. Putin and Russia soon became an important ally in the "War on Terror" for the US government. The American invasion in Iraq proved even more fruitful for the Russian leader, as oil and natural gas prices skyrocketed, significantly increasing the budget of the Russian Federation. Putin decidedly grasped the opportunities which were presented to him after September 2001, although he was cautious at first. Only starting from 2004, did Putin decide to actively get involved in the neighbourhood. The trigger was "The Revolution of the Roses" (November 22-23, 2003) in Georgia, but the most significant turning point became "The Orange Revolution" in Ukraine (November-December, 2004). Not long after, the first steps were taken against Georgia.

The Russian policy towards Georgia after the collapse of the Soviet Union was never friendly, but it deteriorated significantly when Putin became president of Russia. Even before the Rose Revolution, the Russian leader had shown his intentions towards Georgia. On 1 July 2002, a new law of citizenship was adopted by the Russian government, after which they started the illegal process of giving Russian citizenship to Georgian citizens of Abkhazian and Ossetian origin, living in Abkhazia and so-called "South Ossetia".⁹ After the Rose Revolution, when the new Georgian government started reforms and declared Georgia's membership in NATO its top priority, Georgia became the greatest single threat to the Russian ruling elite because, from their point of view, Georgia joining NATO would mean the end of their own dream/desire to restore the Soviet Empire. During the period 2004-2008, the Russian government took several anti-Georgian measures, but none of them brought the desired results. At first, the Russians attempted the institution of an economic blockade on Georgia and banned the import of Georgian (and Moldovan) wines.¹⁰ But this step backfired, eventually leading to the diversification of the Georgian economy and the

incident, where the Russian FSB (Federal Service of Security) were captured, and released afterwards, after planting explosives in the apartment building. The "failed terrorist attack," as it was declared on September 22, 1999, became "training" on the next day. For a detailed account see: Alexander Litvinenko, Yuri Felshtinky, *Blowing Up Russia: The Secret Plot to Bring Back KGB Terror* (Encounter Books, 2007), 54-99.

⁷ UK condemns Chechnya ultimatum, *BBC News*, December 7, 1999, accessed May 15, 2016 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/554075.stm; U.S. Response to Decision of UNCHR To Pass Resolution on Chechnya, April 26, 2000, accessed May 15, 2016 <http://1997-2001.state.gov/www/briefings/statements/2000/ps000426.html>.

⁸ Putin rebuffs Chechnya warnings, *BBC News*, December 7, 1999, accessed May 15, 2016 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/554019.stm>.

⁹ Kakhaber Kalichava, Some Aspects of Russian "Passport Policy" in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Region, *Saistorio Dziebani (Historical Researches) XII* (2015): 217-232 (in Georgian with English and Russian summaries. Online version accessible at <https://sites.google.com/site/saistoriodziebani/saistorio Ziebani XII.pdf>).

¹⁰ Russian Wine Move Draws Protests, *BBC News*, March 30, 2006, accessed May 15, 2016 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4860454.stm>.

improvement of Georgian product quality. The expulsion of several thousand Georgian citizens from Russia, following the so-called "spy scandal" in 2006¹¹, also did not help much. Russia then backed a number of the leaders of the mass demonstrations which took place in Georgia in 2007, protesting mistakes made by the government. The use of force against the protesters on 7 November 2007, nearly gave Putin the chance to succeed in his intentions, but the situation quickly changed after snap presidential and parliamentary elections, ending with the victory of Mikheil Saakashvili and the United National Movement. Meanwhile, the majority of Western countries decided to recognize the independence of Kosovo, which made Georgia's position even more vulnerable. During his informal meeting with Saakashvili, Putin openly declared his intentions: "You know we have to answer the West on Kosovo. We are very sorry, but you are going to be part of that answer."¹² Soon the world found out that "that answer" was – the invasion of Georgia and the occupation of certain Georgian territories, namely, Abkhazia and Tskhinvali ("South Ossetia"), which occurred in August 2008. The war was "victorious" for the Russian government, since they established full control over Abkhazia and Tskhinvali. Nevertheless, they were unable to change the regime in Georgia, which had been their main task. Because of this, they recognized the "independence" of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali.

The causes of Russian aggression are well covered in historiography,¹³ therefore this will not be discussed here. As for the consequences of the conflict, I wish to recall my own prediction, made in 2009. At the time, I said that one of the possible scenarios would be "the continuation of the current situation: where Russia is doing whatever it wants and the Western countries just make verbal condemnations of their moves. Of course, this cannot continue forever, but at least, the European leaders consider it safe to preserve this situation, since Russia is not yet a menace to them, and they prefer to deal with this problem in the future." I also said that it could cause a dangerous situation where no one would be satisfied with the results, eventually leading to a new war.¹⁴ Unfortunately, the events of 2014 proved that I was correct in these predictions. The decision of Western leaders not to press Russia to fulfil the 12 August 2008 agreement, and to continue their co-operation with Putin, resulted in Russian aggression against Ukraine. At the same time, the change of government in Georgia following the parliamentary elections of 2012, also brought no real changes in Russian-Georgian relations. It is quite evident that Russia is only interested in placing more hurdles in the way of Georgia's ambition to join NATO and the EU, with the hope of restoring its control over the whole territory of Georgia in future.

For a long time, Russian policy in Ukraine was not as active as that in Georgia. In Ukraine, Putin chose to actively support Viktor Yanukovich and his "Party of Regions." In 2004, electoral fraud during the presidential elections resulted in the "Orange Revolution," ending in the victory of pro-Western politician Viktor Yuschenko. Nevertheless, the Rus-

¹¹ Michael Stott, Putin to Georgia: Don't Provoke Russia, *The Star Online*, October 4, 2006, accessed May 15, 2016 <http://www.thestar.com.my/news/world/2006/10/04/putin-to-georgia-dont-provoke-russia/>.

¹² Ronald D. Asmus, *A Little War that Shook the World. Georgia, Russia and the Future of the West*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 106.

¹³ A detailed analysis of the causes can be found in: Teimuraz Papaskiri, "Russian-Georgian August War: Causes, Results, Consequences," *Proceedings of Institute of Georgian History I* (2009): 298-302 (online version accessible at <http://geohistory.humanities.tsu.ge/images/SHROMEBI/SHROMEBI-1/019>).

¹⁴ Teimuraz Papaskiri, "Russian-Georgian August War," 303.

sian government continued to support Yanukovich. Since ethnic Russians are a significant part of the Ukrainian population, the pro-Russian party retained its strength, especially in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. At the same time, President Viktor Yuschenko made several mistakes and never attempted to conduct real reforms. The Ukrainian elite was corrupt and nothing was done about this.¹⁵ This caused the pro-Western parties in Ukraine to lose the 2010 presidential elections and 2012 parliamentary elections. Yanukovich became the president of Ukraine and the "Party of Regions" became the governing party. Nevertheless, officials in Moscow were not satisfied with just having a pro-Russian government in power in Ukraine and practically forced Yanukovich's refusal to sign the EU Association Agreement in November of 2013. The protests and bloodshed that followed resulted in Yanukovich's impeachment in February 2014. The Russian government was somewhat passive during this crisis because of the Winter Olympic Games, which were held in Sochi, Russia from 7-23 February, 2014. Once the Games ended, Putin had no further need to pay attention to the international situation and he started taking control of Crimea. Before the Games, he was clearly afraid of a boycott taking place, similar to the one at the 1980 Moscow Summer Olympic Games. Yanukovich's four-year presidency allowed the Russians to take over key positions in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. The poor state of the Ukrainian army meant that it was unable to oppose the Russians in Crimea, which was occupied and annexed a few weeks after Yanukovich's removal from office. Before annexing Crimea, Putin heartily denied that Russian troops were participating in events in Crimea.¹⁶ Nevertheless, just a month after annexing Crimea, Putin admitted that the so-called "little green men", who took control over the peninsula at the end of February, 2014, were in fact Russian soldiers.¹⁷ This is clear evidence of how Russian policy is based on lies and deceit. It was the same in the case of Georgia, when the Russian side at first stated that Russian troops were just answering Georgian aggression and accused the Georgian side of "genocide".¹⁸ Yet several years later, Russian leaders admitted that "the invasion of Georgia in August 2008 was indeed a pre-planned aggression and that so-called 'Russian peacekeepers' in South Ossetia and Abkhazia were in fact the vanguard of the invading forces that were in blatant violation of Russia's international obligations, and were training and arming the separatist forces."¹⁹ The Russian government still denies that there are Russian troops in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions of Ukraine, which are controlled only partially by the Ukrainian government and where there are quasi-republics created by the Russian government. Although internationally it is well-known that the Malaysian passenger plane MH-17 was downed by a Russian BUK anti-aircraft missile system,²⁰ the Russians continue

¹⁵ Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine Crisis: What It Means to the West* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), 45-47.

¹⁶ Владимир Путин рассказал об Украине, March 4, 2014, accessed May 15, 2016, <http://ru-an.info/новости/владимир-путин-ответил-на-вопросы-журналистов-о-ситуации-на-украине/>.

¹⁷ Direct Line with Vladimir Putin, April 17, 2014, accessed May 15, 2016, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20796>.

¹⁸ Putin accuses Georgia of genocide, August 9, 2008, accessed May 15, 2016, <https://www.rt.com/news/putin-accuses-georgia-of-genocide/>.

¹⁹ Pavel Felgenhauer, Putin Confirms the Invasion of Georgia Was Preplanned, *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Volume: 9 Issue: 152, accessed May 15, 2016, [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=39746&cHash=1.#.Vzj-luQ4Xz8](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=39746&cHash=1.#.Vzj-luQ4Xz8).

²⁰ Full coverage of the investigation conducted by the independent journalists can be found at <https://www.bellingcat.com/?s=MH-17>.

to deny it and invent conspiracy theories that have nothing to do with the truth.²¹ There will not be any surprise when, in one or two years, the Russian government admits that their troops did take part in fighting in Donetsk and Lugansk, and that they downed the plane due to some mistake.

For a long time, Western societies did not consider Russian foreign ambition as a threat to themselves. All the events happening in the post-Soviet space were not considered inter-related. As it is correctly mentioned in research by the Centre for Military Studies of the University of Copenhagen:

"The problems with Russia were treated as isolated problems rather than as an expression of general tendencies. The conflict in Chechnya, which began in the 1990s, was seen as a local, Islamist-inspired rebellion against the central government in Moscow rather than as an expression of the central government tightening its grip on the regions and replacing a pluralist, federal system with rigorous control from Moscow. The invasion of Georgia in 2008 was seen as a local, nationalist conflict where President Mikheil Saakashvili's defiance of Russia was seen as equally much of a major problem as the subsequent Russian invasion, rather than as a challenge to European security. Russian hackers' attack on Estonia in 2007 was seen as an example of the risk of cyber warfare in the future rather than as an expression of the Russian will to also use this area to destabilise former Soviet republics. Russian support of Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria was similarly seen as an expression of relations between Syria and Russia that had their roots in the Cold War and not as a general opposition to Western intervention and as a defence of allied regimes without due regard to the way they treated their own citizens. The Ukraine Crisis cancelled out this reading of Moscow's policy as a reaction to isolated events that could be excused on the basis of concrete circumstances. Instead, the Russian intervention in Crimea became the final piece of evidence in a series, where events in Chechnya, Georgia, Estonia and Syria appear as part of the indictment against the Kremlin."²²

As we can see, the new imperialistic policies of Vladimir Putin have brought some gains to Russia. Russia has now annexed Crimea, possesses a foothold in Eastern Ukraine, and has established full control over Abkhazia and "South Ossetia". Nevertheless, all these actions have no recognition from the civilized world. Therefore, all these gains look to be temporal. Russia has lost the opportunity to create a stable and pro-Russian neighbourhood. Because of the annexation of Crimea, most Ukrainians have turned against Russia and there will be no change in their attitude as long as Russia holds Crimea. Moreover, prior to 2014, all elections in Ukraine were close and it was difficult to predict the winner. After the annexation of Crimea, which was previously a stronghold for pro-Russian parties, the situation has changed and, in the nearest future, all elections will be dominated by pro-Western political organizations. The same applies to Georgia, which will never agree to full reconciliation with Russia while Russian troops are stationed in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali. The Russian moves in Ukraine have even caused fear in Belarus. Therefore, it is safe to say that it

²¹ Aric Toler, The Weird World of MH17 Conspiracy Theories – Part 1, August 7 2015, accessed May 15, 2016, <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2015/08/07/mh17-conspiracies/>.

²² Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen et al., The Ukraine Crisis and the End of the Post-Cold War European Order: Options for NATO and the EU, *Centre for Military Studies of University of Copenhagen*, 2014, 19.

is Russian foreign policy that has created an anti-Russian mood in the neighbourhood and throughout the whole world.

In conclusion, it has to be said that there is only one way out of the present situation. The West must admit that the "Second Cold War" (or "New Cold War", as it called by Edward Lucas²³) has already started. Therefore, the West needs to conduct the same policy that allowed it to end the "First Cold War." Russia (and by extent Putin) only recognize force and, thus, the only way to stop Russian aggression in the neighbourhood is to meet force with force. The economic sanctions which have been instituted against Russia are at least partially successful²⁴, but they must be strengthened. NATO has to strengthen its defences on its Russian perimeter in order to avoid new acts of aggression from Putin. Aggressors like Putin have to be stopped in time, before it is too late. These types of aggressors cannot be appeased. It is time to remember the definition of appeasement – which, according to *The Manchester Guardian* in 1939, "is a clever plan of selling off your friends in order to buy off your enemies"²⁵ – and to learn from the lessons of history.

²³ Edward Lucas, *The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

²⁴ Larissa Krüger & Silke Mülherr, „Karl Bildt: Ganz einfach, Europa muss liefern.“ *Die Welt*, June 24, 2014, accessed May 15, 2016, <http://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article129387167/Ganz-einfach-Europa-muss-liefern.html>.

²⁵ *The Manchester Guardian*, February 25, 1939.

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Russia's Peacekeeping Operations in the Post-Soviet Space: "Mirotvorchestvo" Applied

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Peacekeeping in Theory: Russia's Approach

According to a general definition, a conflict is a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party¹. Conflict is manifested through adversarial social action involving two or more actors and the expression of differences is often accompanied by intense hostilities. Most significantly, protracted conflict arises from failure to manage an antagonistic relationship². A special kind of conflict involves force being used by both parties to the conflict.

Armed conflicts in the neighbourhood of Russia emerged during the disintegration of the USSR, when parts of former Soviet republics began to claim independence. This is when Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Transnistria decided to form independent states, thus infringing on the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova – all states with international recognition. The parties on both sides of these ethnic and political conflicts had been attempting to resolve these situations by themselves, but the management process was then joined by "third parties": Russia, Iran, Turkey, CIS and other international organizations such as the UN and the OSCE, and, recently, also the EU.

The discussed subject shall require analysis of the peacekeeping approaches adopted by Russia and its strategies implemented in the countries which have directly experienced armed conflicts – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Among many

¹ James A. Wall Jr. and Ronda R. Callister, "Conflict and Its Management," *Journal of Management* 21/3, (1995): 517; Ho-Won Jeong, *Conflict Management and Resolution. Introduction* (New York: Routledge 2010): 243; Louis Kriesberg and Bruce W. Dayton, *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*, (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011): 428; Joseph S. Nye, *Konflikty międzynarodowe. Wprowadzenie do teorii i historii*, (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne, 2009): 6-30.

² Jeong, *Conflict Management...*, 3.

approaches towards conflict management, there are also actions undertaken by third parties: in this case, by Russia³. Such actions basically mean the involvement of an external actor at every possible stage of an armed conflict, who works for early warning, preventive diplomacy, and limiting of military actions until armed conflict ends, as well as preventing a renewed outbreak of armed conflict, referred to as post-conflict peace building.

During the Soviet era, the Russians did not gain the necessary experience in the conduct of peace operations, unlike the UN⁴. After the collapse of the USSR, a new area of armed conflict management in the form of peacekeeping missions was initiated, which has been called "mirotvorchestvo", literally, the creation of peace. It covers a wide range of activities from political mediation, to military operations undertaken to achieve peace by force. The two most characteristic features of Russian peace missions are the ability to enter into the conflict zone before the cessation of hostilities and the inclusion of peacekeeping troops of both conflicting parties or the CIS countries, ensuring Russia obtains greater legitimacy as a promoter of peace and avoids allegations of interfering in the internal affairs of post-Soviet states⁵.

Russian peacekeeping activities developed outside the UN framework. What distinguished the Russian conflict management concept of peace missions was a lack of neutrality towards the conflicting parties. The Russians often supported the weaker side (i.e. the separatists) against stronger countries in the region, such as Azerbaijan, Georgia or Moldova. Thanks to such "frozen conflicts", Russia is able to influence the post-Soviet geopolitics of the region. Because of their limited efficiency in promoting peace, the goal of Russian operations has become maintaining the *status quo*, rather than finding a solution to the given armed conflict. Russia uses both official and unofficial channels to influence the development of these types of situations, making its actions less transparent. It should also be noted that in Russia, decisions relating to peacekeeping operations can be made at various political, administrative and military levels, which sometimes makes it difficult to determine Russia's position clearly⁶. As a result, the Russian Federation has become the most important stabilizing factor inhibiting the outbreak of hostilities in post-Soviet countries, at the same time having its own political, military and economic interests in the region and thus, becoming a "party to the conflict". On the other hand, Russian operations tended to ignore traditional UN peacekeeping principles such as consent, impartiality, and minimal use of force. Consequently, "Russia's operations in the FSS [have] failed to obtain UN legal endorsement and international financial support"⁷.

³ Kristine Barseghyan and Zainiddin Karaev, "Playing Cat-and-Mouse: Conflict and Third-Party Mediation in Post-Soviet Space," *The Online Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution* (6.1), (2004): 192-209; Lena Jonson, "Keeping the Peace in the CIS. The evolution of Russian Policy," *Discussion Paper RIIA* 81, (1999): 13; Domililla Sagramoso, *Russian peacekeeping policies*, in *Regional peacekeepers: the paradox of Russian peacekeeping*, ed. John Mackinlay and Peter Cross, (Tokyo - New York - Paris: United Nations University Press, 2003): 117-130.

⁴ Alexander Sokolov, "Russian Peace-keeping Forces in the Post-Soviet Area", ed. Mary Kaldor, Basker Vashee *Reconstructing the Global Military Sector*, (London-Washington: PINTER 1997): Chap. 8.

⁵ Kazimierz Malak, "Czynnik wojskowy w polityce zagranicznej Federacji Rosyjskiej (1991-2000). Rozprawa habilitacyjna," *Zeszyty Naukowe AON* 2001, 99.

⁶ Jonson, "Keeping the Peace...., 3; Legucka Agnieszka, *Geopolityczne uwarunkowania i konsekwencje konfliktów zbrojnych na obszarze poradzieckim*, (Warszawa: Difin, 2013): 311-322.

⁷ Sagramoso, *Russian Peacekeeping Policies*, 14.

Russia Peacekeeping – Phases

There have been several armed conflicts in Russia's neighbourhood. At the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, conflicts arose in Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and Transnistria. They all underwent similar phases: eruption, a "freezing" in the form of a truce and then the creation of *quasi-states* that were not recognized by the international community. Later, two of these conflicts were "unfrozen" (in South Ossetia and Abkhazia) which were transformed into the Georgian-Russian War of August 2008. According to some, there is a considerable possibility that the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh may also escalate into an international conflict. A renewed outbreak of hostilities is indeed highly probable, especially bearing in mind the "arms race" in the South Caucasus⁸.

Russia has had an impact on the course of each of these conflicts in the CIS area. In the first phase of the conflict, when military action took place, the Russians supplied weapons and soldiers (sometimes mercenaries), and offered military advice and support – military and diplomatic activities were conducted simultaneously. It must be stressed that, during the intensive armed operations of the early 1990s, the decision-making process in Russia was highly distributed. Government agencies, the president, the parliament, the ministries of foreign affairs and defence, the army (including officers and soldiers in units distributed throughout the territories of the former USSR) all had a say in the process. Mainly owing to the support of the latter, the separatists obtained the necessary military supplies for conducting military operations. In Transnistria, the separatists' success was determined by the Soviet 14th Army; in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, weapons were obtained from local military units; and in Nagorno-Karabakh, the separatists were supported by Armenia, itself probably being armed by Russia. At the same time, Russia sought international partners to have them recognize the CIS as an organization ensuring regional security, as well as building peace and stability. Lena Jonson claims that in the first phase, Russia attempted to present itself as a co-organizer of regional security. The country was not only ready to participate in peace operations all over the world, but also to transfer responsibility for the security of the southern frontier of the former USSR to the UN and the CSCE⁹. An important motive was to secure the financial support necessary for conducting peace operations in the "near abroad". But the UN and the CSCE (later OSCE) limited themselves to supporting Russian operations, not wanting to send peacekeeping missions into regions of conflict, contenting themselves with merely monitoring Russian operations. In Abkhazia, an observer mission was undertaken by the UN (UNOMIG), in South Ossetia and Transnistria by the CSCE/OSCE, and in Nagorno-Karabakh, the peace process was undertaken by the CSCE/OSCE Minsk Group¹⁰. Although the goals laid down in the mandates of these negotiating missions aimed at solving the conflicts – with the parties' interests decidedly at odds – they have not yet been achieved.

⁸ Agnieszka Legucka, „Wyścig zbrojeń na Kaukazie Południowym”, in ed. Agnieszka Bryc, Agnieszka Legucka and Agata Włodkowska-Bagan, *Bezpieczeństwo obszaru poradzieckiego. Książka poświęcona pamięci prof. Kazimierza Malaka*, (Warszawa: Difin, 2011): 233-249.

⁹ Jonson, "Keeping the Peace...", 9.

¹⁰ Владимир Николаевич Казимиров, *Мир Карабаху. Посредничество России в урегулировании нагорно-карабахского конфликта*, (Москва: Международные отношения, 2009): 30-31.

In the second phase, after the cessation of military operations, Russia took the role of main mediator and guarantor of the truce agreements, successfully forcing both parties to the negotiating table. In June 1992, an agreement was signed in Dagomys to end the South Ossetia conflict. The agreement set forth the formation of a peacekeeping force that included South Ossetian, North Ossetian, Russian and Georgian battalions. According to the document, both parties were to observe a complete cease-fire and withdraw their forces to create a corridor separating the two sides in the conflict area. The Russian forces at Tskhinvali were to act as neutrals, while the Joint Control Commission (JCC) had to guarantee the cease-fire, withdraw armed forces, disband self-defence units, and ensure security measures in the conflict zone. In effect, the JCC became the political mechanism to regulate the conflict and supervise the peacekeeping forces. It succeeded in creating a cease-fire and separating the conflicting parties, withdrawing Russian units from the conflict zone, securing the area of conflict and building confidence among the parties. However, it failed to define the political status of South Ossetia, return refugees and displaced persons, or disarm the local population on both sides¹¹. Russia had a special position in the JCC, which influenced the decision-making process, as well as the peacekeeping force.

In July 1992, the conflict in Transnistria was brought to an end. As a result, a security zone was established and a Joint Control Commission (JCC) composed of three parties: Moldova, Russia, and Transnistria. Russia was named the "trust guarantor"¹². The Agreement between Yeltsin and Snegur provided for a cease-fire, the creation of a security zone on both sides of the Dniestr River, and the development of a combined Russian/Moldovan/DMR peacekeeping force under the daily supervision of a trilateral JCC. It also provided for the strict neutrality of Russia's 14th Army, the removal of the economic blockade, and the return of refugees. Originally the peacekeeping forces were comprised of six Russian battalions (3800 troops), three Moldovan battalions (1200 troops), and three DMR battalions (1200 troops)¹³.

In 1994, Russia proposed an initiative to send CIS peacekeeping forces to Abkhazia (in reality these were predominantly Russian forces) to secure the truce agreed in December of the previous year. It was the first CIS peacekeeping operation of any kind. The agreement contained the following conditions: a durable cease-fire between Georgian and Abkhazian forces, a security zone in which no armed forces or heavy military equipment from either Georgia or Abkhazia would be allowed, a restricted weapons zone, and heavy weapons storage sites (primarily at Ochamchira and Senaki). The final and most important conditions were the development of a CIS peacekeeping force on both sides of the Inguri River, and the implementation of a cease-fire line to promote safe conditions for the return of displaced persons, implement the conditions of the cease-fire agreement, pursue comprehensive political settlement, and supervise the transport of heavy weapons to designated storage sites¹⁴.

¹¹ John Mackinlay and Evgenij Sharow, "Russian Peacekeeping operations in Georgia," in ed. Mackinlay and Cross, 77-78.

¹² Jonson, "Keeping the Peace...", 10.

¹³ Trevor Waters, "Russian peacekeeping in Moldova: Source of Stability or neo-imperialist threat?" in ed. Mackinlay and Cross, 149-150.

¹⁴ Mackinlay and Sharow, Russian Peacekeeping..., 89-90.

Also, in May 1994, a truce was signed between Armenia and Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh. But, owing to the lack of a proper agreement between the two parties, no peace forces were sent into the conflict region. The peace negotiations held by OSCE Minsk Group were fragile and the opening of a new forum for discussion of the conflict could have undermined this process. Unfortunately, the *status quo* was preferred to settlement and resolution by most of the actors involved¹⁵. After the cessation of hostilities in the border regions of the former Soviet Union, Russia's position as a regional leader was much in demand and could have shaped a required regional order promoting Russian soft power. But it became clear that Russia could gain more by using hard power, or a position of strength, by maintaining quasi-states and not ending any conflict with a peace treaty. Between the end of 1992 and 1996 Russia transformed into an intervening military power that maintained no guidelines or standards set forth in the UN's system of peace operations. Russian peace-building activity developed outside of the UN's system and its norms. Russia was deeply involved in solving conflicts, although an international audience highly doubted that its intentions were singularly peaceful and questioned the impartiality of its actions¹⁶. At the same time, the status of the military also changed. While in 1996 peacekeeping and peace-making was under the purview of the armed forces, by 1999 they were withdrawn from its structure.

In the third phase, when the "conflict freezing" occurred, Russia was still utilizing diplomatic means and its military presence to guarantee the *status quo* of relative stability. Simultaneously, constant monitoring of the situation by the Russian Federation prevented a final solution to any given conflict. As a result, separatists in the CIS countries, counting on Russia's help, hardened their negotiating positions. For many years, Russia, anxious about its internal separatist tendencies gaining strength (i.e. Chechnya), had not recognized any of these quasi-states. The "frozen conflicts" provided a natural guarantee of Russia's influence over the situations in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova. At the OSCE summit in Istanbul in 1999, Russia committed to withdraw its forces and military equipment from Georgian and Moldovan territories. From 2005 to the end of 2007, it withdrew its forces from military bases in Georgia, but most of them were simply transferred to Armenia. However, their commitments concerning separatist Transnistria were not kept.

The fourth phase was to "unfreeze" the armed conflicts in the South Caucasus, which was influenced by the Georgian "Rose Revolution" of 2003, the bold demands of the president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, on the recovery of territorial integrity (in what was supposed to help support the modernization of the Georgian army by the Americans), and the growing military budgets of countries in the region (mainly Azerbaijan, which proclaimed the desire to reclaim Nagorno-Karabakh). Support by the West, in the form of including the South Caucasus countries in the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy in 2004 and the announcement to invite Georgia to NATO in April 2008, was treated as a threat towards the regional position, as well as the political, military and economic interests of Russia. After a series of incidents and provocations, Russia: (1) conducted direct attacks on military targets in Georgia – a helicopter attack on Georgian facilities in Kodoria and a missile strike on

¹⁵ Emma J. Steward, "EU Conflict Management in the South Caucasus: A Preliminary Analysis," University of Nottingham, 22-23 November (2007), [http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/shared/shared_icmcr/ Docs/stewart.pdf](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/shared/shared_icmcr/Docs/stewart.pdf).

¹⁶ Sagramoso, *Russian Peacekeeping Policies*, 13.

a radar station in 2007, involving numerous provocations of Russian peacekeeping forces in the conflict area; (2) established a communications and economic blockade of Georgia from 2006; (3) attempted to play off the internal conflicts in Georgia in 2007-2008, where a new armed conflict broke out¹⁷. After Georgian forces attacked the capital of South Ossetia, Tskhinvali, on 7 and 8 August 2008, Russia stepped in to "protect Russian citizens" in South Ossetia and, then, in Abkhazia. The Russian army marched into Georgia, occupying strategic points and dividing this rebellious republic from the main country. On 26 August 2008, Russia officially recognized the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, thus confirming its ability to "unfreeze" a situation of armed conflict in the Commonwealth of Independent States region, when the "freeze" was not in its favour. No CIS member has recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which is contrasted with the recognition given by the West to Kosovo's independence in February 2008.

Wars in Georgia and Ukraine – Changing Russia's Peacekeeping Approach

Russia maintained a special position as the region's peace guarantor before the Russo-Georgian War. This changed after the first military operation in Georgia in 2008. For the first time Russia decided to use a military solution, not as a peacekeeping operation, but an operation directly "enforcing peace". Representing the presidency of the EU at the time, President Nicolas Sarkozy travelled to Moscow on 12 August 2008. He was able to negotiate a peace plan with the Russian president, Dmitry Medvedev, under which the parties: (1) committed to the non-use of force, (2) would permanently end all military actions, (3) would ensure free access to humanitarian aid, (4) would allow Georgian forces to return to their permanent points of deployment, (5) Russian forces would withdraw to lines prior to the start of military operations, but they would be entitled to introduce "additional security measures", (6) international talks would commence concerning the security in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The agreement negotiated by Nicolas Sarkozy was brought to Tbilisi by the American Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, and was accepted by Mikheil Saakashvili on 15 August, and on the following day by Dmitry Medvedev¹⁸.

The obligations resulting from the agreement were only partially fulfilled by the Russians; the fighting was stopped, but the Russian forces were not withdrawn from Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and the following days saw more military action on the territory of Georgia proper. There were rumours of "cleaning" Ossetia of Georgian families. By this, Russia infringed on the first, second (until 2009) and fifth point of the Sarkozy-Medvedev agreement. Also, access to international humanitarian aid was hampered. South Ossetia only received aid from Russia and Georgian refugees were only able to receive aid in Georgia (Germany increased its aid to EUR 2 million)¹⁹. The fourth point, concerning Georgia, was successfully implemented. However, the last sub-point has never been completed, as it assumed the

¹⁷ Krzysztof Strachota, "Gruzja na wojnie z Rosją," *Tydzień na Wschodzie OSW*, 19.08.2009.

¹⁸ Ronald D. Asmus, *Mata wojna, która wstrząsnęła światem. Gruzja, Rosja i przeszłość Zachodu*, (Warszawa: Res Publica, 2010): 340-365.

¹⁹ Stanisław Żerko, „Niemcy wobec konfliktu w Gruzji (sierpień 2008),” *Biuletyn Instytutu Zachodniego* 1 (2008): 8.

start of international negotiations on South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Although international talks did begin later in Geneva, on 26 August 2008, Russia officially recognized the independence of the two small states, announcing their support and military backing.

On 3 September 2008, the European Parliament issued a resolution stating that "the European Neighbourhood Policy should be developed further and better adapted to the needs of the EU's eastern partners"²⁰. The EU then decided to independently send around 300 observers who were to control the security zones proposed in the Medvedev-Sarkozy agreement. On 1 October 2008, the European Union Monitoring Mission began operations, its goal being to monitor the borders of the security zone in Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions. Unarmed observers, labelled EUMM, were to patrol the identified areas in light armoured vehicles. The EU observers were deployed in four locations: the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi, Gori near South Ossetia, Zugdidi near the Abkhazian border and the Black Sea port of Poti. The financial reference amount intended to cover the expenditure related to the mission was EUR 31 million (2008/736/CFSP)²¹. The mission's task was severely impinged when the EU observers were barred from entering Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Also, in June 2009, Russia blocked the extension of the UN mission's mandate in Abkhazia, and the OSCE's in South Ossetia. In this way, the European Union became the only international organization supervising the situation in Georgia and an important financial aid donor for the country's redevelopment. For this, another EUR 500 million was allocated to Georgia, which nearly equalled the sum received by Georgia under various EU programmes from 1992 to 2005 (EUR 505 million)²². According to the World Bank, Georgia received significantly more assistance in the years 2004-2009 – around USD 3.137 billion under the Official Development Assistance. These data do not cover all categories of aid, as well as a large part of the post-war aid package amounting to USD 4.5 billion²³.

The case of Georgia leads one to ponder Russia's motives in asking the EU to join in the peace process. For many years, Georgia has been drawing nearer and nearer to Russia's greatest rival, the USA. The growing position of the USA worries Moscow, especially in the context of the proposed expansion of NATO to include Ukraine and Georgia²⁴. By including the European Union in the peace talks and allowing its observers to enter into Georgia proper, Russia managed to remove the USA from the Georgian issue. Although the USA supported Georgia's territorial integrity and sharply opposed Russia, it is the European Union who took over responsibility for Georgia's redevelopment and stabilization. However, the policy of *fait accompli* – epitomized by Russia's recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia's independence and the failure to keep all points of the Sarkozy-Medvedev agreement – showed the lack of necessary instruments in Europe to force Russian compliance.

²⁰ Leila Alieva, "EU and South Caucasus," *CAP Discussion Paper* December (2006): 10-11.

²¹ COUNCIL JOINT ACTION 2008/736/CFSP of 15 September 2008 on the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia, EUMM Georgia, "Official Journal of the European Union", L 248/26, 179.2008, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:248:0026:0031:EN:PDF>.

²² Katarzyna Petczyńska-Natecz, „Integracja czy imitacja? UE wobec wschodnich sąsiadów,” *Prace OSW* (2011): 47; Georgia Strategy Paper, 2007-2013, European Commission, European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/pdf/country/enpi_csp_georgia_en.pdf : 16

²³ Marek Matusiak, „Gruzińskie wybory. Między silnym państwem a demokracją,” *Punkt Widzenia OSW* (2012): 12.

²⁴ This is reflected in a statement by V. Putin during the conference in Munich, on 11 February 2007.

The conflict in Georgia has solved the main goal of Russia foreign policy. It has helped to withdraw NATO and the Americans from this country, putting Western obligations for the stabilization of Georgia on the EU. It has accelerated work on the Polish-Swedish proposal to strengthen the EU's relations with the countries of the region²⁵. The proposal of "eastern specialization", within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy, was eventually adopted as the Eastern Partnership Project (EaP), officially established in May 2009.

The next step in Russia's militarization of its foreign policy toward post-Soviet countries took place in Ukraine, when people demonstrated their willingness to join the EU. Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, and its military intervention in Donbas (East Ukraine), together with its insistence on the right to take action on behalf of Russian-speaking populations outside its own borders (mentioned in Russia military doctrine in 2010), dramatically changed the political and security environment in Europe. The Ukrainian scenario was quite similar to previous post-Soviet conflicts. On the one hand, Russia helped separatists in Donbas, while on the other, Moscow tried to show its willingness to create peace by sending humanitarian aid, or by the negotiations in Minsk, where representatives of Ukraine, the Russian Federation, the Donetsk People's Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic signed the Minsk Protocol on 15 September 2014 – an agreement to stop war in the Donbas region. Despite its signature, there were frequent violations of the cease-fire and a follow-up to the Minsk Protocol was agreed to on 19 September. The memorandum clarified the implementation of the Protocol. During the meeting, peace-making measures were agreed to as follows:

- The pulling back of heavy weaponry 15 kilometres on each side of the front line, creating a 30-kilometre buffer zone;
- The banning of offensive operations;
- The banning of fighting by combat aircraft over the security zone;
- The withdrawal of all foreign mercenaries from the conflict zone;
- The setting up of an OSCE mission to monitor implementation of the Minsk Protocol.

After two years of military conflict we can see that the Minsk Protocol cease-fire has completely collapsed, and Russia has not achieved its foreign policy goals, which are focused on control over Ukraine.

Conclusions

Armed conflicts determine security policies of countries in the region that seek "more powerful" external allies in order to balance the threats posed by their neighbours. This is why Armenia expects Russia's support, whereas Georgia relies on the USA (NATO) and the European Union. For several years, Moldova has been counting on European integration to balance the Russian position and solve the conflict in Transnistria. In the EU, there has been an increase in awareness of the challenges and threats existing in East Europe and

²⁵ Joanna Cieslińska, „Partnerstwo Wschodnie – miejsce wymiaru wschodniego w Europejskiej Polityce Sąsiedztwa,” *Rocznik Integracji Europejskiej* 3 (2009): 129-130; Tomasz Kapuśniak, „Wymiar Wschodni Europejskiej Polityki Sąsiedztwa Unii Europejskiej. Inkluzja bez członkostwa,” *Zeszyty Natolin* (2010).

the South Caucasus, resulting in demands to prove the EU's capability to prevent and manage armed conflicts.

Since, over the past decade, the Russian government has demonstrated its increased willingness to use military force to shape events in the post-Soviet space, scholars must address the larger Russian foreign policy dimensions of frozen conflicts, as they are now an integral part of Moscow's foreign policy toolbox under Vladimir Putin's government. I would argue that Putin is motivated by four broad strategic objectives: (1) to increase the security of the Russian state and regime by controlling the so-called "near-abroad," to the exclusion of other powers, especially since Russia remains determined to stop any further enlargement of NATO; (2) to increase Russia's international position and prestige; (3) to buttress its strength both at home and abroad through a sphere of influence, which Moscow calls its "near-abroad" or, to quote the 2015 Russian National Security Strategy, its "sphere of vital interests"; and (4) to set precedents that will allow for the emergence of new rules in the international community which favour Russia's priorities.

The emergence of GUAM – the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova) – as an early regional grouping of post-Soviet states, sent a powerful signal to Moscow that it risked being locked out of at least parts of the post-Soviet space. GUAM's objectives of promoting democratic values, ensuring stable development, enhancing international and regional security, and stepping up European integration, were seen in Moscow as a challenge to Russia's goal of restoring its influence in the region. Russia responded with a range of tools: political, economic, cultural, and, in the end, also military. Frozen conflicts became the embodiment of Moscow's foreign policy in the post-Soviet space. However, these conflicts have never been quite as "frozen" as their name implies. In fact, Russia has exploited what – according to Rupert Smith – are actually "wars among the people" eschewing the dichotomy of war and peace, while retaining the ability to "manage" levels of violence as it deems necessary²⁶. This mutation of war into "frozen conflict" means that Russia can exploit "wars among the people" by putting military pressure in the political, social, cultural, and economic realms of the targeted state, while also using such conflicts for propaganda purposes at home and abroad.

The security of the "shared neighbourhood" of the EU and Russia is determined by many factors, including the influence of these two "strategic partners", with the former adopting the role of stabilizer, and the latter striving to maintain a state of controlled destabilization in order to have greater influence on the six countries in the region. For the European Union, values such as democracy, the rule of law and the development of civic society are important. In the long run, this is intended to ensure the economic and social development of these countries, which in the future will eliminate negative phenomena such as illegal migration, organized crime, terrorism, as well as arms smuggling and human trafficking. For Russia, the priority is to maintain these countries in its sphere of influence, and "frozen conflicts" remain an important tool in achieving this goal. In order to achieve this, Russia maintains a military presence in six of the region's countries, determines the "unfreezing" of armed conflicts, and has an impact on the security policy of each of its neighbours. In terms of economic means, Russia uses differentiating energy resource pric-

²⁶ Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art. Of War in the Modern World*. (New York: Random House, 2008).

es, embargoes on oil and natural gas, and trade sanctions (bans on wine, vegetables and meat imports). This is accompanied by political pressure which has increased in strength, given the availability of Russian TV channels and newspapers in neighbouring countries.

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The Kaliningrad Region – Key to Security in East-Central Europe

Political transformations in East-Central Europe after 1989, and the advancing processes of integration, have resulted in a significant increase in the importance of the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation for the stabilisation of this part of Europe in two dimensions: the Kaliningrad region provides a unique example and a specific "testing ground" for cooperation between the European Union (EU) and Russia, and also plays a crucial geopolitical role for the southern part of the Baltic Sea region. For the Russian Federation, this region has become especially important in view of the integration processes occurring in East-Central Europe over the last twenty-five years. The European integration process has been ongoing, with significant milestones marked by two stages of the EU expansion in 2004 and 2007, when a series of East-Central European states gained membership. An increase in the cohesion of this part of Europe was also affected by progressive Euro-Atlantic integration, a subsequent step of which was the eastward expansion of NATO in 1999 and in 2004. Thus, the area of European and Euro-Atlantic integration significantly neared the borders of the Russian Federation. It is important that the Kaliningrad region has entered into intensive interactions with various entities from the EU member states, becoming involved – to some extent – in the network of relations with the EU: through the integration of local governments, universities, non-governmental organizations, and by utilizing various cross-border cooperation programmes.

On the other hand, it should be noted that the Kaliningrad region, as part of the Russian Federation, is participating in a great integration process being carried out in the post-Soviet space under the auspices of Moscow. The genesis of this process can be traced back to the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1991, although processes of the post-Soviet space's reintegration gained momentum after Vladimir Putin took office as president of the Russian Federation in 2000. This process was marked by former Soviet republics entering into agreements of a political, military and economic nature

– the crowning achievement of which seems to be the initiation of the Eurasian Economic Union in 2015¹. The policy of the Russian government towards the so-called "near abroad", particularly the European part of the post-Soviet territories, should also be analysed in the light of these processes. The growing conflict in Ukraine and the risk of unfriendly Russian moves towards the Baltic states, Moldova and Georgia, have all led to an increase in the significance of territories controlled by Russia and situated somehow "behind the backs" of the states participating (or aspiring for participation) in European and Euro-Atlantic Integration processes (such as the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation, the Transnistria region, Crimea and Armenia).

The aim of this article is to present the key conditions for the security of Central and Eastern Europe in relation to the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation, as well as to analyse the importance of this Russian region within the context of two integration processes observed in Europe: European (and Euro-Atlantic) integration and the integration of the post-Soviet space carried out under the auspices of the Russian Federation. In view of the above presented circumstances, the thesis of the article should be to determine how the importance of the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation, in terms of the safety of East-Central Europe, will increase in the nearest years. This may be substantiated as follows: the Kaliningrad region is an area where the routes of two great integration processes being carried out in Europe intersect; the Russian Federation will strive towards maintaining its influence in the Baltic Sea basin and the Kaliningrad region will play the role of one of a number of geopolitical wedges in Europe, situated "behind the backs" of the states participating in the processes of European and Euro-Atlantic integration, or demonstrating such aspirations.

The Kaliningrad Region as an Element of Geopolitical Conceptions in East-Central Europe

The geopolitical significance of the Kaliningrad region in the Soviet Union, as well as in the Russian Federation, has evolved in accordance with geopolitical changes occurring in East-Central Europe. Three crucial phases may be distinguished here – the first is connected with the functioning of the region within the Soviet Union; the second is connected to the period directly after the collapse of the USSR; and the third, after 2000, is connected with Russia's internal consolidation and its return to the concept of reintegrating the post-Soviet space. During the time of the Soviet Union, the region was attributed with a particular geopolitical and military significance, something akin to the USSR's gate to the southern part of the Baltic Sea. This was demonstrated by the fact that the region had not been included as part of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic, but directly made part of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. In the Cold War era, the region was included as a strategic part of the Soviet Union from the point of view of Soviet military doctrine. That was supported by the fact that the Soviet Baltic fleet and significant land forces

¹ Nicu Popescu, *Eurasian Union: The Real, the Imaginary and the Likely* (Paris: CHAILLOT PAPERS, EU Institute for Security Studies, 2014); Aleksandra Jarosiewicz, Ewa Fischer, "Eurazjatycka Unia Gospodarcza – więcej polityki, mniej gospodarki." *Komentarze OSW* 157 (2015).

were stationed there. Upon the collapse of the Soviet Union, the geopolitical significance of the Kaliningrad region seriously decreased. After 1991, it was mostly used as a collection point for Russian troops being transferred from East Germany and the Baltic republics to Russia. The Russian strategic concepts of that time did not foresee any particular role for the region in terms of the Russian Federation's geopolitics or its defence. However, most of the Russian Baltic fleet was stationed in the region at the same time, which increased its military significance even more. The third phase is connected with a number of intensified attempts by the Russian authorities to reintegrate the post-Soviet space and reinforce Russian influence in the Baltic Sea² after 2000.

Here, it is worth analysing the Kaliningrad region more accurately as a crucial element of Russian policy in the post-Soviet space, mostly implemented and observed after 2009. That period is characterized by intensified Russian actions aimed at increasing its influence in particular former Soviet republics, intended to persuade them to participate in a number of integration initiatives in the post-Soviet space: the Eurasian Economic Union, the Customs Union, or other initiatives of a political and/or defensive character. It is important now to distinguish three crucial groups of states – former Soviet republics – that present different levels of acceptance towards the idea of post-Soviet reintegration. The core of the integration processes should include Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, countries that even today manifest their willingness to participate in the integration processes. The second group includes the former Soviet republics that show relatively ambivalent attitudes toward post-Soviet space reintegration projects. Their attitudes toward those processes is dependent, to a large extent, on the current political conditions in those states. The third group – including Ukraine, Moldova, the South Caucasus states, and to lesser degree the Baltic states – forms a key challenge for Russian objectives connected with the reintegration of the post-Soviet space. In the nearest future, the main attempts of the Russian authorities connected with the project of post-Soviet space reintegration are to be directed towards building mechanisms of destabilization and forming regions/states which will be the sources of threats to key areas of that reintegration. These regions – which are, in fact, sources of military and non-military threats – form something akin to geopolitical wedges that threaten those areas of the former Soviet Union that are presently part of the Euro-Atlantic integration process (the Baltic states) or demonstrate such aspirations (Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan).

The Specific Character of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation

The Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation is an area where various tendencies, as well as social and political phenomena, have emerged. On the one hand, they reflect the diversity of Russia itself, while on the other, they demonstrate the specific features of this area of the Russian Federation. One of its characteristics is its geographical location: the region is an enclave "squeezed-in" between Poland and Lithuania, and territorially dis-

² Jarostaw Affek, "Potencjał militarny Rosji w obwodzie kaliningradzkim a możliwości wplywania tego państwa na sytuację geopolityczną w regionie." *Przegląd Geopolityczny* 8 (2014): 192-194.

connected from the remaining part of the Russian Federation. The peripheral nature of this region in relation to other Russian territories is accompanied by its geographical proximity to East-Central European states, which has an influence on opportunities for establishing economic and social contacts on various levels³.

The Kaliningrad region is an area with less than seventy years of historical tradition. No social or political structure of a similar territorial shape or national identity existed here before. The specific character of the area under discussion is related to the fact that it was created as a result of decisions made by the Allied superpowers at the end of World War II, conditioned mainly by geopolitical and geostrategic reasons, not by historical or demographic reasons⁴. As a consequence, the demographic and material image of the region which was created after the war was not rooted in any previous history or tradition of those lands. Legal sanctioning of the existence of the Kaliningrad region and the establishment of its borders took place over the period of 1945-1957. It is considered that 1946 marked the formal beginning of the existence of this area as part of the USSR and, currently, the Russian Federation.

What is worth emphasizing is the specific nature of the community of the Kaliningrad region, which was meant to illustrate – according to the intentions of its creators – a model Soviet community. A series of consequences resulting from the plans of the constructors of the social and economic reality of the region includes the particularly important fact that the national diversity of the Kaliningrad region reflects, to some extent, the multi-national character of the Soviet Union and, later, the Russian Federation – Russians make up the majority of the population (86%), although the region is also inhabited by Belarusians and Ukrainians (3% each), Lithuanians and Armenians (1% each) and peoples from the Caucasus and Central Asia. A significant element determining the character of the region's community is also the clash of two opposing tendencies related, on one side, to the drive for closer integration of the region with "big" Russia and, on the other, with the desire to gain special autonomous status within the Russian Federation⁵. It is worth mentioning that in recent years federal authorities have undertaken a series of initiatives aimed at tightening cooperation between Russia and the region, the most important of which included a procedure introduced in 2004 concerning the appointment of governors of individual federal regions (revoked in 2012) and the implementation in 2006 of a relocation programme to move Russian populations of former Soviet republics to the region⁶.

³ Christian Wellman, "Historische Miscelle. Die Russische Exklave Kaliningrad als Konfliktsyndrom." *Die Friedens-Warte Journal of International Peace and Organization* 3-4 (2000): 404.

⁴ Genadiy Kretinin, Vladimir Briushinkin, Valeriy Galtsov, *Ocherki istorii Vostochnoy Prussii* (Kaliningrad: Yantarniy Skaz, 2002), 452.

⁵ David T. Kronenfeld, "Kaliningrad in the Twenty-First Century—Independence, Semi-Autonomy, or Continued Second-Class Citizenship?" *Washington University Global Studies Law Review* 9, issue 1 (2010): 159-161.

⁶ Jadwiga Rogoża, Agata Wierzbowska-Miazga, Iwona Wiśniewska, "Wyspa na uwiezi. Kaliningrad między Moskwą a UE." *Prace OSW* 41 (2012): 10-11.

The Kaliningrad Region as a Subject of Russian Security Policy

The attitude of the Russian authorities toward the Kaliningrad region is based on the claim that it makes up an integral and significant part of the Russian Federation, particularly from the point of view of national defence and security. All discussions held over the last dozen years or so concerning the special status of the region or the need to introduce economic privileges take into account the inseparability of relations between the region and "big" Russia.

It should be underlined that the far-reaching dependence of the region on federal authorities has, first of all, political and systemic dimensions. Currently, the decision-making ability of the region's government is highly limited. Most decisions concerning the social and economic development of the region are taken at the federal level. Both the structure of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and a series of other legal regulations at the federal and regional level make the region merely a tool of Russian policy, depriving it of any major importance as an autonomic political and spatial entity.

The dependence of the Kaliningrad region on federal authorities is also sanctioned by the formal and legal status of the region within the structural and political system of the Russian Federation. The Kaliningrad region is one of eighty-three subjects of the Russian Federation, and its political system is to a large extent determined by the structural system of Russia and its political scene. Under the Constitution of the Russian Federation of 1993, the Kaliningrad region gained official recognition and status as an administrative-territorial unit. Strong relations between the region and "big" Russia are also reflected in the provisions of the federal agreement of 31 March 1992, providing a legal basis for the functioning of the region within the Russian Federation⁷.

Another instrument for deepening relations between the Kaliningrad region and Moscow are mechanisms for integrating the political system of the region with the federal authority system and a gradual reduction of the powers of regional authorities. One of the most meaningful examples was the abolition of direct elections of the region's governors in 2004, replacing them with appointments by presidents of the Federation, with the consent of regional legislatures. Although this regulation was revoked in 2012, the political dependence of governors on the federal authorities deserves attention.

A factor which clearly places the Kaliningrad region among the crucial regions of Russia from a geopolitical point of view is its military character. The Kaliningrad region makes up a part of the North-West Federal District and the Western Military District of Russia. The region is also an important component of the Baltic Naval Zone, intended to protect the Russian military presence in the Baltic Sea basin. The region is characterized by developed military infrastructure, based on a system of land, air and naval military bases. A significant element of this infrastructure is the Russian Baltic Fleet, with naval bases in Baltiysk, Primorsk and Kaliningrad⁸. Ground forces in the area of the Kaliningrad region include infantry, missile, artillery and motor brigades stationed in Baltiysk, Kaliningrad, Gusev and Chernyakhovsk. Major air force combat units are located at bases in Chkalovsk and Chern-

⁷ See: Federalniy Dogovor. (Moscow, 31 March 1992), accessed 20 April 2013, <http://constitution.garant.ru/act/federative/170280/#220>.

⁸ Andrzej Sakson, "Obwód kaliningradzki a bezpieczeństwo Polski." *Przegląd Strategiczny* 7 (2014): 114.

yakhovsk, and a helicopter regiment is stationed at Donskoye and Ljubino. To complete the picture, it should be added that the Kaliningrad region is also an area where several reconnaissance and anti-aircraft units are located. The main centres are: Pereslavskoye (radio-technical regiment), Gvardeysk and Znamensk (missile defence regiments)⁹.

Although after the collapse of the Soviet Union the number of troops in the region was reduced, it still remains one of the largest agglomerations of military units in Russia, determining Russian military potential in the Baltic Sea basin to a significant extent. After 1991, the number of troops garrisoned in the region was estimated at 40,000-100,000 soldiers and sailors¹⁰. Although these numbers were gradually reduced throughout the 1990s, the region still plays a significant role in Russian military strategy¹¹. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian government supported the need to maintain the military nature of the region in view of its strategic importance. According to this concept, it was of vital interest to the Russian Federation to keep significant ground and naval forces in the region. Despite a clear reduction in the military potential of the region, it should be expected that the Russian side will not refrain from taking advantage – at least in terms of political rhetoric – of this potential, as shown by its repeated announcements of the deployment of short and medium-range missiles¹².

Three major factors indicate an increase in the significance of the Kaliningrad region in Russian military doctrine. Firstly, Russian strategic documents on national security stress the importance of increasing the influence of the Russian Federation in the post-Soviet space, at the same time identifying threats connected with NATO's military infrastructure near the borders of Russia. In the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020, accepted in 2009, as well as in its amendment from December 2015, it has been stressed that disturbances to the balance of military power in the neighbourhood of Russia or its allies' borders constitute threats to state security¹³. Thus, threats resulting from any possible infrastructure deployment in the NATO states neighbouring Russia (Poland, the Baltic States) have been indicated. In this context, the Kaliningrad region is a key area from the point of view of Russian security strategy.

Secondly, in accordance with the content of the latest Security Strategy, ensuring strategic stability in Russia's direct neighbourhood should be achieved by reinforcing integration actions (political and military) in the post-Soviet space, as well as by harmonizing

⁹ Robert Ciechanowski, "Rosyjskie sily zbrojne w Kaliningradzie." 2014, accessed 18 June 2015, <http://dziennikzbroyny.pl/artykuly/art.2,6,6819,armie-swiata.potencjal.rosyjskie-sily-zbrojne-w-kaliningradzie>.

¹⁰ Vladimir N. Abramov, *Kaliningradskaya oblast': sotsyalno-politicheskiye i geopoliticheskiye aspekty obshchestvennoy transformatsiy 90-kh gg.* (Sankt Petersburg: Nestor, 1998), 27; Valeriy Galtsov, "Obwód Kaliningradzki w latach 1945 – 1991. Społeczeństwo, gospodarka, kultura." *Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie* 2 (1996): 210.

¹¹ Andrzej Sakson, "Okręg Kaliningradzki – rosyjskim oknem na Europę." *Przegląd Zachodni* 1 (1997): 247; Marek Szymański, "Potencjał militarny w Obwodzie Kaliningradzkim a bezpieczeństwo Polski." *Przegląd Zachodni* 1 (1999): 143-149.

¹² Daniel Szeligowski, "Rosjanie rozmieszczą rakiety przy granicy z Polską." 2013, accessed April 19, 2013, <http://uniaeuropa.org/rosjanie-rozmieszczz-rakiety-przy-granicy-z-polska/>; Ingmar Oldberg, "Kaliningrad's difficult plight between Moscow and Europe." *Ulpaper 2* (Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 2015): 8-9.

¹³ Chapter II, pt. 12 of National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation to 2020, no. 537, 12.05.2009, accessed February 24, 2009, <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/documents/99.html>; pt. 15 of National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation to 2020, no. 683, 31.12.2015, accessed February 24, 2016, <http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/40391>.

the integration processes on the European continent¹⁴. The content of the document is to be understood as a proposition to find a specific *modus vivendi* with the European Union and, at the same time, to obtain larger freedom to implement the concept of post-Soviet space reintegration. The Kaliningrad region makes up a crucial element of that concept, serving as a wedge that closes the post-Soviet space from the West.

Thirdly, a practical dimension of the role played by the Kaliningrad region in Russian security strategy and war doctrine is also worth mentioning. The majority of military manoeuvres conducted in recent years in the Russian Western Military District involved Kaliningrad episodes¹⁵. Apart from the military potential of the region demonstrated before, it should be also pointed out that it is located in one of the key areas of Russia from a geostrategic point of view. In the case of a hypothetical military conflict with the West, the Kaliningrad region is to form a Russian gate to the southern part of the Baltic Sea region, making it possible to territorially cut off the Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia) from the rest of the NATO member states¹⁶.

The Kaliningrad Region in Relations between Russia and the West

The Kaliningrad region, as the westernmost area of the Russian Federation, is a natural area of economic, social and cultural cooperation with states participating in the process of European and Euro-Atlantic integration. As a result of the political transformations after 1989, the region has become an enclave surrounded by Polish and Lithuanian territories, and, at the same time, one of the border regions of the Russian Federation¹⁷. After the expansion of the European Union and NATO in 1999–2004, the Kaliningrad region became an area bordering on territories of member states of both organizations. In this context, the region is one of the key areas of EU–Russian and NATO–Russian relations, to a certain extent defining common operations at the level of central institutions and, in bilateral rela-

¹⁴ Chapter IV of National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation to 2020, no. 683, 31.12.2015, accessed February 24, 2016, <http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/40391>.

¹⁵ The following Russian military exercises had their Kaliningrad episodes: Zapad 2009, military exercise of Russian Western Military District in 2012, Zapad 2013, exercises of rocket forces in 2014, as well as Union Shield 2015. See: Johan Norberg, *Training to Fight – Russia's Major Military Exercises 2011–2014* (Report no. FOI-R--4128—SE: Swedish Ministry of Defence, 2015), 65–74; *Russia's Zapad 2013. Military Exercise. Lessons for Baltic Regional Security*, eds. Liudas Zdanavičius and Matthew Czekaj (Washington: The Jamestown Foundation, 2015); "Rosyjsko-białoruskie ćwiczenia »Tarcza Związku«." 2015, accessed February 24, 2016, <http://przegladmilitaryny.blogspot.com/2015/09/rosyjsko-biaoruskie-cwiczenia-tarcza.html>.

¹⁶ An area of high risk is the so-called "Suwałki Gap" – part of the Polish territory that separates the Kaliningrad region and Belarus. This area was defined by General Ben Hodges, commander of US Army Europe, as another NATO 'gap' to worry about. See: Paul McLeary, "Meet the New Fulda Gap. Foreign Policy," 29.08.2015, accessed February 24, 2016, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/09/29/fulda-gap-nato-russia-putin-us-army/>; Richard Sisk, "Poland's Suwałki Gap Replaces Germany's Fulda Gap as Top NATO Concern," 10.12.2015, accessed February 24, 2016, <http://www.military.com/daily-news/2015/12/10/polands-suwalki-gap-replaces-germanys-fulda-gap-top-nato-concern.html>.

¹⁷ Valeriy Bilczak, *Prigranichnaya ekonomika* (Kaliningrad: KGU, 2001), 122; Marcin Chetmianiak, *Obwód Kaliningradzki FR w Europie. Rosyjska enklawa w nowym międzynarodowym ładzie politycznym* (Toruń: Dom Wydawniczy Duet, 2009), 88.

tions between Russia and Poland, Lithuania, Germany and the Scandinavian states, as well as serving as a benchmark with regard to the temperature and quality of those relations.

Issues related directly and indirectly to the Kaliningrad region were addressed in numerous policy papers on EU-Russian relations, which were elaborated and adopted at EU-Russian fora. The first paper was the Common Strategy of the European Union on Russia, approved at the summit of the European Council in Cologne on 4 June 1999. One of the key intentions contained in the paper and related to the Kaliningrad region was to enhance Europe's cohesion through regional and cross-border cooperation¹⁸. Another important document for the EU-Russian relations and cooperation on the Kaliningrad region was the Medium-Term Strategy for the Development of Relations between the Russian Federation and the EU (2000-2010) published in October 1999¹⁹. The Kaliningrad issue was also addressed in other documents and discussed at numerous events related to EU-Russian relations. The European Commission report "The EU and Kaliningrad", published in January 2001, identified a number of risks and benefits for the Kaliningrad region resulting from the European Union expansion eastwards²⁰. In turn, the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on Relations with Russia (February 2004) emphasised the need to establish friendly relations with the Russian Federation, in particular through the creation and development of cross-border cooperation. The document also provided for a liberalisation of the visa policy towards Russia and its border areas, depending on progress made in the modernisation of the economic and political systems²¹.

In observing EU-Russian relations, particularly those carried out in the political sphere, it should be noted that issues related to the Kaliningrad region were key problems hindering the development of those relations²². Undoubtedly, the existence of the Kaliningrad region as an enclave surrounded by EU Member State territories, with all its negative consequences, determines relations between the European Union and Russia to a significant extent, and this is how this issue should be analysed. At this point, it is worth underlining that the Kaliningrad issue was present in discussions concerning the relations between the European Union and the Russian Federation as far back as the early 1990s²³.

Eastern expansion of the European Union and NATO, and involvement of the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation in European cooperation, became the basis of concerns expressed in some Russian circles pertaining to the growth (as a result of cooperation with EU entities) of the region's independence in relations with the Russian Federation. According to those opinions, various initiatives carried out by Western states, related to deepening cooperation with the Kaliningrad region, are a tool for arousing the region's

¹⁸ Robert Dziewulski, Rafał Hykawy, "Wspólna Strategia UE wobec Rosji." *Biuletyn Analiz UKIE* 1 (1999): 1-7.

¹⁹ Marek Menkiszak, "Rosja wobec Unii Europejskiej: kryzys »strategicznego partnerstwa«." *Prace OSW* 22 (2006): 30-32.

²⁰ Łukasz Gemziak, "Obwód Kaliningradzki – rosyjska enklawa wewnątrz Unii Europejskiej." *Dialogi Polityczne* 10 (2008): 347.

²¹ Menkiszak, "Rosja wobec Unii Europejskiej," 28-29.

²² The importance of the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation in EU-Russian relations was noticed especially in the period immediately preceding the enlargement of the EU in 2004. See: Menkiszak, "Rosja wobec Unii Europejskiej," 10; Gemziak, "Obwód Kaliningradzki," 10.

²³ Issues referring to a practical dimension of the EU-Russian Federation relations and neighbourhood are a subject of the regulations included in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, 1994, accessed February 24, 2016, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31997D0800&from=PL>.

awareness of its distinct character as “the westernmost” outpost of Russia. The Russian Federation attaches great significance to separatist tendencies emerging in the region, although in fact they are actually marginal. The Russian side also perceives the proposals of Western states concerning their support for social, economic and political contacts with the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation in this same context²⁴.

At the same time, it should be emphasised that the Kaliningrad region will continue to be one of the key areas of EU-Russian and NATO-Russian relations. It should be stressed that the Kaliningrad region as part of the Russian Federation is a major element of the great project of post-Soviet space reintegration carried out since the beginning of the 21st century under the auspices of Russia. Therefore, the region is meant to form a natural zone of Russian interests in the area of the southern part of the Baltic Sea region forming a threat to the Baltic states and Poland. The region is a key area from the point of view of the Russian Federation's geo-strategy in East-Central Europe as it facilitates cutting the Baltic states off from their NATO allies in the case of any potential military conflict. For that reason, the Kaliningrad region has been a crucial element of Russian military training manoeuvres in recent years²⁵. At the same time, attempts to install permanent elements of military infrastructure by NATO or the United States on the territories of Poland and the Baltic states pose a crucial threat to the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation, which justifies Russian objections to actions by NATO aimed in that direction²⁶. The future role of the region in the development of those relations can also be analysed on several planes, including: at the level of political relations between the EU and Russia; at the level of political and military relations between NATO and Russia; at the level of international relations with EU Member States (Polish-Russian, Lithuanian-Russian relations); at the regional level (economic cooperation and social-cultural relations in the borderlands). The most advanced cooperation is observed in the last point. There has been significant achievement in the form of introducing local border traffic as a tool for engaging the region in the network of European cooperation and playing a special role as a laboratory for changes in cooperation between Russia and the West. In view of this, the Kaliningrad region, as an entity of the Russian Federation, can be both a significant link in relations between Russia and the West, and might also serve to reduce the often confrontational operations of Russia in East-Central Europe.

Alternatives for the Kaliningrad Region

Although the role of the Kaliningrad region in the political stability and security of East-Central Europe has already become important, it seems that the geopolitical importance of the region will grow even more in the future. This will not only be the result of the specific geographical location of the region but, above all, the effect of the above-mentioned

²⁴ One of the manifestations of these concerns was ambiguous attitude of the Russian authorities toward the liberalization of the visa regime on Polish-Russian border in 2012. See: “Władimir Putin przeciwny wizowym ułatwieniom dla obwodu kaliningradzkiego.” *Tydzień na Wschodzie*, The Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW). 08.06.2011, accessed February 24, 2016, <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/analizy/2011-06-08/wladimir-putin-przeciwny-wizowym-ulatwieniom-dla-obwodu>.

²⁵ Norberg, *Training to Fight*, 65-74; *Russia's Zapad 2013*; “Rosyjsko-białoruskie ćwiczenia »Tarcza Związku«.”.

²⁶ Oldberg, “Kaliningrad's Difficult,” 9.

intersection of two great integration processes in the area of the Kaliningrad region: Euro-Atlantic integration, and Euro-Asian integration carried out under the auspices of Russia. On the one hand, the Kaliningrad region as a part of the Russian Federation, will be an element of a broader political plan carried out by Russian authorities, aimed at political, military and economic domination in the post-Soviet space. On the other hand, the Kaliningrad region is, and will remain in the future, a participant in intensive cooperation with member states of the European Union and NATO. In this context, it is worth making an attempt to create alternatives for the region in view of the changing international conditions that can be observed in Europe. It should be emphasized that although the role of the region in the security of East-Central Europe is obviously the outcome of various factors and phenomena affecting international relations and security in Europe, those alternatives can be presented as four scenarios:

1. Status quo – the Kaliningrad region as an important region of Russia from the geopolitical perspective, with some elements of independence, especially in contacts with partners from East-Central European states;
2. The Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation as a laboratory and a specific testing ground in relations between Russia and the West. In this scenario, the region would play the role of a stabilizing factor for the situation in East-Central Europe and the mechanism of political cooperation between Russia and the West;
3. "Deep" independence of the Kaliningrad region as the fourth Baltic republic – which seems an unrealistic scenario under current conditions of political and military consolidation of the Russian Federation. If separatist tendencies emerge, the region would become a source of conflict in East-Central Europe;
4. The Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation as a tool in the hands of the federal authorities, used to "hold in check" member states of the EU and NATO in the South Baltic region.

Although we can now observe a mixture of the above-mentioned scenarios in the present geopolitical situation, particularly in the context of the conflict in Ukraine and the implemented project of integrating post-Soviet space by the Russian Federation, it should be expected that the fourth scenario is more likely, since it is related to the use of the geographical location of the Kaliningrad region as an element of the geopolitical game carried out in East-Central Europe. However, it should be expected that, at the social and economic level, the federal authorities will still allow the region to keep, to some extent, independent contacts with their European partners.

At this point, it should be mentioned that the southern part of the Baltic Sea region is one of the key geostrategic areas in Europe. According to many experts, the enlargement of NATO to the East from 1999-2004, has redefined the previous directions of Moscow's geostrategic interests, which, apart from the western direction (Poland, Lithuania, the Czech Republic), now include, among others, the southern (Crimea, Donbas, Caucasus), south-western (Carpathians, Balkans) and north-western directions (Baltic states, Scandinavia)²⁷. The internal political and military consolidation of Russia since 2000, the strengthening

²⁷ Andrzej Sakson, "Obwód kaliningradzki w otoczeniu NATO i Unii Europejskiej," *Rocznik Bezpieczeństwa Międzynarodowego* 9 (2015), no. 1: 45; Kronenfeld, "Kaliningrad in the Twenty-First Century," 166-167; Leonid Ivanov, *Rossiya ili Moskoviya. Geopoliticheskiye izmiereniye nacyonal'noy bezopasnosti Rossii* (Moscow: Eksmo, 2002), 10-11.

of integration tendencies in the post-Soviet space and, as a consequence, the conflict in Ukraine, have only reinforced the importance of the above-mentioned geostrategic directions of interests of the Russian Federation. The geopolitical transformations in East-Central Europe presented above have resulted in the Russian authorities identifying areas of particular importance through which Moscow could protect its interests in this part of Europe by controlling the areas situated somewhere “behind the backs” of states/members of European and Euro Atlantic integration. In this context, the key areas of Russia’s geopolitical interest can be treated as specific geopolitical wedges in relation to these states²⁸.

This is the way in which the incorporation of Crimea into the Russian Federation, as well as – more or less – official support for separatists in Eastern Ukraine, should be interpreted – it should be treated as a potential warning to Ukraine with regard to demonstrating European aspirations. A similar role is currently played by Transnistria, both in relation to Ukraine and Moldova, as well as by Armenia (with which the Kremlin maintains exceptionally warm relations) in relation to Georgia and Azerbaijan. It might be expected that a similar role – at least as intended by the Russian authorities – can be played by the Kaliningrad region towards Poland and the Baltic states, as a source of permanent (more or less real) threat, helping Russia to preserve its influence in the southern part of the Baltic Sea region.

Thus, the factors that may define the role of the Kaliningrad region as the Russian Federation’s geopolitical wedge in East-Central Europe, according to the thesis presented in the introduction to this article, should be singled out. Firstly, the geographical location of the region predestines it in a particular way to play the role of a specific guardian of Russian interests in the region of the southern part of the Baltic Sea basin. Although the size of its area, population, or economic structure do not indicate its crucial role in the federal structures of Russia, the significance of the region attributed in Russian strategic documents, or including the region in Russian plans connected with military manoeuvres, prove the crucial geopolitical potential of the region. Secondly, its role in Russian military doctrine is an indicator of the significance of the Kaliningrad region for security in East-Central Europe. Even today, the region is an area of concentrated troop deployment and military infrastructure, while the military manoeuvres carried out in recent years on the territory of the Kaliningrad region (or those that used military units stationed in Kaliningrad) have been of an expansive, not defensive character. Thirdly, the character of the actions by the Russian authorities on the international arena, including the expected aims of Russian foreign policy connected with post-Soviet space reintegration, indicate that using territories belonging to the Russian Federation or tightly connected to it economically, militarily, and politically, is to be one of the tools for implementing Russian interest in that area.

Summary

The Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation is a unique area in East-Central Europe from the point of view of development of cooperation between the European Union and the Russian Federation, as well as geopolitical conditions of security in the Baltic Sea

²⁸ Anna M. Dyer, “Back to the Difficult Past: Central and Eastern Europe’s Relationship with Russia.” *PISM Policy Paper* 16 (2015): p. 3-4.

region. Due to this reason, the Kaliningrad region is a crucial area for security of the Baltic Sea region. In this region, subject to the Russian Federation, two key processes for European security are intersecting. On the one hand, this is the process of European integration, which is continuing in the eastern part of Europe, while the Kaliningrad region – due to its geographical location – is taking part in several nets of European cooperation. On the other hand, the Kaliningrad region is a subject of the Russian Federation, which is carrying out a great project of reintegration of the post-Soviet space and the region is one of the key elements necessary for the success of this project. The Kaliningrad region might become a tool in the hands of the Russian authorities to threaten states of the Baltic Sea region, as they do in relation to other exclaves and separatist regions in the post-Soviet space. The thesis of the lecture is the assertion that the significance of the Kaliningrad region to the security of the Baltic Sea region, as well as the whole of East-Central Europe, will increase on par with the rise of processes of integration in the post-Soviet space. An indicator of this is the significance of the Kaliningrad region in the national security system of the Russian Federation, as well as its geographical location, especially in the context of relations with the Baltic states. Also of significance in this process are the goals of Russian foreign policy with regard to the Baltic states, as well as the Nordic states.

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Price of Aggression: The Impact of Sanctions on the Russian Economy

Introduction

In late February of 2014, president of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovych, a staunch ally of Russia, lost power. This event sent into motion a sequence of events that pitched Russia against its neighbour and the West. Faced with the loss of influence, if not control, over Ukraine, Vladimir Putin immediately took steps that, in his mind, were to secure the interests of his country. First, in March 2014, Russia seized and annexed Crimea; soon afterwards a Russian-inspired rebellion engulfed eastern Ukraine.

These measures drastically increased Putin's popularity at home, but made him a pariah abroad. Initially, the West, including the European Union, imposed diplomatic sanctions¹. They had no effect on Russian behaviour and, in July, the West expanded punitive measures to the economy². President Putin did not budge, and in September, the United States and the European Union increased the pressure by imposing additional sanctions on the financial sector³. As a result, Russian companies, including large banks, were effectively cut off from western financial markets. Past experience, such as the U.S. led sanctions on Iran, shows that this type of punishment is very effective and this paper illustrates that they exacted a price on the Russian economy as well.

¹ U.S. Department of State, *Ukraine and Russia Sanctions*, <http://www.state.gov/e/eb/tfs/spi/ukrainerrussia/>

² US Department of the Treasury, *Directives 1 and 2 Pursuant to EO 13662*, 16 VII 2014, <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Pages/ukraine.aspx>, European Union, *Highlights, EU sanctions against Russia over Ukraine crisis*, http://europa.eu/newsroom/highlights/special-coverage/eu_sanctions/index_en.htm.

³ US Department of the Treasury, *Announcement of Expanded Treasury Sanctions within the Russian Financial Services, Energy and Defense or Related Materiel Sectors*, 12 September 2014, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2629.aspx>, European Union, *Highlights*, op. cit.

In the late autumn of 2015, the price of oil began to dramatically decline. The collapse of the price of Russia's most important export commodity compounded the economic dislocation caused by sanctions. Together, these two factors resulted in Russia's economy descending into a deep and prolonged recession.

There is no question that the sanctions harmed Russia's economic performance – both President Putin and Prime Minister Medvedev admitted this⁴. This paper discusses recent developments in this area in greater detail.

Macroeconomic Developments

The deleterious effects of the sanctions are well reflected in macroeconomic data. Figure 1 illustrates the drastic depreciation of the Russian currency and the drop in value of the nation's official reserves.

The disturbances in Ukraine increased risk of doing business in Russia and investors immediately started to take money out of the country – between September 2013 and March 2014, the value of official reserves declined by about 10% – but as the initial sanctions affected only the political sphere, the situation stabilized. However, the imposition of economic sanctions resulted in another bout of capital outflows and between July and October 2014, the central bank recorded another 10% loss in official reserves. As the price of oil started to decline, capital outflows continued, and between October and April of the next year, the value of reserves declined by another 15%. Overall, the value of reserves dropped from 524 to 357 billion US dollars, or by almost a third⁵.

Initially, foreign exchange traders took the crisis in stride and between November of 2013 and June of 2014, the value of the rouble did not change substantially. However, right after the West imposed economic sanctions, the value of the Russian currency started to plunge (Figure 1). Between the end of June and the end of October 2014, the value of the U.S. currency rose to 43.4 roubles, from 33.6 roubles, in other words the Russian rouble lost 22.5% against the dollar. As the price of oil began to decline, the drop accelerated and by the end of January of 2015, the exchange rate rose to 68.9 roubles to the dollar (i.e. the rouble lost an additional 37% against its American counterpart). Overall, over the period from June 2014 to January 2015, the Russian currency lost over 51% of its value⁶.

It is worth noting that the staggering loss of reserves and precipitous decline in the rouble's value took place while Russia was recording a very large international trade surplus (Figure 2). In the first half of 2014, Russia exported more goods and services than it imported, to the tune of over 102 billion U.S. dollars. In the third quarter, the country logged another surplus of USD 45 billion⁷. Overall, during the first three quarters of 2014 (i.e. before the collapse of the price of oil), trade surplus substantially exceeded that recorded

⁴ V. Putin, *Meeting on socioeconomic development in Crimea and Sevastopol*, 18 March 2015, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47877>; D. Medvedev, *Government report on its performance in 2014*, 21 April 2015, <http://government.ru/en/news/17768/>.

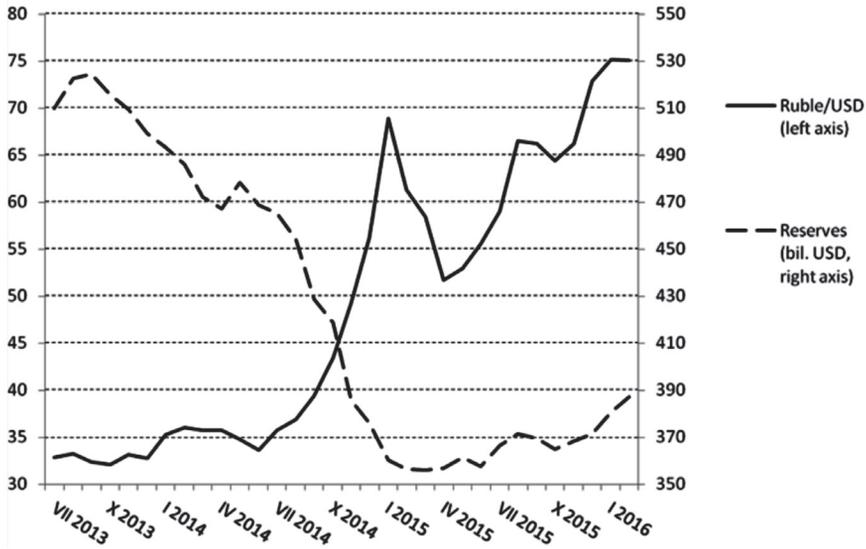
⁵ Bank of Russia, *Databases*, http://www.cbr.ru/Eng/hd_base/.

⁶ Bank of Russia, *Databases*, http://www.cbr.ru/Eng/hd_base/.

⁷ Bank of Russia, *Databases*, http://www.cbr.ru/Eng/hd_base/.

over the same period the year before. Under normal circumstances, the nation's official reserves and the value of the currency should have increased rather, than taken a plunge.

Figure 1
Rouble/dollar exchange rate and Russia's international reserves



Source: Bank of Russia

Russia maintained huge trade surplus during the whole of 2015, as well. The total for that year reached almost 150 billion U.S. dollars. Yet, in the second half of the year, the value of the rouble resumed its decline, and in January of 2015, the dollar was worth over 75 roubles. Overall, between June of 2015 and January of 2016, the Russian currency depreciated by over 26% against the U.S. dollar. A major factor behind this event was the fact that, on one hand, private Russian firms had to repay almost 96 billion U.S. dollars in debt to foreign banks and, on the other, the financial sanctions. Under normal circumstances, Russian firms would roll over their debts, in other words they would issue new debt to repay the old one, but as a result of the sanctions they were cut off from Western financial markets. 2016 will also be challenging, as the private sector has to pay back almost 68 billion U.S. dollars⁸.

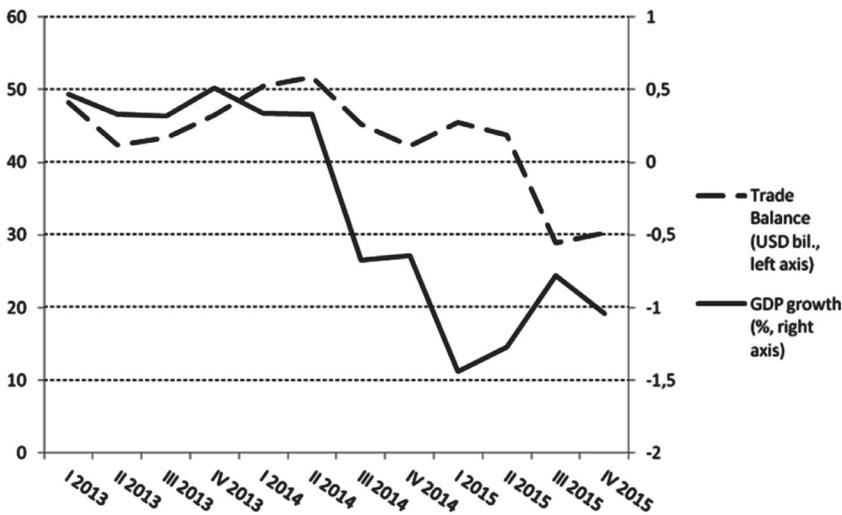
Data on Russia's GDP fully confirm the fact that the economic sanctions took a large toll on the economy (Figure 2). In the third quarter, that is, before the drop in the price of oil and gas could have influenced the level of economic activity, the GDP declined by 0.67% compared to the previous quarter⁹. Russia was growing at a relatively slow pace prior to that and

⁸ Bank of Russia, *Databases*, http://www.cbr.ru/Eng/hd_base/.

⁹ OECD, *Data, Quarterly real GDP growth*, V 2016. <https://data.oecd.org/gdp/quarterly-gdp.htm#indicator-chart>.

the sanctions tipped the nation into recession. The decline continued as the West extended the sanctions to financial matters – in the fourth quarter, GDP dropped by another 0.64%. The collapse of the price of oil compounded economic problems for Russia and for the whole of 2015 its GDP declined by slightly over 4%¹⁰. The OECD forecasts another decline in the level of economic activity this year (0.4%) and a mild recovery in 2017, an increase of 1.7%¹¹. This latest OECD forecast is more pessimistic than that published a year ago. Economic Outlook No. 97 predicted a milder GDP decline in 2015 (3.1%, as opposed to the actual drop of 4.0%) and positive growth already in 2016 (0.8%)¹².

Figure 2
GDP growth and international trade balance (quarterly data)



Source: OECD and Bank of Russia

The tremendous decline in the value of the rouble and huge capital outflows, on one hand, forced the Bank of Russia to drastically increase the rate of interest and, on the other, caused a significant increase in the general price level (Figure 3). In March 2014, the central bank embarked on a series of interest rate hikes. Initially, the rates went up to 7.0%, from 5.5%, but in response to the imposition of economic and financial sanctions, and the resulting loss of official reserves as well as the rapidly declining rouble, the Bank of Russia was forced to undertake additional measures. A succession of interest rate hikes led to the seven-day Repo rate reaching 17% in December of that year. As the pressure on the

¹⁰ OECD, *Data, Real GDP growth: Total, Annual growth rate (%), 2009 – 2017, V 2016*. <https://data.oecd.org/gdp/real-gdp-forecast.htm>.

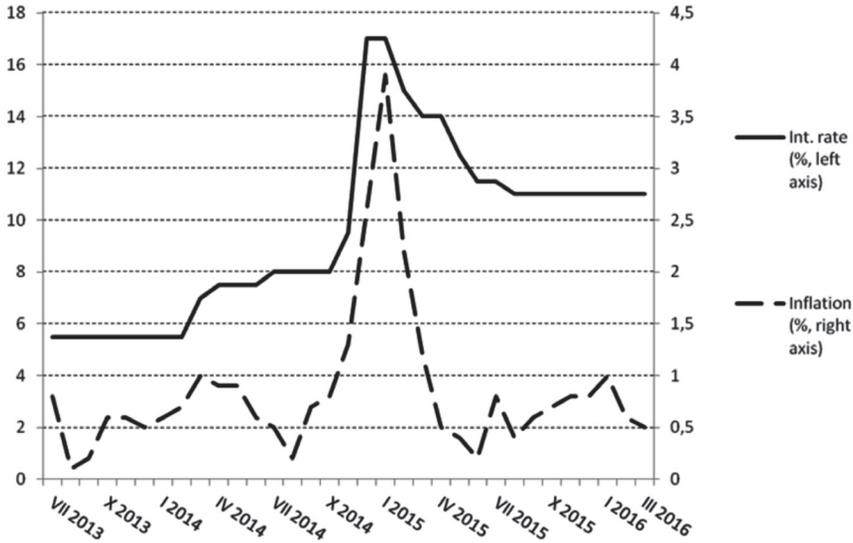
¹¹ OECD, *Data, Real GDP growth: Total, Annual growth rate (%), 2009 – 2017, V 2016*. <https://data.oecd.org/gdp/real-gdp-forecast.htm>.

¹² OECD, *Economic Outlook No. 97, VI 2015*, <http://stats.oecd.org/index.aspx?DataSetCode=EO>.

exchange rate subsided in early 2015, the Bank of Russia managed to bring interest rates down to 11% by August of 2015, and they have stayed at this level since¹³.

Figure 3

Inflation (change from the previous month) and interest rates (seven-day Repo rate)



Source: Bank of Russia

The steep decline in the value of the rouble caused prices of imported goods to appreciate dramatically. In late 2014, inflation took off and by January of the next year, the monthly increase in the overall price level reached 3.9%. As the value of the rouble stabilized at a depressed level, inflationary pressures receded, but the problem did not go away. For instance, with another spell of rouble weakness in late 2015, the monthly change in prices shot back to 1% in December (Figure 3)¹⁴. In all of 2015, the overall price level rose by 15.6% – double the inflation rate of the year before (7.8%) and three times higher than in 2012 (5.1%)¹⁵.

The OECD predicts that the overall price increase in 2016 will moderate to 9.4% and, so far, monthly data support this prediction. Therefore, with the Bank of Russia keeping short-term interest rates at 11%, real interest rates are relatively very high. High real interest rates are needed to forestall massive capital outflows and the collapse of the rouble, but this policy creates a drag on economic growth. In 2015, private consumption and fixed investment dropped by 9.8 and 7.2%, respectively, from the year before. OECD estimates

¹³ Bank of Russia, *Databases*, http://www.cbr.ru/Eng/hd_base/.

¹⁴ Russian Federation, Federal State Statistics Service, *Russia in figures*, http://www.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_main/rosstat/en/figures/prices/.

¹⁵ OECD, *Economic Outlook No. 98*, XI 2015, updated May 2016, <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=EO#>.

that these two macroeconomic factors will decline further this year, by 0.9 and 0.1%, respectively, hence the organization predicts a decline in GDP growth. An important factor contributing to the economic malaise is high real interest rates.

Thus, Russian economic decision makers face a stark dilemma, either to stimulate economic growth with lower interest rates and let the value of the currency and official reserves diminish further, or suffer economic stagnation and prevent further deterioration on the reserve and foreign exchange fronts. Evgeny Gontmacher, chief economist at the Institute of Contemporary Development in Moscow, predicted that without quick recovery in the price of oil, the Russian economy will suffer stagnation until the end of this decade¹⁶.

Other steps taken by the government do not point to a quick resolution of economic problems. For instance, in response to sanctions imposed by the West, Russia took retaliatory measures and banned importation of many goods from the sanctioning countries, causing more harm than good¹⁷. This step also contributed to overall price increases, because the nation substituted more expensive domestic goods for imports.

International Competitiveness of the Economy

Russia's economy resembles that of a less developed nation. Income from crude oil, natural gas, and oil products constitute a majority of its exports (Figure 4). The absolute value of these exports peaked in 2013, at over 350 billion U.S. dollars, and the drop in energy prices resulted in a decline to less than 199 billion in 2015, or by almost 39%. Until 2015, these three items constituted about two thirds of Russia's export revenue, but with the collapse of energy prices their relative share declined to slightly over 58%. Once the price of these sources of energy collapsed, so did the overall value of the nation's exports. In 2014, total exports of goods amounted to 498.8 billion U.S. dollars, while the following year, they were equal to 341.5 billion U.S. dollars – a drop of 156.3 billion or over 31%.

The fortunes of the Russian economy have been tied to the price of oil for many decades. The oil price collapse in 1986, played an important role in the process of the Soviet empire's disintegration¹⁸. More recently, the rapid growth recorded by the nation in the early 2000s was also a result of a huge oil price increase (Figure 5). Similarly, the drastic decline in the price of energy in 2008, caused an almost 8% decline in Russia's GDP. As the price of oil recovered in 2009, so did the economy, but the positive effects of energy price increases were exhausted by 2013. Even before the start of the Ukrainian conflict, economic growth in Russia came to a standstill – in 2013 and 2014, GDP grew at 1.3 and 0.6%, respectively (Figure 5).

It is worth noting that in 2015, exports of all other goods declined, as well. They peaked in 2012, at 180.6 billion and by 2015, dropped to 142.6 billion U.S. dollars, or by over 21%.

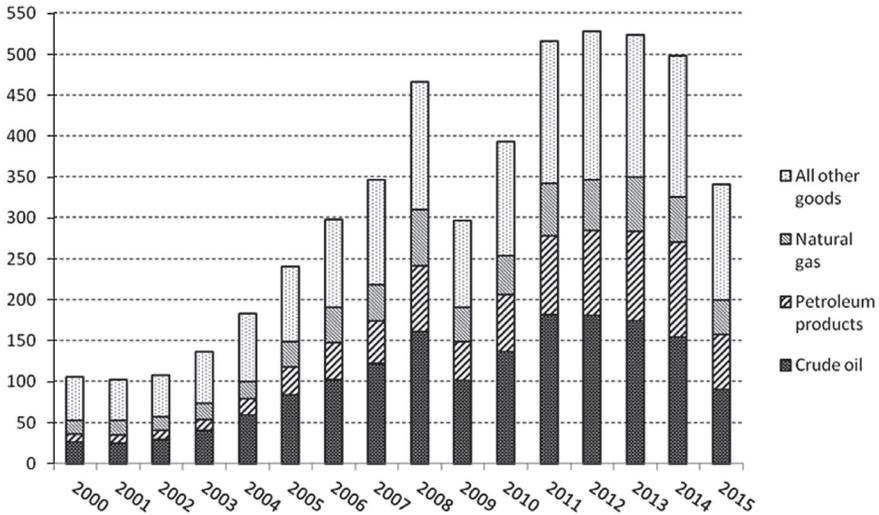
¹⁶ I. Arkhipov and H. Meyer, *Putin Takes Credit for Dodging 'Deep Crisis' as Slump Deepens*, "BloombergBusiness", 19 VI 2015, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-06-19/putin-says-russia-s-economy-is-weathering-crisis-after-oil-slump>.

¹⁷ I. Jurgens, *Target sanctions with unclear target*, in *Costs of a new Cold War: The US Russia confrontation over Ukraine*, P. J. Saunders (ed.), Washington, D.C., pp. 39-49.

¹⁸ K. Dadak, XXX, Arcana,

Given the drastic decline in the value of rouble, exports should have increased, but apparently Russia has no other goods for sale in international markets.

Figure 4
Magnitude and composition of Russian exports (bil. U.S. dollars)



Source: Bank of Russia

This development should have come as no surprise, as Russia is a backward country plagued by corruption. Transparency International ranks the nation at #119 of the 168 rated countries¹⁹. In 2013, Russia spent only 1.12% of its GDP on research and development (R&D), well below the average for OECD nations (2.26%). Moreover, between 2000 and 2013, the number of persons employed in R&D dropped to 6.17, from 7.78 per 1000 employed, while over the same period, in OECD countries, the average increased to 7.77, from 6.08. In 2013, Russia recorded just 119 triadic patents, whereas the total for all OECD members was 50,603. For instance, Austria, a tiny country in comparison to Russia, produced 500 such discoveries in the same year²⁰.

Price of Oil and the Economy

Figure 5 illustrates the relationship between the price of oil and economic growth. A similar relationship exists between oil price and government budget surpluses and deficits. During rapidly rising energy prices, the government recorded enormous surpluses.

¹⁹ Transparency International, *Perception Corruption Index 2015*, <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2015>.

²⁰ OECD, *Data, Innovation and Technology*, <https://data.oecd.org/innovation-and-technology.htm>. Triadic patents are discoveries that obtain patent protection in the United States, the European Union, and Japan (the Triad).

For instance in 2008, the government had a surplus equal to 7.25% of GDP. The next year, as prices of commodities took a dive, the surpluses changed into a deficit of 4.0% of GDP. The situation repeated itself after the oil price recovery and in 2011, the government had a budget surplus equal to 3.8% of GDP. But as the price of energy stabilized and the rate of economic growth slowed (Figure 5), surpluses greatly diminished and in 2013, amounted to only 0.3% of GDP. Just two years later, with the collapse of the price of oil and sanctions in place, the government suffered a deficit of 4.0% of GDP. The OECD predicts budget deficits of 3.2 and 1.8% of GDP for 2016 and 2017, respectively²¹.

To sum all this up, the economic performance of the nation is closely related to prices of energy and, in the absence of other readily marketable goods, Russia faces bleak prospects as long as oil prices remain low.

Predicting the future is a risky endeavour; nevertheless the past offers useful insights in this regard. The existence of long-term business cycles in many industries²², and in particular in commodity markets, is a well-established fact²³. In the case of the price of oil, J. A. Ocampo identified four super-cycles, counting from a low starting point to a peak followed by a descent into another trough. In the first such cycle, lasting from 1892 until 1947, the "up-phase" lasted 28 years, followed by a fall lasting 27 years. In the second cycle, from 1947 to 1973, the price of oil initially rose for 11 years, while the decline and bottoming process lasted for 15 years. During the third cycle, over the period of 1973-1998, the up and down swings lasted, respectively, 7 and 18 years. Ocampo's 2013 presentation did not specify the length of the last period that started in 1999, but in hindsight, it is possible to identify 2008 – with a real oil price per barrel of 100 U.S. dollars – as the peak. 2015 certainly marks the beginning of a period of low energy prices. It is impossible to predict the length of the bear market, but, if the past is any indicator of the future, it will last many years. Saudi Arabia, the most important member of OPEC, announced that it wants to protect its market share and that it can sustain low oil prices for many years²⁴. Other major oil producers also plan to increase output of oil as well²⁵. In sum, barring unforeseen developments, for instance, a major war in the Middle East, energy prices are likely to remain low for the foreseeable future. This scenario would make President Putin's life difficult, even without economic sanctions.

²¹ OECD, *Economic Outlook No. 98*, XI 2015, updated May 2016, <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=EO#>.

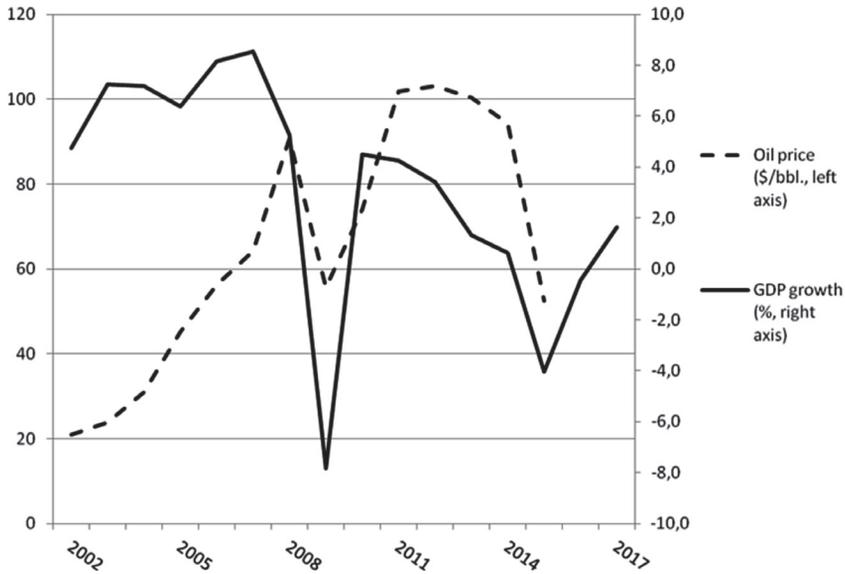
²² J. D. Sterman, *Business Dynamics*. Boston, 2000

²³ M. E. Slade, *Cycles in Natural-Resource Commodity Prices: An Analysis of the Frequency Domain*, „Journal of Environmental Economics and Management“, 1982, no. 9, pp. 138-148 and B. Erten i J. A. Ocampo, *Super cycles of commodity prices since the mid-nineteenth century*, DESA Working Paper no. 110, II 2012.

²⁴ W. Mahdi and N. Razzouk, *Saudi Aramco Chief Named Oil Minister in Sign of Stable Policy*, „BloombergBusiness“, 7 V 2016, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-05-07/saudi-aramco-chairman-al-falih-replaces-al-naimi-as-oil-minister>.

²⁵ For instance: H. Kalantari and G. Motevalli, *Iran Oil Minister Says Output to Rise a Week After Sanctions*, „BloombergBusiness“, 2 VIII 2015, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-08-02/iran-s-oil-minister-says-output-to-rise-one-week-after-sanctions>, A. DiPaola, *U.A.E. energy minister says oil glut could run for years*, „BloombergBusiness“, 7 I 2015, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2015-01-07/u-a-e-energy-minister-says-oil-glut-could-run-for-years.html>, A. Raval, *Oil glut to swamp demand until 2020*, „Financial Times“, 10 XI 2015, <https://next.ft.com/content/51645ebc-86cb-11e5-90de-f44762bf9896>.

Figure 5
Oil price and GDP growth (annual values)²⁶



Source: OECD and Bank of Russia

Conclusions

Russia is facing an uncertain future. The economic situation is challenging and the situation is very likely to remain so for years to come. The aggressive stance that is the highlight of a resurgent Russia under President Putin exacts a heavy political and economic toll on the country.

The lack of response from the West, especially from the United States, following the Russian military incursion into Georgia, or its sponsoring of rebellions in Abkhazia and Transnistria, emboldened the Kremlin to attack Ukraine, annex Crimea, and foment military revolt in the Donbas region. At this juncture, the West reacted, and the diplomatic and economic sanctions inflicted significant pain on Russia. The spectacular decline in the price of oil that took place soon after the imposition of sanctions made the situation much worse. The strategic position of Russia has weakened and the fragility of prosperity in Russia under Putin became evident. The Russian economy is not competitive in world markets and has no major sources of income other than commodities. Russia would need to embark on a new bold economic policy that fosters growth, but this change would require fighting corruption and relaxing the control over society exerted by the current regime. Neither is likely to happen and economic stagnation is likely to persist. Russia will

²⁶ GDP data for 2016 and 2017 are OECD estimates.

lose ground, not only to other fast-growing emerging economies such as China and India, but even to some mature economies, for instance the United States and Germany.

The Soviet Union collapsed because it overstretched its resources. In the wake of the Vietnam War, the United States was weakened. In 1973, the price of oil and gas started a meteoric rise, a development that drastically increased the hard currency revenue of major exporters of commodities, including the Soviet Union. Additionally, by the early 1970s, the USRR attained nuclear parity with the United States. The confluence of these events created an illusion that the East could compete with the West on an equal footing. The Soviets set about global expansion; they supported dictatorial regimes from Vietnam to Angola, Cuba, and Nicaragua. But the relative weakness of the United States and strength of the Soviet Union were transitory phenomena. By the mid-1980s, Russia was mired in war in Afghanistan, and when the price of oil set on a downward trajectory, the Kremlin lost the ability to support its client-dictatorships. The Soviet Union's withdrawal from Afghanistan, an attempt to cut its losses, only hastened the disintegration of the Soviet Bloc, as oppressed nationalities – both inside the USRR and in many satellite states – realized how fragile the “superpower” was.

Today, the situation seems to be repeating itself. In 2007, at the peak of the recent oil price boom, Putin threw down the gauntlet challenging the existence of a “unipolar world”²⁷. While president of the Russian Federation, Medvedev proclaimed: “the firm conviction that Russia can and must become a global power”²⁸. More recently, Medvedev, this time as prime minister, said: “speaking bluntly, we are rapidly rolling into a period of a new Cold War”²⁹. The Soviet Union fell apart as a result of the first Cold War, and Russia is very likely to lose the second.

A major upheaval in Russia would pose very serious dangers, but also great opportunities. Russia is armed to the teeth and possesses nuclear weapons, and it is, thus, capable of annihilating any opponent. There is little that the world and its neighbours could do about that. But the nations that border Russia should be prepared to take advantage of the nation's approaching period of serious weakness. Putin or his successor, like Gorbachev before him, may try to retrench in the face of crisis. This could not only involve a withdrawal from Eastern Ukraine, but also other outposts, including the Kaliningrad enclave.

For Poland, it is imperative that the nation is capable of preventing any unpleasant developments in this area. The nation needs to drastically improve its economic and military capacity and become a regional power. Poland also needs to strengthen its alliance with the United States, a country that is, and will remain, a major power-broker in Eastern Europe.

²⁷ V. Putin, ‘Prepared Remarks’ at the 43rd Munich Conference on Security Policy, 12 II 2007. Available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/12/AR2007021200555.html>

²⁸ D. Medvedev, *Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation*, 12 XI 2009, <http://en.special.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/5979>.

²⁹ D. Medvedev, *The Russian Government, Munich Security Conference: Dmitry Medvedev's speech at the panel discussion*, 13 II 2016, <http://government.ru/en/news/>.

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How the Socialist Economy was destroyed in the USSR (One reason for the collapse of the country)

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On 25 September 1990, one of the first meetings of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Russia was held in the building of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. The agenda consisted of the issue of ensuring the economic sovereignty of Russia in the USSR. Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Yuri Skokov, responsible for industrial policy, spoke with bitterness about his meeting with Minister of Metallurgy of the USSR Seraphim Baibakov: "We spoke to him about our sovereignty, and he said: 'I'm sorry, but last year I became an owner of property and a legal successor of state property.' Kolpakov became Krupp. Now he creates 10-15 companies, leaving a small management structure. It is presidential rule in the steel-casting complex."

Frankly speaking, after I became familiar with the transcript of this meeting, it made me think. When assessing the reforms that took place in the late 1980s and early 1990s it is, perhaps, the only question to which all representatives of Russian political science answer in the same fashion. Both supporters of radical reforms (we shall call them, conventionally, the E. T. Gaidar-Anatoly Chubai school) and their opponents in the wider political spectrum – from former Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers N.I. Ryzhkov, to present Assistant to the President and scholar, S. Y. Glazyev, answer the question about the beginning period of privatisation and destruction of the public sector in the same manner. They are unanimous in recognising that privatisation dates back to the early 1990s, and is concentrated in the period from 1992 to 1996.

The arguments of the supporters of this point of view are simple and straightforward, and based on the legalistic method. The beginning of privatisation was declared in the law of the Russian Federation "On privatisation of state and municipal enterprises in the Russian Federation", dated 3 July 1991, and in the first state privatisation program of state and municipal enterprises in the Russian Federation for 1992 (approved by the resolution of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation of 11 June 1992). For some, it is a reason to take pride

in the results of privatisation, which changed the economic nature of the country, while for others – to accuse its initiators of the destruction of the economy, of “looting the country”.

I will take the liberty of accepting neither the first nor second viewpoint. The study of documents of the supreme authorities of the USSR – the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Council of Ministers of the USSR, as well as materials from the State Planning Committee (the Gosplan) of the USSR, allow us to assert that the process of the destruction of the Soviet economy, part of which was privatisation, started much earlier. To begin with, despite the noisy fanfare in honour of the successes of the Soviet economy (the echo of which is heard to this day), the people responsible for the condition of the Soviet economy at the end of the 1970s, saw a serious problem.

On 11 December 1979, the Council of Ministers of the USSR submitted a secret report on the economic situation of the country and measures for its improvement, which was signed by high-ranking officials, including Chairman of the State Planning Committee N. Baybakov, and Chairman of the State Committee on Science and Technology Vladimir Kirillin.¹ It noted a systematic drop in productivity of 6.8% during the eighth five-year plan (1965-1970) to 3.8% during the tenth five-year plan (1975-1980). It also indicated the low quality of the labour force. Manual, mostly unskilled labour was practiced by over 50 million workers in material production, or 50% of their total number. In addition to calls for changes in the industrial structure and accelerated development of the mechanical engineering industry as the locomotive of the economy, the report noted dangerous tendencies in monetary circulation and the threat of inflationary effects. “The solvent demand of the population is not satisfied. It is difficult to identify a group of goods for which demand would be fully met,” the report recorded. The unmet demand was estimated at from 25-30 up to 70-90 billion rubles.

One of the main conclusions that followed from this report was that the state budget did not have enough money. Hence the proposal was to increase the fee for excess housing area by 5-6 times, to reduce state subsidies on housing maintenance and shift to its self-repayment, as well as self-sustained construction. For the first time, a declaration was made about the need to **expand handicraft trades, “seasonal crafts” and small handicraft cooperatives**. The report became a diagnosis of economic prosperity at a time when the price of oil – the basis of Soviet exports – reached almost \$40 per barrel in contemporary prices.² A diagnosis was made, but treatment did not follow. The cure – the rejection of the existing forms of economic management – was deemed worse than the disease. And so, at meetings of the Politburo, there followed fruitless discussions and resolutions, which, in fact, had no mechanism for implementation.³

¹ See more: Pikhoya R. G. *The Soviet Union: History of Power. 1945-1991*. Novosibirsk, 2000. p. 333. Kirillin's report deserves special study.

² See: Neftegas.ru/analisis/view/526-mirovye-tseny-na-syruyu-neft-istoria-i-analiz.

³ Resolutions of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers of 12 June 1981: “On measures to increase production of essential goods in 1981-1985 and to better meet the population's demand for these goods”; Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Council of Ministers of the USSR of 14 January 1982 No. 29 “On measures for further development of trade and improvement of trading service of the population in the eleventh five-year plan”.

The situation began to change at the end of 1982, after Y.V. Andropov succeeded Leonid Brezhnev as General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. One of the first decisions of the new Secretary General was to establish an Economics Department at the Central Committee. It was headed up by Nikolai Ryzhkov, an experienced manager and former director of the Ural Heavy Machine Plant in Sverdlovsk, who later worked as First Deputy Minister of Heavy and Transport Machine Building of the USSR, as well as First Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee. By order of Andropov, a group of economist-practitioners was formed under Ryzhkov, which included First Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee of the USSR Stepan Sitryan, Head of the Department of Finance of the State Planning Committee Valentin Pavlov, as well as a number of employees of the Ministry of Finance. Sitryan became the leader of this group. "Our group's work was not openly publicised," Sitryan later recalled. "Even the Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee didn't know what we were working on. (...) Yuri Vladimirovich believed that the existing rigid planning system had exhausted itself. (...) In order to start deep, serious changes in the economy, it was necessary to demonstrate to government officials that cooperative businesses with relative economic freedom were more profitable to state enterprises. In the document drawn up by us, it was not openly stated that there was a need for private property, but the idea that was expressed, along with that of state property, was **to begin the development of co-operative ownership, which was a serious attempt to dilute state ownership as the only form of resource ownership in the country.**"⁴ And he also supported it."⁵

The government sought to expand the production of consumer goods, while simultaneously trying to solve a social problem – market saturation – and an economic problem – to increase budget revenues. In 1983, the State Planning Committee adopted the resolution "On the implementation of resolutions of the party and the government related to increasing production of consumer goods and improving their quality."⁶ The military complex was also involved in the production of goods for cultural and household purposes.⁷

An analysis of the documents of the State Planning Committee – the nerve centre of the Soviet economy – leads to the conclusion that by the first half of the 1980s, there **was no longer any command-based administrative** system for managing the economy of the USSR. Rather, there was a system based on **planning and distribution**, or a **distribution and coordination system** for organising the economy, in which the interests of the state and the ministries clashed, and, following the ministries, the largest enterprises – monopolists. The State Planning Committee was given the role of a coordinating–persuading mediator among market participants.

With an acutely felt lack of resources and the reduction of incoming oil money into the budget, the task which came to the foreground was that of searching for alternative economic options. A different path seemed much more realistic to the practitioners of the State Planning Committee – the path of including the personal economic interests of the people, as agents of the economic life of the country.

⁴ All emphasis added by the author, unless otherwise indicated.

⁵ S.A. Sitryan, *Lessons of the Future*, M., Publishing House "Economic newspaper", 2010. pp. 71-73.

⁶ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 4372, Finding aid 67, File, Leaf 14-18.

⁷ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 4372, Finding aid 67, File 4693, Leaf 101-102.

On 23 February 1984, the State Planning Committee presented proposals to the Council of Ministers of the USSR, "On the organization of work on further improvement of the economic management". On 6 March 1984, after long discussions in the Politburo, the Commission of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee began to work on examining proposals for ways of improving their management. This Commission would play a crucial role in the process of transforming the Soviet economy during the second half of the 1980s.

On 7 June 1984, at the Commission's meeting a decision was made on the preparation of a decree of the USSR Council of Ministers: "On further development of forms of individual and collective activities of citizens in the sphere of production of consumer goods and services to the population". This was the beginning of developing a law on individual labour activity. The draft law was developed by the State Planning Committee, in conjunction with the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR and the Estonian SSR, along with the relevant Soviet ministries. In the Protocol of the State Planning Committee of 5 September 1984 it was directly noted that: "Given the limited scope of additional public investment, labour and material resources for the development of the sphere of production of goods and services, at the present stage, it becomes more important to create conditions for the development of the national economy, and flexible forms of individual and collective labour activity of citizens."⁸

It should be pointed out that reviving self-employment in the USSR, destroyed with the coming of the New Economic Policy at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, had to be done almost from scratch. According to State Planning Committee data, there were only 60,000 craftsmen and artisans in the Soviet Union. In the planned economy existing at the time, there were countless problems with ensuring equipment, raw materials and other materials for future artisans.

The proposals of the State Planning Committee were radical. In their project, enterprises and shops of the territorial bodies of the State Planning Committee were allowed to sell materials, old equipment, tools, waste, recyclables and any other non-conforming products to companies and organisations providing consumer services, trade and public catering, as well as directly to citizens via enterprises and organisations – people involved in self-employment could now obtain loans.⁹

The revenues from sold goods and services were to stay with citizens as a means to pay them and ensure further development of their enterprises. Enterprise managers were allowed "to tentatively conclude contracts with citizens' groups, **employing up to 10 people, on the terms of full-scale cost accounting, with the use of equipment, tools, inventory and premises being in private ownership of citizens or rented by manufacturing companies that had an agreement signed.**"¹⁰

⁸ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 4372, Finding aid 67, File 5507, Leaf 152-153.

⁹ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 4372, Finding aid 67, File 5507, Leaf 154-156.

¹⁰ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 4372, Finding Aid 67, File 5507, Leaf 158-160. The draft of this document was prepared by V. V. Sychev, First Deputy Chairman of Gosstandart of the USSR, V. S. Pavlov, Chief of the Department of Finance, Cost and Prices of the State Planning Committee of the USSR, Senchagov V. K., Deputy Head of the Department of Planning and Economic Stimulation of the State Planning Committee, Anikin V. I., supervisor of the Department of Elaboration of Forecasts of the Development of Branches of the Military-Industrial Complex. Materials for the development of the law on self-employment, see: The Russian State Economy Archive Collection R-7523, Finding Aid 145, File 14537, 14538, 14539, 19653.

The degree of radicalism of these proposals can be assessed by comparison with the norms of the 1977 Constitution of the USSR. There, Article 11 stated directly that: "The land, its subsoil, and forests are the exclusive property of the state. The state owns the basic means of production in industry, construction and agriculture, the means of transportation and communication, banks, property of trade, communal and other enterprises organized by the state, the main urban housing and other property necessary for the implementation of the tasks of the state."

On 25 February 1985, these proposals were framed as a decree of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers, entitled: "On further development of forms of individual and collective labour activities of citizens in the sphere of production of consumer goods and services to the population." In fact, this decree legalised new processes that eroded the socialist economy.

The coming to power of Mikhail Gorbachev was related to an attempt at reviving the old methods of economic management, including: "acceleration" by increasing investment in machinery and introducing state quality control to speed up the development of industry. However, by early 1986 it became clear that these plans were unrealistic. Additional problems for the economy of the USSR were associated with a two to threefold drop in oil prices.

Problems were also sharply increasing in the food market. Evidence of this could be seen in the memo by then-Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR Andrei Gromyko, who visited Moscow shops and a hospital in January 1986. He reported his observations to the CPSU Central Committee on 21 January 1986. In grocery store No. 27 in Zhdanovsky District, right in the centre of Moscow, he found that "cheese and dairy products, smoked sausages are deficient. Lamb and pork are rarely available. Beef, for example, was not delivered to the store from 2-9 January, despite claims made to the contrary (...) poultry was available at times. We saw it ourselves". The worsening economic situation in the country created confusion in the political leadership for some time.

On the one hand, an attempt was made to strengthen the repressive apparatus in order to combat what was assessed as an economic crime. Investigations of the so-called "cotton case" against the leaders of foreign trade departments continued with new force.¹¹ The decision of the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the RSFSR, dated 23 April 1986, highlighted the need "to focus on the correct application of provisions of the law and formation of judicial practice, when examining such categories of cases as taking part in forbidden types of self-employment and the unauthorised use of vehicles, machines or mechanisms". It is easy to see that the Supreme Court's decision created the opportunity for lateral punitive interpretations, thus creating a danger for **any** business activity based on self-employment. On the other hand, the growing inefficiency of the old management system forced decisions to be made far beyond the limits of the political economy of socialism.

On 9 November 1986, the "On individual labour activity" law was adopted. It differed from the previous decree of the Council of Ministers and the CPSU Central Committee by some degree. Already in the preamble to the law it specified that: "Individual labour activity in the Soviet Union is used in order to better meet **social needs in goods and services**,"

¹¹ See: Pihoya R. G. The Soviet Union: History of Power... pp. 411-413.

which in turn meant that the state considered private entrepreneurship as a legitimate element of the Soviet economy.

People were not only allowed to use their own equipment and raw materials, but also to receive property, equipment, facilities under contracts with enterprises, purchase materials, instruments and other property in the state and cooperative retail outlets and markets, as well as to use natural resources they needed for their activity, in compliance with the rules set. The shameful statement on the prohibition of exploitation was outweighed by granting permission to hire workers. However, the main economic novelty consisted in the development of a draft law "On socialist enterprises (associations)". On 8 October 1986, the Presidium of the USSR Council of Ministers instructed ministries and departments to prepare proposals for the project. Of particular interest were the commentaries of economists: L. I. Abalkin, A. G. Aganbegyan, Y.M. Primakov, O. T. Bogomolov, A. A. Nikonov, R. G. Yanovsky, A. I. Volsky and V. A. Medvedev, addressed to Mikhail Gorbachev in early December 1986.¹² Below, are a number of them:

L. I. Abalkin:

"The draft law should be viewed not as an isolated act, but as a link in the system of measures for the radical restructuring of the economic mechanism."¹³

A. G. Aganbegyan:

- To complement the right of the companies with the right to sell and to lease unused resources to companies and **the population** (Aganbegyan's emphasis);
- To allow the companies to give credits for housing to their employees; the right to transfer individual groups of employees, sites, shops to a collective contract.
- To allow companies to trade with each other;
- All audits and inspections should be carried out no more than once per year.¹⁴

O. T. Bogomolov:

- To establish uniform regulations for cooperatives and industrial enterprises.

An interesting transcript was preserved of a line-by-line discussion, regarding the reading of the draft law aloud, by two members of the Politburo – Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers N. I. Ryzhkov and the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party G. A. Aliev, on 27-28 December 1986. Heads of key state economic departments and Ryzhkov's advisors – S.A. Sitaryan, P. M. Katsura attended the meeting. During the discussion, from time to time topics came up which were not directly related to the future law, but which noted the condition of the economy. Chairman of the State Planning Committee Talyzin, complained, "now a number of districts have grain, the harvest is very high, they (regional authorities) hold it back, they do not want to distribute it. And no matter how much grain is harvested, there is no grain in the country." To which Ryzhkov replied: "(...) And if we introduced, as they say, agricultural tax in kind, what would that change? Would there be more grain?"

Ryzhkov also addressed Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR Vorotnikov, who asked for 4.5 million tonnes of grain. "There are districts that are left without grain. Before, we forcibly took from the first ones and passed it to the others. Or maybe we should

¹² The Russian State Economy Archive Collection P-5446, Finding aid 148, File 19, Leaf 1.

¹³ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection P-5446, Finding aid 148, File 19, Leaf 2-4.

¹⁴ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection P-5446, Finding aid 148, File 19, Leaf 7-8.

give nothing, then they will perish, or maybe we should introduce a rationing system, or shift to purchasing grain abroad... And with meat it's the same story. Previously, the Russian Federation had a reserve. Now there is no reserve. And the first one who has been trapped in this situation was the Council of Ministers of the USSR. We are left with the whole country on our shoulders – with the ones who have no meat."¹⁵

When discussing the articles of the future law, both Ryzhkov and Aliyev were unanimous on one point – state-owned enterprises should not have more rights than cooperatives. For the record, not a single word was uttered about cooperatives in the draft.

From 1 January 1987, many ministries and departments of the USSR and the largest associations and enterprises received the right to carry out direct export and import operations. Self-supporting foreign trade companies could be created within their structures. The activities of these companies were regulated by the "Regulation on self-financing foreign trade organization (association) of ministries and departments" and the "Model regulation on self-supporting foreign trade, research and production companies as well as production associations, enterprises and organizations", adopted by the Council of Ministers of the USSR on 22 December 1986.

13 January saw the approval of both the resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On the order of creation on the territory of the USSR and operation of joint enterprises, international associations and organizations of the USSR and other member countries of the CMEA" and the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR "On issues related to the creation on the territory of the USSR and operation of joint ventures with the participation of Soviet organizations and companies of capitalist and developing countries".

Meanwhile, preparations for the draft law "On socialist enterprises" were underway. By the way, in the course of these preparations, by February 1987, the word "socialist" was removed from the title. The future law became known as "On state enterprises". In order to examine the proposals of ministries and departments, a working group was established under the leadership of G. A. Aliyev. The working group met once a week. S.A. Sitaryan directly coordinated work on drafting the law, and set the tone there¹⁶.

In early May, a draft law was sent to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. On 5 May 1987, its chairman A. Gromyko ordered the draft sent to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republics and to the standing committees of the Union Council and the Council of Nationalities.¹⁷

Discussions on the draft law began in the Council of Nationalities and the Union Council of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. The main speaker, representing the project, became the First Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee, the Deputy Chairman of the Commission for improving management, planning and the economic mechanism, S. A. Sitaryan. When speaking to the deputies, he stated the future law was the starting point of all economic reforms in the country and that the economic departments had already prepared secondary legislation for the future law. Sitaryan's statement that the issue of the law would be submitted to the nearest Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU,

¹⁵ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection P-5446, Finding aid 148, File 19, Leaf 136-155.

¹⁶ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection 7523, Finding aid 145, File 875, Leaf 9-14.

¹⁷ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection 7523, Finding aid 145, File 875 Leaf 22.

was very meaningful¹⁸. He was asked questions. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers pointed out that in the report that the ministries and departments were mentioned, but what about state employees – teachers, doctors, pensioners, state housing and inhabitants of communal flats? What was to be done with the people who had waited for public housing for 20-30 years? Sitaryan answered by saying that, on the one hand, the situation in the social sphere was getting worse, but on the other hand, it was necessary to make the non-production sphere self-sufficient. He believed that local authorities should be involved in housing issues. Chairman of the Moscow Soviet of People's Deputies V.T. Saikin objected. He deemed urban agriculture unprofitable and to make it self-sufficient in 1988-1989, would only increase debt.

Sitaryan responded, but his answer did not sound particularly convincing. The "loss-making enterprises will be funded by central funds and ministry reserves (...) Let's say, we are also going to transfer coal in 1989, and it (the coal industry - R.P.) is a completely loss-making industry."¹⁹ In the end, "On state enterprises" was adopted. What did this law stipulate? Under a thick layer of arguments about "achieving the supreme goal of social production under socialism - i.e. the fullest possible satisfaction of the growing material and spiritual needs of people", were hidden new radical changes in the economic life of the country.

The first change was the election of company directors at a general meeting or conference of the labour collective. This removed the establishment directors (nomenclature) from direct dependence on the state and the party apparatus, and made them much more independent. Simultaneously, the law granted the directors some rights they had not possessed before. It was stated that "a company operates on the principles of full economic accountability and self-financing". The law, according to which "the company as an independent producer may act on the securities market and issue shares in order to mobilise additional financial resources, as well as to carry out targeted loans" sounded incredible bearing in mind the socialist reality of the USSR. Note that until that time, there existed no legal act establishing and regulating the securities market.

The companies received the right to "sell, exchange, lease, provide – free of charge –for temporary use or rent: buildings, constructions, equipment, vehicles, inventory, raw materials and other material values," that is, to engage in activity which was previously punishable as a criminal offence. The companies also received the right "to use products for their own needs, to sell them to other companies, organisations and the general population, or to exchange them with other companies, subject to the fulfilment of contractual obligations," to purchase material resources without limit (funds), in accordance with their orders on the basis of "contracts concluded with enterprises and other bodies, as well as technical and material procurement agencies or product manufacturers".

Previously, such activities were classified as crimes; as aiding the activities of "tsekhoviks"²⁰. Each company was allowed to create its own network of products for sale

¹⁸ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection 7523, Finding aid 145, File 875 Leaf 56-83.

¹⁹ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection 7523, Finding Aid 145, File 875, Leaf 92.

²⁰ Tsekhovik – shadowy economic "operation" in the USSR, operating typically in the sphere of production of light industry goods. This activity involved the acquisition of raw materials and equipment on the "black market" as well as complex mechanisms of distribution. According to the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, such activities fell under Article 89-93/1 – crimes against public property and were punishable with long terms of imprisonment and up to execution by a firing squad.

"for unlimited direct orders", something also prohibited before. The law introduced a truly revolutionary provision – an actual abolition of the state monopoly on foreign trade. Enterprises were allowed to engage in foreign trade activities "on the basis of monetary self-sufficiency and self-financing", to conduct export-import operations, "to create, should there be a need, self-supporting foreign trade companies, or to commission management of such operations to other foreign trade organisations on a contractual basis". They were allowed to have foreign currency accounts, to receive "credits in foreign currency for the creation and development of export production, with the condition that they be repaid with foreign exchange earnings from exports".

But the law went much further. It allowed directors to create business units operating on the basis of self-financing within their enterprises. "A business unit may have a separate balance and accounts in banking institutions." We will pay special attention to this provision and I will return to it later. What tsekhoviks could not previously even dream of was accomplished by the new law "On state enterprises". The activities for which previously citizens were convicted, put in camps, and even executed, were now permitted by order of the state. Now an important question arises – did the enterprises in question in fact remain state-owned? Judging by the title of the law – yes. But if one looks at the content of the law, then in theory the company belonged to the labour collective. In practice, the role of its leaders increased significantly, since they were given the opportunity to distance themselves from state control. The companies and, accordingly, their directors now had the opportunity to engage in foreign trade activities. On 25 December 1986, the Politburo adopted a decision on creating joint enterprises with the participation of Soviet and foreign organisations, companies and governments.

This law gave the possibility even to transform ministries into state-owned corporations that received assets that they formerly managed as their property. This form of state-owned corporation turned out to be only the initial transition towards their transformation into joint stock companies. The largest industrial ministries in the country took this path. The first to do so was the Ministry of Gas Industry of the USSR. Minister of Gas Industry Viktor Chernomyrdin in 1989, recalled: "We went to the government with a proposal that we would be given the opportunity to leave state ministerial structures and go directly to economic ones. In other words, **that this powerful ministerial structure would be transformed into a system according to the "law on enterprises". And in the USSR, the "law on enterprise" had just been adopted.**"²¹ The law received full political support at the June 1987 Plenum of the Central Committee. Mikhail Gorbachev called for a radical reform of the management of the economy, which implied the weakening of centralised planning and the need for a price reform. It is worth noting that Gorbachev also raised the question of extending the principle of self-financing to the Federal Republics, as well.²²

The response was immediate. On 26 September 1987 in Tartu, an article was published by four Estonian economists, S. Kallas, T. Made, E. Savisaar and M. Titma, who insisted on the introduction of republican cost accounting, the transfer of all enterprises of the Union

²¹ Cit. ex: URL: <http://www.tadviser.ru/index.php/> %D0%A1%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%8C%D1%8F:%D0%98%D1%81%D1%82%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%8F_%D0%93%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%B0.

²² Materials of the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, June 25-26, 1987 M.: Politizdat, 1987.

to the Republic, the transfer of relations with other republics to market relations and on the possibility of Estonia's secession from the ruble-zone.²³ But let us return to the immediate consequences of the June Plenum of the Central Committee.

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted on 30 June the resolution, "On restructuring the management of the national economy at the present stage of economic development of the country". It was noted there, that "the adoption of the USSR law on state enterprises is of key importance to the implementation of the envisaged change. Ministries, state committees and departments were instructed to "decisively change the forms and methods of managing associations, enterprises and organizations, to move from administrative to mainly economic methods, to provide the conditions necessary (...) for the application of full economic accountability, self-financing and self-government".

In the Politburo a commission "On restructuring the organizational structures of the central economic bodies, ministries and departments of the USSR" was established headed by N. I. Ryzhkov and operated from 1987 to 1989. Many hundreds of pages of transcripts of detailed discussions on economic reforms survived at all levels of government, including ministries and all republics of the Soviet Union, without exception. This topic deserves a special study. I will highlight the most important approaches that were developed during these meetings.

First of all, there was the desire to endow the ministries and departments the rights received by enterprises according to "On labour enterprises". The ministries insisted on being transformed into territorial associations, functioning on the principles of self-financing and self-government.²⁴ The ministers insisted that the Central Board, or the Central Administrative Board (as it is called today), be a continuation of their central apparatus, not meet the requirements of drastic economic reforms carried out in the construction sector, and not meet the requirements of democratisation in the management of the national economy. The law on state enterprises was to be extended to central boards, as well as the labour payment schedule.

Ryzhkov opposed Minister of Construction A. N. Shepetilnikov in the southern regions of the USSR, stating: "We have the trust and industrial enterprises. They all work and comply with the law on socialist enterprises. (...) The central board is a government body and it is not subject to this law." But Shepetilnikov nevertheless disagreed: "The central board, in principle, is a continuation of the control apparatus of the Ministry. **Since it is not subject to this law, then it has no right to interfere in the economic activity of state-owned enterprises.** This form of governance should be democratised." A logical step in such transformations was the emergence of ministries and departments, as well as state-owned holdings, like the above-mentioned Gazprom, previously the Ministry of Gas Industry.

But the economic reforms of the second half of the 1980s were not limited to the implementation of the law "On labour enterprises". In parallel with it, the law "On cooperation" continued to be developed. S. Sitaryan continues to consider himself a proponent of its adoption: "I was the Chairman of the Committee on its elaboration and argued its case to the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee. I came up with the idea of developing co-

²³ For details, see: Ostrovsky A.V. Stupidity or Treason? The Investigation of the Death of the USSR. M., Krymsky most, 2011.

²⁴ See, in particular, The Russian State Economy Archive Collection 5446, Finding Aid 149, File 8. Leaf 2-9.

operation when we were preparing the reform of 1965. I tried to fully articulate the specific assumptions for the development of cooperation when we were preparing proposals for Yuri Andropov in 1983. (...) It so happened that the law on cooperation was passed in the version that we presented."²⁵ Despite the importance of Sitaryan's role, it should be noted that the resolutions on self-employment that became the forerunner of the law "On cooperation" were adopted in 1984-1985.

During the preparation of the draft law, ministries and agencies were consulted. Of particular interest is a note written by the People's Control Committee, entitled "On the results of examination of the situation with the development of cooperative and individual labour activity."²⁶ The note reported on successful examples of cooperative activities. In Vilnius, almost all taxis in the city (about 3000) – were cooperative. In Vladimir, cooperative photographic studios operated successfully, working two times faster and better than the state versions, while the cooperatives created within the Glavmosstroy system began to build houses for gardeners and repair apartments. Cooperative participants in the Moscow and Vladimir Regions began to grow cattle. But then problems started to appear. The proportion of cooperation in the regional economy was negligible. In the Vladimir Region, noticeably distinguished by the level of development of the cooperative movement, it was only 0.1%, in the Moscow Region – 0.02%, and in the city of Moscow itself – 0.05%.

Cooperatives were primarily meant to provide goods and services directly to the people, but preferred to work with government agencies, not local communities. In the Vladimir Region, the proportion of orders placed by the population was only 6% and the task of fundraising and reducing "inflationary overhang" was not performed – cooperative members preferred to work via bank transfer. The structure of the cooperatives did not meet the initial ideas of its legislators. The number of cooperative members was much smaller than the number of people hired by the cooperatives. In the Vladimir Region, for every one member there were nine employees, while in Moscow, the ratio was 3:67. Between these two categories of workers there was a big difference in salary. In the Polymer Cooperative in Vladimir, the head of the cooperative received – by Soviet standards a fantastic salary – 12,000 rubles a month. His deputy received 11,500, while accountants made 3500 rubles each. In the Gloria Sewing Cooperative in Zagorsk, eleven members of the cooperative received an average of 1200 rubles a month, while the 29 workers received an average of 250 rubles per head. The average salary in the USSR in 1987 amounted to 201 rubles a month.²⁷

Cooperative members were accused of buying large quantities of scarce goods, food products, meat, etc. and reselling them at a large profit.²⁸ In turn, the ministries reported to the Council of Ministers how they were aiding the cooperative movement. The Ministry of Construction in the Urals and Western Siberia informed that there were 135 cooperatives operating in subordinate enterprises. They were engaged in harvesting gravel, producing wall panels and cinder blocks. The production of wall panels and cinder blocks at the enterprises was organised to take place on the third shift. The situation was also similar in

²⁵ S.A. Sitaryan, *Lessons of the Future*, M., Publishing House "Economic Newspaper, 2010, pp. 76-77.

²⁶ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 7523, Finding Aid 14, File 888, Leaf 7-12.

²⁷ The materials for the delegate of the XIX all-Union Conference of the CPSU, M., 1988, p. 151.

²⁸ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 7523, Finding Aid 145, File 888, Leaf 7-12.

other ministries. In practice, there was a gradual convergence and merging of state enterprises and cooperatives, or rather, of the part of state enterprises that could be converted to cooperatives by their directors in accordance with the law "On labour enterprises". It is not hard to see the business leaders' personal financial interest in the creation of such cooperatives, as well as the obvious danger of corruption. Bearing in mind that the director of a regular production association received a salary of 400 rubles, the earnings of cooperative members were simply enormous.

On 14 March 1988, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet's decree on the taxation of cooperatives was published. Taxes were raised significantly – up to 10%. This coincided with the discussion on the draft law on cooperation. At the same time, a new socio-political process began to take place – a movement of cooperative members. They strongly opposed the new decree. They had support from the press in such publications as *Literaturnaya gazeta* and *Izvestia*. On 15 May 1988, at a round table organized by *Literaturnaya*, the cooperative members not only demanded the decree be cancelled, but also insisted on being included in the Commission of the Supreme Soviet, which would examine the draft law. Surprisingly, this proposal was accepted. On 13 May, Naberezhnye Chelny hosted a meeting of the cooperative members of the RSFSR, which was organised in order to discuss the draft law. The Vladimir Region members, at their general meeting attended by 178 individuals, not only condemned the decree on taxation, but also had meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Finance and regional financial bodies. They unanimously voted against the decree.

The number of people who were self-employed or working in cooperatives (not to be confused with collective farms) rapidly grew. If in 1984, they amounted to 60,000, by 1 April 1988 they already numbered 369,400.²⁹ By 1990, 3.1 million workers were part of cooperatives, not to mention 300,000 people employed in the private economic sector.³⁰ It was an active, politically involved portion of the population that went out into the political arena. During discussions in commissions of the Supreme Council, it was determined that a great deal of cooperatives existed as business units of the State Supply Office and regional executive committees; they built roads, constructed houses and engaged in foreign trade. This time, the discussion on the draft law in the Supreme Council was very heated. Hundreds of letters for and against the cooperative movement flooded the Kremlin. Some wrote and demanded speculators be punished, accusing cooperative members for the shortage of raw materials, housing, etc. The members themselves insisted on easing taxation.³¹ Even more heated debates unfolded at meetings of commissions of the Supreme Council.

On 11 May 1988, after making his report, representatives of the farmers attacked S. Sitaryan. The collective farmers (*kolkhozniks*) refused to accept the provision of the draft law according to which the collective farms were required to participate in "voluntary public procurement". It was its "voluntary" nature that caused the protest. Chairman of the Commission of the Agro-Industrial Complex of the Council of the Union A. F. Ponomarev objected:

Ponomarev – The farms will not be willing to plant crops.

²⁹ The materials for the delegate of the XIX all-Union Conference of the CPSU, M., 1988, p. 96.

³⁰ The materials for the delegate of the XVIII all-Union Conference of the CPSU, M., 1990, p. 162.

³¹ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection P-7523, Finding aid 145, File 889.

Sitaryan – If they don't plant crops there will be no income, they will not survive. Now everything changes. You're talking as you used to. Now we need to do things differently. Of course, it will be difficult. It will not be easy.

P – If you don't make them plant technical crops, tomorrow they won't plant a single hectare.

S – So we should give them a good price.

V. F. Popov, the Chairman of the Russia Kolkhoz in the Kalachevsky District, Volgograd Region and member of the Union Council of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, stated that the farms did not have to supply their products and accused those that drafted the law, that they "want to hide the plan behind words, by any means."³² Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Estonia and also the Minister of Agriculture H.T. Veldi proposed abandoning the concept of collective farming once there were cooperatives.³³ In the violent disputes that erupted in the Supreme Soviet, everything was discussed except Article 5 of the law on cooperation, according to which "cooperative unions (associations) have the right to establish self-supporting branches or regional cooperative banks. (...) Under a contract with a cooperative or union which issues securities (shares), the bank may take responsibility for carrying out operations connected with the sale, return and payment of income on securities".

The emergence of commercial banks rapidly changed the financial situation in the country. On the eve of perestroika in the USSR, there were three banks – Gosbank (State Bank), Stroybank (Bank of Construction) and Vneshtorgbank (Foreign Trade Bank). After the banking system was reformed, there were now suddenly six banks: Gosbank, Vneshekonombank, Agroprombank (the Bank of Agricultural Industry), Promstroibank (Bank of Construction Industry), Zhilsotsbank (Bank of Public Housing) and Sberbank (Savings Bank). The old banks did not carry out – at least domestically – economic activities in which money itself acted as a commodity. Banks distributed the funds in accordance with the state administration's instructions. Industrial enterprises did possess money, but there was another difficulty – in every institution in the USSR, money was distributed according to balance sheet accounts. Limits were set for payroll, capital repairs and construction (with a "subcontracting limit"), routine maintenance, purchases of furniture, equipment, all accounted for separately. There was money for "exchange coverage", distributed by groups of currencies – from socialist country currencies to hard currencies. The state banking system and many inspectors kept an eye out and violently suppressed any unauthorised transfers of money from one balance sheet account to another.

With the advent of commercial banks, everything changed. Businesses and ministries that had been transformed into corporations were permitted to transfer their money to commercial banks. Their number grew rapidly. On 1 January 1989, there were 41. Just six months later, on 1 July 1989, there were 143, including 54 cooperatives. By mid-1991, they were more than 1500.³⁴ The first to appear was Soyuz Bank in Chimkent (Shymkent), Kazakhstan. On August 26, the second to appear was Patent Leningrad Bank, followed by Moscow Cooperative Bank and Credit-Moscow, not to mention later Inkombank (12th),

³² The Russian State Economy Archive. Ф-7523. Finding aid 145. File 885. Leaf 121-122.

³³ The Russian State Economy Archive. Ф-7523. Finding aid 145. File 885. Leaf 136.

³⁴ Kirсанов R. G., *The Restructuring (Perestroika). "New Thinking" in the Banking System of the USSR*. M., 2011. p. 231.

AvtoVAZbank (13th), Avtobank (16th), Aeroflot Bank (20th), and Menatep (25th).³⁵ All large businesses and agencies created their own banks. Enterprises that were financed by the state budget, transferred a part of their funds to the new commercial banks. From there, they came back, "laundered" of their financial classification. At that time, enterprises engaged in granting real loans to commercial banks cared little about receiving interest on the deposits placed in these banks. For them, it was important to save money and use it independently. But commercial banks, when lending to the nascent cooperative commercial structures, were already demanding interest on their loans.

Cashing – the conversion of non-cash money into full-weight cash, became a source of income for commercial banks. For cashing, commercial banks received 10-12% of the total amount, however, as the number of banks and competition among them grew, this profit was reduced to 2-3%. Later, their main source of income became transactions related to buying and selling currencies. Money evolved from a means of payment for goods and the price of credits submitted by state-owned banks was symptomatic in this sense. In 1990, loans were given at an interest rate of under 1%, while by 1991, this number was up to 15%. Agroprombank brought loans to the level of 20-24%, including loans taken out earlier.³⁶

The establishment of commercial banks was qualitatively a new phenomenon, which denied the old planning-and-distribution-based financial system. Simultaneously, the destruction of another component of the Soviet financial system came about – its centralism. Republican banks appeared in the USSR republics and later in its autonomous regions, which quite successfully attempted to pursue policy independent of the Central Bank of the USSR. The previous "On state enterprises" law was revised. It was replaced by "On enterprises in the USSR" in 1990, which granted more rights to enterprise owners (both state and collective owners). Quietly, without any discussion in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR adopted "Regulations on joint-stock companies" on 25 December 1990.

All of this had its consequences. The previous establishment was falling apart right before everyone's eyes. General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev, outraged by the inefficiency of the party apparatus, pounced at an official during a meeting of the Politburo, who had refused to install gas at the railway station of a village in Siberia "And what was the response? Let the Politburo install gas. Listen, why do we keep such bureaucrats? (...) We don't need such personnel. **We should destroy this establishment!** We have grown bums who cater only to higher officials and remain absolutely deaf to simple people."³⁷

Gorbachev was unaware of the fact that based on the decision of the Politburo, which was published in the newspapers: gas was not to be installed, funds were required for large and expensive work, money should have been budgeted and that he, the Secretary General, as a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, was responsible for the same state budget that doomed railway transportation, and for the desperate position of railway towns, not to mention who the establishment was comprised of

³⁵ Berger M. The First Banks, or the Origin of Money, *Izvestiya*, 11 April 1995, No. 66.

³⁶ Kirsanov R. G., *The Restructuring (Perestroika)*.. p. 14.

³⁷ AP RF. Working Record of Meetings of the Politburo. 1988 pp. 370–371.

and how it operated. The reaction of the party apparatus to Gorbachev's innovations was adequate. He started to be quietly hated, since people saw the source of instability to be the activities of the Secretary General... and stability had been a major achievement of the apparatus since the Khrushchev-Brezhnev era. Positions in the state party apparatus began to lose their attractiveness. The position of the chairman of a bank's board of directors turned out to be more profitable and safer than the post of secretary of a CPSU district committee.

The higher echelons of the state apparatus were also involved in the process of enriching the establishment, although legally, no privatisation in the Soviet Union occurred. These processes were only rarely discussed publicly.³⁸ But in practice, due to the lack of development of Soviet legislation, the possession and disposal of property in fact turned into ownership of property. For new owners, it became important to enshrine the actual possession in law as legally registered ownership. These new owners quickly became wealthy. Through their cooperatives, raw materials such as oil, aluminium, diamonds and timber were sold abroad.

The CPSU, which possessed the party's property and finances, was also involved in business activities. Using "Komsomol" banks, the party's money was transferred and invested in businesses in the Soviet Union and abroad. The CPSU Central Committee was in a hurry to conclude commercial transactions using its connections in Eastern European countries. On 16 February 1990, the Administrative Department of the CPSU Central Committee addressed the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. They proposed to explore issues related to the organisation of profitable production and business activities of Communist Party enterprises and institutions. The Administrative Department stated that: "in order to prepare proposals on this issue it would be considered necessary to also study the experience accumulated by a number of Communist and Workers parties. In particular, the communists of Italy, France, Austria, Greece and some other countries effectively use a variety of forms of organising economic activity. These parties have a network of private companies and businesses, the proceeds of which are used to finance party activity."

On 20 April 1990, the Administrative Department requested permission to buy shares and invest in the acquisition of 15% of the Joint-Stock Innovative Construction Bank in Budapest. "I believe it would be appropriate to entrust the Administrative Department and the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee along with Vnesheconombank of the USSR to hold talks with Hungarian representatives related to a possible placement of the Communist Party's funds in bank in Budapest." At the same time, there were hundreds, if not thousands of requests coming from regional Party committees asking for permission to incorporate health resorts, publishing houses, garages, buildings (owned by them), etc. into joint-stock companies. Another interesting subject was the creation of a system where financial experts from the KGB, employees of foreign trade departments, the staff of the Administrative Department of the CPSU Central Committee and others,

³⁸ Perhaps the only time that discussion took place was in 1990 at the Third Extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies, when the sale of a dozen brand new tanks through Antey Cooperative caused some scandal. According to some deputies, this deal was supervised personally by Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR N. I. Ryzhkov and his deputies.

were involved in the creation of a network of companies and banks, with investment in shares and financing "firms of friends" across Europe, in order to save the Party's money.

The people of the establishment – whether economic, state-related, or party-related – had lost their dependence on their master, the Central Committee apparatus. The old ideology of communism with its denial of private property collapsed; was killed inside its citadel – the party apparatus. Abandoning the establishment was no longer a tragedy, as it had been before. To the contrary, positions such as chairman of the board of a bank, factory shareholder or publishing house owner were more tempting than working as the head of a department or regional committee. This new ownership was alluring, but it demanded legal protection. Unexpectedly, these aspirations coincided with the desire of the majority of citizens to have their own property and get rid of the dictatorship of the Communist regime. The historical circle came to a close and the political system that denied property ownership collapsed. Among its gravediggers was the "new class", the previous establishment, which would successfully transform into the old and well-known strata – the capitalist class. For this reason, there were no defenders of establishment values in August 1991.

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Public and Private Hate Speech in Poland

Introduction

"Words can be like tiny doses of arsenic: they are swallowed unnoticed, appear to have no effect, and then after a little time the toxic reaction sets in after all," wrote Victor Klemperer in his study of the language of the Third Reich (Klemperer 1946/2000: 15-16). The importance of language for effective persuasion has been acknowledged by the teachers of rhetoric and orators since the age of antiquity. In modern times, there were both politicians who practiced deception through language for political or other gains, and also those who studied the effects of language-based manipulation. Among the most profound research on the mechanisms and effects of propaganda, one could name the writings of George Orwell, Friedrich Hayek, or Michał Głowiński. In this paper, we focus on one particularly disturbing aspect of propaganda: the use of hate speech. The reason for this choice of topic is the unprecedented explosion of populism all over the world, and the spread of perhaps its strongest weapon – hate through political and social fearmongering and use of what Klemperer referred to as 'poisonous language'.

Both political discourse in general and political propaganda in particular, tend to use a number of linguistic mechanisms in order to maximize the way they affect their target audiences and stir up hostility towards certain minorities. The most effective techniques, proven throughout history, include stereotyping for the purpose of singling out individuals or groups as the proverbial "other" and, making that "other" out to be the scapegoat (cf. Stroińska 1998), as well as *ad hominem* attacks and redefining the meaning of certain keywords.

This paper attempts to look at recent changes in the Polish public discourse and discuss the changes that make it appear more violent and offensive, both at the lexical level and in terms of discourse patterns. We focus on political discourse that expresses nega-

tive emotions and, in particular, that found on Internet *hejt* forums. We compare the Polish Internet language of *hejt* with similar phenomena finding their way into the English language media discourse in recent years. Based on our previous research on political propaganda and discourse regarding minorities (Stroińska & Popovic 1998, Drzazga et al. 2012), this paper looks specifically at the use of lexical means, as well as discourse level phenomena in the Polish political discourse concerning the opposition, as well as ethnic, sexual and religious minorities.

The power of words

In 1944, Friedrich Hayek wrote that "the most efficient technique [of persuasion] is to use the old words but change their meaning... (Hayek 1944: 117). Victor Klemperer, in a diary kept during World War II, expressed a similar opinion with relation to the propaganda of the Third Reich: "...the most powerful influence [of Nazism] was [...] not achieved by things which one had to absorb by conscious thought or conscious emotions. [...] Instead, Nazism permeated the flesh and blood of the people through single words, idioms and sentence structures which were imposed on them in million repetitions and taken on board mechanically and unconsciously. (Victor Klemperer 1947/2000: 15). Klemperer stressed the importance of repetition. As the popular saying goes: a lie repeated often enough becomes the truth. This statement, variously attributed to Lenin or Goebbels, simply sums up modern era propaganda and it has never been as true as it is now with the spread of social media.

The increasingly populist political ideologies and social movements, and, most recently, the influx of refugees from North Africa and the Middle East to Europe, have all been affecting political discourse and testing many of the core values and principles declared by Polish society. Nevertheless, in the context of Polishness and the declared adherence to Christian values, as well as the strong influence of the Catholic Church, it is surprising to see, for example, no moral obligation to aid those who are less fortunate and in dire need of assistance. When in 2015, the Civic Platform government agreed to accept a number of Syrian refugees according to the quota system proposed by the European Union, Polish public opinion polls showed that 21% of the country's population was opposed to admitting refugees to Poland (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej CBOS, May 2015). The result was not surprising because of the general mistrust towards people of different ethnic, racial or religious background in a country that, due to losses suffered during World War II, became ethnically homogeneous. The October 2015 general election brought to power Law and Justice, an openly nationalistic right-wing party, who ran their election campaign based on anti-refugee and anti-European Union sentiments. It must be admitted that Poles were never particularly enthusiastic about the idea of accepting refugees from the war-torn Middle East because of fear of the unknown 'others' who would bring with them a different religion and foreign customs. However, under the Law and Justice government, these xenophobic sentiments transformed into a pronounced rejection of the very idea of letting in any refugees, even children. The results of a poll conducted in May 2016 show that in just one year the percentage of those in Poland

opposed to accepting refugees had climbed to 55% (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej CBOS May 2016). The anti-immigrant policies of the new government were soon accompanied by criticism of those social groups and organizations that were perceived as not supportive of the newly elected government and its banner policy of "good change". The ruling party, with its parliamentary majority, swiftly took control of the state-owned media and started to shape the flow of information. With the unprecedented support of the Catholic clergy and its media network – in particular radio and TV channels – the Law and Justice government is now responsible for mass media that transmit racist, xenophobic and misogynistic messages to Polish audiences, not only with impunity but, in fact, with tacit approval and encouragement. As we shall see, some (albeit not all) of the hate speech available in the public sphere is based on the use of so-called "fighting words" – aggressive and offensive expressions. Other messages need to be deconstructed or their interpretation needs to be assembled by the audience, thus making it complicit in producing the offensive meaning. The poison of this language cannot be ignored because of "the toxic reaction" that follows (Klemperer 2000: 15-16).

What is hate speech?

According to the American Constitution, freedom of speech allows free expression of any thoughts, no matter how offensive they may be to some audiences. The First Amendment clearly states that "Congress shall make no law [...] abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press" (Amendment 1 - Freedom of Expression and Religion, U.S. Constitution). Thus, hate speech is protected in the United States, unless it can be demonstrated that it has been used to incite to commit unlawful actions (c.f. Ruane, 2014). Canada, on the other hand, like the European Union, adopted the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Updated in 2000 in Rome, the Convention spells out in Article 1 (pp. 48-49) the general prohibition of discrimination. It reads:

1. The enjoyment of any right set forth by law shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.
2. No one shall be discriminated against by any public authority on any ground such as those mentioned in paragraph 1.

In this context, hate speech could be defined as language use that contains aggressive expressions – the so-called "fighting" words – that are used to attack people based on the above listed "prohibited grounds". The "prohibited grounds of discrimination" are features that are mostly independent of a person's will and therefore require legal protection. In Canada, the concept of "hate speech" is used as a legal term and hate crimes are prosecuted. In the US, however, hate speech is protected by the First Amendment, which ensures the free exercise of the freedom of speech. Butt (2015) argues that the "Canadian freedom of expression law, like so many things Canadian, embodies compromise. In the United States, even the most hateful, virile and destructive speech is constitutionally protected. In many other countries, expression is suppressed if politically problematic. We walk between those extremes." Despite different legal frameworks, most people on both sides of the US-Canada border would likely agree that hateful language constitutes a form

of violence and may be used to further incite physical violence against others. The fact that hate speech would not normally be prosecuted in the US explains why it was possible for the 2016 US presidential election to turn so nasty. But "legal" is not always the same as "acceptable"; there is a growing opposition to the hateful and aggressive tone introduced recently into American politics and the popular support for demonstrations organized by groups such as "United Against Hate" shows that many Americans feel alienated by this message of hate. The United Against Hate group declares on its website: "When dangerous and divisive leaders have come to power in the past, it has been in part because those of goodwill failed to speak out for themselves or their fellow citizens. Some of us come from the groups Trump has attacked. Some of us don't. But as history has shown, it's often only a matter of time before the "other" becomes "me" (<http://unitedagainsthate.com>). The group describes itself as united in its opposition to violence, sexism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, and fascism.

The Polish situation, on the other hand, shows that what is illegal may become acceptable if it meets with the approval or acquiescence of the authorities. As part of the European Union, Poland is obliged to follow EU conventions that prohibit discrimination, and, as a consequence, also makes inciting hatred a criminal offence. The Polish legal system still does not have proper regulations regarding some aspects of discrimination and, for example, does not include sexual orientation in the protected category. Nevertheless, discrimination based on race, skin colour, ethnicity or religion is against the law. However, very little is done to prevent it and even less is done to prosecute hate speech when it occurs.

Waldorn (2012) points out that the very presence of hate speech in the domain of public life harms all those who come into contact with it. When graffiti proclaims that some group of people is not welcome in a given neighbourhood, it affects (albeit in different ways) anyone who sees it. Those who belong to the targeted minority may feel threatened and insecure; those who oppose the presence of the targeted group in their community may feel vindicated in their views; and those who have nothing against the said group may feel that they themselves might in fact become a targeted minority because of their sympathies.

What is *hejt*?

To be fair, we must mention here that the widespread use and omnipresence of social networks, internet news sites and various other forms of computer-mediated communication makes it very difficult for authorities to monitor hate speech online and to bring hate speech perpetrators to justice. In May 2016, Facebook, Twitter, Google, YouTube and Microsoft signed a special code of conduct to work against the use of hate speech on their respective platforms. They were to eliminate instances of hate speech within 24 hours. This joint action was in response to the demands of the European Union to fight online hate, in particular following the terrorist attacks in Brussels in March 2016 and in Paris in November 2015. In the words of Věra Jourová, the EU Commissioner for Justice, this agreement could be seen as "an important step forward to ensure that the internet remains a place of free

and democratic expression, [...] where European values and laws are respected." (European Commission press release, 31 May 2016).

The Polish word *hejt* is very often perceived as equivalent to the English term *hate* because the former clearly derives from the latter. A closer look, however, shows that modern Polish has two words to refer to hatred: *nienawiść* and *hejt*. The Polish verb *nienawidzić* and the noun *nienawiść* serve comparable semantic functions to the English *hate*. The recently introduced noun *hejt*, on the other hand, refers to offensive language used on the Internet. As presented in Niepytalska-Osiecka's (2014) morphological analysis, the neologism *hejt* has already been adapted to fit the Polish morphological system; it appears in all grammatical cases and constitutes the base for numerous derivatives (e.g. *hejtować* or *hejcić* – to hate, *hejter* – a hater).

Hejt, or verbal aggression online, is not a new phenomenon, but it has become significantly more visible in the ever-growing sphere of public media and social networks. Particularly aggressive instances of *hejt* can be seen in the comments sections of online news articles, even those of respectable news websites. Erjavec and Kovacic (2012) analysed Internet hate speech and found that those engaging in online commenting could be divided into several types. Particularly interesting are what the authors labelled 'players': Erjavec and Kovacic then describe the behaviour patterns of players and observe that "[b]y starting to use hate speech, someone wants to rag the other, who then gets back at him or her in the same manner, and then the third one joins, and so on [...] they just want to have fun by humiliating others." Players do not seem interested in the issue being discussed. *Hejt*, therefore, appears to be an act of linguistic impoliteness, defined as "(an attempt) to exercise power over one's interlocutors whilst simultaneously ensuring that one's interlocutors are (overly) offended in the process" (Bousfield 2008: 141). This very specific purpose of *hejt* is clear, as most of the aggression is directed at other users of the website and has nothing or very little to do with the articles that the comments are linked to.

Challenges of measuring *hejt*?

The most commonly used definition of hate speech comes from the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, Recommendation No. R (97) 20, which states: "the term 'hate speech' shall be understood as covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin" (Weber 2008: 3). Weber further observes that *hate speech* defined in such a way "covers comments which are necessarily directed against a person or a particular group of persons" (Weber 2008: 3). As mentioned in the previous section, the aim of Internet *hejt* is often to trigger further aggression and does not target a specific person or a group of people. Therefore, it appears that Internet *hejt* only partially fits the definition of hate speech.

With no clear definition of *hejt*, identifying or prosecuting instances of it can prove difficult. The level of difficulty is clearly seen from one attempt to measure the effects of *hejt* or, to be more precise, to measure the culture of offending others on the Internet which was made in *Internetowa kultura obrażania* (Krejtz and Kolenda 2012), a study conducted

in two stages. First, the participating Internet users completed a questionnaire which provided the researchers with a general overview of what the participants saw as hate speech on the Polish Internet. In the second stage, trained linguists assessed the level of offensiveness of some chosen Internet entries. This laborious project highlighted the specific linguistic nature of Internet communication. It was observed that the analysed samples of online writing closely resembled spoken language. The researchers also pointed out that when Internet users perceived the language used online as a relatively colloquial variety of Polish, they were more likely to assume more freedom to post contents breaking the norms of written language.

On the surface, the results of the analysis can be seen as very encouraging: they suggest that the use of hate speech on the Polish Internet is quite rare. Participants considered 97% of the analysed samples as being focused on the content of the discussion, not on offending other users or specific groups of people (Krejtz 2012: 28). Aggressive tone and offensive words were found in only 5% of posts (Jonak 2012: 58). However, Krejtz points out that more research is needed, due to the fact that the hate speech may be defined in a much broader way than the definition used for the study (Krejtz 2012: 28). Most importantly, the study is now five years old and the use of *hejt* on Polish websites has increased significantly.

Polish studies conducted by Krejtz and Kolenda (2012) and Krejtz (2012) demonstrate some of the major complexities of Internet hate speech and also illustrate the challenges of measuring its effects. What can be regarded as *hejt* is not necessarily based on lexical choices or the high frequency of "fighting words." While overt aggression, vulgarity or negative emotional tone of expression may be easier to notice for readers, there are also all kinds of more subtle shades of *hejt* that may be left unnoticed by participants in a linguistic study. Such participants may be unaware of words or comments that are very offensive for those targeted by online hate speech.

Polish hejt: lexical phenomena

In the process of gathering preliminary data for our study, we noticed a disturbing trend of using very strong fighting words (in the literal sense) and expressions, in contexts which did not deal with physical violence. For example, we have found many examples of the verb *miażdżyć* (to crush) or even *masakrować* (to massacre) used to mean "to criticise", as illustrated below (1):

- (1) *Prezydent Duda „zmasakrowany” przez... Lecha Kaczyńskiego. Jeden cytat, którym były prezydent miażdży swojego ucznia.* ('President Duda "massacred" by Lech Kaczyński. One quote with which the former president crushes his disciple'). (<http://natemat.pl/164101,prezydent-duda-zmasakrowany-przez-lecha-kaczynskiego-jeden-cytat-ktorym-byly-prezydent-miazdzy-swojego-ucznia>)

The verb *masakrować* and the related noun *masakra* are popular slang expressions of criticism or dissatisfaction in Polish. The online Polish *Urban Dictionary of Slang and Colloquialisms* reports the noun *masakra* as an expression of exaggeration of a problem or issue, illustrating its usage with the following example:

- (2) *Ale miałem dziś dzień, **masakra!*** ('What a day it was, a massacre!')
(<http://www.miejski.pl/slowo-Masakra>)

The fact that this slang expression found its way into the journalistic discourse of mainstream media can be interpreted as a symptom of the general rise in verbal aggression that society is willing to tolerate. As noted above, the colloquial nature of the terms *masakrować* and *masakra* may obscure their violent and aggressive power, and their offensive nature. However, the fact that speakers no longer register the brutality of the language they are exposed to or use themselves does not diminish the problem of verbal aggression.

To better understand the usage of these aggressive expressions, we used the National Corpus of Polish and the Monco PL search engine. The National Corpus of Polish is the largest corpus of the Polish language available and its creators continuously strive to maintain a representative sample of the current Polish language. However, spoken language constitutes only 10% of the corpus (Pędzik, 2012: 38), and so it may lack some of the common colloquial expressions that are mostly used in face-to-face and online conversations. For the current study, the biggest disadvantage of the corpus was the fact that the newest texts included in it were from 2012; thus, the most recent developments of the Polish language in general, and the phenomenon of the virtual explosion of online *hejt*, could not be observed. Monco PL, on the other hand, is updated daily, therefore it shows the newest trends in Polish language usage. Comparing the results obtained from these two search engines shows significant differences in the usage of fighting words, replacing direct objects with human referents.

The first verb that seems to appear very frequently in most recent Polish media debates and online *hejt* is the previously mentioned *miażdżyć* (to crush). A search of *miażdżyć* in the National Corpus of Polish, using the PELCRA search engine (Pędzik 2012), suggests that this word is used most often in fiction writing. When used in non-fiction texts, the verb seems to be used in its literal meaning, as illustrated in example 3.

- (3) *Tir zmiażdżył skodę, zabijając dwóch mężczyzn.* ('An eighteen-wheeler crushed the Skoda, killing two men.')(Super Express, 2006)

Using Monco PL and viewing the most recent search results first, we find examples that illustrate the usage of the verb *miażdżyć* with a non-literal meaning, as in examples 4-6.

- (4) *Prezes Kaczyński zmiażdżył infantylną propagandę PO w swoim wystąpieniu.* ('Chairman Kaczyński crushed the PO's [Platforma Obywatelska – Civic Platform political party] infantile propaganda in his speech.')(User's comment, wprost.pl, 16 September 2015)
- (5) *[...] Lis znów miażdży obóz rządzący.* ([...] 'Lis again crushes the ruling camp.')(tok.fm, 22 January 2016)
- (6) *Kukiz miażdży Nowoczesną i Platformę* ('Kukiz crushes [the two opposition parties] Nowoczesna and Platforma.')(wpolityce.pl, 21 January 2016)

The usage of another verb that took on a new and violent meaning, *zaorać* ('to plow'), follows a similar pattern. While the National Corpus of Polish consistently shows the word used in its literal meaning (example 7), on Monco PL, one may find examples of the recent semantic shift of the word (examples 8 and 9).

- (7) *Można na polu niczego nie zasiać, wystarczy zaorać.* ('You don't have to plant anything [in the field], all you have to do is plow.') (Polityka, 2008)
- (8) *Jak zaorać posta Platformy podczas dyskusji?* ('How to plow a Civic Platform MP during a discussion?') (P. Witwicki, 300polityka.pl, 3 January 2016)
- (9) *Ale prezes wszystkich prezesów Jarosław Kaczyński postanowił politycznie zaorać PSL i zaloty odrzucić* ('But the boss of all bosses, Jarosław Kaczyński, decided to politically plow PSL [party] and rejected their courtship.') (P. Gadzinowski, onet.pl 20 November 2015).

It appears that the shift in the meaning of these verbs points to a more general trend of the brutalization of the Polish language. This process has been a cause for concern for the Polish Language Council since at least 2007, when the Council discussed this issue of "brutalization of the language of public debates" during its 25th plenary meeting (Rada Języka Polskiego 2007). Sentences 10 and 11 provide additional examples of this tendency, utilising expressions 'to run over someone with a steam roller' and 'run over someone'.

- (10) *PiS właśnie rozjechał walcem polską szkołę* ('PiS [Law and Justice] just ran over the Polish school system with a steam roller.') (User's comment, wp.pl, 9 January 2017)
- (11) *Danuta Wąteśa ostro przejechała się po Andrzeju Dudzie i jego żonie.* ('Danuta Wąteśa brutally ran over Andrzej Duda and his wife.') (natemat.pl, 12 October 2016)

Of course, the growing aggression of newspaper headlines and online comments is not just a Polish phenomenon. The recent debate concerning the privatization of garbage disposal in Toronto was discussed in an article in the *Toronto Sun*, entitled:

- (12) "Mayor John Tory trashes Bob Rae over privatization comments." (Toronto Sun, 22 January 2017)

We see here the same process of replacing a prototypically inanimate direct object with a human referent. This gives the line an aggressive and violent interpretation, somewhat softened by the pun based on using the verb *to trash* in a discussion about garbage.

Before drawing any conclusions, we must note that our investigation of how to measure and evaluate the linguistic aspects of *hejt* revealed the weaknesses of corpus linguistics methodology in the investigation of Internet hate speech. The National Corpus of Polish lacks the most current linguistic data, therefore no conclusions about the recent development of the Polish language can be made on the basis of the frequency of words or expressions. On the other hand, the reliability of Monco PL should be approached with caution, as there is no information on the methods of selecting texts included in the corpus. Thus the representativeness of the search results may be called into question. These

corpora provide a tool to find evidence for language developments that have been identified by the researchers beforehand, as was done in the current study. However, they do not provide means to define or capture the actual nature of Internet *hejt*.

Ad hominem attacks

Personal attacks are a form of passing judgment, and the judgmental nature of the discourse used by the new government in Poland is one of its most striking features. Judgement and evaluation, instead of description, have already been pointed out by Michał Głowiński as characteristic features of communist Newspeak (Głowiński 1991: 38). The same can be observed with regard to the language used by media that have found themselves under government control after the October 2015 election. The mechanism of putting people into labelled categories (e.g. the infamous "lesser sort of Poles" – *gorszy sort Polaków*) is a new phenomenon in the post-communist political discourse and, as such, requires a thorough analysis. Over the course of the last year, many specific groups of people became – for various reasons – targets of government criticism. Those who oppose the Law and Justice government are often collectively labelled as "communists and thieves" – an invective introduced by Jarosław Kaczyński, leader of the ruling party and *de facto* puppet master of Polish politics, though without any official government position. These "enemies" of the government include supporters of the Committee for Defence of Democracy, the European Union and its politicians, those who watch or read non-government media, refugees, people of different ethnic, religious or racial backgrounds, teachers who oppose the education system reform proposed by the government, sexual minorities, those who speak foreign languages, cyclists, vegetarians, women standing up for their right to choose, etc. One might ask: if all of those people are enemies of the government, who then constitutes its electorate?

The acquiescence of the authorities and the silent consent of the Catholic Church allows ordinary people to assume that calling people names (and other forms of verbal aggression) is acceptable. A particular group of haters actively courted by the government are football "fans", who are allowed to use offensive slogans during games and in online forums with the tacit approval of the authorities. An example of this was a banner used during a match in Warsaw in May 2016, where certain opposition parties and journalists were warned: "For you there will be gallows, not whistles." This could be interpreted as a direct death threat or a threat to the personal safety of the targeted individuals, and yet no action was taken against those who produced and displayed the banner. On the contrary: there was an outcry of support for these football fans, even in the government-sponsored official media, as well as a wave of internet *hejt* blaming the said journalists for spreading lies about patriotic football supporters. Only opposition newspapers, such as *Gazeta Wyborcza*, commented on the punishable nature of such threats and suggested that they should be reported to the authorities ("Skandaliczny transparent na stadionie Legii: 'KOD, GW, będą dla was szubienice.'" *Gazeta Wyborcza*. May 8, 2016, <http://wyborcza.pl/1,75398,20040440,skandaliczny-transparent-na-stadionie-legii-kod-gw-beda.html>).

The level of aggression and vulgarity of such online discussions is high and online comments are mostly aimed at offending others, rather than commenting on the issue at hand. This leads us to believe that many of the comments come from professional Internet *hejters*, the so-called “players” – i.e. people who are paid to write comments and are not especially invested in any particular political option. The very phenomenon of Internet *hejt* for hire is highly disturbing as it is difficult, maybe even impossible, for most readers to distinguish between authentic political arguments and the staged acting of paid *hejters*. The very fact of being constantly exposed to such high levels of verbal aggression affects audiences of online discussions and readers of comments sections. It is difficult to understand why so little effort is put into moderating such websites: offensive comments remain in place months after they have been written. The fact that hate speech affects everyone, as Waldorn (2012) points out, no matter whether they are supporters or enemies of its target, is a very strong argument for better control of online discussions.

“Some assembly required”

Another interesting phenomenon that we are observing in hate speech, both in online *hejt* and in slogans and banners displayed at rallies and demonstrations, is leaving it to the reader/hearer to actually put the message together and decode the somewhat-hidden meaning. This is also clearly not just a Polish phenomenon. In November 2016, a photo taken by a Reuters reporter at a Donald Trump rally in Minnesota went viral. The picture shows a man in a black T-shirt with the text: “Rope, tree, journalist: some assembly required.” It has been left to the intended reader to put the message together and come to the conclusion that journalists should be lynched; hanged from trees. Apparently, the idea for that slogan goes back about a decade (c.f. Zadrozny 2016), indicating that this is not a new phenomenon. However, the interactivity of political and commercial slogans has certainly been gaining popularity in recent years. Examples of Polish interactive political slogans can also be quoted here. In September 2015, during a football match between Lechia Gdańsk and Korona Kielce, a banner could be seen, which read: “Witajcie w piekle zbłąkane owieczki 12.09.1683 Jan III Sobieski 2015” (“Welcome to hell, lost sheep. 12.09.1683 Jan III Sobieski 2015”). For Poles, this is a reasonably clear reference to King Jan Sobieski’s victory over the Muslim Turks at Vienna in 1683. The intended interpretation suggests that Muslim refugees who enter Poland would be welcomed the way King Sobieski welcomed the Turkish armies at Vienna. (*Dziennik Baltycki*. 16 września 2015¹.) A similar sentiment could be seen in another banner seen at an anti-immigrant rally: “W 1683 pomogliśmy Muzułmanom. Pomożemy i teraz” (“In 1683, we helped Muslims. We’ll help them now, too”). Here again, one needs to know the significance of 1683 – the year of the victory at Vienna – in order to decode the meaning of the slogan. Yet another slogan seen at an anti-immigrant demonstration “invited” refugees claiming that “we already have the infrastructure” (*Infrastrukturę już mamy*),

¹ “Lechia Gdańsk ukarana przez Komisję Ligi za transparent” *Dziennik Baltycki*. 16 września 2015. Retrieved on December 10, 2016 from <http://www.dziennikbaltycki.pl/artykul/8015765,lechia-gdansk-ukarana-przez-komisje-ligi-za-transparent.id.t.html>.

with the intended message that the Nazi concentration camps and possibly other detention centres from the past could be used to keep the immigrants in isolation from Polish society.

Writing of metaphors, Cohen (1978) suggested that the very fact of engaging jointly in the process of meaning-making and interpretation instils a feeling of closeness between the speaker and the receiver. Being able to figure out the implicatures and arrive at the indirect interpretation of a metaphorical or other figurative expression, assumes a certain level of familiarity and mutual understanding. Thus, the hearer or reader of the indirect message becomes an accomplice in producing the intended interpretation, even if they disagree with the message. This may be of particular importance and usefulness in political discourse, where the speaker's goal is to attract an audience. One could compare this to the situation of someone hearing a racist joke and being able to understand what makes it funny. Even though he or she may be offended by the views of the speaker, by seeing the point the joke was supposed to make, they become an accomplice in deriding the racial minority. Understanding a hateful message used by another person makes the hearer or reader share that person's point of view, if only for an instant (cf. Stroińska & Cecchetto, 2014: 232).

Classifying like insects...

In his "Notes on Nationalism" (1945), George Orwell suggested that one of the defining features of nationalism was "the habit of assuming that human beings can be classified like insects and that whole blocks of millions or tens of millions of people can be confidently labelled 'good' or 'bad'". He then explained that "*nationalism is not to be confused with patriotism*. Both words are normally used in so vague a way that any definition is liable to be challenged, but one must draw a distinction between them, since two different and even opposing ideas are involved." While patriotism is love and devotion to a country with no desire to wish any ill to others, the goal of nationalism is securing more power for one's group of people or one's country *at the expense* of others. If one's supremacy necessarily hinges on the inferiority of others, language is used to put down potential competitors, label them as enemies, and take away their humanity. This is, in our view, the extreme stage of *ad hominem* argumentation and hate speech. History demonstrates how this dangerous strategy was used in the past.

Both Russian communist and Nazi propaganda used medical language to create metaphors that described those who were deemed undesirable as parasites, pests, virulent bacteria, diseased, etc. Dehumanising language was an important factor in the Kosovo war (Stroińska & Popovic 1999). When a group of people is perceived as vermin, dangerous parasites, a threat to health or even the life of one's nation, destroying the enemy becomes an action of cleansing; elimination of a health risk. It is no longer a question of morality, but of hygiene.

Already in October 2015, this language began to appear in the public speeches of Jarosław Kaczyński, when he said that refugees may bring parasites and diseases with them that had not been seen in Europe in a long time. He suggested that there have already been cases of cholera on the Greek islands and dysentery in Vienna. He then added that refugees may be the carriers of "various kinds of parasites, protozoans, which may not be dangerous

in the organisms of those people, but may be dangerous here. This is not intended to discriminate against anyone, but it must be checked out." (Kaczyński on 12 October 2015, at an election meeting in Maków Mazowiecki, reported by *Gazeta Wyborcza* on 13 October 2015; Polish version: 'Są już przecież objawy pojawienia się chorób bardzo niebezpiecznych i dawno niewidzianych w Europie. Cholera na wyspach greckich, dyzenteria w Wiedniu. Różnego rodzaju pasożyty, pierwotniaki, które nie są groźne w organizmach tych ludzi, a mogą tutaj być groźne. To nie oznacza, żeby kogoś dyskryminować, ale sprawdzić trzeba.')

For anyone aware of the mechanisms of hate propaganda, this is a very dangerous development. Atrocities usually start with words used to strip the enemy of their humanity. Once this happens, people will stand by and observe the elimination of the enemy with the indifference of someone watching the extermination of bedbugs.

Conclusions

Our analysis of the use of language in present-day media debates in Poland points to a marked shift in Poland's political discourse. We observe a tendency towards stereotyping, based on those characteristics of individuals that are independent of volition and not a matter of choice. The language used in public debates is markedly rude and unapologetically offensive. It spreads from the topic of ethnic and other minorities, to political and public discourse in general. Hatred and fear are the strongest of emotions and, as such, they play an important role in the creation of media stories that capture the attention. Human nature needs to impose some kind of order on the surrounding chaos of social and political reality. People need a narrative; a story that would tell them who is good and who is bad. Unfortunately, Internet *hejters* provide that narrative and the tacit approval of hate speech by the authorities allows this verbal aggression to spread in an uncontrolled manner. We believe that this shift is a very strong indication of a dangerous change in social attitudes. In the past, such changes led to violent conflicts. We see similarities in the use of stereotyping characteristic for ethnic conflicts in general, and we compare them to the linguistic mechanisms of ethnic and religion-based stereotyping characteristic for political discussions in Poland today. Using linguistics as a diagnostic tool, we were able to identify specific mechanisms of exploiting language for the purpose of creating propaganda which targets the political opposition and minorities.

As freedom of speech is not protected in Europe in the same way as it is in the US, hate speech should be considered a violation of social norms of behaviour and should have no place in the mainstream media. Unfortunately, since the 2015 electoral victory of the Law and Justice party, this common-sense approach no longer applies. The state controlled media regularly attack the political opposition and the opposition is outspoken in its criticism of the government. There is plenty of verbal aggression on both sides, but it is really the online comments of readers on news websites and on social network political discussions that provided the material for our study of Polish Internet hate speech. During this populist turn in world politics, it is very questionable whether – in the words of Věra Jourová – “the internet [will remain] a place of free and democratic expression, [...] [w]here European values and laws are respected.”

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AMB. MATTHEW BRYZA

UNITED STATES

***Shaking the Foundation:
the Trump Administration and NATO's East***

This is a very powerful place for me to be, here at the University of Warsaw, I am totally Polish by background, 100 percent. I was looking in front of my hotel today, at the monument to the victims of Soviet repression and the deportations, it is very powerful. I looked at all the towns that victims came from, and I thought about my grandmother's region – Sambor, She was only from a small village, but you know, it made me think that had she, like so many other Poles, not taken a very difficult decision at that time I probably would not exist, would not be here speaking before you, and the changes that this country has gone through, would have never have happened.

Fundamentally, my talk, is going to end up being optimistic, but it's going to start pessimistic, because the title is, *U.S. relations with NATO's East under Trump: Shaking the foundation*. But before that I just want to build on some other things that were said already and thank all the excellencies who are here, the ambassadors, the other members of the diplomatic and academic communities. Professor Micgiel referred to my new life outside of diplomacy. I have a joint venture with a Finnish company, Lamor Corporation, which is the world's largest oil spill response company. I am on their global board – a fantastic environmental technologies company, and it's really fun to be involved in entrepreneurial endeavor, even if it's scary, because, well, all my meager savings are on the line and I have to succeed. So, it's very nice to be back here and have a chance to think and stretch my mind in the way I did in my previous career, to be here with you in a place that my grandparents may have never been able to enter. So it's a very powerful moment for me, thank you. And also to be an opening speaker, together with Secretary of State Szczerki and with my favorite boss of all time, Ambassador Daniel Fried closing the conference. Dan taught me so much about this part of the world, which I'll get to in a moment, enabled me and my dear friend Kurt Volker, who is now the new special representative for Ukraine, to make it, to move through the State Department system, when there were all sorts of bureaucratic

obstacles. If you go back and google us, you will see we were attacked by *The Washington Post*, when we were brought to the State Department from the White House in 2005. There is a position in the State Department called DAS – Deputy Assistant Secretary. That's the first level at which things get serious, where you actually can have an impact on policy. And, we were called the baby DASes, because we were brought over at younger age than normal, thanks to Secretary Rice and Ambassador Fried, and Dan suffered because of that, inside the bureaucracy, a lot of people disliked him because he enabled Ambassador Volker and me, and then another ambassador, Mark Pekala, a Polish American guy as well who became ambassador to Latvia. I remember, Mark at that time was 50, and he said: "Boy, only in the State Department and in Washington could a 50-year-old guy be criticized for being a baby". So, it's great to be outside Washington, it really is. I live in Istanbul now, by the way.

My speech will be built on much of the powerful insights of Professor and Secretary of State Szczerki, and I'm so tempted just to react and embrace what you said. You really reminded me of the context for many other things I want to say. So you should all know a little bit more about my background, I'm much closer to the Republican side of Washington than the Democratic side. But, I am not a member of any party. I was, yes, nominated by President Obama to go to Azerbaijan, but I was always closer to the Republicans and to President Bush and Secretary Rice, so when I'm tough on President Trump in a moment, you'll know, it's not some sort of an ideological response, but it comes from discomfort with what I fear on the President's part, is a lack of what Professor Szczerki was just talking about: that geopolitics have returned to this region, and really should never have left. And the President's chief advisors, whether Secretary Tillerson or National Security Advisor McMaster or, best of all, Secretary of Defense Mattis, I think they understand this, but I think, the President does not. I don't think he has a geopolitical vision. His speech here – I'll get into little more details – said the right things, but in a strange way, in some cases, not as clearly, I would argue, as he should have said. And I think, that's because he doesn't feel it. We all in this room feel it, we feel what Professor Szczerki was saying, we feel that geopolitics was here, that the world changed in 2008, when Russia invaded and occupied Georgia, we know it. By the way I was in middle of that and during the question-and-answer session I will be happy to talk a lot about that. But I don't think President Trump feels it. So, let's start a bit pessimistic, but let's think positive just a little bit longer. If you look at where Poland was in 1989, it's in a miraculous place now. You walk around the city, and it's got so many gleaming skyscrapers, restaurants from all over the world, Poles walking down the streets are indistinguishable in appearance from people of any other European nation. Poland has really returned to Europe, thank God – geopolitically, economically, culturally, and socially. Of course, Poland is in the heart of Europe, but people forgot about that for a while. We've had some crises recently that maybe worry us – of course and obviously, Russia's invasion and occupation of Ukraine, but that also woke us up. I was running a think-tank in Tallinn for three years, a Ministry of Defense think tank called the International Centre for Defense and Security. When I arrived there in 2012, then-President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said: "Please make your primary mission to reawaken Washington to the reality that the geopolitical work in the Baltic region – extended and including Poland of course – isn't over". In Washington, it feels too much as though people think: once the Baltic states and Poland entered NATO and the European Union – the hard work was over.

And these countries came to be seen as successful, quaint, beautiful places, where there weren't any big geopolitical problems to be concerned with anymore. So, in my first day, the first paper that I reviewed for our Centre, was entitled: *How do we get NATO's attention?* At the core of the proposal – I'm sad to say what I'm about to say about myself – was that we ought to ask NATO to pre-station equipment, not so much people, but military equipment, on the territory of NATO's East. And I vetoed it, because I said: "If we say that, people in Washington, Brussels and other European capitals are going to think –you Estonians, are hysterically anti-Russian". That was a strange mood in 2012, even for me, somebody who totally believes in the never-ending significance of geopolitics. But I was reacting to what I would hear all the time in Washington, reacting to my experience in 2008, and in the leadup to 2008, as President Putin was preparing to invade Georgia. Those preparations went on for years, and when I would ring the alarm bell I would often be told that I should focus more on managing President Saakashvili, having him quiet down, and not encourage him to be more aggressive. And it drove me crazy. I got that not only from some of my bosses, but also from my fellow mediators – German, French and British, and at one point my British counterpart looked at me when I was making the point that the EU and the U.S. need to do more to deter Russian creeping aggression in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He pulled me aside at the dinner and said: "Matt, have you lost your mind? Have you lost your mind? You are just going to embolden President Saakashvili if the Europeans are pushing back in the same direction Saakashvili is asking", and I said: "No, dear friend, I'm not, I haven't lost my mind. There will come a time, when we will lose our ability to shape the events on the ground in Georgia. It's coming, and President Putin is provoking it, whether it be through intelligence operations, that resulted in assassinations, or giving Russian passports to Abkhaz and South Ossetians, or enabling smuggling through the Roki tunnel joining Russia and Georgia that undermine Georgian reforms, or launching a missile attack on a day Secretary Rice and Ambassador Fried were in Georgia, a missile attack in South Ossetia that blew up a Georgian air defense radar..." These provocations were coming, but it was an inconvenient truth for many in Washington and in Europe that Russia could possibly really be moving in this direction of aggression towards Georgia, so my assignment was constantly to get Saakashvili to calm down and let us move on with another business at that time which was recognizing Kosovo as an independent state. At one point, it was no longer possible to calm down Saakashvili, Russian troops poured into Georgia, Saakashvili ended up getting blamed by the international narrative for having launched the war. I'll go to my grave thinking it was absolutely wrong based on the intelligence I was reading, it was a provocation by Russia. Had Saakashvili been wiser, perhaps, he would not have intervened, or he would not have ordered a counterattack on Tskhinvali, which, in hindsight, would have been a wiser approach, but he reacted. And now he goes down into history as being imperious and, uncontrollable and, well, the narrative was, that somehow Russia had been provoked into attacking. But now, as Professor Szczerki said, maybe we see things in a different light, maybe we realize that was the first moment, as you said, of the world changing and the return of classical geopolitics to our extended region. The funny thing is, at that time, none other than then-President of France Nicolas Sarkozy made the same point, but he didn't really understand, I think, what he was saying. If you go back and read *The Washington Post* – I think, it was August 18 of 2008, you can google it, he had an op-ed in which he said – essentially, to paraphrase – "Okay, this is terrible what

happened, but really Russia is not going to leave Georgia, so let's move on". I'll get to that phrase "move on" in a second, in the context of Secretary Tillerson – we have to move on. But if Russia moves against Ukraine – this is in 2008 – "if Russia moves against Ukraine, then there must be serious consequences". And, okay, Russia did move against Ukraine, but everyone remembers the initial responses on our part were very soft and slow. I remember Secretary of State Kerry, in the beginning said: "Yes, this is a problematic situation, but Ukraine has not become" – how did he put it? – "an object of East-West competition between the U.S. and its NATO allies and Russia". Of course, it had, and it was obvious to everyone, right? We know what the Russian move was about – it was about freezing Ukraine in place and not letting Ukraine get on the train – as you were talking about, Professor Szczerski – as the rest of the region moves towards the West. I even talked to BBC anchor Nik Gowing at the Brussels forum and I called him on this, at that time he said – this is in February of 2014 – "Russian troops appeared to have crossed the border into Eastern Ukraine, they are having a military exercise there, that must all be some sort of a misunderstanding, it couldn't be that Russian troops moved into Ukraine by design". He said that live, on TV. So, one or two months later, I saw him in Brussels, and I asked him: "Do you realize you said that, Nick?" He said: "Did I? Did I actually say that?" I said: "Yes, you did". He said: "Oh, well, you know, just like you, I was reacting to events just as they were happening". But that was his instinct, right, that was the West's instinct, even until February 2014, when the little green men were invading Ukraine, still some of our opinion-makers simply couldn't believe that Russia would do this.

So, that gets us to today, and a good sign – we finally woke up after the Russian invasion of Ukraine and occupation. The Warsaw summit of NATO was a great moment, we finally have overcome our self-imposed limitation of not deploying NATO troops and U.S. troops to this part of the world, which is a huge strategic development. We have now a consensus on sanctions. Although not as tough as they should be, both U.S. and EU sanctions could be much tougher, still the conventional wisdom is that Putin's Russia has stepped beyond the constricts of civilized behavior of the international legal system that we all committed ourselves to after World War II. That part is good. But the foundation of East-West relations, or the foundations of our postwar environment, I think, is under threat now – across Europe and also in President Trump's vision.

So, what is that foundation? The Foundation, of course, is article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty – collective defense. Another foundation is the Bretton Woods institutions – the World Bank, the IMF to promote economic reform, modernization, and economic growth. NATO enlargement has also been one of the geopolitical tools, clearly, that helped to cement the borders of the post-World War II era in a way that protects the freedom of the people of this region, but also protects their right to decide their own historical destiny. Fundamentally, to me, that's what this is all about. From whatever country you hail, you should have the right to determine the geopolitical orientation and the civilizational location of your country, of your society, no one should dictate that to you. In the late 1980s, and early 1990s, these institutions, and these ideas really drove U.S. policy. Ambassador Fried, I hope, will talk about it when he's here. He was the one of the innovators, one of the first people, also with Chris Hill who at that time was a staffer in Congress who said: "We need to use the World bank, the IMF – not yet NATO – to provide support for the new Polish government, after 1989, to make clear that if Poland undertakes the thoroughgo-

ing revolutionary reforms of Leszek Balcerowicz at that time, and then-President Wałęsa, then the West will be there, we will be there with our financial support, our security support, our political support, because it is in our own fundamental national security interests that these countries – former captive nations – are independent, are free to choose their own destiny and thank goodness they choose to be together with us, because that's their fundamental identity in the first place, and we are stronger with them together with us. We are not weaker, we're stronger".

So now, finally, to President Trump's speech in Warsaw and the Trump administration. The Three Seas conference a few days ago in Warsaw was a great event. I spent 14 of my 23 years in the U.S. foreign service promoting these very ideas, promoting diversification of energy supplies for our European allies, especially natural gas, away from an overdependence on Russia. That's exactly what the Three Seas conference is about. We face, or we have a historic opportunity to rewrite the geo-economic map today. This is thanks largely to technology, a lot of it developed in the United States, but not only, technology that allows natural gas to be turned into liquid form and sent anywhere in the world on ships. It is thanks to revolutionary technology in the United States that allows for the extraction of massive amounts of natural gas, in new and unconventional ways through horizontal drilling and fracturing of the rock underneath the surface. It is also thanks to the geopolitical vision of Poland, and of Lithuania, in contracting for their own liquid natural gas import terminals. We know that there is a longstanding proposal also to have a liquid natural gas import terminal also in Croatia on Krk, and now with the Three Seas initiative there is a vision that we've worked on a lot at the Atlantic Council as well, where I'm also a senior fellow – to link up all these markets of liquid natural gas terminals and make sure no single monopolist like Gazprom, nor any other aspiring monopolist has the ability to manipulate the price of natural gas to keep the price high or to apply political pressure on the countries of the region. We all know, and there is no need to go into it now, that Gazprom has a long history of using natural gas pricing and cutoffs as geopolitical pressure. So, it's great that this Three Seas conference happened. It's amazing that President Trump spoke at it, I mean in my 14 years working on these issues it was impossible to arrange for the U.S. President to show up at an event on this topic. The issue of pipeline interconnections, liquid natural gas, pricing, monopolistic pricing – that is so down in the weeds, that a U.S. President never took the time to do it. These energy security issues are too down in the weeds, too technical for a President. But President Trump came, he gave a speech, he highlighted the geopolitical significance of U.S. natural gas now being able to come to Poland, and hopefully to Ukraine, Lithuania, and throughout the whole region. Great. But the way he did it sort of grated on me, it suggested he doesn't feel it, going back to my earlier remarks. He made a joke out of it, you know, he said: "We're going to talk about a liquid natural gas terminal at Krk island, Croatia". He turned to somebody and said "Have you ever heard of that one? Yeah, it's a great project" kind of dismissively. That was painful to me, to be honest. And he said: "Oh, there is also the Greek-Bulgarian interconnector – great project". Clearly, he really doesn't know what these things are. He has heard about it, his brilliant staff have written this into his speech, again, it would have been a dream for me to hear such words by previous U.S. Presidents, but I fear he doesn't yet feel it. I hope he'll get there, but I don't think he yet feels it. I loved what I heard in his main speech when I first heard it, and clearly, he was scripted, he stayed to the script, he read a speech with geo-

political vision, said some great things, and talked about article 5, right? He said – “The United States shows its commitment to article 5, not only through words, but through actions”. I think he means the deployment of U.S. troops to Poland – fantastic. But he didn’t say: “I unequivocally stand by article 5, I reiterate that the United States would never, never swerve from its commitment to the collective security of all of our NATO allies”. After the debacle at NATO headquarters if you recall in May 2017, in front of the monument to article 5, which consists of the twisted steel from the Twin Towers (the World Trade Centre in New York), which is the first and only time article 5 has ever been invoked, to defend The United States. He didn’t mention article 5, instead he criticized our European allies, unlike Poland, for not spending 2 percent of their own budget on defense. So, this would have been a great opportunity to make clear, once and for all: “We totally stand behind article 5, and we were never not going to”. But he waffled a little bit, at least it seemed to me. Maybe I’m too sensitive, I don’t know, but I think he hedged a little bit on that. It was fantastic that he mentioned Poland’s enduring fight for freedom, even when it was wiped from the face of the world, and then he talked about the civilization of the West. Great, but then he sowed of a little bit of doubt again into the whole concept, when he said: “But it’s not clear, the West has internal strength to protect itself, to fight, to be free”. And then he took a swipe at the European Union and European unity, with that strange final passage, probably written by Steve Bannon, I guess, his ultra-right advisor, that said: “one of our great enemies is bureaucracy, and centralization of authority...” Yes, I know he took a swipe at the size of the US government, but you know, it also struck me as also criticizing the European Union’s unity. And if there is one thing that is the foundation of the geopolitical realities that we hope to create forever in this part of the world, it is that Europe has to stand together, just as you were saying, Mr. Secretary of State, and not let anyone fall from the train. But he seemed to be also calling into question whether or not that value of European unity is worth pursuing, even when saying: “We need to be strong and we need to fight for our freedom”. He criticized Russia for its occupation of Ukraine, thank goodness, and for Russia’s relations with hostile states – the governments of Syria and Iran – but then at the press conference, when he was not scripted, when asked about the Russian meddling in U.S. elections, right, and the hacking of the Democratic National Committee, emails and other things, which all 17 U.S. intelligence agencies say happened, and they say they agree that it was Vladimir Putin himself who ordered this and directed it, President Trump said: “Yes, the Russians were involved, but maybe some others were as well”. Where does he get that? His own intelligence agency says it was Vladimir Putin himself who directed this, nothing about any other country. And if you go back and read, there was an amazing story in *The Washington Post* a couple of weeks ago about the Obama administration’s failure to do anything before the election, when it was found out by the then-administration that this hacking was happening, and President Putin was directing it, one former senior Obama administration official is quoted as saying: “This is maybe our biggest failure, that we failed to bring up this information to the world before the election happened”. President Trump is saying: “Well, okay, the Russians were involved, but maybe others were. So maybe this thing that the Obama administration says is our biggest failure – maybe, it’s not that big of a problem, maybe we should move on”. So, what’s he doing, why are there these contradictions between what his staff says and what he says? I think what he was doing was trying to protect his flank against criticism in Washington about the ties of his team and his

family to Russian security services, on the one hand, because that is a huge scandal in Washington, as we know. He wanted to look tough, but he also wanted not to go too far and upset the man he is about to meet for the first time, President Putin. By the way, there was an extraordinary story in *The New York Times* yesterday, saying that Donald Trump junior after Donald Trump senior became the Republican nominee – met with a representative of, a lawyer of some Russian state-owned company interests trying to get derogatory information about Hillary Clinton to use against her in the election campaign, which echoes with what then-candidate Trump said when he encouraged Russian security services to steal information about the Clinton campaign and publish it on WikiLeaks. It's mind-boggling that a U.S. presidential candidate advocated espionage against the former Secretary of State and former Senator who was running against him for President. So, for these reasons I feel that all the foundation I've been describing of our geopolitical vision is truly shaken at this point. And we constantly see President Trump making a statement, and then his senior staff walking it back saying: "That's not what he really meant". I think that President Trump, like President Obama, distrusts foreign policy elites. To be fair, after President Obama violated his own red line in Syria on the use of chemical weapons, he said and says to this day: "I'm proud I did that, I'm proud I violated my own threats because had I acted upon them, I would have simply been kowtowing to the foreign policy elites in Washington rather than using my own instincts". So obviously, President Obama pulled us away from the geopolitical vision, vacated Europe in many ways, and then basically, had to come running back after Russia invaded Ukraine. Again, I am happy to talk about the Obama administration as well, but because all the Trump stuff is so fresh, so I'm going to focus on that now.

So then, President Trumps gets to the G20 meeting, and what was done and shown is absolutely remarkable, the handshake with President Putin. Everybody must recall all the crazy handshakes that President Trump has given to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe, when he's pulling his arm after which Abe looks like his hand is in pain, and then there was the titanic standoff between Emmanuel Macron and President Trump, where Macron really squeezed Trump's hand and kind of got the best of him. If you watch some of the video footage with Vice President Pence, he pulls him on stage, all to show who's boss. When Prime Minister Trudeau of Canada came to the White House, he put his arm on President Trump, so President Trump had no leverage. Trudeau is a boxer, in really great shape and he was pulling President Trump. The handshake means something to President Trump. Go back, and you can watch it on the *Financial Times* website. What did President Trump do? Well, first – nothing. President Putin did nothing, he waited, Putin waited. What was he waiting for? He waited for Trump to go first, because the symbol of President Trump reaching out his hand was the moment Russia got out of the penalty box. Russia's got all these sanctions on it, it wants them to be lifted, it's seen as a pariah by all the rest of us, especially by the United States under Obama, I mean Obama and Putin hated each other, so Putin was waiting for Trump to reach out. Trump did it. Not only that, he only clasped his hand for a moment, and he even put his left hand on Putin's hand as though trying to ingratiate himself, to show extra respect – nothing I've ever seen him do to anyone, not even his own Vice President whose arm he was pulling to show who's boss. I think this is a lot about his psychology – he has come to office, absolutely convinced that he is the only person who can create a breakthrough in U.S.-Russian relations. He's not the first U.S.

President to do that, George W. Bush, my beloved boss, we all know, looked at President Putin and got a sense of his soul, right, we all know that story. Obama had his Russia reset policy, and Bill Clinton had the spirit of Bill and Boris, if you remember "from Vancouver to Vladivostok", we were going to reshape the world and have a strategic partnership. Every new American President romanticizes Russia, and thinks he, eventually she, is going to be the one that creates the breakthrough and everyone is disappointed in the end, because Russia remains Russia, Russia will pursue its national interests. Its national interests largely do not overlap with ours, except in wanting prosperity and not wanting to eliminate each other with nuclear weapons, otherwise our world views are pretty diametrically opposed, and President Trump will learn this eventually too, but it hasn't happened yet. So, how did Secretary Tillerson describe the meeting between Trump and Putin? He said: "Well, several times President Trump raised the issue of the election interference by Russia". He didn't say – "President Trump confronted", didn't say "criticized", he said – "raised". Foreign Minister Lavrov came out and said: "President Trump accepted President Putin's explanation". Which is that Russia didn't do it. That's suspicious. So, you could say – okay, maybe Secretary Tillerson is just not a diplomat, he's head of the world's biggest oil company, maybe he just was not careful. But then he chose to say: "The good news is – the two Presidents did not agree to re-litigate the past". They agree to disagree, in other words. If Rex Tillerson was still the CEO of Exxon, and, let's say, Shell owed Exxon a billion dollars, would he have a meeting with the CEO of Shell and say: "Okay, we can forget about the billion dollars you owe us, don't worry about it, we're not going to re-litigate the past, you cheated us, but let's move on". Of course, not. Why is that not okay for a huge company, but it's okay for the United States? To let Russia out of this penalty zone? For what? Simply for the purpose of building – whatever it means – a more constructive U.S.-Russia relationship? First of all, that relationship is not an end in itself. It's a tool to do other things. And secondly, it's never going to be a constructive relationship if it appears that the U.S. leader can be so manipulated by his Russian counterpart. So, for all those reasons, I'm pessimistic about this current moment. Yes, geopolitics are now the defining factor in this part of the world, and always should have been. Yes, there have been some great developments. People like me will no longer say: "We can't write a report that says NATO ought to preposition material in the Baltic region, in Poland" We actually have troops on the ground now. Fantastic! We've woken up. We must make sure, of course, that those Warsaw Summit commitments are maintained, and we know – with your boss, Professor Szczerski [President Andrzej Duda] – President Trump was not clear on how committed the U.S. is to keeping our troops here on the ground, and that's a very worrisome development.

Ultimately though, my very last remarks are ultimately optimistic, because President Trump lacks geopolitical vision, lacks historical insight or, really even, frankly – I don't mean to be disrespectful, but – curiosity about history. Everything is about the deal. One and one, the individuals, the people – that's why he had nobody in a room which is what Putin wanted, besides Rex Tillerson and the interpreter when they met. And so, what's inevitably going to happen is he will start up with a grand bargain, where something happens in Ukraine mostly cut over the heads of the Ukrainians. But thank goodness with Ambassador Volker there, I know he's no fool and will fight against that, but probably though there will be an agreement which I know that the Trump administration, from my own contacts within, has been cooking up, hoping for, for a longtime, whereby President Putin

gets what he needs. He gets an excuse to exit Donbass, because that's a failed operation, the uprising that he expected never happened, Russian troops are dying, it's an economic albatross around the neck of Russia. But he can't just leave, he can't just pull out Russian troops, because that would really hurt him domestically, politically. So, okay, he says: "We've reentered the geopolitical stage, we're at the center of it with President Trump". Putin will say "We'll pull out of Donbass, we're never leaving Crimea", That will be the deal I think. Donbass – if the Ukrainian government offers autonomy – will have a sort of a frozen political conflict, troops gone, heavy weapons pulled back on the Russian side, Crimea still what it is – anschlussed by Russia. And then the other area where there will be coopera-

tion is in Syria. And we've already seen in Southeastern Syria there is a modest cease-fire that seems to be holding – that's great, may it work, however it also provides U.S. blessing for Russian troops to base deeper in the Middle East, and that has never happened before. But leave that aside, maybe it will bring peace. Eventually that cooperation in Syria will collapse. Russia has no history of successfully establishing peace and rebuilding economies and complex cultures. It used brutality in the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, to build the Soviet Union, but it doesn't have the finesse to rebuild something on the scale of Syria. And so, Trump is going to be disappointed with President Putin. President Putin will inevitably overplay Russia's hand, and finally at that point my last remark – if the EU and NATO have maintained their cohesion, remain strong, maintain the geopolitical vision of President Duda and Secretary of State Szczerski, then we have a chance to take these positive developments and push away the lack of clarity, the dalliance with Putin and the security services on the part of team Trump, and finally wake up – just as Obama woke up, just as President Bush woke up and realized he that he hadn't see Putin's soul, and then maybe we can rebuild. So, the key to all this is that you all are doing exactly what you've said, Mr. Secretary of State – taking the strategic reins in your own hands, pursuing initiatives like the Three Seas, changing the geopolitical facts on the ground so that when the U.S. does finally wake up – we know which way to move. Thank you very much!

GRAEME HERD

GCMC, UNITED KINGDOM

Remarks on Regional Security

I am delighted to be in Warsaw on this panel. In 1994 when I graduated with a PhD, and held my first academic post, the first international conference I went to was in Wrocław, and obviously I had to travel through Warsaw. So, it's really nice to be back in Poland and have the opportunity to present in the capital when older and wiser. Today, I am going to try and look at how we understand the rationality, the logic of Russia's foreign policy, particularly the destabilization efforts against neighbours and come to a conclusion as to how sustainable and long-term this approach will be. Will it gradually diminish or is it set to stay as it is or even increase?

To try and understand Russia's foreign policy, we need to look into the domestic economic, political, and social system created by a system-forming figure that is President Vladimir Putin. The two key data points here really are two strategic vulnerabilities that Russia has to deal with. The first is the hydrocarbon dependence, 50% of GDP and 70% of exports, and 98% of corporate tax. The vulnerability is that Russia is dependent on hydrocarbon revenues but cannot affect the price of oil globally (which sets the price of gas). Oil can be priced at \$110pb or at \$25pb and the shift can take place over a matter of months. The second vulnerability is the popularity of the president. When Putin has de-modernized Russia, de-institutionalized and de-globalized Russia it means that if his popularity decreases then you have an existential crisis within the federation. The destabilizing question is: "If not Putin, then whom?" There are no contingency plans, no succession mechanism to replace the leader. So, essentially we are looking at Russia's foreign policy operating in a context where the economy is in the toilet as reflected in a 0.2% average GDP growth since 2009; 2012 – 0% growth and since 2012 when Kudrin resigned from the government. Normally, the popularity of a president – as was the case in the first 8 years of Putin's presidency from 2000 to 2008 – tracks the economy, or maybe lags a little bit behind. As economic performance increases and revenues distributed to the population, so the popularity of the president. So, this is very abnormal politics.

However, within the context of these two strategic vulnerabilities and Russia's inability or unwillingness to address them, destabilization as a mainstay and organizing principle of Russian foreign policy makes a lot of sense in terms of rational choice theory. It's a foreign policy for a weak economy, a foreign policy for a high popularity of the president and it's a foreign policy which is cheap and gives a very good return on investment. In other words, it's a foreign policy that works. To understand really, strategically what Russia is doing it is interesting to look at von Clausewitz and his book "On War". Carl von Clausewitz as we know was an officer in Russian and Prussian military service, and he introduced the concept of a *schwerpunkt* or *center of gravity*, and if you think of the *center of gravity* of Russia *in lieu* of an economy and political system that functions, the *center of gravity* in Russia is the belief of the people in the necessity of a strong leader who can patrol the frontier, guard the besieged fortress against external enemies, the good *Tsar* who holds the line, while the bad *boyars*, the government, muck up the economy. So, destabilization must be able to defend and advance the notion of a strong leader. Secondly, if you look at the center of gravity of attack or offence, we're looking at Russia destabilizing market democratic systems and states and their center of gravity, which again is intangible, it's not a building or a monument, it's a belief in the integrity of, for example, the democratic election system, of solidarity, of democratic values, transparency, accountability etc. So, when we look at Russia's use of conventional and sub-conventional tools, conventional tools being the presidency, the presidential administration, state controlled economy and companies, state controlled civil society, the diplomatic core, the intelligence services, the media etc., when we look at Russia's foreign policy we see all of these actors having a role and function in attacking the center of gravity of the West, the political West, defending Russia's center of gravity, and we see the intelligence services acting as a linchpin to sub-conventional actors that Russia can use, support to and from anti *status quo* parties for example in Europe. Weaponizing history and identity, the use of frozen conflicts, weaponizing migrants and refugees, their use of transnational organized criminal groups, corruption – the Kremlin's Playbook. The CSIS study captures some of this very well in five states in the region. And also the use of strategic proxy forces such as *Ultras* or *Kadyrovtsy*, or private military corporations like the Maran Group, RBS Group in Libya, Wagner Group in Syria or the Balkan Cossack Army that ran the coup last year in Montenegro, or the so-called Baltic Civil Army in the Baltic States. There are many examples you can look at of these particular sub-conventional strategic proxy forces, and essentially you have a foreign policy in which the destabilization elements are deniable, one that 'washes its face' so to speak, it pays for itself as criminalized proxy forces can profit through its implementation.

The evidence for the utility of this foreign policy is apparent in state discourse. If you listen to Sergey Lavrov or President Putin or some of the propagandists in the Senate and the State Duma, you see two basic narratives or discourses. One leads this idea of center of gravity – defense and the other, the center of gravity – attack. For example, in terms of center of gravity defense, you often hear the expression "things may be bad in Russia, but they're worse in the West", "go to Berlin and you will be raped", as the Lisa case propaganda tried to demonstrate. This is one part of the discourse. The idea that Russia is a great power; to sacrifice is to be a great power. We need to sacrifice more to rise from our knees, they fear us for your greatness, they are scared of and therefore try and harm us because we are great. This is the internal rhetoric, we are a besieged fortress, we are under threat,

it is your patriotic duty to have a patriotic military mobilization. In this context, Putin is portrayed as a contemporary Alexander Nevsky, Peter the Great, Suvorov, Zhukov or Stalin.

And in foreign policy terms or external center of gravity attacks, Lavrov often says there can be no European security without Russia. In other words, if you don't give us Yalta-Potsdam II or Helsinki III, that is, a grand bargain, in which our sphere of privileged interest is recognized, we will take one through destabilization that forces non-alignment and creates our buffer zone. In addition, as power is relative, if Russia is unable or unwilling to effect structural economic reform and strengthen itself, then it can, as an equalizer, weaken the West. This is a form of parity equality. Also, more recently you have the notion of the Moscow consensus, neo-modernism in Russian thinking. In other words, it is not just the critique of the west but they are now advancing an alternative market democratic paradigm – governance paradigm.

How long can this go on? How long does the logic of destabilization continue? There are really three alternative futures that we can analyze. The first alternative argues that Russia is now, or about to be in a process of a strategic pivot – a proverbial 'kiss and make-up' with the West, a Trump-Putin summit that allows for peaceful coexistence and selective détente with the West is in the offing. Russia needs to do this to get the capital and technology from the West, for example to exploit the arctic. I think there are number of reasons why this is not likely to happen. Firstly, the role of anti-Americanism is the core glue that binds leadership to elite and society, in lieu of real politics or economy. It is critical to the center of gravity defense in Russia. If you are a besieged fortress you need a "dignified enemy" and Merkel does not compare to Trump. Anti-Americanism is hardwired, I think, into the DNA of a Putinite system. Secondly, at least amongst Trump's national security elite, there is no sense that a misunderstanding and misconception is at the root of confrontational relations with Russia. There is a high degree of realism and an understanding that Russian interlocutors lie and cannot be trusted, and we will see how long the ceasefire in southern Syria lasts. We'll see also how long Putin resists the urge to try and drive a wedge between Trump's national security elite's so called "deep state" and Trump himself. I do not think they can. Russia's leaking of the Kislyak-Lavrov pictures from the White House, for example, was self-sabotage as far as I can see, but underscores Russia's need to have tactical victories even at the expense of having strategic better relations. You also have LNG exports and predictions that he US will be no.1 global exporter of LNG by 2020, having become hemispheric energy interdependence, to being energy independent. President Trump also talked about an arms race. President Putin has taken Russia back to 1986, when an arms race and energy competition highlighted the lack of internal modernization, but Putin does not have *Perestroika* or an alternative plan B which would be structural economic reform, which in his view would lead to the collapse of the system, or if it was successful, essentially result in regime or leadership change. Neither outcome would be countenanced, hence the status quo prevails.

The second alternative scenario is big bang revolution in 2017. The system is overloaded as it was in 1917, the system is militarizing, resources are diminishing, there is a Chekistocracy, with *Chekists* or *Siloviki* fighting each other, cannibalizing each other, manual control is not working as it used to work. This is a thesis put to work by Nikolay Petrov at the Higher School of Economics and I think there are a number of reasons why this is not going to happen. Society is acclimatizing; the elite have no other option but Putin; there is

no consensus or mechanism to get a consensus around an alternative to Putin; the middle class have a lot to lose, and 200,000 of them emigrate each year and this acts as a safety valve. The system is much more adaptable than this thesis would suggest, there is still money in the system.

It leaves us with the last alternative scenario option which I think is the most likely, a kind of a long good-bye scenario where you have stability plateaus and mini-crises, you have *zastoy* – stagnation, gradual degradation. I think Russia has actually crossed the critical threshold where it is locked into this trajectory. And if you look at some of the characteristics of that particular system think of a Democratic People's Republic of Korea – DPRK type outcome. This is a state in which organized crime is used and mainstreamed into the foreign policy to break sanctions. This is a state in which nuclear signaling occurs, and Putin is under pressure to demonstrate the political utility of these expensive weapon systems. It is a military first approach, guns ahead of butter, bread takes a second role to battleships. It is *Juche* in the North Korean understanding, that self-sufficiency, and this is something nationalists are talking about. It is essentially a Go world order, it is a spoiler role in international affairs to act as an equalizer, and in this situation I think the risks of miscalculation, misperception and conflict escalation ladders increase. And Russia still has force multipliers it can use, the speed of decision making for example; the geographical proximity it has to regional hotspots; military tactical ability and ability to exploit weaknesses that are there in states around Russia; the return on investment – as economy that shrinks the return on investment increases; the strength of the belief in the center of gravity that state controlled television has been able to maintain and the political will of a leader who knows that essentially he has no other option. And lastly, there is western acquiescence, western weakness in policy responses.

For these reasons, the third alternative is the default evolutionary pathway and one that is much harder to manage than the other two, as it eventually slides into scenario 2 unless scenario 1 is obtainable. The core question is: how can the West reduce risk and mitigate miscalculation in its relations with Russia, while still upholding western core interests and not acquiesce in the abandonment of its core values?

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Kremlin Propaganda and Disinformation in Georgia: tools, channels, narratives

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Introduction

Georgia is an object of special interest for the Russian Federation for several reasons, mainly due to its strategic location. First of all, Georgia connects oil-rich Azerbaijan and the Caspian Sea with Turkey and the Black Sea. The route through Georgia is also the shortest way from Russia to Armenia, which would shorten and ease the transport of military equipment to the Middle East. Further, the trade route through Georgia is one of the few routes connecting China with European markets simultaneously omitting Russia. Finally, Georgia is situated in the area called Russia's "soft underbelly", territory considered by Moscow as its natural sphere of influence, hence NATO's or the European Union's presence there is unwelcome. Yet Georgia is important to Russia for one more reason. Although the August war in 2008 was in general won by the Russian Federation, to Moscow's surprise international public opinion did not follow the Kremlin narration of the events' course. Russia lost the war on information and is unable to dispose of the occupant-aggressor image.

Even though the August war was not the only factor which contributed to the development of non-military means of pressure, certainly it has had a key influence in turning the Kremlin's attention to the soft power and information spheres – foreign policy tools less costly than economic sanctions or maintaining occupied territories. Such instruments are not new, obviously, but the ways of communication have changed greatly since Soviet times. Because of the long tradition of interference in a country's internal affairs via active

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measures, the Kremlin's propaganda is not simply a tool of foreign policy, as it is based mostly on black propaganda instruments². As a complex toolkit, Kremlin information influence requires a wider approach than simple analysis of the messages content.

Role of information in Russian doctrines

Western understanding of soft power is usually associated with the attractiveness of institutions, political systems, culture, language, values and policies, as well as the obvious legality of undertaken actions.³ The object of soft power should, by itself, *want* to share the same values and ideas, and find following the policy of the attractive country beneficial for its population and development. In order to achieve that goal the states usually use public diplomacy, quality media and culture. However, the Russian view on soft power stresses its substantially different aspects, namely as a tool of foreign policy against [sic!] another country, it should be complementary to the means of hard power – the army, economy and violence. It is important to distinguish these terms, as *soft power* in Russian sources refers to absolutely different phenomena than in the West. Its understanding of soft power is crucial in creating a comprehensive image of the Kremlin's perception of information, media, NGOs and their goals.

There are several Russian official and semi-official documents which deliver straight but fully-fledged concepts of information and the media as a weapon:

- 2000 National Security Concept;
- 2011 Convention of International Information Security;
- 2013 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation;
- 2013 Executive order of FR President (Sputnik);
- 2013 "Gierasimov's Doctrine";
- 2014 War Doctrine;
- 2016 Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation, Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation.

The documents listed above provide a vision of the global media environment being biased and hostile towards the Russian Federation. Information security as such was firstly mentioned in the 2000 National Security Concept (NSC), however, it emphasized the technical aspects of the informational environment:

The striving of a number of countries to dominate the global information space and oust Russia from the external and internal information market poses a serious

² More on mechanisms and instruments of black propaganda, as well as on general mechanisms of the Kremlin information war, can be found in Jolanta Darczewska, *Dezinformacja – rosyjska broń strategiczna*, Rządowe Centrum Bezpieczeństwa, 4.07.2017, <http://rcb.gov.pl/nowy-numer-biuletyn-rcb-2/>; Игорь Н. Панарин, *СМИ, пропаганда и информационные войны*, Поколение, 2012, http://propagandahistory.ru/books/Igor-Panarin_SMI--propaganda-i-informatsionnye-voyny/ [access 12.02.2017]; . Garth S. Jowett, Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion*, SAGE Publications, Los Angeles-London-New Delhi-Singapore-Washington DC, 2012, pp. 20–30; Benjamin Nimmo, *Anatomy of an info-war: How Russia's propaganda machine works and how to counter it*, Central European Policy Institute, 15.05.2015, <http://www.cepolicy.org/publications/anatomy-info-war-how-russias-propaganda-machine-works-and-how-counter-it> [access 16.11.2016].

³ J.S. Nye, *Przyszłość siły*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2012, p. 55.

danger, as do the elaboration by a number of states of a concept of information wars that envisages the creation of means of dangerous influence on the information spheres of other countries of the world; disruption of the normal functioning of information and telecommunication systems and of storage reliability for information resources; and gaining of unsanctioned access to them.⁴

Highlighting the last part of the quoted paragraph, it seems that the access and acquisition of information was perceived as a goal, not as an instrument to achieve goals – even though the document already mentions the information wars (as a Western concept). The threat of growing dependence on the foreign information sphere is scarcely mentioned in the Foreign Policy Concept – FPC (2000⁵, 2008⁶). It was only in 2013, already after the Russo-Georgian war and before the annexation of Crimea, when the issue of the information environment was put into the foreground by both the new FPC and the so-called Gerasimov Doctrine, published at the same time. The 2013 FPC describes soft power as ...a comprehensive toolkit for achieving foreign policy objectives building on civil society potential, information, cultural and other methods and technologies alternative to traditional diplomacy", which, however, "sometimes creates a risk of destructive and unlawful use of "soft power" and human rights concepts to exert political pressure on sovereign states, interfere in their internal affairs, destabilize their political situation, manipulate public opinion, including under the pretext of financing cultural and human rights projects abroad",⁷

while the Gerasimov doctrine basically unfolds a concept of weaponization of information and its potential in modern wars. Further, the Doctrine on Information Security from 2016 states that

There is a trend among foreign media to publish an increasing number of materials containing biased assessments of State policy of the Russian Federation.⁸

The Kremlin's perception of soft power and the mediasphere as a means of hostile influence and an attempt to interfere with another state's internal affairs, resulted in establishing a specific approach towards information. It was not new, though, as similar approaches were seen both in Soviet and Tsarist times. In the current approach, as the Russian doctrines state, the idea of information war comes from the West, hence Russia should develop defensive means so that it can protect its information space and reduce the hostile influence. Further, however, Moscow communicates the need to secure an adequate place in the global information circulation for Russian worldviews and an interpretation of ongoing events.

⁴ *National Security Concept of the Russian Federation*, RF Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 10.01.2000, http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk6B6Z2g/content/id/589768

⁵ *The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, Federation of American Scientists, 28.06.2000, <https://fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/econcept.htm>.

⁶ *The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, Official website of RF President, 12.01.2008, <http://en.kremlin.ru/supplement/4116>

⁷ *Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation*, RF Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18.02.2013, http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk6B6Z2g/content/id/122186.

⁸ *Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation*, RF Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 5.12.2016, http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents//asset_publisher/CptlCk6B6Z2g/content/id/2563163.

The need develop Russia's own means of "effective information influence" was firstly voiced in the 2008 FCP⁹. Still, the serious steps were taken in 2013, when President Putin decided to merge the *Voice of Russia* with the *Rossiya Segodnya* information agency, and established *Sputnik* in its place. *Sputnik's* mission is, according to its website, to "tell the untold" and deliver alternative news of the world dominated by the Western point of view¹⁰. Notwithstanding the creation of *Sputnik* and *RT* (formerly *Russia Today*, another media project targeting the foreign public), the information influence is also implemented by traditional means, i.e. by taken over local media, NGOs and politicians, which, together with propaganda and disinformation¹¹, are in fact part of active measures.

Geopolitical goals, objectives and targets

The main goal of interfering with Georgia's information environment in achieving foreign policy goals, can be identified as: restoring influence over the South Caucasus and reducing Washington's influence in order to gain more means of pressure in the energy sector over Europe; push the USA further from Russia's borders; and spread geopolitical ideologies (Holy Rus, Russkiy Mir etc.), while taking control over trade routes trespassing the South Caucasus.¹² In the case of Georgia, it can be fulfilled by achieving tailored objectives such as:

- forcing or convincing Georgia to obtain „neutral country status“;
- inspiring fear and feelings of uncertainty, distrust towards state and foreign (Western) institutions;¹³
- provoking anti-liberal, anti-Western moods, distortion of European values;¹⁴
- questioning Georgia's geopolitical (or even civilization) choices, i.e. Euro-Atlantic integration;
- spoiling regional cooperation and alliances;
- discouraging Western parties from supporting Georgia in order to isolate it; and
- neutralizing 2008 conflict effect.¹⁵

It is nigh impossible to convince Georgian society that the Russian Federation is a friendly state and that any concessions from Tbilisi will be returned in similar steps by Moscow. This is why specific objectives from Georgia are targeted more at influencing the society, in order to hinder it from striving towards the West and supporting NATO's

⁹ Валерий Герасимов, *Ценность науки в предвидении*, Военно-промышленный курьер, ном. 8 (476), 27.02.2013, <https://www.vpk-news.ru/articles/14632>.

¹⁰ *About us*, Sputnik International, <https://sputniknews.com/docs/about/index.html>.

¹¹ As it is not so relevant in this paper, the term disinformation is used both for purposeful false and harmful messages and *dezinformatsya*, which is the special technique attributed to Russian intelligence services.

¹² See Игорь Н. Панарин, *СМИ, пропаганда и информационные войны*, Поколение. 2012, http://propagandahistory.ru/books/Igor-Panarin_SMI--propaganda-i-informatsionnye-voyny.

¹³ Levan Avalishvili, Giorgi Lomtadze, Alexander Kevkhishvili, *Kremlin's Information War: Why Georgia Should Develop State Policy on Countering Propaganda*, IDFI, Policy Paper, 22.08.2016, <https://idfi.ge/en/informational-war-of-kremlin-against-georgia-the-necessity-of-having-state-policy-against-propaganda>.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ See also Alexander Rondeli, *Moscow's information campaign and Georgia*, GISS Expert Opinion, nr 29 2014, p. 4; Giorgi Targamadze, *Information warfare against Georgia*, GISS Expert Opinion, nr 32 2014, p. 4.

presence. The objectives are accomplished by meeting short-term realistic small goals (here called targets). While analyzing the narratives distributed by propaganda channels, it becomes clear, that some of them are aiming at provoking ethnic tensions and instigating clashes between different social groups, some other messages are devoted either to implanting a negative image of the West (USA, NATO, UE and its member countries) in Georgia and vice-versa, or replacing Russia as the main threat with Turkey. Some political parties, especially populist ones, try to advocate Russian economic and political interests, often referring to the alleged threat to traditional, national values or supposed economic profits. The existence of such political actors indicates the target is also on one hand to establish pro-Russian political forces in Georgia, and on the other – to eliminate pro-Western forces from Georgian political life.

Propaganda dissemination: channels and narratives

While analyzing propaganda, it is necessary to draw explicit limits of the propagandist definition. The fundamental question is whether the criterion of awareness should be one of the factors in determining who is a propagandist. In other words, is the motivation of the propaganda or disinformation source important? At a glance it seems that the answer is yes. However, it is impossible to ascertain the motifs behind disseminating certain narratives and a subject's knowledge about their origins. It seems justified, at least for this paper, to define the propagandist as a person, organization or institution, which disseminates theses similar or identical to the narratives of the Kremlin information war, found in Russian geopolitical, historical, economic, cultural and religion ideologies, regardless of the propagandists' motivation.

Characteristics of Kremlin propaganda

With regards to narratives themselves, they may be universal, i.e. distributed in various countries, but also specifically tailored to chosen target groups. Propaganda may also use theses either created *ad hoc* or having an utilitarian character, circulating throughout history. Other distinctive features of Kremlin propaganda are:

- rapidness, continuation, and repetitiveness;
- lack of commitment to objective reality;
- lack of commitment to consistency;
- high-volume;¹⁶
- multisource;
- multichannel – the narratives are disseminated by various channels – traditional media, new media, NGOs, political parties, religious groups etc.; and

¹⁶ Кристофер Пол, Мириам Мэтьюз, *Российская модель пропаганды «Пожарный шланг с потоками лжи» Почему это работает и каковы способы ей*, StopFake [RAND report], <http://www.stopfake.org/rossijskaya-model-propagandy-pozharnyj-shlang-s-potokami-lzhi/>.

- multilayer – the narratives can be distributed on several levels, as well as be limited only to one level. The first layer is official Kremlin statements, the second – messages from institutions formally or officially not connected to Kremlin, but having strong ties with it (for instance, the Russian Orthodox Church), the third – local sources with hidden connections to the Kremlin and the fourth – inspired local media outlets repeating disinformation.

Propaganda narratives

In the case of Georgia, direct repetition of a positive image of Russia hardly would have any effect due to the prevailing negative attitude of Georgians towards Moscow and its image as an occupier. For instance, this lack of effectiveness of open pro-Russia propaganda was perfectly seen after Nino Burjanadze, leader of the Democratic Movement – United Georgia (DMUG) experienced an immense, long-range decrease in support after her meeting in Moscow with then-Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in 2010. Burjanadze's visit to the Kremlin was not accepted by society, thus the DMUG lost a major part of its supporters. For that reason propagandists in Georgia are focused on geopolitical (integration with the UE and NATO), culture-historical (values, religion, conflicts with Turkey) and economic issues:

The above charts implies that the propagandists are operating on contradictions: on the one hand the West is presented in a negative light, with an emotional approach – the West will not defend Georgia, the West does not intend to accept Georgia into its structure at all, the West will destroy traditional values. In the case of Russia, though, the false dilemma technique is applied.¹⁷ Having in the background an artificially created image of the demoralized West devoted to Satan¹⁸, Russia is presented as a defender of traditional values, Christianity, as well as the only competent global leader or perfect market for export. In pro-Kremlin media, such as the aforementioned *Georgia and the World*, one of the most popular topics is usually Mikheil Saakashvili and the United National Movement, the party of the former president. The campaign against Saakashvili has lasted for a long time, even though he is no longer a crucial link on the Georgian or Ukrainian political scene.

Table 1

Chosen narratives of pro-Russian propagandist media in Georgia

Values	Politics	Economy
Europe/USA/West is threatening Georgian national values and traditions	Integration with the EU or NATO equals losing Abkhazia and South Ossetia	Only the Russian market is profitable for Georgia

¹⁷ False dilemma is a technique of manipulation, when the recipient is told that he or she has only two choices, while in reality usually there is a wide range of choices. See Aronson.

¹⁸ Interesting studies of anti-Western narratives has been published by Media Development Foundation. See Tamar Kintsurashvili, *Anti-Western Propaganda*, Media Development Foundation from 2016 and 2017, Tbilisi.

Western values are foreign to Georgians	Cooperation with the West means closer cooperation with Turkey, which is an enemy of Georgia even more than Russia, Turkey is threatening Georgian territorial integrity	Georgia would benefit from integration with Eurasian economic structures
West hates Orthodoxy, and Russia defends Orthodox values		Association Agreement [with the EU] will destroy the Georgian economy
West will impose homosexuality and homosexual marriage on Georgians	Georgia should be a neutral country	
Conflict in 2008 was exclusively Saakashvili's fault	Georgia is an American puppet	

Source: Author's research based on media monitoring Sep 2016-Sep 2017.

Channels of propaganda dissemination

Anti-Western, anti-liberal and anti-Turkish narratives are present in the rhetoric of the whole Georgian political spectrum: from pro-Russian parties, such as the DMUG or AP, through to some members of the ruling Georgian Dream (GD) to "nostalgic parties", i.e. parties referring to Georgia's soviet/communist past and praising Stalin. The first group – pro-Kremlin parties – aim at establishing solid political cooperation with Russia; hence parties visit Moscow and meet with the Russian counterparts of Nino Burjanadze, the AP's delegation and Zurab Noghaideli's party For Fair Georgia¹⁹ agreement with United Russia. AP's former ally, Kakha Kukava from Free Georgia, is also a member of the Gorchakov Foundation Friends' Club. One other political group is a marginal Centrist party, which has promised in its policy Russian pensions²⁰ and Russian bases in Georgia (although there are military bases in Abkhazia and South Ossetia). Some GM members' visits²¹ are of a political and business character, as the party itself represents a more pragmatic approach to the issue of relations with Russia. "Neo-Soviets" use the concept of "good old times", an idealized past with no territorial problems or unemployment.

Another propaganda channel is the third sector – NGOs and think tanks. The most active are the Eurasia Institute and the Society of Erekle II. Currently these organizations are less visible, but their leaders act as experts on Georgian television (like Archil Chkoidze from the Society of Erekle II or Shota Apkhaidze, the director of the Caucasus Centre of Research on Islam and a former coworker of the Eurasia Institute) and they are leading an active campaign on i.a. the advantages of Eurasian integration, celebrating 9 May as a day of victory or learning the Russian language as well as imposing the responsibility for 2008

¹⁹ For Fair Georgia is a marginal party with little importance, thus it is not included further.

²⁰ ბედუკაძე – ხაჩიშვილის პარტიის რეკლამა რუსული პენსიის და ნიშვნაზე, Reg Tv on YouTube, 14.08.2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCvddj6EWTk>.

²¹ Author's own interview with Georgian expert T.K., 19.09.2017.

on then-president Mikheil Saakashvili and calling for neutrality²² (it should be mentioned that Burjanadze has also called for Georgia's neutral status)²³. Both institutions conduct projects financed by Russian government-organized non-governmental organizations²⁴ and were openly voicing Kremlin interests. Another type of propagandist NGO is an organization expressing concern about ethnic minorities' status. The Antifascist Coalition of Multinational Georgia and its satellite organizations are an example of an attempt to nestle the narrative about "Georgian fascists" who are abusing the rights of the Russian minority, which was quite successful in the case of Ukraine. The fake-Antifa briefings usually take place at the Georgian Sputnik's office.²⁵ It is noted that the first "antifascist" organization in 2006 the Antifascist Coalition of Georgia was established and headed by Irina Sarishvili (party Hope), after the arrest of 12 supporters of Igor Giorgadze (former KGB officer) on suspicion of a coup d'état.²⁶

Finally, there is a separate category of religious organizations which are often not registered and usually do not conduct open activities. Orthodox organizations declare themselves as defending Christian and family values, sometimes at all costs; they also stand up against Catholicism and liberal values. These groups' rhetoric is often aggressive (especially towards homosexuals) and disinformative about Western customs. One example of such an Orthodox group is the People's Orthodox Movement.²⁷ There is a part of the Georgian clergy which takes an active part in events organized by aggressive Orthodox groups and socio-political life in general.

Emitting manipulative messages would not be possible without the media. As the basic source of information acquisition for Georgians is television, TV Obieqtivi, closely related to the AP, has become the main platform for propagandists. Further, propaganda is distributed through newspapers (such as *Alia*, *Asaval-Dasavali* and *Georgia and the World*) along with their electronic online versions and online portals (for instance MarshalPress, Isauri, Iverioni, Saqinpormi, YouTube television Patriot TV, Reportiori, Qartuli Azri, Tb24) which may be later used as content for social media. In Facebook itself, the most popular propagandist profile is Politicano, which is strongly anti-American, anti-Western etc.

These outlets are also known for reposting disinformation content²⁸. While the Russian press has little impact on Georgian society, Russian channels are popular among around 20

²² Nata Dzvelishvili, Tazo Kupreishvili, *Russian Influence on Georgian NGOs and Media*, Damoukidebloba.com /IDFI, Tbilisi 2015, <https://idfi.ge/public/upload/russianimpactongeorgianmediadaNGO.pdf>.

²³ ქეთი მაჭავარიანი, *ბურჯანაძემ პარლამენტში უბლოკო სტატუსის შესახებ საკონსტიტუციო ცვლილების მოთხოვნით განაცხადა შეიტანა*, Netgazeti, 12.08.2016, <http://netgazeti.ge/news/134040/>.

²⁴ Nata Dzvelishvili, Tazo Kupreishvili, *Russian Influence...*

²⁵ *Threats of Russian Hard and Soft Power*, ed. Lasha Tughushi, European Initiative Liberal Academy Tbilisi, Tbilisi 2016, <http://www.ei-lat.ge/images/doc/policy%20document.pdf>.

²⁶ *Грузии сторонники Гиоргадзе создали антифашистскую*, Кавказский узел, 18.09.2006, <http://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/102497/>.

²⁷ Nana Devdariani, one of the Movement's leaders, is also engaged in several other projects, in which members of other propagandist organizations are also participating, like the Scientific Association of Caucasologists. See also Nata Dzvelishvili, Tazo Kupreishvili, *Russian Influence on Georgian NGOs and Media*, Damoukidebloba.com /IDFI, Tbilisi 2015, <https://idfi.ge/public/upload/russianimpactongeorgianmediadaNGO.pdf>.

²⁸ See მოთების დეტექტორი, Myth Detector official website, <http://mythdetector.ge/ka>.

percent of the Georgian population. Moreover, around 53% of ethnic minorities' representatives watch news and political programs on foreign channels, predominantly Russian ones²⁹.

Is Kremlin propaganda effective in Georgia?

The answer to this question is much more complex than could be expected. To assess the effectiveness of Kremlin propaganda two factors were taken into consideration:

- a) Changes in public attitudes, measured by opinion polls and analysis of social reactions; and
- b) Support for political parties, which support pro-Russian narratives, measured by election results.

Public attitude changes

Based on the narratives, four target attitudes were chosen for this paper to present the effect of Kremlin propaganda.

a) EU – moderate change

According to the 2008 Caucasus Barometer opinion poll, 54% of respondents had a positive attitude towards the EU. High support lasted at the level of 42-45% until 2013. In 2015, only 27% of respondents declared trust towards the EU. Since 2012, the support for Georgia's membership in European structures has fallen dramatically – from 72% (2012) to 42% (2015); the number of undecided respondents has increased instead. On the other hand, according to NDI polls, the support for the EU stays at a stable level of 72%, whereas IRI polls show support on the level of 63% (85%, if counting answer "rather support"). However, the increase in voices against membership to the EU is the result of a declining number of undecided respondents. This leads to the conclusion that even though the joining the EU and trust toward it stays on a relatively high and stable level, hesitant people turn to a more reluctant option.

b) NATO and USA – significant change

As far as the positive attitude toward the United States it has rather not changed, however support for NATO has drastically decreased. During 2009–2013, according to the Caucasus Barometer the support for NATO varied from 58% to 70%, while in 2015 only 37% of the survey's interviewees approved this idea. NDI and IRI researches also show a declining number of NATO's supporters, but not to such an extent as the Caucasus Barometer.

c) Russia – slight change

In IRI polls, it is only Russia (71%) that is perceived as a threat by Georgians. The second and third country's, i.e. USA and Turkey, were perceived as a threat by 6% of respondents

²⁹ *Public Attitudes in Georgia Results of a April 2015 survey carried out for NDI by CRRC Georgia*, NDI, April 2015, https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI%20Georgia_April%202015%20Poll_Public%20Issues_ENG_VF_0.pdf.

each. On 27th March 2014 Elguja Khodeli, leader of one of the propagandist organizations, Earth is Our Home, stood in the center of Tbilisi with a Russian flag calling for the re-establishment of relations with Russia. His event gathered a small crowd, which actively protested against his claims and called him a traitor.³⁰ In the same year a situation happened with the Eurasia Institute, as its elevation was sprayed with accusations of treachery as well.³¹ Exposing pro-Russian sentiments or Russian symbols is still not well-seen in Georgia. However, although Nino Burjanadze met with widespread criticism after her visit to Moscow in 2010, the AP's delegation to Moscow did not have an impact on its political support.³²

Values – significant change

Changes in values perception can be considered as a success of Kremlin propaganda and messages in accordance with it. The liberal or Western values have become associated mostly with imposing homosexuality and sexual deviations and as such – standing in contradiction with traditional Georgian values.³³ However, the attitude towards the essence of Western values, such as democracy, is still positive. This tendency – devaluation of Western ideas – is also visible in the new nationalistic movements, such as Georgian March, and in AP's rhetoric.

Support for political parties

The Alliance of Patriots gained 6 places in the 2016 parliamentary elections. Since 2003, it is the first party with pro-Russian rhetoric, which was able to overcome the 5% threshold. Even though in a November 2016 NDI public opinion poll the majority of respondents stated that the AP should not have been included in the parliament³⁴, the party's results should be considered as a Kremlin success. The Georgian Dream's position on Russia can be also be marked as ambiguous, especially from the economic aspect. During the 2017 municipal elections AP maintained its level of political support with 6.53% of votes³⁵, although it was Georgian Dream that won all of the mayor posts.

Nevertheless, before summarizing those elements as a Kremlin propaganda success, a few other factors should be discussed which have had an impact on the attitudes

³⁰ დაპირისპირება რუსეთის მხარდამჭერებისა და მოწინააღმდეგეების აქციაზე [VIDEO], Netgazeti, 27.03.2014, <http://netgazeti.ge/news/30479/>.

³¹ ორგანიზაციების ოფისებზე ანონიმურმა პირებმა წარწერები დატოვეს, Tabula, 13.08.2014, <http://tbl.ge/gob> [access 27.01.2017]

³² Author's interview with Georgian expert K. K., 19.09.2017

³³ A. Samkharadze, *Russian Propaganda in Georgia and the EU's Measures*, StopFake, 18.04.2016, <http://www.stopfake.org/en/russian-propaganda-in-georgia-and-the-eu-s-measures/> [access 27.02.2017]

³⁴ *Public attitudes in Georgia*, NDI, November 2016, https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI_November%202016%20poll_political_ENG_vf.pdf [access 27.01.2017]

³⁵ See Preliminary results, CESKO, <http://results.cec.gov.ge/eng/> [access 25.10.2017]. The final results were not available at the time of writing this paper.

towards issues enlisted above. Peculiarly, the circumstances of changes in opinion on the EU, USA and values are not limited only to information operations. It is not a propaganda effect being fostered by the Western policy towards Georgia, but rather the lack of a comprehensive USA or EU policy towards Georgia is fostered by the Kremlin. While the USA engage in Georgia, both by supporting the third sector and by conducting common military drills and exercises, the EU does not have a unanimous, coherent approach in its Eastern policy. It is a result mostly of different economic and geopolitical interests of EU member countries. An evident example of this is voting on a visa-free regime for Georgia, where some MEPs from Greece or Italy were voting against it.³⁶ As mentioned before, specialized propaganda also uses existing stereotypes or structural problems (like unemployment) and attributes them to the unwanted political parties, states or organizations in order to stir up the impression of responsibility lying on their side. Subsequently, the long-term effects of the Kremlin's information operations may be noticeable only in the more distant future. Hence, at this moment the effectiveness of Kremlin propaganda and disinformation in Georgia may be considered as moderate, albeit the deeper impact is yet to be seen.

Conclusions

The Kremlin perception of the third sector and the media as an internal threat from outside, and as a weapon, implies that it should not be considered as a public diplomacy or political marketing tool. Moscow started to pay more attention to this sphere after its conflict with Georgia, which was won by conventional weapons, but lost on the arena of international public opinion. It is also a reason why direct Russian propaganda is rarely successful. However, some of the Kremlin's information war theses have found a fertile ground in Georgia, which shows a specialist and thorough knowledge about Georgian society. The propaganda and disinformation directed to Georgian messages are disseminated mostly by Georgian media and politicians, while the ethnic minorities are affected through the Russian channels, however they are also under the influence of Armenian, Azerbaijani and Turkish media.

Moscow tries to prevent Georgia from deeper integration with the West by depicting it as immoral, homosexual, destructive and indifferent to Georgia's fate. Russia continues to try to replace its image of an occupant with Turkey and to discourage. This image is being delivered to the Georgian audience both by certain political parties and by the third sector: NGOs, Orthodox groups, some members of the Georgian Orthodox Church and pro-Kremlin media. However, the Kremlin is not capable of providing Georgians with a positive image of Russia, except for the economic benefits, nor has it reached its target of restoring diplomatic ties with Georgia. The recent success of the AP reaching the 5% threshold in the 2016 parliamentary elections and a lack of a stronger reaction towards the AP's delegation to Moscow in July 2017, proves that this strategy is perhaps not very

³⁶ Protocol from the plenary session, 2.02.2017, European Parliament, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+PV+20170202+RES-RCV+DOC+PDF+Vo//EN&language=EN>, pp. 14-15 [access 2.02.2017].

successful, but is much more rewarding than the previous attempts of installing openly pro-Kremlin forces in Georgia. Compared with the previous pro-Russian entities' activities, it is clear that after failing Eurasian and pro-Russian narratives more emphasis is put on nationalistic, traditional, conservative image and indirect propaganda.

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Turkey and East Central Europe: idealism, pragmatism, misperception or clash of interests?

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Turkey is Russia-centric in its East European policies. This approach is a legacy of the Cold War, when the Communist bloc countries were regarded not as sovereign states, but merely the Soviet Union's "satellites". Even when they regained full independence after 1989, from Turkey's point of view, they constituted rather a kind of Russia's backyard and were generally little known to the Turkish public. Obviously the newly independent states established after the collapse of the Soviet Union were to an even greater extent than the post-communist states perceived in Turkey in the sphere of influence and special interests of Russia. These clichés were shared by Turks and with many in Western societies, as Turkey remained on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

In the 1990s, however, Turkey gradually increased its political and economic cooperation with post-Soviet and post-communist countries. Above all the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Balkans were of special interest for Turkey since Turgut Özal's presidency.² In the case of the South Caucasus region, the reasons for cooperation were strong ethnic, historical and political ties with Azerbaijan as well as profitable energy cooperation after the construction

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² Gülistan Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dış Politikası Anlayışı," in: *Özal'lı Yıllar. Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet*, eds. Ihsan Sezal, Ihsan Dağı (İstanbul: Beta, 2016), 230–231.

of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline in 2005.³ Central Asia, dominated by Turkic nations, was also important from Ankara's point of view. The Central Asian republics were perceived as being able to follow the Turkish state model combining democracy, secularism and the free market with a Muslim background.⁴ Another post-communist (but not post-Soviet) region in Turkey's zone of interest was the Balkans, and especially those countries with Muslim and/or Turkish minorities. In comparison to the above-mentioned regions, East Central Europe (Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, the Baltic states, Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova) was of rather marginal importance to post-Cold War Turkey's foreign policies.

Before answering the question of the nature of Turkish–East Central European relations, it is necessary to explain the geographical terminology used in this article. Especially the term “East Central Europe” as it may seem controversial to some political scientists as in recent years Central Europe and Eastern Europe are most often treated as two distinct regions. This approach has some merit as it indicates the political division of Europe after several waves of NATO and EU enlargement. Countries which became members of these organizations were labeled part of “Central Europe”, whereas non-members – Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan – part of “Eastern Europe”. However, from a purely geographical point of view this approach is obviously controversial as Romania and Bulgaria (in NATO since 2004 and in the EU since 2007) are rather part of South Eastern Europe, whereas the Baltic states (in NATO and EU since 2004) are located in the North of the continent. In the case of Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia their common historical background related to Eastern Orthodox Christianity may serve as an argument for categorization of these countries as “East European”. However, Romania and Bulgaria, qualified as “Central European”, also have an Orthodox Christian heritage. Moreover, the lands of present Belarus and Ukraine since the Middle Ages have had a strong relationship with Roman Catholicism.⁵ If indeed the political division between NATO and EU members and non-members should be regarded as a crucial distinction between Central and East Europe, then the European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations of Ukraine and Georgia do not fit into this scheme.

From the point of view of the current analysis it is useful to underline common features of Turkey's approach to the Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia), the Visegrad countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland), Romania, Bulgaria, and three of the EU's Eastern Partnership countries (Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova)⁶. For that reason I will use the term “East Central Europe” to encompass all these countries. It is worth underlining that this concept is not new and has quite a long tradition of usage, especially in the his-

³ Konrad Zasztowt, “Stosunki Republiki Turcji z państwami Kaukazu Południowego,” in: *Region Kaukazu w stosunkach międzynarodowych*, eds. Krzysztof Iwańczuk, Tomasz Kapuśniak, (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2008), 343–345, Konrad Zasztowt.

“The Turkey–South Caucasus Relationship and Its Importance to the EU,” in: *Turkey and Europe. Challenges and Opportunities*, ed. Adam Szymański (Warsaw: Polish Institute of International Affairs, 2012).

⁴ Bülent Aras, *The New Geopolitics of Eurasia and Turkey's Position*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 7.

⁵ This relationship culminated with the Union of Brest in 1596, when the Ruthenian Orthodox Church in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth decided to accept the authority of the Pope of Rome.

⁶ I deliberately exclude here the South Caucasus members of the Eastern Partnership – Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. These countries are Turkey's direct neighbors, which are not that unknown to the Turkish public and irrelevant for Turkish foreign policy. Nevertheless, in many aspects their situation is similar to East Central European countries. Similarly to Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova they are regarded by Russia as so called “near abroad”, an area of special Russian interests.

torigraphy of the region.⁷ As I will argue, the East Central European region does not play a significant role in Turkey's foreign policies and is still little known to the elites in Ankara. The latter often perceive the region through the geopolitical scheme of Russia and the United States and their struggle for spheres of influences in Europe. The same is partially true regarding the meaning of Turkey for the East Central European countries' elites. Turkish political realities are little known to them. Moreover, the Russian aspect of Turkey's foreign policy is probably its most important one from their point of view.⁸

Turkey's Forgotten Neighbors in East Central Europe vs. the Turkish "Soviet Myth"

Turkey has a long record of diplomatic relations with the countries of East Central Europe. Perhaps, the best example may be Polish/Lithuanian – Turkish relations, which began in 1414, when King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Władysław Jagiełło sent his envoys to Ottoman sultan Mehmed Çelebi.⁹ 2014 was a year of celebration for the 600 years anniversary organized by foreign ministries and other institutions in both countries, which included several conferences and cultural events.¹⁰

After the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 19th century, Ottoman Turkey played an extraordinarily important role in the Polish émigré circles' political plans of dismantling the Russian Empire and restoring the Polish state. In the concept of Polish émigré leader prince Adam Czartoryski, the Poles had to unite all the enslaved peoples of the Russian Empire from Finland to the Caucasus. Czartoryski founded the Polish village of Adampol in the vicinity of Istanbul. There he settled political refugees from Poland and tried to form military units to fight together with the Ottoman army against Russia. From the Ottoman capital he sent numerous envoys to the lands of the Russian Empire in order to build a network of resistance against the tsars.¹¹

Despite the long history of Polish–Turkish relations, knowledge about Poland in Turkey and about Turkey in Poland was very narrow in the communist period and is still rather limited.¹² Some other countries of East Central Europe are probably even lesser known in

⁷ See also: Jerzy Kłoczowski, *Młodsza Europa. Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia w kręgu cywilizacji chrześcijańskiej średniowiecza*, (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1998). Witold Sukiennicki, *East Central Europe during World War I: from foreign domination to national independence*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984).

⁸ See e.g. article by Polish political scientists, advisor to Polish President Andrzej Duda and Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Witold Waszczykowski, Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski, "W czworokacie Turcja–Polska–UE–USA," *Gazeta Polska*, nr 38, 20. 09. 2017, <https://www.gazetapolska.pl/14374-w-czworokacie-turcja-polska-ue-usa>.

⁹ *Orzet i półksiężyc. 600 lat polskiej publicystyki poświęconej Turcji*, ed. Dariusz Kotodziejczyk (Warszawa: Biblioteka Jedności Europejskiej, 2014), 9.

¹⁰ For a résumé of cultural events commemorating the 600 years anniversary of Polish – Turkish relations c.f. *600 years of Polish –Turkish diplomatic relations. Final Report*, ed. Paulina Dominik (Warsaw: Adam Mickiewicz Institute, 2014).

¹¹ Jacek Borkowicz, "W poszukiwaniu gwarancji. Prometejski nurt polskiej myśli wschodniej," in: *Okręt Koszykowa*, ed. Jacek Borkowicz et al., (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2007), 49–50.

¹² For Polish stereotypes about Turkey during the Cold War period see e.g. a commentary to Polish writer Jerzy Putrament's relation from his journey to Istanbul in 1950's: "Doba w Stambule," in: *Orzet i półksiężyc. 600 lat polskiej publicystyki poświęconej Turcji*, ed. Dariusz Kotodziejczyk (Warszawa: Biblioteka Jedności Europejskiej, 2014), 349.

Turkey. This should be explained primarily not by geographical distance or cultural differences, but by the legacy of the Cold War, when Turkey was divided from communist bloc countries by the Iron Curtain.

Contrary to East Central European countries Turkish society does not have a negative experience with the communist system. This fact significantly shapes the Turkish elite's attitude toward Russia (understood as a former Mecca of the communists and successor of the Soviet Union). Many contemporary leftwing, but also some right wing conservative intellectuals (mostly with a Kemalist secular background), share a positive view of the heritage of the Soviet Union and its relations with the Republic of Turkey. To understand this it is important to examine its historical background. The Russian Bolsheviks played a significant role in the Turkish Independence War (*Türk Kurtuluş Savaşı*), when they helped Mustafa Kemal's government with financial aid and supplies of arms in 1921.¹³ Although later the communist movement in Turkey was suppressed by the government and, after World War II, Turkey – threatened by the USSR – became a member of NATO, sympathies for Soviet and post-Soviet Russia remained in the intellectual milieu.

A good example illustrating the positive Turkish stereotype or myth of the Soviet Union may be the history and legacy of the most famous 20th century Turkish poet, Nazim Hikmet Ran. He was a diehard Communist in the period of Joseph Stalin's rule and a political emigrant, who after fleeing his homeland, spent the last years of his life in communist Poland and the Soviet Union. Nazim Hikmet remains a cultural icon in Turkey, not only for radical left-wing sympathizers, but also for the majority of well-educated Turks. Of course, it is necessary to underline that his fame is based on his outstanding literary skills. His political attitude is widely understood in Turkey not as sympathetic to the totalitarian Soviet regime, but rather for resistance to the repressive and authoritarian policies of the government in Ankara.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the figure of Nazim Hikmet reinforces sympathy for the Soviet legacy in Turkish society.

Turkey, the Soviets, and the U.S. during the Cold War

Of course, not only intellectuals, but also the political elite in Turkey at times sought a closer relationship with the USSR, especially during the period of tensions in Turkish-American relations in 1970s. However, in the conditions of the Cold War these attempts could have had only limited success, if any.

Long before the Cold War started, at the beginning of the Second World War in September 1939, the government in Ankara attempted to improve its relationship with Moscow by sending an official delegation headed by Turkish Foreign Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu to the Kremlin. The Turkish diplomats were, however, discouraged by the Soviet expansionist policies. On 17 September 1939 the Soviet army invaded Poland and the Turkish delega-

¹³ Erich J. Zürcher, *Turcja. Od sultanatu do współczesności* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2013), 153.

¹⁴ More on Nazim Hikmet and his years spent in communist Poland and the Soviet Union see: Witold Szablowski, *Zabójca z miasta moreli. Reportaże z Turcji* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Czarne, 2010).

tion met with Moscow's demands to change the Montreux Convention of 1936, which gave Turkey control over the Turkish Straits.¹⁵

The threat of the Soviet Union for Turkey became even more evident in June 1945. The Soviet government pushed not only for revision of the Montreux Convention, but also demanded the establishment of Soviet military bases in the Straits area and transfer of the Turkish territories of Kars, Ardahan and Artvin to the Soviet Caucasian republics of Georgia and Armenia. Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov explained that according to the Turkish–Soviet Treaty of Kars (1921), the division of the lands of the Caucasus was “unjust” similarly as the Treaty of Riga between Bolshevik Russia and Poland signed in 1921. Molotov argued that it was time for new “just” treaties. In the case of Poland, the new, and after the war “just”, treaty with the Soviets meant not only Soviet annexation of Poland's Eastern territories, but also the loss of sovereignty and Soviet hegemony. Obviously the Soviet demand was unacceptable for Turkey,¹⁶ and pushed the Kemalist government in Ankara, which had managed to stay neutral through the whole period of the Second World War¹⁷, to a final rapprochement with the United States and Turkey's accession into NATO in 1952.

Of course, Turkey's relations with the United States and other NATO allies had also its ups and downs. These usually affected the relations with the Soviet Union. One of the worst moments in the history of the U.S.-Turkey relationship was the Turkish invasion of Cyprus after a Greek coup d'état on the island in 1974. The U.S. reaction to the Turkish occupation of the Northern part of Cyprus was to apply an arms embargo on Turkey. The growing crisis in Turkish-American relations relating to Cyprus led to a warming in the Turkish-Soviet relationship. For instance, in 1973 Turkey allowed Soviet planes, with aid for the Arab countries fighting with Israel, to use the Turkish air base in Incirlik. At the same time the Americans were not allowed to use the base.¹⁸ The Cyprus factor continued to cast a shadow on Turkish-American relations until the 1980s. Then, a new government formed after a Turkish army-led coup d'état on 17 October 1980 decided to quickly repair its relationship with Washington. Shortly after the coup the head of the Turkish National Security Council, General Kenan Evren, met with NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, General Bernard Rogers. As an act of reconciliation with the allies in NATO, Turkey agreed to Greece's return to NATO's military command structure.¹⁹

To sum up, at the end of the Cold War, Turkey became even more integrated into the Euro-Atlantic community. The pinnacle of good relations with the West was Özal's presidency. The U.S. appreciated his decision to support anti-Iraq forces in the Gulf War in 1991 by granting access for the American led coalition to the Incirlik airbase.²⁰ On the other hand, the years of tensions with NATO allies regarding the Cyprus issue, the U.S. support for an undemocratic military coup in 1980, leftist and Islamist criticism of Washington Mid-

¹⁵ Ali Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası. İlkeler, Aktörler ve Uygulamalar*, (İstanbul: Alfa, 2017), 87.

¹⁶ Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *Turcja*, (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Trio, 2000), 168–169.

¹⁷ Turkey declared war to Nazi Germany only on 23 February of 1945, which was purely symbolic gesture in order to obtain better international position in the post-war situation.

¹⁸ Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası*, 176.

¹⁹ Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası*, 189.

²⁰ Kołodziejczyk, *Turcja*, 249–250, Ramazan Gözen, “Turgut Özal ve Dış Politika: Körfez Savaşı Örneğinde İdealler ve Gerçekler,” in: *Özal'lı Yıllar. Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet*, eds. İhsan Sezal, İhsan Dağı (İstanbul: Beta, 2016), 255–265.

dle East policies made many in Turkish society suspicious about American political goals or even openly anti-American.

Post-Cold War Turkey and East Central Europe: Allies or Competitors?

The USSR ceased to exist in December 1991, and Turkey started its attempts to open up to the post-Soviet and post-communist countries. This process, as mentioned before, was sometimes described as the "export" of the "Turkish model" combining an Islamic background with democracy and a free market to the newly independent countries transforming from the communist system.²¹

In 1987 the government in Ankara applied for full membership to the European Economic Community, the predecessor of the European Union. However, Turkey became accepted as an official candidate for full EU membership only at the Helsinki summit of the European Council in 1999. Finally, the EU accession negotiations with Turkey started in 2005. At that time the political elite, as well as public opinion, in Turkey was becoming increasingly skeptical about the real chances to achieve EU membership due to the German and French veto to Turkey's accession.²² The Turkish perception of the EU as a "Christian club" became reinforced with the relatively quick accession process of the predominantly Christian countries of East Central Europe and Cyprus in 2004.

Another moment when East Central Europe entered Ankara's sphere of interests was the NATO enlargement process in the 2000s. Although Turkey did not oppose the 1999 and 2004 waves of the Alliance's enlargement, it became increasingly critical about the rising influence of the U.S. in the Black Sea basin. In 2006 Turkey was against the expansion of the NATO's "Active Endeavor" maritime operation from the Mediterranean Sea to the Black Sea. The government in Ankara argued that Turkey's "Black Sea Harmony" operation was sufficient. The real motive behind Turkish disapproval of the "Active Endeavor's" extension to the Black Sea was Ankara's angst that the U.S. presence would irritate Russia.²³

Even if Turkey was involved in assistance for the modernization of Georgia's army since the 1990s, it was reluctant to openly support Tbilisi's and Kyiv's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. When Russia protested against Georgia's and Ukraine's integration with NATO at the Alliance's summit in Bucharest in April 2008, Turkey found itself closer to Western European members (such as France and Germany), who "understood Russian concerns". Moreover, the "colorful" revolutions, the 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia and 2004 Orange Revolu-

²¹ Finally, despite high expectations, not only in Turkey, but generally in the West, the "Turkish model" was not implemented in any of the Caucasus or Central Asian post-Soviet states. The latter neither accepted the Iranian, "theocratic" or Islamic model, which many in the West feared might replace the Soviet system in the newly independent republics. See: Igor Torbakov, "Ankara's Post-Soviet Efforts in the Caucasus and Central Asia: The Failure of "Turkic World" Model," 25.12.2002, www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav122602.shtml.

²² Lucia Najšlová, Adam Balcer, Rebecca Muray, Zsuzsanna Végh, "Should We Upgrade the V4-Turkey Dialogue," *EU Frontiers. Policy Paper*, no. 13 (June 2016): 7.

²³ Rafat Sadowski, "The cold alliance. Turkish-US political relations after 2003," in: *Turkey after the start of negotiations with the European Union – foreign relations and the domestic situation. Part I*, ed. Adam Balcer, (Warsaw: Centre for Eastern Studies, 2007), 65.

tion were observed with suspicion in Turkey and often interpreted as a plot financed by American business magnate George Soros or the CIA.²⁴

The End of Post-Cold War Peace: Turkey and East Central Europe Facing New Realities

The August 2008 Russian invasion of Georgia turned out to be a challenging test for Turkey as well as the East Central European countries. The latter were not united in their attitude towards the conflict. The Visegrad countries – excluding Poland – were rather silent or sympathetic to the Russian position.²⁵ Poland and the Baltic states were the only European NATO members that decided to openly support Georgia. Turkey, however, launched a new peace initiative for the Caucasus, its so-called "Caucasian Platform of Stability and Cooperation", and tried to maneuver between the sides of the conflict without explanation of its own position.²⁶

The main reason behind the weak Turkish reaction to Russia's aggression was Ankara's intent not to harm economic relations with Russia. Throughout the 2000s the Russian Federation remained one of Turkey's main economic partners. After construction of the Blue Stream pipeline linking the Russian and Turkish Black Sea coasts in 2005 as much as 60-70% of gas supplies were imported from Russia.²⁷ The Turkish economy profited from food exports to the Russian market, Turkish construction companies operating in Russia and Russian tourists coming to Turkish resorts.²⁸

Turkey, however, was concerned by the Russian invasion of Georgia. Especially due to this it put at risk common energy projects with Azerbaijan, as all the strategically important oil and gas pipelines from this country crossed Georgian territory. Thus, despite the fact that there are numerous Abkhazian diasporas in Turkey, did not recognize Georgia's two separatist republics Abkhazia and South Ossetia after their recognition by Russia in August 2008.²⁹

Another, serious security challenge posed by Russia to both Turkey and the East Central Europe region was Russian occupation of Ukraine's Crimea and instigation of the separatist rebellion in the Donbass in 2014. In Poland and the Baltic states Russian aggression against Ukraine was perceived as crossing the line. The conflict triggered serious debates in these countries about the further expansionist goals of the Kremlin. The Baltic states with relatively big Russian populations, Latvia and Estonia, started to prepare themselves for a possible hybrid war scenario including Moscow-instigated unrest by ethnic minorities.

²⁴ See e.g.: Sinan Oğan, *Turunçu Devrimler* (İstanbul: Birharf Yayınları, 2006), Fiona Hill, Ömer Taşpınar, "Turkey and Russia: Axis of the Excluded?," 1 March 2006, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/turkey-and-russia-axis-of-the-excluded>.

²⁵ Dariusz Kačan, Konrad Zasztowt, "Business and Democracy: V4 Policy on South Caucasus," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 136 (589), 13.12.2013, https://www.pism.pl/files/?id_plik=15892.

²⁶ Zasztowt, "The Turkey-South Caucasus Relationship," 189.

²⁷ Dimitar Bechev, *Rival Power: Russia's Influence in Southeast Europe*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2017), 165.

²⁸ Bechev, *Rival Power*, 165.

²⁹ Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası*, 304–305.

When Ukraine's territorial integrity was breached by Russia, Turkey too could not stay completely passive. Similarly as in the case of the 2008 August War in Georgia, Ankara had to react, but did not want to push Russia too far. Thus Turkey restrained itself from joining the U.S. and EU sanctions against Russia after its annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. On the other hand, Ankara did not recognize the March 2014 referendum in Crimea organized by Russia in order to "legalize" the annexation. Turkey also became concerned due to the deteriorating situation of Crimean Tatars, the autochthonous Turkic population of Crimea.³⁰

In 2015 two important international developments forced Turkey and East Central Europe to express their positions clearly. The first one was the height of the refugee crisis in summer 2015, and the second one was the beginning of Russian military intervention in Syria. In fact these two developments were interrelated: the refugee crisis was a result of the Syrian civil war and Russian military support for the Damascus regime led to a growth in the number of Syrians escaping from the conflict. Turkey became the country with the biggest number of Syrian refugees (according to UNHCR data: 3,285,000).³¹

In 2015, for many of those refugees, Turkey was only a transit country and their final destination were rich European countries, members of the EU. To stop the uncontrolled wave of refugees traveling through Greece and the Balkans to Central Europe, the EU (in fact mostly due to the initiative of German Chancellor Angela Merkel) decided to cooperate with Turkey. The March 2016 agreement between the EU and Turkey envisaged tighter control of the Aegean Sea border by the Turkish Coast Guard in order to stop the smuggling of people, a relocation mechanism of those migrants who had already come to Greece from Turkey, and EU financial aid for the Syrian refugees in Turkey. In the framework of the deal the EU promised Turkey a speed up of accession negotiations and to grant Turkish nationals visa-free access to the Schengen zone. The EU also agreed to resettle up to 72,000 Syrian refugees directly from Turkey to the Union's member countries.

The latter element of the EU-Turkey agreement was criticized in the Visegrad countries, especially by the conservative governments in Hungary and Poland. They argued that an influx of Muslim immigrants to the EU countries could lead to a rise in terrorist attacks. The target of the criticism was, however, not Turkey, but rather the European Commission and German Chancellor Merkel.³²

The anti-immigrant and anti-Islamic voices of some of the prominent politicians in Visegrad countries were equally strong and frequent as in the case of the West European political elites. Interestingly, however, despite this rhetoric, the same Visegrad politicians refrained from criticism of current policies of the moderately Islamist Justice and Development Party government in Turkey. Moreover, some of the Visegrad leaders even tended to positively assess Turkish Prime Minister, and later President, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his tough approach to the EU and Turkish anti-government protesters during the Gezi Park protests in summer 2013.³³

³⁰ Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası*, 358.

³¹ This is the number of registered refugees according to UNHCR data as of 2 November 2017: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=224>.

³² "EU-Turkey migrant deal is 'necessary,' says Hungary's Orban," 2.05.2016, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/eu-turkey-migrant-deal-is-necessary-says-hungarys-orban--98619>.

³³ Lucia Najšlová, Adam Balcer, Rebecca Muray, Zsuzsanna Végh, "Should We Upgrade the V4-Turkey Dialogue," 17–18.

There were other issues causing some tensions in Visegrad countries relations with Turkey. In the early 2000s Turkish diplomacy protested after the Polish and Slovakian parliaments passed the Armenian genocide resolutions.³⁴ In April 2016 the Syrian Kurds' military organization the People's Protection Units (YPG) officially opened an office in Prague. This caused a brief period of distrust between Turkey and the Czech Republic. From Ankara's point of view the YPG is a sister organization of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), recognized by both Turkey and the EU as a terrorist group. Regardless, the office was closed after seven months.³⁵ Before the closure of the YPG office in Prague, the Czech Foreign Ministry explained that it did not "recognize so called 'Syrian Kurdistan' as a subject of international law". The Czech authorities also underlined that the YPG office was registered as an NGO and the organization was not included in the EU's list of terrorist organizations.³⁶

Turkey, the West and Russia after the 15 July 2016 Coup Attempt

Along with the issue of support for the YPG, the problem of the U.S. and EU countries' alleged tolerance, or sympathetic attitude towards, the Fethullah Gülen movement turned out to be the main bone of contention in Turkey's relations with its Western partners. Although the tensions had been growing since at least 2014, the peak of the crisis turned out to be the 15 July coup attempt in Turkey, which according to Turkish authorities was staged by pro-Gülenist officers. The coup was surprising for the Turkish public since the last case of the Turkish army's serious interference in civilian politics had happened in 1997. Similarly, for Western observers, political analysts and political leaders, the 15 July events were unexpected and incomprehensible. On the other hand, the weak reaction of the U.S., and the main European leaders on the day after the coup was immediately interpreted by the government in Ankara as support for the plotters.³⁷ Later Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan became annoyed due to the American authorities' refusal to extradite Islamist leader Gülen from his self-imposed exile in the U.S. state of Pennsylvania to Turkey.

On the other hand, Russian President Vladimir Putin was very quick to congratulate his Turkish colleague's victory over the Gülenist enemies. Investigative journalists started to analyze whether Russia was involved in the 15 July coup. Several facts raised doubts about the Russian role in these developments. On the day of the coup, just a few hours before it had started, Putin's propagandist and eulogist of Eurasianist ideology, Aleksander Dugin, visited Ankara and met with the capital's Mayor Melih Gökçek. The latter later stated publicly that he learned from Dugin about the CIA's involvement in the coup attempt.³⁸

Most probably these statements were only a proof of how smart and skillful Russian propaganda was, rather than evidence that the Russians were fully aware of the coup plans or involved in the events of 15 July. Nevertheless, the Russian media managed to picture Russia as a true friend of Turkey and the U.S. and the West as traitors for plotting together

³⁴ Lucia Najšlová, Adam Balcer, Rebecca Muray, Zsuzsanna Végh, "Should We Upgrade the V4-Turkey Dialogue," 16.

³⁵ "Kurdish YPG office in Prague shut down," 15.12.2016, <http://aranews.net/2016/12/kurdish-ypg-office-prague-shut>.

³⁶ Lucia Najšlová, Adam Balcer, Rebecca Muray, Zsuzsanna Végh, "Should We Upgrade the V4-Turkey Dialogue," 17.

³⁷ Ian Lesser, "Turkey and the West after the Failed Coup: Beyond Suspicion?," *Insight Turkey* 18, no. 3 (Summer 2016): 45–46.

³⁸ See e.g. Hakan Aygün, *15 Temmuz Sırları* (İstanbul: Siyah Beyaz Yayınları, 2017), 352–354.

with Gülen's organization against the democratically elected government in Ankara. Indeed some members of the Turkish ruling party started to repeat this Russian narrative. Dugin's anti-American rhetoric fitted into the narratives of both some Islamists, as well as secularist, politicians in Turkey. Undoubtedly, the coup attempt helped to strengthen rapprochement between Turkey and Russia, which started less than two months before the 15 July events.

The Turkish-Russian thaw came just six months after a severe crisis between the two countries, which started after the shooting down by an F-16 of a Russian Su-24, which had violated Turkish airspace in November 2015. Two months before the NATO summit in Warsaw, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan warned that the Black Sea region is falling under Russian dominance and becoming "almost a Russian lake". He was quite alarming in his rhetoric addressing NATO partners ("If we don't act now, history will not forgive us").³⁹ However, in May 2016 Ahmet Davutoğlu resigned from his premiership, and Binali Yıldırım became the new prime minister. The latter, contrary to his predecessor, left all the initiative in foreign policy to President Erdoğan.⁴⁰ One of the first moves of the new government was to change Turkey's foreign policy priorities. The most important ones were halting the process of rapprochement with the EU (based on the EU–Turkey "migrant deal"), and a thaw in Turkish-Russian relations, boosted by the Gülen crisis between Turkey and the U.S. and EU.⁴¹

Turkish-Russian rapprochement happened despite serious arguments between Moscow and Ankara over the fate of Syria. President Erdoğan decided, however, to cooperate with Russia for several reasons. The main cause of this extremely rapid process of restoration of relations between the two countries was pressure of the business lobby in Turkey, those who were the victims of a Russian-Turkish war of economic sanctions. Apart from important political figures in Turkey and Russia, also the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarabayev played a crucial role in negotiations leading to a resolution of the crisis.⁴² Moreover, mending fences with Putin enabled Erdoğan to start – with Russian silent approval – a military operation in Syria (*Euphrates Shield*). Turkey resigned from its previous demand for the resignation of Syrian leader Bashar al Assad, but managed to build its zone of influence in al Bab and disable Syrian Kurdish forces (YPG) from unifying their territories along the Turkish border. In December 2016 Russia, Turkey and Iran issued a declaration in Moscow regarding common efforts to resolve the Syrian conflict. Turkey's involvement in this format meant the final resignation from regime change policy regarding Damascus and a further strengthening of its relationship with Russia.⁴³

Looking at these developments in the Middle East from the East Central Europe perspective it is worth analyzing to what extent they influence the situation in the latter region. Poland was involved in the 2003 U.S. invasion of Saddam Husain's Iraq and many other East Central European countries participated in the post-invasion mission. Then, the rationale behind these governments' decision to send troops to the Middle East was to prove their loyalty to the U.S. as an ally in NATO. In the case of the Syrian conflict, the U.S. and other

³⁹ "Russia's military ambitions make waves in the Black Sea," *Financial Times*, May 13, 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/1b9c24d8-1819-11e6-b197-a4af20d5575e>.

⁴⁰ Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası*, 350.

⁴¹ Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası*, 356.

⁴² Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası*, 359.

⁴³ Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası*, 360.

Western NATO countries did not decide to intervene on the ground.⁴⁴ Similarly, there was little incentive for East Central European countries to be involved politically or militarily in Syria. For Poland and the Baltic states such a motivation could have been support for Turkey, whose territory had come under threat due to the civil war in Syria. The common denominator for Turkey and Poland, the Baltic States, as well as Romania and Bulgaria, is their location on the Eastern flank of the Alliance. Nevertheless, the threats stemming from the militarization of Russia in the Baltic and Black Sea regions are different from the threats Turkey faces in its Middle Eastern environment. Moreover, at the moment it is Russia, not the NATO allies, who is helping Turkey to achieve its goals in the Syrian conflict.

On the other hand, Russia will rather not remain Turkey's reliable partner in the Middle East as the two countries are united only by a tactical alliance and their long-term goals in Syria are mutually contradictory. The changes in the security environment are fast and it is difficult to predict an outcome to the Syrian war and its impact on Turkish-Russian relations. What remains constant are the security challenges that NATO's Eastern flank countries are facing. Awareness of these risks should be the basis of closer Turkish and East Central European countries' viewpoints. Therefore, trying to understand and forecast the direction of Turkey's relationship with the region of East Central Europe, it is necessary to study their different perceptions, threat assessments and sometimes even stereotypes that influence their political decisions.

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***From a Common to a National State(s)
and the Lithuanian-Polish Dispute***

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On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the restoration of the independent states of Poland and Lithuania, we will return to a fundamental question, namely, whether the relationship between our contemporary states, which had already become hostile during the restoration process, is a time of missed opportunities? Or maybe the interests of both sides were simply so different that it was impossible for them to agree on a matter of major importance – state territory (partly also on the issue of national minorities) – and to balance their interests, thus avoiding conflict and a particularly hostile bilateral relationship which lasted until the tragic developments for both Poland and Lithuania in 1939-1940, when our countries fell victim to two tyrants.

It is necessary to adopt new approaches to history. As time passes, new generations lose the memory of how events developed. Moreover, old beliefs, suspicions, and phobias are even revived. I would like to tell you a personal story in order to illustrate this point. At the end of December 1993, an annual convention of Lithuanian ambassadors was held in Vilnius. I had just flown in from Washington, D.C., and so I was reflecting on the attitude of the U.S. Administration and the conclusions that were arrived at after some friendly discussions with the staff of the Polish Embassy in Washington D.C., and I shared my thoughts.

At that time, talks on a treaty between Lithuania and Poland had stalled, and so the Lithuanian side, including members of both the Government and the opposition, was working under a cloud of fear and suspicion. They were slowly looking for miraculous ways to describe past events, while some groups of people were demonstrating on the streets. When I spoke at the convention, I believed and recommended for many historical, geopolitical, and cultural reasons and despite a complicated past that we stop ruining the present and endeavor to reach an agreement with Poland as soon as possible because this nation is an important partner and we share the same values and have common strategic goals with the people of Poland. At first, my words were met with complete silence. Then,

much to my surprise, the speech was loudly applauded. So, the Lithuanian diplomatic corps supported friendly relations with Poland. On 26 April 1994, Poland and Lithuania signed the Treaty of Friendly Relations and Good-Neighborly Cooperation.

I shall survey the position with which I am better acquainted: that of the Lithuanian side on relations with Poland and the Polish people. In the aftermath of World War I, the goals of Lithuania changed substantially; the goal of autonomy (in the Russian sphere) was replaced by the goal of independence. The two wings of Lithuania's political spectrum – the conservatives (the right, mainly Christian Democrats and Nationalists) and the radicals (the left, mainly Social Democrats and liberals) – appealed to the natural, inherent rights of a nation. The conservatives hoped for the gradual renewal of life in a rather ethnic nation according to their understanding. The radicals had a socialist reform plan aimed at modifying or transforming the nation (*populi*) – the entirety of its citizens, who had decided to live in a one state structure. Their programs incorporated a significant link between the natural rights of a people and the historical tradition of the Lithuanian state – a link which allowed both wings to implement the actual idea of national consolidation.

In the process of restoring the Lithuanian state, besides gaining the consensus of Lithuania's political factions, it was also necessary to establish a *modus vivendi*, first, with the Jewish population that lived in the country's towns (shtetls) and cities (and that had an economic interest in a larger Lithuanian state) and, second, with the Polish-speaking landowners, who had also been there for centuries, as well as with the Polish population in the towns and cities, most of whom were oriented toward the Polish state that was being restored and saw Lithuania as an integral part of Poland. Belarusians were less important because of their fragmentation, although contacts with them had not been abandoned, as evidenced by the fact that the first interim governments of Lithuania had also included ministers without portfolio for Belarusian and Jewish affairs from November 1918.

Lithuanian radicals recognized the importance of having the Polish and Jewish minorities as equal citizens loyal to the country. The radicals countered the influence of Lithuanian conservatives and Polish nationalists (Endeks) by expanding the dialogue between the democratic and socialist groups. A unique group since the end of the 19th century was the democratic movement of the noble intelligentsia called the *krajowcy* (Michał Römer, Tadeusz Wróblewski, Ludwik and Witold Abramowicz, and others), which continued the traditions of territorial patriotism and recognized Lithuania and Belarus as a single political and economic entity that deserved its own statehood based on citizenship of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the possibility of restoring the GDL in confederation (or equal federation) with Poland.¹

Consultations between various ethnic groups continued during the war, as Russian influence declined. In the face of the German factor, after the German army had occupied Lithuania, political visions changed quickly. The Lithuanian activist Petras Klimas wrote: "Under the German presence, we can see how we are solidifying politically, how our visions are becoming clearer and more precise. The goal of independence, of orientation to

¹ Rimantas Miknys, „Vilniaus autonomistai ir jų 1904–1905 Lietuvos politinės autonomijos projektai“, *Lietuvių atgimimo istorijos studijos*, t. 3, Vilnius, 1991, p. 195; Rimantas Miknys, „Mykolas Römeris – Lietuvos modernybės aušros mętraštininkas, analitikas ir politikas“, Mykolas Römeris, *Dienoraštis: 1918 m. birželio 30-oji–1919 m. birželio 20-oji*, Vilnius, 2007, pp. XXIII–XXVIII.

the West, is crystallizing as well as relations with the Jews, Poles, and Belarusians. In building Lithuania, Lithuanians should make the decisions, not the minorities...."²

In the run-up to and during the Vilnius Conference in the summer of 1917, groups of the intelligentsia decided first to agree on a vision for the Lithuanian state among themselves and only then to invite national minorities to participate in the process of creating (restoring) this state. However, Lithuanians were required to comply with the demands of the occupying authorities to declare a union with Germany. A union with Poland was not discussed because expansionism was behind Polish ideas of such a union. The national principle, the right to self-determination, regarded by conservatives as the basis for the restoration or creation of the modern Lithuanian state, was also regarded by the government of Imperial Germany as a good reason for Lithuania's union with Germany. It is, therefore, not surprising that Berlin tried in every way to persuade the Ober Ost (the Supreme Commander of All German Forces in the East) to give in to Lithuanian wishes to elect rather than appoint the members of the Council of Lithuania.³

Modernizing its annexation plans for the occupied territories, Germany demanded a declaration of eternal ties from the representations of those lands (Courland and Lithuania) on the eve of the Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations with Russia. At the same time, Lithuanians produced a vision of restoring a Lithuanian state that was comprised of Lithuania's ethnographic territories and the capital Vilnius (Polish Wilno, English Vilna), while keeping Polish culture in strict subordination on the condition that Germany abide by the principle of self-determination and lend support to Lithuania. In this case, Lithuania would be provided with an international guarantee of its existence. Thus, Lithuania's working diplomacy was born – by playing Russia and Germany off against each other in order to decisively negate Polish influence in Lithuania.⁴

The Polish question was already on the table in both camps – the Entente and the Central Powers. The Lithuanian question was raised only by the Lithuanians themselves. Lithuanians collected all the statements made regarding Poland's future – those by Roman Dmowski and Józef Piłsudski and their representatives. In the process of restoring their states, Lithuanians and Poles came into sharp conflict regarding the use of language in churches and the indication of nationality in the census, and both sides issued memoranda to the German authorities. The speedy rise of the Polish question made Lithuanians suspicious. On 8 December 1915, Petras Klimas wrote in his diary: "Some colleagues complain that Smetona is an impractical choice for chairman of the Lithuanian Committee to help war victims. He is very concerned only about the East and talks only about the Polish threat – 'Polish danger and Polish danger.'⁵ Although Polish activity was a good example for Lithuanians, each achievement raised an important question for the near future: what would happen to the Suwałki region? To whom would Vilnius belong?

What Lithuanian public figures dreaded was that a union of states would pose a threat to the development of Lithuanian culture and would even lead to its disappearance in

² Petras Klimas, *Dienoraštis 1915.XII.1 – 1919.I.19*, Chicago, 1968, p. 176.

³ Raimundas Lopata, *Lietuvos valstybingumo raida 1914–1918 metais*, serija „Lietuvių atgimimo istorijos studijos“, t. 9, Vilnius, 1996, p. 126.

⁴ Česlovas Laurinavičius, *Politika ir diplomatija. Lietuvių tautinės valstybės tapimo ir raidos fragmentai*, Kaunas, 1997, pp. 8–9.

⁵ Petras Klimas, *Dienoraštis 1915.XII.1 – 1919.I.19*, Chicago, 1968, p. 57.

Poland's melting pot. In addition, they could not agree that their historical capital, Vilnius, should become part of Poland. The idea of restoring the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) or the old Commonwealth of the Two Nations had a fundamental flaw: it did not ensure the independence of Lithuania. The goal of independence, which was set forth for the first time ever in Vilnius, emphasized the importance of language.⁶ As the question arose about whether to invite non-Lithuanians to the Lithuanian conference, Smetona stated on 4 August 1917: "It would be impractical: we would have to speak Russian. We are not going to teach Russian at our conference. This is politics.... Neither the Poles nor the Finns have done this."⁷ In their *politeia* (form of state, legal or otherwise, its character) Lithuanians saw Vilnius as their historic and future capital and the home of their central cultural societies and the Council of Lithuania⁸. They were successful: the Lithuanian Jurgis Matulaitis was appointed bishop of Vilnius (on 9 December 1918), and the Statute of Vilnius University was discussed and approved in early December. In the eyes of Poles, Vilnius was almost entirely a Polish city.

The many documents published by Lithuanian⁹ and Polish historians as well as the memoirs of contemporaries directly lead to a simple conclusion: the states of Poland and Lithuania, which were being restored during 1917-1920, could not resolve the issue of Vilnius and its surrounding territory primarily because their most important leaders never discussed it directly.

This conflict became apparent on 24 May 1917, when 44 prominent Poles from Vilnius issued a memorandum to the German Chancellor asking that Lithuania be part of a union with local self-rule.¹⁰ The Lithuanian leader Antanas Smetona promised national minorities the right to cultural autonomy because Lithuania was traditionally tolerant, but he added: "We must be careful lest we ourselves perish because of our great tolerance."¹¹ The Poles avoided cooperation on the Council of Lithuania because the Lithuanians treated them like a national minority, but not like equal citizens. Polish political parties acted the same way, and so all joint projects were frozen.

Afterwards, the Ober Ost allowed the Vilnius Conference to be held on 18-22 September 1917 and permitted the election of 20 members to the Council of Trust (*Vertrauensrat*) – what Lithuanians called the Council of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Taryba*), which was under-

⁶ Lithuanian political statesmen and the protocols of the Lithuanian Council of 1917-1918 are published in: *Lietuvos Taryba ir nepriklausomos valstybės atkūrimas 1914-1920 metų dokumentuose*. Sudarė A. Eidintas ir R. Lopata, Vilnius, 2017. – 814 p. (hereinafter – *Lietuvos Taryba*...)

⁷ *Lietuvos Taryba*..., p. 203.

⁸ It's a special study about Vilnius as the Capital of Lithuania – a problem in the project of the Nation State (late 19th Century – 1940) see: Dangiras Mačiulis, Darius Staliūnas. Vilnius – Lietuvos sostinė: problema tautinės valstybės projekte (XIX a. pabaiga – 1940 m., Vilnius, 2015. – 318 p.

⁹ *Lietuvos ir Lenkijos santykiai: nuo Pirmojo pasaulinio karo pabaigos iki L. Želigovskio įvykdyto Vilniaus užėmimo (1918 m. lapkričio-1920 m. spalio)*. Dokumentų rinkinys. Sudarė E. Gimžauskas, parengė E. Gimžauskas, Artūras Svarauskas, Vilnius, 2012. – 704 p.; another volume of documents edited by Edmundas Gimžauskas deals with Lithuanian-Polish relations during the German occupation: *Lietuva vokiečių okupacijoje Pirmojo pasaulinio karo metais 1915-1918. Lietuvos nepriklausomos valstybės genezė: dokumentų rinkinys*, sud. Edmundas Gimžauskas, Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas, 2006, p. 97-99.

¹⁰ *Lietuva vokiečių okupacijoje Pirmojo pasaulinio karo metais 1915-1918. Lietuvos nepriklausomos valstybės genezė*, pp. 134-137.

¹¹ *Lietuvos Taryba*..., p. 193.

stood *a priori* as the supreme body in Lithuanian affairs for all Lithuanians, including émigré organizations in the USA, Russia, Switzerland, etc. Lithuanians were forced to speak in favor of a close relationship and ties between Lithuania and Germany as well as to enter into the phase of the so-called pro-German orientation. The Lithuanian dilemma was clear: Russia did not promise anything, nor did the Entente, and occupied Lithuania was completely dependent on the Ober Ost authorities, while Poles believed Lithuania was just part of Poland. Only the Germans could raise the Lithuanian question in the international arena, and so it was important to wait for the war to end as well as for a favorable turn of events.

Under the harsh German occupational regime, the Vilnius Conference (with 222 participants) worked hard to achieve that orientation. But everyone realized that there was now a need to take risks – especially because the permission to elect the members of the Council had been obtained through the actions of Germany's own internal forces, which had urged a relaxation of the occupational regime in the territories occupied by German troops, particularly after the United States declared war against Germany (on 6 April 1917). The USA had also actively raised an issue that was gaining popularity – the principle of a people's right to self-determination. It was hoped that the postwar Peace Conference would resolve all issues.¹²

President Smetona's plan for the restoration of the Lithuanian state had never been described in detail, but its outlines now became clearer. He hoped to come to the Peace Conference prepared with help from the Germans and, with the assistance of their army, to keep the borders of their military *Verwaltung*. In the meantime, Lithuanians would build their own army, take over the administration, etc. Thus, when the Germans demanded on 11 December 1917 that the Council of Lithuania adopt a resolution in which it announced the restoration of an independent Lithuanian state with Vilnius as its capital and the dissolution of all its ties with other nations, the Council requested Germany's **protection and assistance** [our emphasis – A.E.] in order to "protect its interests in peace talks"¹³ in the second clause of this document.

This resolution also called "for an eternal steadfast union of the state of Lithuania with the state of Germany; this union should be based on military and communication conventions, a common customs and monetary system." Smetona was not afraid of conventions. According to him: "...they are a necessity. Lithuania needs conventions because it is a small country among giants." During 5-16 September 1918, at the Lithuanian Conference in Lausanne, he explained regardless of the four conventions: if the Germans are leaving Lithuania "the Bolsheviks or Poles will come, and they will behave like our masters..."¹⁴ As the Ober Ost did not entrust the Council with any administrative functions, Lithuania would not be able to stand on its own for much time. Therefore, precisely this way of restoring the state was chosen. Only on the basis of this resolution of 11 December 1917 did Germany recognize Lithuania on 23 March 1918.

The issue of four conventions was also linked to the introduction of a constitutional monarchy into Lithuania and the election of Prince Wilhelm of Urach, Count of Württemberg, 2nd Duke of Urach, on 11 July 1918 as King of Lithuania with the royal name of Mind-

¹² *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 317.

¹³ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, pp. 384-385.

¹⁴ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 544.

augas II. The idea of a constitutional monarchy was already dominant in the Council at the end of 1917; it was being promoted in the Reichstag by Catholic Center deputies (mainly Matthias Erzberger, with whom Lithuanian conservatives had close ties). In the project for a monarchical constitution, the four conventions were also mentioned.¹⁵ Smetona and the conservatives still believed that Germany would not lose, but might even win the war¹⁶.

Not only was a constitutional monarchy supposed to save Lithuania from a personal union with Prussia and Saxony, but it was also hoped that such a monarchy would secure a better relationship between the Council and the majority of landowners, who were Poles. As Smetona said: "...we could clarify our situation and put an end to claims that we do not have a plan [to restore the state]. I have no fear of landowners."¹⁷ Not without reason had he also spoken against the expropriation and distribution of landed estates to peasants. It was expected that the tradition of statehood, which the Latvians and Estonians lacked, would be a great help. "There are enough Lithuanian intellectuals and traditions, but they are so confused. It is almost as if we had no nobility. On the contrary, nobles are our most significant figures," said Smetona, who considered gaining the support of some noblemen. According to him, the pro-Polish landowners would either have to "return to their Lithuanian roots" or "die" to Lithuanian society.¹⁸ But the aristocracy's ethno-political polonophilia was not reconcilable with his own orientation toward ethnic values, and the compromise proposal – to grant public and caste privileges to the noblemen in return for their Lithuanianization – did not resolve the issue, as most of these noblemen did not seek to be re-Lithuanianized. Moreover, the Nationalists (*tautininkai*) and the Christian Democrats could not seek reconciliation with the Polish landowners, as they would lose their influence with the people¹⁹, especially since the Poles were further developing their social base in Lithuania and Polonizing the country, particularly eastern Lithuania.

Even on 29 October 1918, at the Council of Lithuania, Smetona continued to defend the monarchy and noted that "the election of Urach is to be reckoned with – a serious,

¹⁵ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 431.

¹⁶ On 16 February 1918, after a clash between the conservative and radical wings of the Council there was a unanimous vote for an independence resolution. The act of independence was born because the Germans had not invited the Lithuanians to the Brest-Litovsk negotiations and had not recognized Lithuania as an independent state. The postulates of this decision were accepted by the Lithuanians as a proclamation of independence and a most important national day. There was nothing in them about "close ties with Germany" or other states; therefore, Germany ignored this act, and the Lithuanians were forced to assure Berlin that, if recognized, they would agree to base relations on the resolution of 11 December 1917.

¹⁷ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 467.

¹⁸ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, pp. 564-565.

¹⁹ Here we cannot ignore also social questions when talking about language or ethnic relations between Lithuanians and local Polish population in Lithuania. The land reform and promises to distribute the land for a peasants – volunteers of the Lithuanian army became a very important tool also to restrict Polish influence in Lithuania. The tensions between landowners and peasantry was a subject of the concern in the discussions between the Warsaw politicians. It was 8000 estates over 100 hectares in Lithuania and Belarus and it was a ground base for Polishness in those lands, as one said if that country finds itself in the hands of some regional government, "let's say the Sejm in Vilnius where Poles will be a minority, and that the government will strive to minimize large landed estates, everything indicates that Poles will be forced to leave." See Polish Documents on Foreign Policy, 11 November 1918 – 28 June 1919. Editors Slawomir Dębski, Piotr Długolecki, Warszawa, 2017, s. 247-249, 254. Indeed, the land reform in Lithuania was executed by Lithuanian conservatives (Christian Democrats mainly), restricting the size of the estates to about 80 hectares.

deliberate step has been taken," that it was not a mere turn of events, that "this act has much greater significance than is thought."²⁰ But the plan to establish a kingdom collapsed together with the European monarchies.

The Lithuanians had developed a concept of ethnic territory. Petras Klimas had prepared a study of the ethnic boundaries of Lithuania, which was published in German in Stuttgart at the end of 1916.²¹ On the basis of ethnographic criteria, he narrowed the territory of Lithuania down to a "healthy nucleus": the greater part of the Kaunas, Vilnius (except Russian Orthodox dominated areas), and Suwałki guberniyas, part of the Grodno guberniya up to the Niemen (Nemunas) River, also Sejny and Krasnopol. The Lithuanians defended this concept of territory during their peace talks with Bolshevik Russia in 1920. It was, in essence, entered in the Soviet-Lithuanian Peace Treaty of July 1920. The circumstance that secret annexes were added to this treaty is another story.

But the biggest question for Lithuanians was how much territory they could control in the process of building a national state. In October 1918, Smetona was clear: "The Council claims the territory that is now controlled by the German Militärverwaltung."²² That was *Lithuania propria*, or Lithuania proper, with Suwałki, Sejny, Grodno, Białystok, Lida, etc. Because the majority in some of those territories did not speak Lithuanian, the Lithuanians themselves were forced to exclude some areas from their proposed state. Even if the border with Poland had been delineated in a friendly manner, its designation would sometimes have been difficult because Polish islands and strips surrounded Vilnius almost as far as Kaunas, while Lithuanian islands and strips surrounded Sejny, Puńsk, the Grodno guberniya, etc.

Lithuanian assurances that national minorities would be allowed to satisfy their cultural needs were in vain, especially after it was said at the Council: "We will take matters into our own hands. We will make our nation rise.... We will take into consideration all the affairs of national minorities, but we will form our administration without them."²³ Others thought that it was too early for talks with the Poles because the Poles still did not want to believe Lithuania could win. However, there were reassurances about equal rights for all citizens in all of the provisional constitutions of Lithuania during 1918-1920. Also, on 30 June 1918, on behalf of the Council of Lithuania, Augustinas Voldemaras signed an agreement with the Polish representative Count Adam Ronikier (the so-called Ronikier-Voldemaras Treaty), pledging equal rights for Poles in Lithuania and guaranteeing the use of the Polish language as a medium of instruction in schools and future institutions of higher education (following the example set by Helsinki University) as well as the equal use of vernacular languages in churches. Poland committed itself to support Lithuanian statehood and act against hostile agitation.²⁴ Unfortunately, this agreement failed.

However, the turning point in the orientation of the early Lithuanian governments, when they turned away from Germany toward the Entente, did not enhance their relationship with Poles, either. In the context of an impending Bolshevik invasion and the danger

²⁰ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 565.

²¹ Werbelis [Petras Klimas] *Russisch-Litauen. Statistisch-etnographische Betrachtungen*, Stuttgart, 1916.

²² *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 560.

²³ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, pp. 594-595.

²⁴ *Lietuvos Taryba...*, p. 439.

of having Lithuania Bolshevized, also because of domestic policy (the radicals' revenge for the pro-German orientation of the Council), the Cabinet discussed the possibility of becoming a protectorate of England a few times in the first half of 1919, in as much as Prime Minister Mykolas Sleževičius had received approval from the leaders of the parties. The benefits of a protectorate would have included opportunities to obtain weapons from the English and to intensify our foreign policy. Although this point was not mentioned, a British protectorate would have had to defend Lithuania against encroachment by the Polish Army and to prevent moving the demarcation line further into ethnically Lithuanian lands. In August 1919 seven out of eleven Cabinet Ministers voted for a British protectorate.²⁵

All the later meetings and discussions between Lithuanians and Poles ended with Vilnius being recognized as the capital of Lithuania.

- 1) On 16 April 1919, the government of Lithuania sent a delegation led by Jurgis Šaulys to Warsaw to establish diplomatic and economic relations with Poland, to agree on joint military action against the Bolsheviks (on 19 April, the Poles took Vilnius without saying a word to the Lithuanians). The Poles (Ignacy Paderewski) proposed a federation (a joint army, treasury, and foreign policy), while other members of the Polish parties proposed a union. According to them, Vilnius could be the capital of Lithuania if Lithuania were to unite with Poland²⁶. As a result, talks broke off. Šaulys noted to the Lithuanian Government that the Polish political movement National Democracy (*Narodowa Demokracja*) and the federalists agreed among themselves on the issue of Lithuania.
- 2) At the same time, the mission of Józef Piłsudski's envoy – Michał Römer – failed in Kaunas. Ethnic Lithuanians refused to take part in a secret campaign to form a pro-Polish government. The Lithuanians decided that the Polish proposal lacked details and, according to Jonas Vileišis, "did not defend Lithuania against Polish imperialism."
- 3) In May 1919, a delegation from Poland headed by Stanisław Staniszewski arrived in Kaunas. On 29 May, his meeting with Prime Minister Sleževičius discussed the anti-Soviet alliance. The Lithuanians demanded that Lithuania be recognized with Vilnius as its capital within the Ober Ost. The talks broke off.
- 4) In August 1919, a second delegation of the Polish government, headed by Leon Wasilewski, arrived in Kaunas. But it failed to reach an agreement because the Lithuanians maintained their demands. The issue of a union with Poland had already been dropped. The Lithuanians saw that this would not guarantee freedom because the Poles, especially Józef Piłsudski, did not seem to appreciate Lithuania as their union partner and the proposals were not specific. Perhaps he did not believe in the resilience of Lithuanian culture and the prospects of the Lithuanian language (which meant that the Polish language and culture would be dominant in the restored Grand Duchy of Lithuania). He looked at Lithuania but did not see ethnic Lithuanians and, thus, the Lithuanian side at the negotiation table. Maybe Piłsudski looked at Lithuania

²⁵ The minutes of the meetings of the provisional governments of Lithuania; Lietuvos centrinis valstybės archyvas, F. 923. Ap. 1. B. 24, l. 243a, 225-227. The meeting of the Government on 15 August is in: B. 57, l. 73-75a.

²⁶ Polish Documents on Foreign Policy, 11 November 1918 – 28 June 1919. Editors Sławomir Dębski, Piotr Długolecki, Warszawa, 2017, pp. 349-350.

without seeing Lithuanians as a subject for talks?²⁷ Most probably, only Prof. Habil Dr. Włodzimierz Suleja²⁸ could answer that question.

- 5) When the talks failed, Warsaw tried to get things done faster – it planned to organize a coup d'état in Lithuania and form a government that would not resist the renewal of a Polish-Lithuanian union²⁹. A secret Polish Military Organization (*Polska Organizacja Wojskowa*) was to organize the coup. In August 1919, Lithuanian intelligence uncovered these plans, and arrests began: 200 suspects were arrested, including 23 officers, and 117 people were brought to justice.³⁰

On the other hand, there was a friendly gesture: in November 1919 Poland permitted Lithuania to concentrate its army in the north against the Pavel Bermond-Avalov Russian-German troops by giving assurances that Poland would not start any operations against Lithuania.

However, the obvious desire of the Poles living in Poland and Vilnius to dominate the lands of Lithuania and Belarus (including Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania) undermined efforts to restore the state and rallied Lithuanians to protect narrower ethnic cultural interests and needs – a response that boosted nationalism whether they wished it or not. This was a defensive, existential nationalism.³¹

This conflict prevented the sides from agreeing even on a joint anti-Bolshevik front. In 1920, Moscow exploited this situation by adding secret annexes to the Soviet-Lithuanian Peace Treaty of 12 July, which enabled the Red Army to use Lithuanian territory in its war against Poland. But they were no true allies, for 2,000 Soviet Russian agents were sent to Lithuania in July-August. They were setting up secret weapons depots and were agitating for and preparing a coup. This coup was prevented only by the Polish military victory in the Battle of Warsaw.

Poles and Lithuanians also shared some similar attitudes. For example, they similarly identified their areas of interest. The provisions of the Law on the Election to the Constituent Seimas also stipulated dividing eastern Lithuania and the Klaipėda region into precincts for the purpose of voting. On 24 January 1920, the Central Election Commission divided the country into precincts. The total number of mandates was to be 229. The territory of the independent Lithuanian state was to be divided into 6 precincts, in which 112 members were to be elected to the Constituent Seimas, while 108 members were to be elected in the territory already under Polish control (30 members in the Vilnius precinct,

²⁷ Česlovas Laurinavičius, *Politika ir diplomatija: lietuvių tautinės valstybės tapimo ir raidos fragmentai*, pp. 73–74.

²⁸ Włodzimierz Suleja, *Józef Piłsudski* (Wrocław, 1995, 1997, 2004 editions, in Russian 2009).

²⁹ Piotr Łossowski, *Konflikt polsko-litewski 1918–1920*, Warszawa, 1996, pp. 60–61, 64.

³⁰ Pranas Janauskas, *Istorinė byla: POW narių teismas Kaune 1920 metais*, Kaunas, 2005, p. 3–25.

³¹ The Lithuanians slowly developed an "allergy" to territorial autonomy. They had nothing against cultural autonomy for the Jews (at the Paris Peace Conference the Lithuanians promised very liberal cultural autonomy, but territorial autonomy had no appeal – neither for Poles nor for Belarusians nor later for Germans in the Klaipėda region. The observer Prof. M. Römer admitted that the Lithuanians were not afraid of the Jews (there was no danger that Lithuanians would become Jews, and the Lithuanians did not plan to assimilate them). But the Poles in Vilnius were very close to the people, psychologically and culturally close; most of them were autochthons and in the past had Polonized the local people; so they could encourage Polonization. Besides, the Lithuanians thought that the Poles and Belarusians in Lithuania, under the right conditions, might easily be re-Lithuanianized, but for that process territorial autonomy was a serious obstacle. See Miknys, op.cit., p. 90.

29 in Lida, 27 in Białystok, and 22 in Grodno).³² Thus, 117 members were to be elected in the territory where the election to the Constituent Seimas of Lithuania could not be held (and this territory was almost the same as Żeligowski's Litwa Środkowa (Central Lithuania).

On 7 December 1920, as Western countries were demanding direct talks, Lithuania sent a delegation headed by the deputy chairman of the Constituent Seimas Justinas Staugaitis to Warsaw. This delegation was authorized to reach an agreement with the Poles and to avoid a plebiscite, also to establish contacts with members of the Sejm and politicians. Lithuania suggested that Poland should recognize it within the borders set out in the provisions of the agreement with the Soviet Union on 12 July, pledging to never fight against Poland, guaranteeing free transit and freedom to national minorities, and promising to grant amnesty to all Polish prisoners and even to decentralize power. The Poles agreed – but again on the condition of a union between both states. Negotiations broke down.

Furthermore, General Lucjan Żeligowski's "Mutiny" – the seizure of Vilnius – aggravated the situation altogether, even though the idea of a possible plebiscite was still being entertained even when Vilnius was already occupied by Polish army units. In February 1921, Lithuania told Western countries that it did not want a plebiscite in the Vilnius region (as one Kaunas newspaper stated – "Find a country that would want this, especially when it concerns its capital.").

Poland organized elections to the Vilnius Sejm on 8 January, but only Polish candidates participated; local Lithuanians, Jews, and Belarusians did not. On 20 February 1922, the Vilnius Sejm decided to seek unification with Poland, without rights of autonomy. The Vilnius question became the most important one in Lithuanian foreign policy and propaganda, and besides – it was a good tool to promote national unity.

The dispute between Poland and Lithuania was, in fact, a clash between two integral nationalisms: both parties were, in principle, unable to find a compromise because then they would be not integral. The conflict over Vilnius was so important for Lithuanians that it even became a dramatic question – to be or not to be. Therefore, reaching an agreement and concord between Lithuania and Poland in the critical years of restoration of the two states (1918–1922) was impossible because both of them were being established as nation states. Poland was bigger, better prepared, and more powerful: it had close ties with, and support from, a good friend, France, and always stressed its cultural superiority. The Lithuanians, for their part, were backed into a corner: they had lost some of their ethnic territory, areas torn away from them by the two lines of demarcation with which the nations of the Entente had sought to halt further Polish incursions into their country, and even Paul Hymans' famous plan did not satisfy both sides. Whenever the Lithuanians raised the Vilnius question, the Polish negotiator Szymon Askenazy ran from this issue like a devil from the Cross. The two countries had a hostile non-relationship relationship. They did not even have diplomatic relations. Sharp reciprocal propaganda intensified.³³ In Lithuania, the loss

³² *Lietuvos įstatymai. Sistematuotas įstatymų, instrukcijų ir įsakymų rinkinys*, surinko A. Merkys, redagavo A. Kriščiukaišis. Pirmas leidinys (ligi 1922 m. sausio 1 d.). Kaunas, 1922, p. 33; See also: Mykolas Römeris, *Lietuvos konstitucinės teisės paskaitos*, d. 1, Kaunas, 1937, p. 102.

³³ See a solid and informative study by: Krzysztof Buchowski, *Litwomani i polonizatorzy. Mity, wzajemne postrzeżenie i stereotypy w stosunkach polsko-litewskich w pierwszej połowie XX wieku*, Białystok: Wydawnictwo uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, 2006; Lithuanian edition: *Litvomanai ir polonizuotojai. Mitai, abipusės nuostatos ir stereotipai lenkų ir lietuvių santykiuose pirmoje XX amžiaus pusėje*, Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2012.

of Vilnius became an ideology that united Lithuanians around the goal of liberating their capital from the Poles. A third country took advantage of this situation. During this time, Lithuania got dangerously close to the USSR, as this country promised to help resolve the Vilnius question. Luckily for Lithuania, the two countries did not share a common border.

It is quite a complicated matter to identify the reason for the games that were being played by the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Augustinas Voldemaras during 1927-1929 or where they might have led. Perhaps this egocentric person just wanted to become a star in the European press. After a dispute with Józef Piłsudski, Voldemaras said on the radio: "We have entered the global political scene."³⁴ At the end of 1927, in Paris, he missed an opportunity as a result of Aristide Briand's intercession to meet with August Zaleski and re-establish diplomatic relations between our countries.³⁵ It is similarly difficult to justify the actions of another minister, Dovas Zaurius, who persistently shut his eyes to Poland in foreign policy.

On the other hand, in Lithuania there were also people who advocated the normalization of relations. Two Lithuanian diplomats recommended continuing negotiations. An improvement in relations with Poland was advocated by the envoy Jurgis Šaulys, and Foreign Minister Stasys Lozoraitis drew up a special paper on 18 April 1935. Lithuania could not win a two-front diplomatic war against Nazi Germany, which was much more aggressive than Poland, he maintained, and independence was more important than Vilnius. We have Klaipėda but we do not have Vilnius and we are not able and never will fight for Vilnius militarily. So, without forgetting the Vilnius question, Lithuania should defend Klaipėda with all possible means, he continued, it's time to return to our foreign policy "the Polish segment" and to use all political combinations against Nazi Germany (and including a combination with Poland), to curb the aggressive policies of the Third Reich.³⁶ Smetona also realized that there was a need to change the situation. But Józef Beck's unyielding rigidity did not allow him to make even a small conciliatory gesture (according to one British diplomat, the Poles could have initially ceded some swamp to the Lithuanians, as they had a lot of them). Minister Beck wanted everything and now. A blow struck by the voivode of Vilnius, Ludwik Bociński, to destroy Lithuanian organizations and education in the Vilnius area put Lozoraitis on the losing side. Moreover, the establishment of diplomatic relations as a result of the 1938 ultimatum did not add sincerity to bilateral relations. Both sides showed that they could survive without each other, but this attitude was not productive, and national minorities actually became hostages to bad bilateral relations.

In one way or another, Lithuania and Poland have carried part of these old issues into the generally different current bilateral relationship that they have had since 1990. Poland has lent Lithuania support in the process of restoring our state, and this deserves to be remembered with the greatest respect along with the long-term fruitful cooperation

³⁴ Vytautas Žalys. *Lietuvos diplomatijos istorija (1925-1940)*. I tomas, Vilnius, 2007, pp. 340-343.

³⁵ In Paris, Briand tried to arrange a meeting between Voldemaras and the Polish Foreign Minister August Zaleski, hoping to find a formula for establishing diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Poland, while leaving the Vilnius question unsettled. Zaleski agreed, and Voldemaras promised to send an answer from the provisional capital of Lithuania, Kaunas. Briand agreed to be a witness. There were good prospects for an agreement, but Voldemaras did not respond. See: Petras Klimas, *Lietuvos diplomatinėje tarnyboje*, Vilnius, 1991, p. 101.

³⁶ Vytautas Žalys. „Stasys Lozoraitis – Lietuvos užsienio reikalų ministras“, in *Lietuvos diplomatija XX amžiuje*, Vilnius, 1999, pp. 35-40.

between our countries. Although Vytautas Landsbergis has given friendly speeches, one could detect in statements made by the Deputy Prime Minister Romualdas Ozolas a more cautious attitude, a lack of confidence in Poland, and even an atmosphere of suspicion.

The normalization of bilateral relations between Lithuania and Poland in the agreement of 24 April 1994 did not include anything about former disagreements over Vilnius and other prewar disputes. This was a wise compromise. Both parties recognized each other's sovereignty and renounced interference in each other's internal affairs. Territorial integrity was stressed: both countries declared that they do not have any claims on each other's territory. It is clear that Poland does not and will not demand the Vilnius region, and Lithuania – Suwałki, Puńsk, and other lands with a Lithuanian population. The Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas established good personal relations with the Polish President Aleksander Kwaśniewski: they established a presidential consultative committee.³⁷ Unfortunately, there were ups and downs. In the context of the region and Europe, the good personal and interstate relations enjoyed by the presidents Valdas Adamkus and Aleksander Kwaśniewski should be seen as exemplary. Lithuanians lost the mutual trust needed to have good relations during the time of the overbearing Minister Radek Sikorski, and it was our Lithuanian mistake that we failed to upgrade our relations during the promising time of President Lech Kaczyński. Despite sharp ongoing disputes on issues raised by national minorities, even if political disagreements have cast a shadow on a history of friendship, the implementation of economic projects important for Lithuania, Poland, the entire region, and the EU has continued, especially in the fields of transport (highways and railway) and energy (gas and oil pipelines, electricity lines), and close military cooperation has continued. It is promising that most recently, during 2017-2018, contacts between the leaders of our states are again on the right track.

The dispute between Poland and Lithuania and 100 years of experience demonstrate (there are more facts than necessary) the need for regular bilateral dialogue on any question by both countries and not only on the bureaucratic level but also on the highest, including parliamentary, levels. The two sides can clarify their viewpoints, create shared visions, and adopt solutions. In case of disagreements, some matters may be postponed until tomorrow, while others can be expedited. We are on the right path. As eternal neighbors, we have always been able to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement whenever there has been enough goodwill. With a win-win attitude, we can grow stronger. Let us learn how to grow together.

Let me finish by telling a didactic story. Sometimes the wish to make jibes at each other looked like a silly joke: in 1916, in Moscow, a Russian State Duma member from Lithuania, Martynas Yčas, and a Polish representative, the lawyer Adam Lednicki, were talking to the mayor of Moscow, Mikhail Chelnokov. They were discussing how to divide the alms for war victims collected in Moscow in order to ensure that not only Poles but also Lithuanians received their share of the money.

The Russian asked Yčas, "How many Lithuanians live in the empire?"

"Three million," answered Yčas.

"Certainly not three million!" the Pole retorted.

³⁷ Saulius Grybkauskas, Mindaugas Tamošaitis, *Epochų virsmo sūkuriuose. Algirdo Brazausko politinė biografija*, Vilnius, 2018, p. 294.

The Russian asked the Pole, "And how many Poles live in the empire?"

"Nineteen million," replied Lednicki.

"Fewer than nineteen million!" contradicted Yčas.³⁸

After these 100 years of experience, it is time we stopped making fools of ourselves. We are both capable of basing our decisions and policy in general on mutually positive and beneficial reasons, and neither of us should allow outsiders to manipulate our bilateral relations.

³⁸ Martynas Yčas, *Atsiminimai. Nepriklausomybės kelias*, t. II, Kaunas, 1935, p. 36.

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The Structure of Government Elites within the Regime of Alaksandar Lukashenka

Introduction

Belarus under the authoritarian rule of President Alaksandar Lukashenka claims the status as the last free country in Europe¹. In contrast to neighboring Ukraine, Russia, and the Baltic States, no structural reforms have been implemented in Belarus: the system of power remains strictly centralized; the government replicates the Soviet vertical system with its multiple bureaucratized ministries and departments; the economy is mainly state-owned, and the opposition is excluded from all state institutions and the government. The personalistic dictatorship of Lukashenka who has uncompetitively remained in power since 1994, lets neither politicians nor officials accumulate sufficient economic or political power. The bureaucracy in Belarus is formed primarily of people who demonstrate full loyalty to the regime. This makes the cabinet of ministers a purely technical, not political body. However, could not this be the evidence of its unprofessionalism?

The research statement of the current paper is that Belarus government appointees and bureaucrats take their offices according to their experience and competence, not only because of their personal or political ties. In particular, I assume that for an absolute majority of ministry staffers their way to power was paved with specialized education and professional careers in their area, and later they were appointed to leading positions in the Government or state-building institutions without building political careers.

The empirical basis for the research is the biographical information of 162 high-level officials and politicians. The collected data on their career paths, status, education and age reveal the exponential trends in the circulation of nomenklatura, and also some informal

¹ "Freedom House. Belarus," June 28, 2017, accessed December 03, 2017, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2017/belarus>.

rules of the organization of power in Belarus. This is important for understanding the nature of Lukashenka's regime, as well as the grounds for its long-term stability and potential unrest as well.

This research paper begins with the introduction of basic theoretical concepts on state, elites, and infrastructural relationships within them. Then I give a historical overview of the formation of the elite in Belarus before and during Lukashenka's presidency, as well as show some ideas of relevant studies on Belarus elites and their structure, including the relationships between elites and Lukashenka. In the final part, I present the findings of my quantitative research and outline their conclusions in the Summary.

Elites and bureaucracy in state building

After the Springtime of Nations in 1989-1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed and fifteen new countries appeared, the question of how new states could be built, arose again². The most well known state-theorist Max Weber sees the state as the monopolistic, hierarchical, impersonal, and competent bureaucratic structure to perform the coercive and extractive tasks of statehood³. However, after Weber conceptualized the state a hundred years ago, the role of a state as an institution increased enormously, it penetrated all spheres, imposed rules and norms, regulated economic relations, monopolized tax collections and defined the order of life on each particular territory. State structures became more complicated and expanded.

Obviously, the structure of a state determines its relationship with citizens, including the level of violence it can use. In liberal democracies, formal state leadership is elected by the population, can be easily changed, and controlled by society. In other countries, like Belarus, the whole power of the state is concentrated in one hand or group of people I call the *elite*. According to American sociologist C. Wright Mills, elites are «*those political, economic, and military circles, which as an intricate set of overlapping small but dominant groups share decisions having at least national consequences. Insofar as national events are decided, the power elite is those who decide them*»⁴.

There are different types of governing elite structure. Idealized by classic state-building theorists a monopolistic *bureaucracy* works until a parallel organization like a party, a grouping or a clan appears. These informal organizations could substitute the formal system, where both principal and agent remain within the state apparatus⁵. States built on informal ties could be of the same strength as pure bureaucracies.

The infrastructural strength of the state is defined by how efficiently it implements policies, controls a territory, extracts resources and employs coercion⁶. According to

² Michael Howard, "The Springtime of Nations," January 28, 2009, accessed December 03, 2017, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1990-02-01/springtime-nations>.

³ Max Weber, "Economy and Society," accessed December 03, 2017, <https://www.ucpress.edu/book.php?isbn=9780520280021>.

⁴ C. Wright Mills, *The power elite* (London (etc.): Oxford University Press, 1959).

⁵ Keith Darden, "The Integrity of Corrupt States: Graft as an Informal State Institution," *Politics & Society* 36, no. 1 (2008). doi:10.1177/0032329207312183.

⁶ Gerald M. Easter, "Reconstructing the State," 2000, doi:10.1017/cb09780511571527.

Thomas Ertman, there are two types of infrastructural relationships within the state institutes: "*bureaucratic*" and "*patrimonial*."⁷ The patrimonial system is defined by a personalistic approach of selecting, appointing and removing executives, as well as by appropriation of state or public resources by those who are in power. In contrast to patrimonial, a bureaucratic infrastructure is distinguished by "*a set of standard operating procedures subject to the structures of a formalized, impersonal administrative law*."⁸ In the bureaucracy, expertise and merit serve as the primary basis for selection, and there are routine mechanisms for any official's removal from office. When an efficient bureaucracy lacks significant organizational, financial, and human resources, personal network ties became the means by which the power center coerces the state institutes and regions⁹. Informal structures help to exchange information, allocate resources, and coordinate activities. In this particular research, based on the case of Lukashenka's Belarus, it is possible to see how the combination of a patrimonial (based on informal networks) and bureaucratic (based on formal relationship) approach could be essential to building a robust coercive power center.

According to M. Mann's framework of state power dimensions, Belarus is an *authoritarian* state. This type suggests that Belarus is high in both dimensions, having high despotic power over civil society groups and being able to enforce this infrastructurally. It prevents any competitive force from influencing the state significantly. However, this also means, that in the case of potential changes and diminishing presidential power, bureaucratic structures remain functional. For more bureaucratic efficiency, the state government hires professionals and distributes the power according to their capabilities. The power of experts, who efficiently perform the administrative tasks is often called a *meritocracy*¹⁰, or *technocracy*¹¹. In this system, economists govern the economy, political scientists dictate social policy and medical professionals manage the health system. Various branches of specialists, who work together and share knowledge, are coordinated by specialists-managers, and the performance of each is maximized. Belarus is an example of a state which has moved toward a technocratic government.

Study of Belarus government elites

Formation of government elites in Belarus

To understand how the current system of elites was shaped, it is important to look back to the B.S.S.R. model of recruitment which is based on the rotation of vacancies

⁷ Thomas Ertman, *Birth of the leviathan: building states and regimes in medieval and early modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

⁸ Max Weber, *Economy and society* (Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of California Press).

⁹ Gerald M. Easter, "Reconstructing the State," 2000, . doi:10.1017/cbo9780511571527.

¹⁰ Tuong Vu, "Studying the State through State Formation," *World Politics* 62, no. 01 (2009): , doi:10.1017/s0043887109990244.

¹¹ "Technocracy," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, accessed December 03, 2017, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/sociology-and-social-reform/sociology-general-terms-and-concepts-18>.

and does not depend on the influence of the center¹². The elite in Soviet Belarus consisted of separate patronage groups of different roots which fought with each other for political influence: "*Partisans*"; "*Minsk city industrial group*" (directors of huge enterprises), "*Brezhnev's protégés*" (directly sent from Moscow) — according to M. Urban who described the key features and tendencies of development of the Belarusian Soviet elite in 1960–1980¹³. The elites for the central level were hired primarily from managers of large state-owned enterprises loyal to the center (*industrial* model), and the regional elite was hired mostly from provincial functionaries (*agrarian* model). Law-enforcement authorities, security officials and border guards usually formed separate elites grouping (*bordering* model)¹⁴. It must be stressed that all the law-enforcement structures except of the militia (police) were ex-territorial and directly depended on Moscow. In contrast to other post-Soviet states, in Belarus there was no significant change in the elites structure and personal composition between the Soviet Union collapse and the first Presidential elections in 1994.

After Lukashenka became president, three major stages of the formation of this elite may be noticed¹⁵. They are characterized by changes in domestic and foreign policy, and in particular, relations with Russia.

During the **first**, *pseudo-parliamentary* (pseudo-democratic) stage, Lukashenka appointed high officials through personal contacts and regional acquaintanceship ("Mahiloŭ group" of his countrymen, loyal members of Parliament who supported his candidacy, and the high-level Nomenklatura) to high ministerial positions¹⁶. I suggest there were three major groupings within the central elite during Lukashenka's early presidency: *the «old elite»*, *«security people»* and *parliamentarians*¹⁷. The old (Soviet) elite apparently saved key positions in the economic/finance; security officials were significantly rotated; however, the most unstable and fractured group were the parliamentarians.

The **second stage** began in 1996 after the constitutional crisis caused by a standoff between the president and the parliament¹⁸. The post-Soviet Nomenklatura confronted democratic leadership of the *Viarchouny Saviet* (Supreme Council) -- the Parliament -- in the legislative field. The power takeover was enabled by a relatively stable and conservative administrative apparatus. After the controversial referendum, Lukashenka dis-

¹² In 1989, Michael Urban made the first advanced study on Belarusian Soviet elite. Using the corresponding mathematical tool. Urban investigates the examples of recruiting of elite to the BSSR party and administrative apparatus in the period from 1966 to 1986 (actually, in the times of Brezhnev "stagnation"). The author analyses a career ladder of 3127 individuals and 2034 current positions. He comes to the conclusion that the model of recruitment is based on the rotation of vacancies and does not depend on the influence of the center (Markov chain) —Vasilevič .

¹³ Michael E. Urban, *An algebra of Soviet power: elite circulation in the Belorussian Republic 1966-86* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

¹⁴ Piotra Natčyk, "Belarusian Nomenklatura and Rupture Line in Its Environment. Lukashenka's Staff Policy," *Belarusian and Political System and Presidential Elections*, (2001)

¹⁵ Natčyk., "Belarusian Nomenklatura and Rupture Line in Its Environment..."

¹⁶ Natallia Vasilevič. "Study of Belarusian Elites: Between Algebra and Geography." *Political Sphere*, no. 13, (2009).

¹⁷ Natčyk., "Belarusian Nomenklatura and Rupture Line in Its Environment..."

¹⁸ "Referendum 1996 hodu: Kanstytucyja dyktatury," *Radio Svaboda*, November 27, 2017, . accessed December 03, 2017, <https://www.svaboda.org/a/28877709.html>.

missed Parliament and got full control over the state with Nomenklatura support¹⁹. It was a moment when the Old Nomenklatura from primarily the "Mahiloŭ grouping" gained its stature through personal relations with the president²⁰ (the model of patron-client relations)²¹. Lukashenka needed the Nomenklatura to heighten his impact on Russia. It was even believed that Yeltsin could assign Lukashenka as his successor²²; Lukashenka himself miscalled himself «a president of Russia» multiple times²³. However, regional and industrial elites were losing their positions to the advantage of well-organized power ministries' officers²⁴.

The third stage began after Putin became President, and the Russian factor in Belarus elites structure gradually decreased. Russia continued supporting Lukashenka, providing cheap hydrocarbons in exchange for political loyalty, however, they left him autonomous enough in domestic issues. After an unconvincing victory in the elections of 2001 and following mass protests, Lukashenka started to tighten his control inside the country and began building a strong power vertical. The old Nomenklatura lost its influence, loyal "*siloviki*" got more power. The industrial-economic elite became more dependent on the center.

Establishing the current structure

Scholars note two levels of bureaucracy existing within the newly emerged system: 1) political, which contains the highest-level bureaucracy that decides on the political course; and 2) professional layer, basic mass of government officials²⁵.

In the new system four principal levels of decision making were formed (from highest to lowest)²⁶:

1. Presidential Administration (which functionally altered the Communist Party Central Committee of Soviet times²⁷ with all its power, a few hundred officials who dispose of about 90% of state property and issue orders to the ministers); 2. State Control, KGB, Security Council; 3) Council of Ministers, Ministries, state committees; 4) Administration bodies (directors of large industrial enterprises, directors of collective farms, and members of

¹⁹ Zianon Pazniak, „Camu nomenklatura za prezidenta," Pazniak.info, accessed December 03, 2017, http://pazniak.info/page_chamu_nomenklatura_za_prezidenta_.

²⁰ Nina Antanovic, "State Power Organs Structure in the Republic of Belarus and Their Transformation," *Belarusian Political System and Presidential Elections*, 2001, pp 127-142

²¹ Gerald M. Easter, "Reconstructing the State," 2000, doi:10.1017/cbo9780511571527.

²² Halina Pryhara, „Bierazouski: Lukashenka razhladali na prezidenta Rasiel," *Radio Svoboda*, March 24, 2013, accessed December 03, 2017, <http://www.svoboda.org/content/article/24937681.html>

²³ "Lukashenko: Ya kak pervyi prezident Rossii," YouTube, February 26, 2016, accessed December 03, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wbRDzalFL4>.

²⁴ Vasilievich. "Study of Belarusian Elites: Between Algebra and Geography."

²⁵ Nina Antanovic, "State Power Organs Structure in the Republic of Belarus and Their Transformation."

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus (Tsentralniy Komitet Kommunisticheskoi Partii Belorussii-TsK KP(b)B).

parliament). I must point out that this system of decision-making obviously contradicts the existing constitutional order.

The new system was built on a centralized redistribution of benefits by the administrative apparatus. The state officials' ruling functions, including power, field of activity, duties – all these things became the functionaries' resource and by using this resource they built systems of interaction within the economic and business sphere (patron-client relationship)²⁸.

Parties and groupings within the Government

Political parties, even formally registered (not all the parties in Belarus enjoy this status), do not play a significant role in the current system. The only remarkably multi-party parliament was elected in 1990. The dominance of the communist platform was opposed by the pro-independence national democratic Belarusian Popular Front (BNF) and the more "moderate" and diffused pro-democratic MPs. However, emerging political parties were feeble and just in their beginning at the formation of the current system. They were too weak to resist Lukashenka's rising authoritarianism and reconsolidated centralized post-Soviet Nomenklatura in 1995-1996. As a result of elections in 1995, pro-democracy parties (BNF, Social Democrats) failed, the major part of seats were occupied by formally non-partisan functionaries of power. Those functionaries who supported the installation of Lukashenka's regime got seats in his government. The bifurcation point was the forcible dissolution of the last elected Parliament in 1996 and nomination of the "new MPs" by the decision of Lukashenka according to the level of loyalty of the "old MPs". The new body called the Chamber of Representatives had lost the majority of its power rights and turned into a typical rubber-stamp parliament²⁹.

The only real attempt to create a Nomenklatura party was in 2007, when the public organization «Bielaja Rus» was founded. There is an opinion, that Bielaja Rus was created before potential electoral reform, which was supposed to switch a majoritarian system of electing Parliament to a proportional one³⁰. The huge number of its members is explained by the administrative obligation of every high- and medium-level state official to enter this organisation. Many state workers like teachers, lawyers, communal workers etc. are forced to enter Bielaja Rus as well. Experts explain its existence in a form of pro-party by Lukashenka's idea to have it "just in case", when internal and external conditions would require him to imitate multi-party competition in Belarus.

In contrast to parties, clans and groupings within the government elites played a significant role, especially when the system was establishing itself. Scholar Piotra Natčyk emphasizes existing differences, though not always clear, between elite «clans» — power ministries officer ("*siloviki*") and "*Mahiloŭ grouping*" (a regional faction of Lukashenka's fel-

²⁸ Nina Antanovic, "State Power Organs Structure in the Republic of Belarus and Their Transformation."

²⁹ "Parliament court fail to prevent lukashenka from staging coup in 1996", Belsat, accessed December 04, 2017, <http://belsat.eu/en/news/parliament-court-fail-to-prevent-lukashenka-from-staging-coup-in-1996-ex-mp>.

³⁰ „Ci hatovaja ūlada pierajsci da vybaruŭ pa partyjnych spisach?” Novy Cas, accessed December 04, 2017, <https://novychas.by/palityka/ci-hatovaja-ulada-perajsci-da-vybaruau-pa-partyjnyh>.

low countrymen). He shares an opinion that the ruling elites had considerable contradictions and particular interests, and the opposition tried to use them during the presidential campaign in 2001³¹. At that campaign the so-called "official" (state-controlled, post-Communist) trade unions leader Uladzimir Hančaryk was selected as a single opposition candidate in order to get more impact from the Nomenklatura³². However, the attempt did not succeed³³. After 2001 Lukashenka re-shuffled the government in order to diminish the power of these groups.

Relationships between Lukashenka and elites

The only strongly visible informal network left within the government is tied to Lukashenka personally. It contained former people from "Mahiloŭ grouping", «Siloviki», and the most loyal former communist bureaucrats. These officials are usually members of either the Presidential Sports Club, National Olympic Committee, or they worked in the most powerful executive branch — the Presidential Administration. The changes apparently began in the 2000s when young career professionals were hired to high ministerial and committee commissions without any evident personal ties to Lukashenka. However, that does not undermine the fact that the system itself remains vertical and strictly authoritarian, all ministers and high-level officials are appointed personally by Lukashenka, and their welfare depends on him (e.g. he provides judges with apartments). So, they have limited power to use any kind of independent force.

Could discontented elite groupings unite and form an opposition to Lukashenka? Political analyst Jury Čavusaŭ assumes several variants of the course of events in which Nomenklatura could impose a threat for existing regime³⁴. According to the **first** version, the groupings of elites may have realised that their personal interests differ from the interests of Lukashenka's regime, but they would not be able to form a separate political class. In the **second** scenario, the Nomenklatura may be shaped as a separate political class and realize their own interests, which will lead to a revolutionary situation. The **third** variant is status-quo, it means the Nomenklatura will remain an amorphous non-politically threatening group³⁵.

It was commonly believed that in the first term of Lukashenka's presidency, Belarus' ruling elite had considerable contradictions and particular interests of which it was supposed to take advantage during the presidential campaign in 2001 with a Nomenklatura accepted candidate. During the next presidential campaigns the opposition attempts oriented for Nomenklatura upheaval clearly failed. Lukashenka successfully prevented consolidation of the business elite and decentralization of the ruling elite through the strict state-control over property, large enterprises, and whole economic branches. It's important to mention, that several prominent representatives of the technocratic elite and business,

³¹ Natčyk., "Belarusian Nomenklatura and Rupture Line in Its Environment.."

³² Vasilievič. "Study of Belarusian Elites: Between Algebra and Geography."

³³ Natčyk, "Belarusian Nomenklatura and Rupture Line in Its Environment"

³⁴ Jury Čavusaŭ, "Revolutionary Sub Consciousness of the Belarusian Elite", Political Sphere, accessed December 06, 2017, <http://palityka.org/2005/09/revolyucionnoe-podsoznanie-beloruskoj-elity/>.

³⁵ Ibid..

who previously strongly supported Lukashenka but became his opponents, disappeared or died in unclear circumstances³⁶. Elites took this as a strong warning to each of them.

Elites as an ideological phenomenon

Different from the structuralist approach to Belarus, studies of the elite have been presented by Andrej Kazakievič, who sees elites as a cultural and ideological phenomenon – in the context of the geopolitical apprehension of Belarusian identity³⁷. Within current government elites, Andrej Kazakievič identifies four groups: 1) *Belarusian post-Soviet elites* 2) *the national elite* 3) *"new elites"*, and 4) *the young generation*. The Belarusian post-Soviet elites appeal to the Soviet identity and culture, understand Europe and Russia as geographic territories but not as political or civilized choices, and have a rather positive but purely pragmatic, not value-based, attitude towards Europe. In contrast, the national elite is relatively new, they refer to the European past, seeing Europe as the sign of a Belarus National revival, favoring "*desovietization*" and "*derussification*" as a reasonable alternative to the status-quo. The "New elite" are the present-day ruling elite, characterized by an anti-West rhetoric, they see Belarus as the geographical center of Europe. The young generation is eclectic, fragmented, and comprehends the basic forms of identity of the existing groups. Such an identity is based on two questions: "who are we?" (what makes Belarusian people Belarusians) and "where are we?" (choice of civilization model)³⁸. Different visions and concepts of Europe, Belarus, and the Slavic (or rather post-Soviet and loyal to Russia) community could lead to a deconsolidation of elites.

Research findings

Hypothesis

The initial assumption of the current research is that Belarus Government appointees in specialized ministries and state committees took their offices, as a rule, according to their experience and competence, not only because of their personal ties. Using the available data, I expect to prove a tendency towards the further *professionalization and indigenization* of elites since 1994, when Lukashenka came to power. As I assume, after 2000 younger and Belarus-born officials were appointed to the high positions in power. I expect to reveal some patterns of informal ties within the Government. Some groups of officials share membership in same sports-clubs, graduated the same military schools, have a close personal relationship with Lukashenka and Russia. However, within the state apparatus, they are still distributed according to their professional backgrounds.

³⁶ Carl Schreck, "U.S. Presses Belarus On 'Disappeared'," RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, September 16, 2014, accessed December 06, 2017, <https://www.rferl.org/a/belarus-disappeared-hanchar-krasouski-us-pressure/26585897.html>.

³⁷ Andrej Kazakevich, "Čatry karparycyja bielaruskaje elity," Bielarus: ni Eüropa, ni Rasieja, 2006. doi: ISBN 83-89406-77-2.

³⁸ Vital Silicki, "The Dilemma of Choice", in Belarus: Neither Europe nor Russia." (Warsaw, 2006).

Significance of the Study

Understanding the political elite is essential for assessing the likelihood of change, the continuity of power, the level of political consolidation and stability, as well as a coherent vision of internal and external policies. Currently, no reliable criteria for the definition of the Belarusian political elite has been developed, so I have used the formal structure of the government as a basis for analysis.

Our study reveals the level of government Nomenklatura exponential trends in the circulation of elites, their socio-demographic characteristics, and also some informal rules of organization of power in Belarus. Based on the available findings, I can speculate, that in case of potential political unrest, significant democratic and institutional change, the current structure of power elites could guarantee a softer transition in contrast to neighboring Ukraine or Russia where elites are pure political appointees.

Research design and data analysis

The authors studied 31 entities in the Government structure, i.e. 23 ministries and State committees: State Customs Committee, Committee for State Security (*KGB*), Military Industrial Committee (*Goskomvoenprom*), State Border Committee (*Gospogrankomitet*), Committee on State Property (*Goskomimushestvo*), Committee on Science and Technology in the period between 1994-2017. In addition, high profile personalities of such formally independent structures as the National Bank of Belarus (Economic sector) and the General prosecutor's office (Judicial sector), are regarded.

Then I classified all these entities according to the professional sector they belong to. It is made to define how the educational or professional background of the person corresponds to the specialization of the organization he or she was appointed to lead.

Table 1.

List of ministries and state committees in accordance to their professional sectors

ECONOMIC SECTOR	Antimonopoly Regulation and Trade Ministry (MART), Ministry of Economy (Minekanomiki), Ministry of Finance (Minfin), Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (Minpracy), Ministry of taxes and fees (MPZ), National Bank
AGRICULTURE	Ministry of Agriculture and Food (Minsielhasprad)
JUDICIAL SECTOR	Ministry of Justice (Minjust), General prosecutor's office
CULTURE/EDUCATION/SCIENCE	Ministry of Education (Minadukacyi), Ministry of Culture (Minkultury)
SPORTS	Sports and Tourism Ministry (Minsport)
HEALTH	Ministry of Health (Minzdar)
DIPLOMACY	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MZS)

SECURITY	State Customs Committee (DzMK), Committee for State Security (KGB), Ministry of Emergency situations (MNS), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MUS)
MILITARY	Military Industrial Committee (Goskomvoenprom), State Border Committee (Gospogrankomitet), Ministry of Defence (Minabarony)
COMMUNICATIONS	Ministry of Information (Mininform), Ministry of Communications and Informatization (Minsuviazii)
ENERGY	Ministry of Energy (Minenerha)
FORESTRY, LAND, REAL ESTATE,	Committee on State Property (Goskomimushestvo), Ministry of Forestry (Minleshas)
ENVIRONMENT	The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (Minpryrody)
CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSPORTATION	Ministry of Architecture and Construction (Minbudarchitektury), The Ministry of Transport and Communications (Mintrans)
INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY	State Committee for Science and Technology (GKNT), Ministry of industry (Minpram)

Then I analyzed 162 biographies of all officials appointed by Alaksandar Lukashenka to lead those ministries and committees in the period between 1994 and 2017, this became the empirical base for our study. Based on this received data, I created a dataset which consists of 171 positions since some people take the same or different positions multiple times. Variables for each entry shows the name, date of birth, age (when they were appointed), name of the organization, year of start and end being in office, education area, professional career area, membership of «presidential clubs», political parties and organizations, ties with Russia, military background, region of birth.

Table 2.

List of variables employed in the research

VARIABLES	
Name	Second and first name of official written in Belarusian transliteration
min_name (min_num)	organization (ministry or committee)
min_area (min_area_num)	professional sector of organization according to table 1. (1-18)
educ_area	the area of education received prior to working in the profession according to the table 1. It means, if their first education was in agriculture, and second was a mid-career economics program in the Academy of Public Administration, only the first (agriculture) is counted. (1-18)
Prof	If area of education and area of ministry matched (0 or 1)

prof_area	If area of professional career and area of ministry matched (0 or 1)
Dob	year of birth
year_start	year when appointed
year_end	year when dismissed
Age	age when appointed
club_member	membership in Presidential sports clubs, National Olympic Committee, positions in National Sports Federations, work for Presidential Administration or Presidential Property Management
party_member	member of the political party (0 or 1)
military	professional military background (0 or 1)
russiarel	Any relationship or ties with Russia, Russian-Belarusian Union, CIS, Euroasian Economic Union initiatives, awards from Russian Government (0 or 1)
born_bel	was born on the territory of Belarus including of Polish, German and Soviet occupation (0 or 1)
Region	in which part of Belarus was born: 0 (non-belarus), 1 (Bierascie), 2 (Homiel), 3 (Horadnia), 4 (Mahilou), 5 (Minsk region), 6 (Viciebsk), 7 (Viciebsk)
Period	When appointed by periods: 1994-2000 (1), 2001-2009 (2), 2010-2017 (3)
period_new	When appointed by periods: 1994-2005 (1), 2006-2017 (2)
Actual	Is a currently serving representative (0 or 1)

To understand the trends and how the situation changed over time, I introduced two variables on periods. According to the first approach, I define three periods: 1994-2000 (1), 2001-2009 (2), 2010-2017 (3). It corresponds to periods mentioned in chapters 3.2 and 3.3. According to the second approach, I have equally divided two periods of Lukashenka's presidency: 1994-2005 (1), and 2006-2017 (2).

Limitations of the study

The presented research cannot reflect the whole situation in Lukashenka's Government, but the government bureaucracy on the ministerial level only. I acknowledge, that within the current system all the decision-making power is consolidated in the hands of Lukashenka and the Presidential Administration. As I mentioned above, it duplicates the role of the Communist Party Central Committee with all its branches : industry, finances, administrative bodies, education etc. However, ministries and committees do execute these decisions and form a primary level of bureaucracy.

The Presidential Administration, Presidential Affairs Management, the Prime minister and his deputies, the House of Representatives and House of the Republic, the Security Council, the House of Representatives, the Belarus Youth Union (BRSM), the Eurasian

Economic Commission, State Control Committee (KGK), State Committee for Standardization (Gosstandart), the Ministry of Housing and Communal Services, state-run enterprises, regional executive and legislative bodies were purposefully excluded from the analysis. These organizations do not have explicit professional specialization, and are not relevant to this particular research.

Characteristics of Government elites:

Rotation

Belarus is the absolute leader in terms of its number of ministries among post-Soviet states. It has 24 full-scale ministries and seven ministry-level committees. Most of these ministries are inherited from the B.S.S.R, and the government system has not undergone significant changes since the Soviet Union's collapse. An increase in the number of ministries has also been planned with the creation of the Ministry of Industrial Politics³⁹. Comparably close by size and population Czech and Sweden have 14 and 12 ministries respectively, neighboring Ukraine has 18 (including a brand new Ministry for occupied territories), and Russia — 21.

There is not significant rotation between ministries. Since 1994, I found only nine cases (among 171) when the former minister took his position again or moved to another ministry or committee. For example, Michail Rusy served twice as Minister of Agriculture (2001-2003 and 2010-2012) and once as a Minister of Natural Resources (1994-2001). There is a slight rotation between "siloviki" ministries, which is supposedly made to prevent them from having a concentration of power.

However, Lukashenka changes ministers frequently enough. Twelve different people have ruled the Ministry of Agriculture, including Michail Rusy twice, and short-term ministers Vadzim Papou (only four months in 2000), and Zianon Lomac (6 months in 2003). Lukashenka has replaced seven ministers of culture, seven chairmen of the KGB, where no one has stayed in their seat for more than five years. «Siloviki» (military, police) are often rotated, but always stay in the «Nomenklatura pool». For example, Lukashenka has changed ministers of defense six times, and Leanid Malcau has been appointed as a minister twice and served in that position for exactly nine years. Even after being fired from that position after a grand scandal, he managed to stay in the government as a chairman of the Committee of Border Control, the Security Council, and then came back to the ministry. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has had eight ministers since Lukashenka became president, starting with post-Soviet Nomenklatura representative Jahorau and finishing with the very anti-opposition, and Lukashenka's favorite, Ihar Shunievic.

There have been six ministers of Foreign Affairs, four ministers of Emergency Situations, four ministers of Housing and Communal Services. The longest-serving official was a National Bank director Piotr Prakaŭovich (13 years), beside him three people served in this position.

³⁹ "Ministerstvo promyshlennoy politiki: ideya novaya, sut' – staraya. Analiz," *Nashe mneniye*, accessed December 09, 2017, <http://nmbny.eu/news/analytics/5791.html>.

We can also observe some cyclism in the Ministry of Education. Directors there stay in office in most cases for 2 or 7 years: Viktor Hajsionak (1992), Vasil Strazau (1994), Piotr Bryhadzin (2001), Alaksandar Radzkou (2003), Siarhiej Maskievic (2010), Michail Zuraukou (2014), and Ihar Karpienka, who was, by the way, the leader of Communist Party (2016). However, there is no particular logic in this rotation in contrast to the Ministry of Sports where eight ministers changed due to bad results at world competitions, the Olympics or near-sports intrigues.

Specialized education and career path

All the appointees without exclusion have a higher education (100%), in most cases according to their field of ministerial work (73.7%). Usually, before getting a significant position, a future minister or committee chair graduates the Academy of Public Administration under the aegis of the President of the Republic of Belarus⁴⁰. In many of the analyzed careers, it has become a springboard for the Nomenklatura especially for those who work in the regions.

There is no clear evidence of dominance of a specific profession in the government for the last 23 years. Obviously, specialists in economics (16.5%), military (12.4%) and agriculture (11.2%) are the most represented in the government. Law (11.1%) and technology (10.5%) are less in demand. This general pattern corresponds with ministries' specialization which is additional proof of the continuing professionalization of the Nomenklatura.

The vast majority of officials I analyzed show that they were employed according to their education (74%). The specialists in health usually work as Ministers of Health (87.5%), those graduated schools or programs on sports (100%), energy (75%), forestry (80%), law (69%) are appointed to relevant committees or ministries. The most specialized are the Customs Committee, General Prosecutor Office, Defence Ministry, Ministry of Architecture and Construction, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of finances, Ministry of Health, National Bank. All of them have 100% appointees with education in the area. The least specialized is Ministry of Foreign Affairs (33%), Ministry of Information (40%), Ministry of Nature (20%).

In order to prove the hypothesis about professionalization of elites and to exclude potential coincidences, I also analyzed their career path. 77.8% were appointed to ministerial positions from the same field or even the same ministry or department (1994-2017). However, during the last decade the percent of those with specialized education overcame career professionals (86% vs. 83.7%).

⁴⁰ Before 1994 — the Academy of Public Administration under the Council of Ministers of the BSSR; before 1995 — the Academy of Public Administration under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus.

Figure 1.

Ministers employed according to their professional career 1994-2017

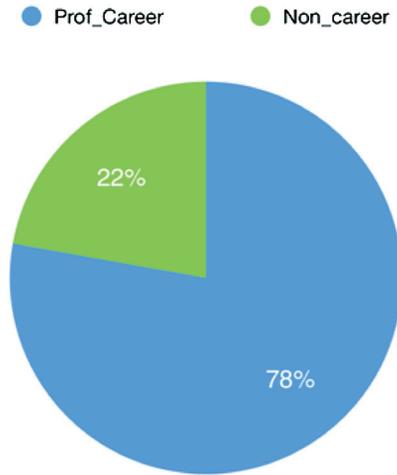


Figure 2.

The first column in each time period shows the percentage of officials who work in the same field as their education. The second column shows if their appointment was preceded by the professional work of someone in the same field.

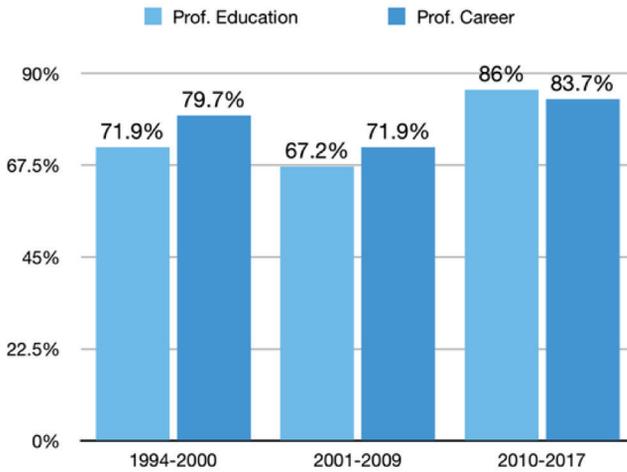
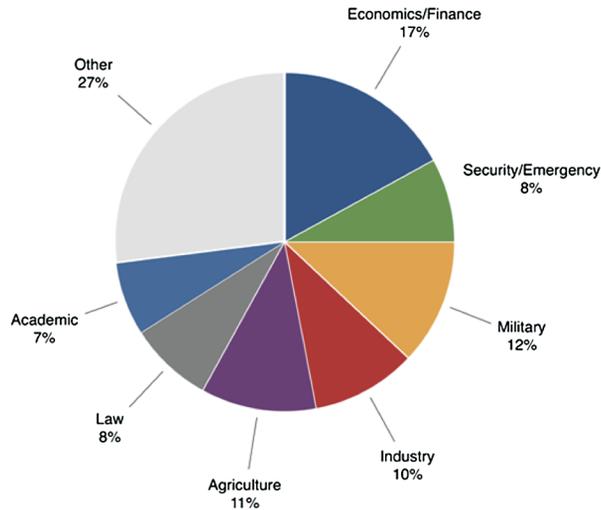


Figure 3.

Education specialization among ministers and state committee chairs, 1994-2017

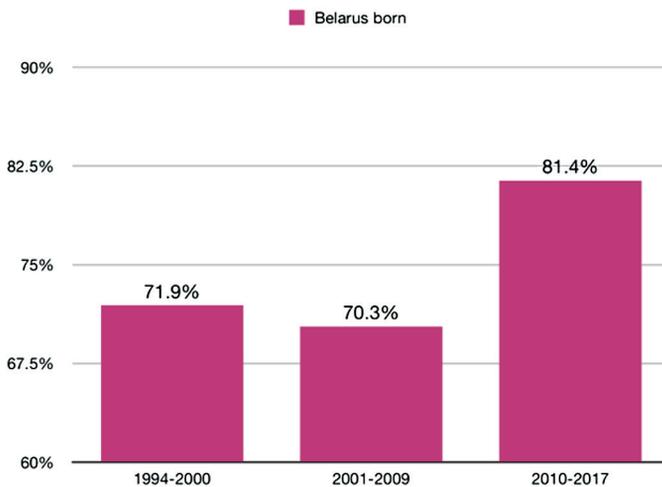


We can emphasize three major career paths to the minister position:

- 1) **Vertical institutional.** The full career cycle in one branch of executive power. The Minister of Taxation Uladzimir Palujan started his career as a regular specialist Committee of State Control, was promoted to Minsk department of the Ministry of Taxation as expert and then director, moved to the position of vice-Minister, and then became a minister. This career path is the most common among appointees, and I assume these kind of appointees are more professional, and less politicized.
- 2) **Horizontal inter-institutional.** As director of a large state-owned organization and then promoted to ministerial positions, the Minister of Industry Dzmitry Kaciarynich first built a career as a tire manufacturer «Belshyna» until he was appointed as its director, and later as the Minister of Industry. After ministerial work, he was moved by Lukashenka to work as president for the Minsk Car manufacturer (MAZ). Another example, the current Minister of Information Ales Karlukevic, before being appointed, served on various management positions in state-run newspapers and publishing houses, and his ministerial work might be considered by him as career promotion. However, there is no particular logic in horizontal rotation, it is usually a personal decision of Lukashenka. In 2005, National TV and Radio chief Uladzimir Matviachuk called his appointment to the Ministry of Culture «absolutely unexpected» (he served there for five more years, until 2009).
- 3) **Political appointees on rotation.** Significant numbers of bureaucrats and regional administrators are moved from one position to another within the government without having special experience or education in the field. For example, former Komsomol and Communist bureaucrat and regional administrator Zianon Lomac first was appointed a Slucak administration director, then to a presidential advisor, and later became a Minister of Agriculture. There is no particular logic in these moves, and I believe he is political appointee because of his ties with Lukashenka.

It is also important to mention each career path after being dismissed from office. Usually, officials: 1) continue working for government in state or private companies or institutions (former minister of Agriculture Jury Maroz became a director of farm-type agricultural company «Bielavieski»⁴¹; 2) move to Presidential administration or Presidential Affairs department (Minister of trade Uladzimir Kulickou was appointed a Director of Presidential Affairs in 2005)⁴² 3) get nominated for a foreign diplomatic mission (former Minister of Culture Pavel Latushka went to France as Ambassador), 4) start working for a Russian-Belarusian Union or other regional and Eurasian initiatives (for example, Minister of Culture Uladzimir Matvejchuk moved to Moscow to work as leader of «Soyuznoe Gosudarstvo»⁴³.

Figure 4.
Officials born in Belarus



Origin

More than 26% of appointees were born abroad, mostly in Russia (16%), and no one was born from outside the territory of the former Soviet Union⁴⁴. Russian-born ministers prevail in "siloviki" ministries such as defense, internal affairs, and KGB, and apparently, preserve their ties with Russia.

⁴¹ "Bielavieski abysou 45 rajonau." Zviazda.by, February 22, 2017, accessed December 04, 2017, <http://zviazda.by/be/news/20170222/1487771994-belavezhski-abysou-45-rayonau>.

⁴² "Ukaz Prezidenta Respubliki Belarus' ot 21 fevralya 2005 g. №96 "O naznachenii A.N.Kulichkova Upravlyayushchim delami Prezidenta Respubliki Belarus'", Pravavaja biblijateka Archiu, accessed December 04, 2017, <http://laws.newsby.org/documents/ukazp/pos02/ukaz02159.htm>.

⁴³ "Gde seychas Vladimir Matvejchuk? — Narodnaya Volya," Narodnaya Volya, September 23, 2014, accessed December 06, 2017, <https://www.nv-online.info/np/gde-sejchas-vladimir-matvejchuk>.

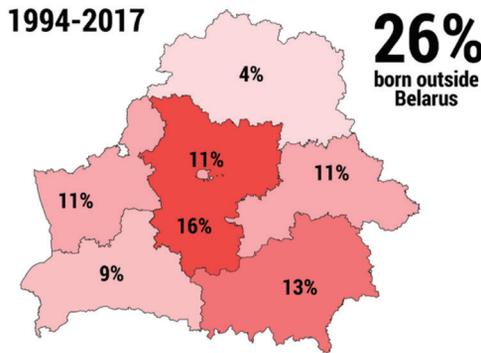
⁴⁴ Officials born in Western Belarus (formally Poland) or under German occupation but on the territory of Belarus are counted like Belarus-born.

Over time, we see an increasing number of appointees born in Belarus, especially those who were appointed after 2010 (81.4%). This trend is universal for all ministries and committees.

Among those born in Belarus, there is not one dominant region despite the popular belief of a «Mahilou clan» which keeps control over power. However, the presence of those born in eastern Belarus (Viciebsk, Homiel, Mahilou) is still significant (28%). And those from Eastern Belarus are slightly more likely to take ministries of “siloviki” (defense, KGB, police).

Figure 5.

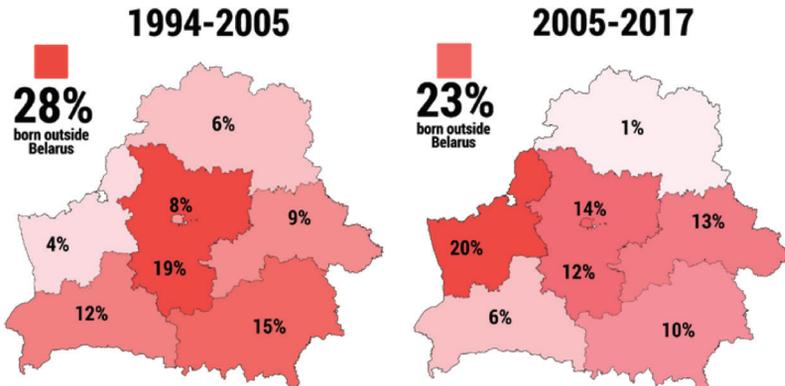
Where officials were born 1994-2017



There is an evident trend in favor of a westernization of the elites (those born in western regions being preferred). Before 2006, appointees from the eastern regions of Belarus made up more than 30% of all positions, while the westerners only 16% (from the Bierascie and Horadnia regions). Since 2006 “western” representation has achieved 26%, and “eastern” has decreased to 24%. It is important to emphasize that western regions are much less populated (2.3 million) than in the East (3.6 million).

Figure 6.

Where officials were born



Over time there has been a significant shift to the Horadnia region (the most westernized, pro-European and catholic). Since 2005 the number of appointees born in the Horadnia region has risen from 4% to 20%, however, another western region, Bierascie, has dropped in half from 12% to 6%, as well as the north-eastern Viciebsk region (from 6% to 1%), usually considered as pro-Russian. These regional trends might be a sign of the influence of various groupings within the elite.

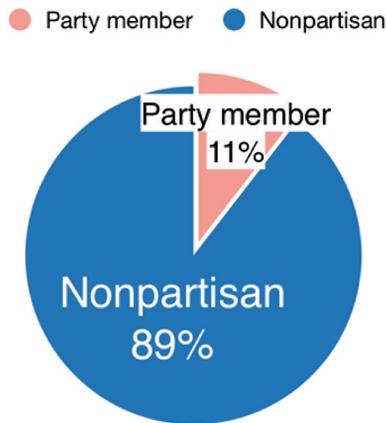
Some regions have their specialization, for example Bierascie (south-west) region is a primary source for specialists in economics and finances, with a significant number of them having graduated from the Paleski State University in Pinsk⁴⁵.

Political affiliation (party membership)

Almost 90% of appointees have not been members of a political party or any political organization. Lukashenka's government is explicitly non-partisan. Since the installment of his regime, Lukashenka has not succeeded in creating his own party. The only real attempt was in 2007 when "Belaja Rus" was founded to represent the interests of the Nomenklatura. Some appointees were also members of the pro-Lukashenka Communist Party and Agrarian Party. Not one appointee has been a member of an oppositional party or pro-democracy NGO.

Figure 7.

Officials—members of parties or political organizations



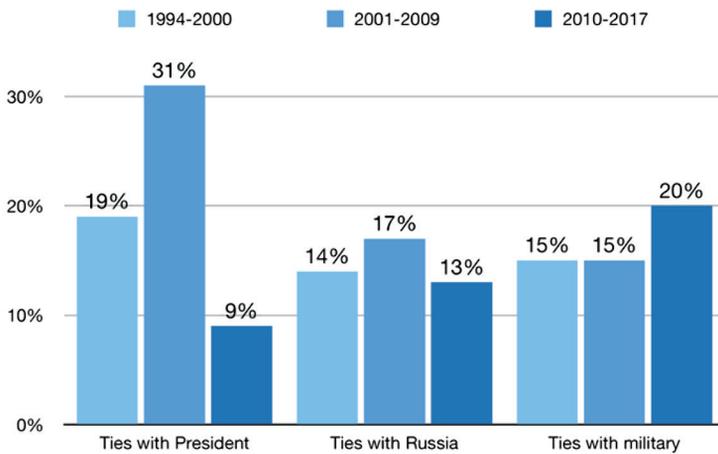
This model of nonpartisan Nomenklatura distinguishes Lukashenka's regime from other post-Soviet authoritarianisms. In Belarus, the fact of being on the board itself (when you work for government), is kind of an informal membership into the system which might guarantee your security and career growth.

⁴⁵ It was known earlier as Pinski Ulikova-Kredytny Technikum (Пінскі ўлікова-крэдытны тэхнікум).

Personal ties (President, Russia, Military)

The majority of appointees do not have evident ties with Lukashenka (79%). There have been some fluctuations, especially between 2001-2009, when almost a third of all appointees were members of Lukashenka's sports club, the National Olympic Committee or used to work in Presidential Administration or for the Presidential Property Management Department. As I mentioned, after 2001 Lukashenka enforced building a strong powervertical, and he needed loyal officials in the government. After 2010 this number dropped (9.3%). It might be a result of a new generation of officials taking offices, and they do not fit completely into the presidential circle of friends. The closest officials to Lukashenka are obviously appointed to the Security Council or Presidential Administration, not ministries or state committees.

Figure 8.
Informal or formal ties with the President, Russia, or with a Military background



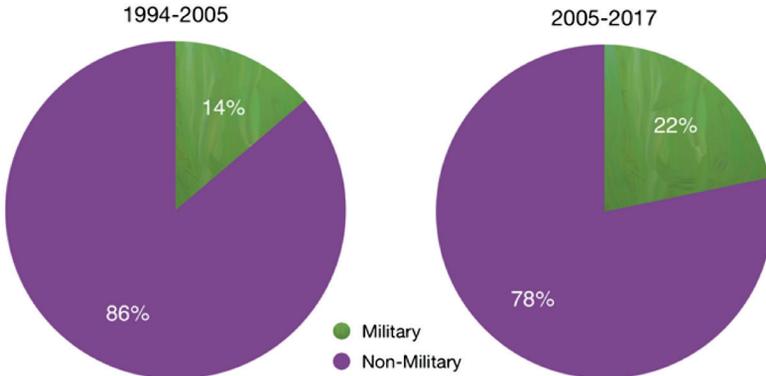
We also can observe the permanent presence of a slight Russian influence within the government (15%). This does not mean these officials serve as Russian agents or influencers directly, but shows the continuing importance of Russia in shaping Belarus government elites. Some officials after governmental work continue working in Russian-Belarusian Union institutions, the CIS, the Eurasian Economic Union, or move to Russia with other purposes, including business. There is a significant overlap between those with Russian ties and those who belong to Lukashenka's closest environment (34%).

Military

Twenty-nine people of the 171 (17%) have a professional military background, which might be a kind of informal network. Many of them graduated the same educational institutions in Russia during Soviet times, and 52% of them are non-Belarus born. In contrast to many

European Union countries, where military members are not supposed to take ministerial position, Belarus follows Soviet tradition. Even within the current government, at least eight people in the government have a military background, and not only in "siloviki" ministries.

Figure 9.
Officials with a military background

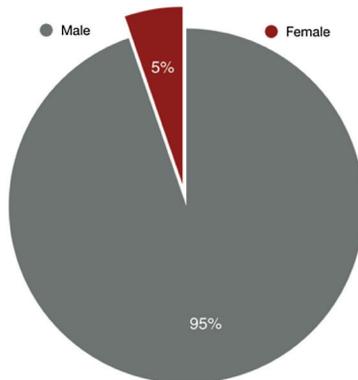


Age and Sex

The average age of appointees (based on the age when position was taken) is 50.5 years old which means the government is relatively young. And this number has stayed the same during all of Lukashenka's presidency. Ministers of Taxation were the youngest (an average of 44 years old for appointees), Ministers of Finance (46). Directors of Military Industry (58), Ministers of Communication (55) and Ministers of Agriculture (53) are the oldest.

Figure 10.
Gender

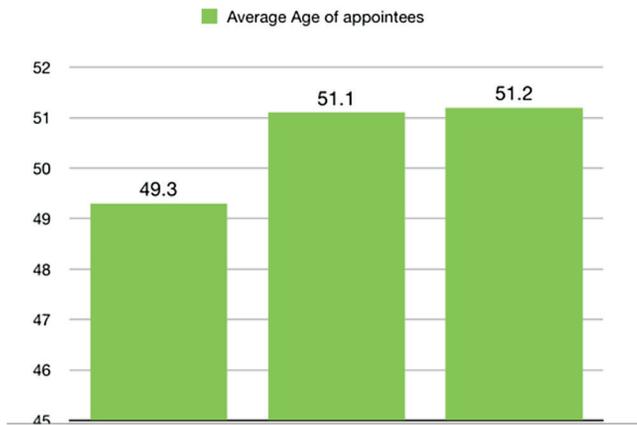
Ministers and State Committees Chairs since 1994



Among the 171 ministers and state committees chairs appointed by Lukashenka since 1994 only nine were women. Among ministers and committee chairs, women have been traditionally represented in the Ministry of Labor. This fact inspired the joke, that women are in charge of labor because the word «praca» is feminine in Belarusian. Another "female" ministry is health represented by Inesa Drabyseuskaja (1994-1997) and the mother-in-law of Lukashenka Ludmila Pastajalka (2002-2006).

Women are incredibly underrepresented in ministries compared to in neighboring Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine or Russia. And there has not been any particular evidence of change since 1994. After 2011 only three women were trusted enough for such high positions in the government. However, this tendency is not universal for institutions of Lukashenka's regime. It depends on real power in the hands of appointees. In the parliament (which is deprived of any real power) the percentage of women has kept stable at 30-35% over the last decade (which is the highest rate in post-Soviet space, Ukraine 12%, Russia 16%).

Figure 11.
Average age when appointed



Data sources, difficulties in collecting information

The information was taken from open sources on the internet and in print. I have used data published on the website of the Belarus Information Agency «Belta»; the National Center of Legal Information; «Who is who in the Republic of Belarus 2016»; wikipedia, and publications in various Belarusian outlets, both state and independent.

I lacked some biographical information (fully or partially) on a few officials appointed before 1999; it is not available online in official government publications. I also cannot guarantee the completeness of some biographies published by official and unofficial resources, especially concerning data related to ties with Russia or the President. It is assumed, that some facts important for the research could have been hidden or omitted. However, I believe, it would not significantly influence our findings and conclusions.

Conclusions

Belarus remains one of the least free post-Soviet countries, with a poor rule of law, absent separation of powers and lacking political competition. After coming to power in 1994, president Lukashenka has successfully monopolized the power by diminishing the role of Parliament and the post-Soviet Nomenklatura. It has taken years and several stages have passed until the current structure of "power vertical" and state elites could be finally established.

Lukashenka's regime replicates the Soviet model of governance, where the presidential administration plays the role of Communist Party Central Committee with its enormous executive power. Ministries and state committees are not autonomous bodies, but the top layer of state bureaucracy, implementing presidential decisions and distributing goods as allowed for them. In this model, in contrast to other post-Soviet and East European countries, hired ministers are not necessarily political appointees but narrowly specialized bureaucrats-managers.

This research based on a quantitative analysis, revealed several spectacular trends within Belarusian government elites (at least at a ministerial level) in the period between 1994 and 2017:

1) **Professionalization.** 78% of ministers and state committee chairs are employed according to their professional career background. The number of appointees with a specialized education has risen from 71.9% to 86% during Lukashenka's presidency. Since 2010, almost 84% of new appointees have come to ministerial offices after making their careers in related areas, or even working in the same ministry.

2) **Indigenization.** The number of officials born in Belarus has increased from 71.9% to 81.4%. There is a clear tendency to mono-nationalize the elite. Those born abroad are primarily from Russia and occupy power ministries and committees. In contrast to neighboring Ukraine, the absolute majority of appointees are Belarusians.

3) **Westernization.** More of the appointees than previously have been born in Western Belarus (which had two generations less time under Soviet rule than Eastern Belarus). It is hard to say if there is any evidence for them having a more pro-Western or progressive position. Before 2006 appointees from Eastern regions formed more than 30% of all appointees, whereas, Westerners (Bierascie and Horadnia regions) made up only 16%. Since 2006 Western representation has reached 26%, and the Eastern one has decreased to 24%, despite these regions being more populated. After 2005 the number of appointees born in the Horadnia region has risen from 4% to 20%.

4) **Informal networks.** The number of appointees tied to Lukashenka (through sports clubs, work in presidential administration, etc.) has significantly decreased during the last decade (from 31% to 9%). This could be a result of generational change within the elite, but also corresponds with a tendency for more professionalization. At the same time, the number of officials with professional military backgrounds has increased from 15% to 20%.

Based on the available data, it is possible to speculate that the current structure of government elites, especially those on the ministerial level, consists of professionals with no apparent political affiliation. This means, in the case of political unrest and democratic transition, that they could keep state mechanisms properly functioning even when the highest leadership is changed.

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The Balkan Front in the New Cold War

As relations between Russia and the U.S.¹ continue their downward spiral, the Balkans have become another front in what scholars such as Stephen F. Cohen and Robert Legvold have dubbed “the New Cold War.”² Yet the return to cold war, as Legvold notes, involves numerous opportunity costs for both countries—and considerable collateral damage as well.

One of the areas in which the collateral damage will be most severe is the Balkans. Indeed, the costs of the new confrontation between Washington and Moscow are already evident in the democratic backsliding that has occurred throughout the region over the past decade. The Economist Intelligence Unit’s *Democracy Index 2016*, shows that of the nine countries in southeastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia), only one (Bulgaria) showed any improvement, one (Albania) showed no improvement, and the remaining seven all regressed in terms of their democratic development.³ Freedom House’s *Nations in Transit* and the Bertelsmann Transformation Index have similarly shown significant democratic backsliding in the Balkans since 2008.⁴

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² See, respectively, Stephen F. Cohen, *Soviet Fates and Lost Alternatives: From Stalinism to the New Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), and Robert Legvold, *Return to Cold War* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2016).

³ See *Democracy Index 2016: Revenge of the “deplorables”* (London: Economist Intelligence Unit, 2017), 5.

⁴ For a brief analysis of the most recent Bertelsmann scores as they pertain to southeastern Europe, see Marcus Tanner, “Balkan States Rank Poorly in Governance Index,” *BalkanInsight*, 29 September 2017, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/balkan-states-rank-poorly-in-governance-index-09-29-2017>.

During this same time a cohort of petty Balkan authoritarians has learned how to benefit from the new Cold War. By portraying themselves as “anti-Russian” and “pro-NATO,” the Balkans’ new strongmen know that Washington and Brussels will turn blind eyes to practically any attacks on democratic institutions and processes. Abetting this process is a small army of special interests and lobbying groups willing to promote any distortion of reality for the sake of advancing parochial interests—even to the detriment of U.S. national interests.

The parallels with another recent (and tragic) episode in U.S. history are inescapable. In many ways, the U.S. foreign policy establishment today is making the same mistakes in southeastern Europe that it made some fifteen years ago on the road to war in Iraq. In 2002-2003, the neocons driving Bush Administration policy were neither responding to Saddam Hussein’s intentions nor to his capabilities. Instead, they were implementing a pre-determined agenda and polluting what little public debate there was about the rush to war with dubious allegations, assumptions and rumors about WMD’s and Saddam’s supposed ties to Al Qaeda.

Switch your geographic focus back to the Balkans, and much the same is taking place today. Just as happened in the run-up to war with Iraq, many quarters are now exaggerating and inflating the “Russia factor” in the Balkans to cover up what is really happening in southeastern Europe—the deterioration of democratic institutions and processes, and the entrenchment of corrupt, political-criminal elites.

The damage this is causing affects more than just southeastern Europe. Because of the difficulty in compartmentalizing our various foreign policy disagreements with Moscow, opening a Balkan front in the New Cold War will have implications for broader U.S. national security interests. How Washington, Brussels and Moscow, for instance, manage their respective policies in southeastern Europe inevitably impacts the overall security equation throughout central and eastern Europe. In turn, how these problems are managed affects the degree of conflict or cooperation we can reasonably expect from Russia to deal with Iran, North Korea, or Syria. All of this ultimately affects the most fundamental, existential aspect of the U.S.-Russian relationship, nuclear arms control. As a recent report by James N. Miller, Jr. and Richard Fontaine notes,

the overall state of U.S.-Russian relations substantially influences the pace of strategic arms development, the likelihood of crisis and conflict, and the likelihood of preventable or accidental escalation due to poor communications and worst-case assumptions . . . The future course of bilateral relations will have a significant impact on the likelihood of a U.S.-Russian crisis, and in the event of it, on the ability of both sides to find acceptable political solutions without resorting to armed conflict.⁵

With so much at stake, understanding Russia’s real capabilities in southeastern Europe is of paramount importance. Unfortunately, the current atmosphere in Western capitals concerning all things Russian seriously impedes any such effort.

⁵ See James N. Miller, Jr., and Richard Fontaine, “A New Era in U.S.-Russian Strategic Stability: How Changing Geopolitics and Emerging Technologies are Reshaping Pathways to Crisis and Conflict” (Cambridge, MA: Harvard/Kennedy School Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Center for a New American Security (September 2017), at <https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.cnas.org/documents/CNASReport-ProjectPathways-Finalb.pdf?mtime=20170918101504>.

The Russian Boogeyman in the Balkans

The result has been, as Glenn Greenwald aptly put it, “an offensive assault on reason”—a flood of ominous news reports ranging in quality from absurd allegations to sheer ignorance and pure disinformation. Common to this genre of analysis and reporting is that it leans heavily on anonymous sources, unverifiable claims, and unsubstantiated assertions, which makes many of the allegations in such pieces non-falsifiable. Such dubious methodology is then made additionally suspect by the use of cherry-picked facts taken out of context, which distorts the reality and totality of a given issue. On the other hand, and perhaps more importantly, such tactics are useful for scoring cheap propaganda points with gullible or uninformed readers. Unfortunately, however, simple explanations promising easy solutions to the complex problem of dealing with Russia in the Balkans are doing more harm than good.

In reality, Russian policy in the Balkans has been much more passive than most of the commentary one sees in western analyses would suggest. This follows a pattern throughout East-Central Europe; as many veteran Russia watchers have argued, for the past two decades Russian policy throughout Eastern Europe has been essentially reactive, insofar as significant Russian moves in the area have been a response to prior U.S./NATO moves (for a sampling, see Stephen Cohen,⁶ Nikolas Gvosdev and Chris Marsh⁷, George Kennan,⁸ Henry Kissinger⁹, Anatol Lieven¹⁰, Jack Matlock,¹¹ John Mearsheimer,¹² and Stephen Walt¹³).

Nevertheless, “evidence” of the growing Russian menace in southeastern Europe can now be found every day on every corner—in the visit of a Cossack folklore troop to Bosnia (supposedly analogous to the “little green men” that took over Crimea),¹⁴ a road trip by a Russian motorcycle gang to Podgorica,¹⁵ the graffiti on a kitschy Russian-built train car

⁶ See Cohen, *Soviet Fates and Lost Alternatives*, op. cit., Chapter 7.

⁷ See Nikolas K. Gvosdev and Christopher Marsh, *Russian Foreign Policy: Interests, Vectors and Sectors* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2013), 221-226.

⁸ See Kennan, “A Fateful Error,” *The New York Times*, 5 February 1997, at <https://www.nytimes.com/1997/02/05/opinion/a-fateful-error.html>.

⁹ See Jacob Heilbrunn’s discussion with Kissinger entitled “The Interview: Henry Kissinger,” *The National Interest*, 19 August 2015, at <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-interview-henry-kissinger-13615>.

¹⁰ See Lieven, “Why Trump is Right on Russia,” *The New York Times*, 14 February 2017, at https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/14/opinion/why-trump-is-right-on-russia.html?_r=0. Lieven make a more sustained version of this argument in “The Dance of the Ghosts: A New Cold War with Russia Will Not Serve Western Interests,” *Survival* 60 (October-November 2018), 115-140.

¹¹ Matlock, “Who is the Bully? The U.S. has treated Russia like a loser since the end of the Cold War,” *The Washington Post*, 14 March 2014, at https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/who-is-the-bully-the-united-states-has-treated-russia-like-a-loser-since-the-cold-war/2014/03/14/b0868882-aa06-11e3-8599-ce7295b6851c_story.html?utm_term=.c279776087a7.

¹² Mearsheimer, “Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West’s Fault: The Liberal Delusions that Provoked Putin,” *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2014), 1-12.

¹³ See Walt, “Why Arming Kiev is a Really, Really Bad Idea,” *Foreign Policy* 9 February 2015, at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/09/how-not-to-save-ukraine-arming-kiev-is-a-bad-idea>.

¹⁴ See Christo Grozev, “The Kremlin’s Balkan Gambit: Part 1,” 4 March 2017, at <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2017/03/04/kremlins-balkan-gambit-part>.

¹⁵ See Andrew Higgins, “Finger Pointed at Russians in Alleged Coup Plot in Montenegro,” *The New York Times*, 26 November 2017. Symbolic of the exaggeration used to describe anything related to Russia in the Balkans was the claim that the visit by the Night Wolves to Bosnia in March 2018 was “the most significant threat to the Dayton peace [accords] since 1996.” See Gordana Knežević, “Putin’s Pals, The Night Wolves, Troll Bosnia and the Region,”

travelling from Belgrade to Mitrovica, or the building of a monument to Russian monks who served in Macedonia in the early twentieth century. Some claim talk of Islamist terror groups in the Balkans is a conspiracy theory exploited by Russia,¹⁶ while others suggest Russia itself is funding such groups.¹⁷

Croatia has been portrayed as “the next Russian domino to fall”¹⁸ and even of offering itself to Moscow as a replacement for Serbia as the main Russian ally in the Balkans.¹⁹ Yet apart from the propaganda value to be had from making such claims, there is clearly no validity to the charges. Croatia is both an EU and NATO member; it refused to sign up for the Moscow-sponsored South Stream pipeline project; it joined the EU sanctions regime against Moscow resulting from the annexation of Crimea; it joined the Western response to the Skripal affair by expelling a Russian diplomat; it joined Western countries in condemning Russia for the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria in April 2018 and is helping the Pentagon provide weapons to U.S.-backed, anti-Assad opposition groups in Syria. Croatia also has close ties to Kyiv, Croatian officials have voiced their support for Macedonia joining NATO and the EU, and the entire ideological foundation of Croatia’s ruling party is based on being the Western European, Roman Catholic antithesis to Eastern Orthodox Slavs (Serb or Russian). Finally, one might add that Croatia’s current president used to be assistant secretary-general of NATO.

The list goes on and becomes increasingly silly. In Kosovo, an individual politically irrelevant since the 1980s was recently shot and immediately claimed that “the Russians” were behind the “assassination attempt.” Putin stands accused of trying to turn the Orthodox monastic republic of Mount Athos into a Russian spypost,²⁰ and Moscow is variously accused of promoting Croatian nationalists,²¹ Macedonian nationalists,²² Serbian

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 20 March 2018, at <https://www.rferl.org/a/night-wolves-motorcycle-club-troll-bosnia-region-putin/29111436.html>. A *New York Times* report on the Night Wolves’ visit put the trip in more sober perspective, describing “tattooed, potbellied bikers” who “looked pathetic” and left their bikes behind because of cold weather. See Andrew Higgins, “Russia’s Feared ‘Night Wolves’ Bike Gang Came to Bosnia. Bosnia Giggled,” *The New York Times*, 31 March 2018, at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/31/world/europe/balkans-russia-night-wolves-republika-srpska-bosnia.html>.

¹⁶ See Janusz Bugajski, “Balkans Terrorist Threats,” Center for European Policy and Analysis, 18 May 2015, at <http://cepa.org/index/?id=daa172021eb0b28d756615925486f129>.

¹⁷ See David L. Phillips, “Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans: External Influences and Local Drivers” at: http://www.humanrightscolumbia.org/sites/default/files/2017_01_22_violent_extremism_balkans.pdf.

¹⁸ See Jasmin Mujanovic, “Russia’s Bosnia Gambit: Intrigue in the Balkans,” *Foreign Affairs*, 6 September 2017, at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/bosnia-herzegovina/2017-09-06/russias-bosnia-gambit>.

¹⁹ See Ibro Čavčić, “Mujanović: Zagreb nudi svoju političku lojalnost Kremlju za bolji kreditni aranžman u vezi s Agrokorum,” *Klix.ba*, 20 October 2017, at <https://www.klix.ba/vijesti/bih/mujanovic-zagreb-nudi-svoju-politicku-lojalnost-kremlju-za-bolji-kreditni-aranzman-u-vezi-s-agrokorum/171020015>. Attempting to discredit Croatian politicians in both Bosnia and Croatia proper by labeling them “pro-Russian” has become the standard propaganda ploy of the Sarajevo political establishment; for examples, see Mujanovic, op. cit., and Edina Bećević and Senad Pečanin, “Dodik i Čović na istom zadatku,” *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 30 November 2017, <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/hdz-bih-dodik-covic-rusija/28888178.html>.

²⁰ See Jeremy Norman, “What is behind Vladimir Putin’s curious interest in Mount Athos?,” *The Spectator* (UK), 10 September 2016, at <https://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/09/what-is-behind-vladimir-putins-curious-interest-in-mount-athos>.

²¹ Mujanovic, “Russia’s Bosnia Gambit: Intrigue in the Balkans,” op. cit.

²² See Luke Harding, Aubrey Belford and Saska Cvetkovska, “Russia actively stoking discord in Macedonia since 2008, intel files say,” *The Guardian* (UK), 4 June 2017, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jun/04/russia-actively-stoking-discord-in-macedonia-since-2008-intel-files-say-leak-kremlin-balkan-nato-west-influence>.

nationalists, and even, most remarkably, of trying to create a Greater Albania.²³ Russia is also accused of trying to get the Serbs in Serbia proper into the EU to use it as a Trojan Horse within the union,²⁴ while simultaneously using the Serbs in Bosnia to prevent that country from joining the EU.

Emblematic of this genre of analysis was a recent British tabloid story, the title of which screamed "Warning Putin could DEFEAT NATO and smash through the Balkans in just THREE DAYS."²⁵ The report by the RAND Corporation the article cited, however, was about the Baltics, not the Balkans. The same tabloid would continue with this theme a few months later, with an article suggesting that Putin was planning to annex the Balkans.²⁶

Many of these pathologies are perfectly exemplified in a series of *Guardian* articles alleging various nefarious Russian activities in Bosnia. The first in the series claimed Bosnian Serb authorities had set up a paramilitary unit trained in the "Serbian-Russian Humanitarian Center" in the southern Serbian city of Niš. One source for the piece melodramatically claimed that the event was "part of a larger change in the international order, starting with the invasion in Georgia, Syria, Ukraine, the meddling in the US elections . . . [it is] a watershed moment."²⁷ The group in question, however, called *Srbska Čast* ("Serbian Honor") was so unknown and insignificant that it was not even mentioned in an exhaustive, 203-page study of pro-Russian organizations in Serbia.²⁸ Moreover, repeated visits by western diplomats and journalists to the Russian facility in Niš have revealed no military activity there (see below), and in any case the only apparent tie the group had to the Russian facility was a Facebook picture of members in front of the building.

The follow-up article then claimed that the RS was embarking on a massive weapons-purchasing spree as a prelude to using violence in upcoming elections.²⁹ The weapons acquisition in question, however, had been vetted and approved by four of Bosnia's central state authorities (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Security, as well as by Bosnia's Intelligence and Security Ministry); moreover, it was the first time the RS police had been re-equipped in some two decades.³⁰ Borger's article also

²³ See Emily Holland and Rebecca Friedman Lissner, "Countering Russian Influence in the Balkans," *lawfareblog.org*, 6 August 2017, at <https://www.lawfareblog.com/countering-russian-influence-balkans>.

²⁴ See Mark Galleoti, "Do the Western Balkans face a coming Russian storm?" *European Council on Foreign Relations Policy Brief* (4 April 2018), 12.

²⁵ See Alex Culbertson, "Warning Putin could DEFEAT NATO and smash through the Balkans in just THREE DAYS," *The Daily Express* (London), 27 October 2016, at <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/726066/Putin-defeat-NATO-Balkans-two-days>.

²⁶ See Jon Rogers, "Is Putin plotting to annexe the BALKANS? Russians expelled over suspected Montenegro COUP," *The Daily Express* (London), 31 January 2017, at <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/761055/Russians-expelled-Montenegro-coup-Vladimir-Putin-annexe-Balkans>.

²⁷ See Julian Borger, "Russia-trained mercenaries back Bosnia's Serb separatists," *The Guardian* (UK), 12 January 2018, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/12/russian-trained-mercenaries-back-bosnias-serb-separatists>.

²⁸ See *Eyes Wide Shut: Strengthening of Russian Soft Power in Serbia: Goals, Instruments and Effects* (Beograd: Centar za Evroatlantske Studije, May 2016).

²⁹ Julian Borger, "Arms shipment to Bosnian Serbs stokes EU fears," *The Guardian* (UK), 13 February 2018, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/13/bosnian-serb-police-arms-purchase-stokes-eu-fears>.

³⁰ See S. Demirgendić, "Otkrivamo: OSA dala pozitivno mišljenje na uvoz oružja za MUP-RS," *Dnevni Avaz* (Sarajevo), 15 February 2018, at <http://avaz.ba/vijesti/bih/351576/otkrivamo-osa-dala-pozitivno-misljenje-na-uvoz-oruzja-za-mup-rs>.

failed to mention that at precisely the same time, Sarajevo Canton had budgeted a weapons purchase which amounted to an expenditure three times larger per capita than the RS had planned.³¹ Even more importantly, RS officials claim that Russian instructors have never even been involved in training RS police units at the facility, while American military instructors are there on a weekly basis.³² In a similar example of propagandistic sleight-of-hand, the RS Interior Ministry was recently attacked for signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Moscow's Interior Ministry,³³ but the deal is fully in line with a number of such agreements between central Bosnian state authorities and the RSFSR.³⁴

The Russian ties to the alleged "Montenegrin coup plot" are a story unto itself. More perceptive quickly noted the absurdities in the Montenegrin government's official account of the so-called coup-attempt. Many of the people arrested in the plot "were elderly and in ill-health,"³⁵ who were "more suited to opera buffa than espionage."³⁶ The *BBC* would note that "the only element missing is the poison-tipped toe caps of agent Rosa Klebb."³⁷ This motley band of alleged coup plotters, it should be noted, was supposed to overthrow a government defended by 5000 trained police officers and 2000 military personnel.

The man on whose testimony the entire case rests (and the only person who claimed any contact with Russians), Saša Sindjelić is a fantasist with a history of mental illness whose greatest achievement in life appears to have been the theft of a tractor (and the murder of its owner).³⁸ In addition to claiming that the Russians had paid him to organ-

³¹ See "PLAN NABAVKI UPRAVE POLICIJE MINISTARSTVA UNUTRAŠNJIH POSLOVA KANTONA SARAJEVA ZA 2018. GODINU," at: https://mup.ks.gov.ba/sites/mup.ks.gov.ba/files/plan_nabavki_2018.pdf

³² According to Tatjana Telić, Head of the Department for International Cooperation of the RS Ministry of the Interior, Washington, DC, February 2018. See also Dejan Šajinović, "Lukać: Neće nas obučavati Rusi nego Amerikanci," *Nezavisne Novine* (Banja Luka), 14 February 2018, at <https://www.nezavisne.com/novosti/bih/Lukac-Nece-nas-obucavati-Rusi-nego-Amerikanci/464836>.

³³ See, for instance, Reuf Bajrović, Richard Kraemer, and Emir Suljagić, *Bosnia on the Chopping Block: The Potential for Violence and Steps to Prevent it* (Philadelphia, PA: Foreign Policy Research Institute, March 2018), 6.

³⁴ Compare, for instance, "СОГЛАШЕНИЕ О СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВЕ МЕЖДУ МИНИСТЕРСТВОМ ВНУТРЕННИХ ДЕЛ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ И МИНИСТЕРСТВОМ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ БОСНИИ И ГЕРЦЕГОВИНЫ," (Moscow, 8 September 2004, and "МЕМОРАНДУМ о разумевању између Главне управе Министарства унутрашњих послова Руске Федерације за град Москву и Министарства унутрашњих послова Републике Српске (Босна и Херцеговина). (Facsimiles of both agreements in the author's archives.) More recently, in April 2018 Bosnian state security minister Dragan Mektić met in Sochi with Nikolai Patrushev to discuss strengthening cooperation between Bosnia and the Russian Federation in the fight against terrorism, promoting cyber-security, and dealing with illegal migration and human trafficking. In his capacity as an official of the Bosnian central state government, Mektić also signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with his counterpart in Russia's Interior Ministry concerning labor force migration. See "Bosnian Security Minister Meets Russian security officials," *N1 Bosnia*, 26 April 2018, at <http://ba.n1info.com/a257046/English/NEWS/Bosnian-Security-Minister-meets-Russian-security-officials.html>. For an example of how uninformed journalists and policy analysts manufacture misrepresentations of this issue, see Vera Mironova and Bogdan Zawadewicz, "Putin is Building a Bosnian Paramilitary Force," *Foreign Policy*, 8 August 2018, at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/08/putin-is-building-a-bosnian-paramilitary-force>.

³⁵ See Andrew Higgins, "Finger Pointed at Russians in Alleged Coup Plot in Montenegro," *The New York Times*, 26 November 2017, at <https://mobile.nytimes.com/2016/11/26/world/europe/finger-pointed-at-russians-in-alleged-coup-plot-in-montenegro.html>.

³⁶ Hopkins, "Indictment Tells Murky Montenegrin Coup Tale," op. cit.

³⁷ See Delauney, "Rumours and spies in the Balkans as Russia seeks influence," *BBC News*, 12 December 2016, at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38289421>, accessed on 14 January 2018 at 9:22am EST.

³⁸ See Valery Hopkins, "Indictment Tells Murky Montenegrin Coup Tale," *Politico.eu*, 23 May 2017, at <http://www.politico.eu/article/montenegro-nato-milo-ukanovicmurky-coup-plot/>.

ize the coup, he also claimed that Chechen president Ramzan Kadyrov was involved in financing a post-coup government,³⁹ and professed his belief that Montenegro's "pro-Russian opposition" was in fact working for Western intelligence services. Indeed, in August 2018 Montenegrin officials even sought the extradition of a former CIA agent who was alleged to be part of "the plot."⁴⁰ Montenegrin officials also claim Sindjelić's Russian contacts sent him funds via wire transfer from a Western Union office located on the same street as GRU headquarters—a claim apparently meant to make people believe that to finance the overthrow of a foreign government and assassinate a country's leader Russian intelligence agents do not use untraceable black budget funds, they walk down the street and stand in line for a teller at their local American financial services institution. Having played his role in the court proceedings, in March 2018 Sindjelić disappeared altogether.

Sindjelić's "accomplice", Miroslav Velimirović, claimed he bought armaments for the plot (which have never been produced), and gave "wildly conflicting accounts" of the weapon that was to be used to assassinate Djukanović. In April 2017 he renounced his testimony altogether. The weapons Velimirović allegedly bought have never been found, and the person Velimirović allegedly bought the weapons from has never been identified.⁴¹ In any case, for his role in attempting to overthrow the constitutional order and assassinate the country's prime minister Velimirović was released on €100 bond. (By way of comparison, individuals charged with disturbing the court proceedings have been given €500 fines.) A former Montenegrin diplomat even testified before a U.S. Senate committee that a Serbian police official named Bratislav Dikić admitted his involvement in the affair, although Dikić has done no such thing.⁴²

Lurking in the background of this story is the claim that Russia was interested in acquiring military bases and naval facilities in Bar and Kotor, although this seems questionable as well. Former Montenegrin foreign minister Igor Lukšić has claimed that Montenegro and Russia never discussed this issue; similarly, a member of Montenegro's Parliamentary Commission for Defense and Security, Obrad Mišo Stanišić, has claimed that *"For as long as I have been a member of the Commission for Defense and Security, and this is already my second term, this topic has never been discussed. It was not mentioned during the commission's sessions. I believe these are irrelevant stories."*⁴³ *Indeed, the military value of having*

³⁹ See "Šesnaesti dan suđenja: Sindelić pričao o Ediju, Dikiću, DF, Branku Mićunoviću . . ." *Vijesti* (Podgorica), 26 October 2017, at <http://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/sesnaesti-dan-sudenja-sindelic-pricao-o-ediju-dikicu-df-branku-micunovicu-960274>.

⁴⁰ See Eli Lake, "Montenegro Takes on Russia, America, and a Former CIA Officer," *Bloomberg.com*, 14 August 2018, at <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2018-08-14/montenegro-takes-on-russia-america-and-a-former-cia-officer>.

⁴¹ See Glenn Ellis and Katerina Barushka, "A Very Montenegrin Coup," *Al Jazeera*, 2 March 2017, at <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2017/03/montenegrin-coup-170302060130440.html>.

⁴² See the testimony of former Montenegrin Ambassador Vesko Garčević before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, entitled "Russian Interference (sic) in European Elections: Russia and Montenegro," 28 June 2017, page 7, at <https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/sfr-vgarcevic-062817b.pdf>. For a detailed analysis of the so-called "coup plot," see Gordon N. Bardos, "Coup or Hoax in Montenegro," *American Center for Democracy*, 20 December 2017, at <http://acdemocracy.org/coup-or-hoax-in-montenegro>.

⁴³ See Srđan Janković, "Officials Dismiss Talk of Russian Military Base in Montenegro," *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 10 February 2015, at <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/officials-squash-talk-of-russian-military-base-in-montenegro/26839898.html>.

a base in the Bay of Kotor is practically nil; as anyone who has seen the narrow fjord knows, in the event of hostilities a fleet holed up in Kotor Bay would represent the naval equivalent of Dien Bien Phu.

The Military Balance in the Balkans

In contrast to the above, a serious analysis of Russia's position in southeastern Europe—military, diplomatic, and economic—reveals that the EU and NATO (the main instrument of U.S. power in Europe) have achieved dominant positions in the Balkans. Thus, the real question for U.S., EU and NATO policymakers is not how to thwart Russian advances in the Balkans, but how to reinvigorate democratic reform in the region. In other words, we need to start confronting the challenges of the present and the future in the Balkans, rather than reviving Cold War ghosts from the previous century.

Militarily, Russia has had little influence in southeastern Europe over the past two decades. Putin withdrew Russian peacekeeping forces from Bosnia and Kosovo in 2003, and in December 2014 Putin cancelled what was supposed to be the grand instrument of Russian geo-strategic and economic power-projection in the Balkans, the South Stream Pipeline Project.

Over this same period Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania and Slovenia have joined NATO, Macedonia is a candidate country, and Bosnia and Serbia are members of NATO's Partnership for Peace Program (see Table 1). The latter two have also concluded Status-of-Forces Agreements (SOFA) with NATO which give alliance personnel immunity from prosecution on their territory. Russia's only formal military association with any country in southeastern Europe comes from Serbia's observer status in Moscow's Collective Security Treaty Organization. Indeed, as *The Economist* sarcastically noted, when Moscow threatened to cancel joint military projects with Montenegro if the latter joined NATO, "the Montenegrins were baffled, because there are none."⁴⁴ What is widely cited as a Russian spy base near the Serbian city of Niš has a full-time staff of six Russian nationals; by way of comparison, the largest U.S. military base built since the Vietnam War is just across the border in Kosovo. Moreover, the Russians in Niš have not been given the same status provided for by Serbia's SOFA with NATO.⁴⁵ In March 2016, journalists from *Radio Free Europe* visited the center and claimed to find "nothing that could be used for military purposes."⁴⁶ In July 2017, a delegation of the U.S. diplomats visited the Niš center, also finding nothing out-of-the-ordinary;⁴⁷ indeed, even personnel from NATO countries train there.⁴⁸ As former

⁴⁴ "In the Balkans, NATO has outmuscled Russia," *The Economist*, 11 December 2015 at <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21683967-montenegros-accession-fills-one-few-remaining-gaps-western-alliance>.

⁴⁵ See Dusan Stojanovic, "Inside Russian 'spy base' in the Balkans," *Associated Press* (Dateline Nis, Serbia), 6 October 2016, at <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/03f70a64ec5b48bbb1c2f56bdeag255e/inside-russian-spy-base-balkans>.

⁴⁶ See Predrag Blagojević, Ljudmila Cvetković, and Iva Martinović, "RSE u ruskom centru u Nišu," *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 7 March 2016, at <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/rse-u-ruskom-centru-u-nisu/27592623>.

⁴⁷ See "Američke diplomate posjetile Srpsko-ruski centar u Nišu," *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 12 July 2017, at <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/28612732.html>.

⁴⁸ For instance, Hungarian disaster-response personnel trained at the Niš facility in 2018; see Michael Birnbaum, "Russia's low-cost influence strategy finds success in Serbia," *The Washington Post*, 3 October 2018, at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2018/10/03/russia-s-low-cost-influence-strategy-finds-success-in-serbia/>.

U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs Brian Hoyt Yee himself has noted, the U.S. concern about the Russian outpost is “not so much for what it is now, but what it might become.”⁴⁹

Table 1.
Balkan Military Alliances

NATO/PfP Members	Collective Security Treaty Organization
Albania Bosnia & Herzegovina (PfP) Bulgaria Croatia Greece Kosovo (submitted PfP application) Macedonia Montenegro Romania Serbia (PfP)	Serbia (observer status)

While Serbia’s recent purchase of second-hand MIG-29 fighter jets from Moscow made headlines, this misses the more important overall point; as defense analyst John Cappello has noted, Serbia’s “relations with the Euro-Atlantic alliance have never been stronger . . . the vast majority of its international defense cooperation is with NATO and the West.”⁵⁰ Moreover, according to one American analyst, the MIG’s are “obsolete and unusable.”⁵¹

Indeed, in a detailed examination of Serbia’s military relations with foreign powers, Aleksandar Radić has noted that the only genuine donation the Russian military has made to Serbia since 2014 consisted of ten parachutes. By way of comparison, Radić notes that “when it comes to contracts of a purely commercial nature, Serbia is heavily oriented towards purchases from NATO . . . An overview of the cooperation with NATO and the

washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russias-low-cost-influence-strategy-finds-success-in-serbia--with-the-help-of-fighter-jets-media-conspiracies-and-a-biker-gang/2018/10/03/49dbf48e-8f47-11e8-ae59-01880eac5f1d_story.html?utm_term=.079df9337af1.

⁴⁹ See Milena Djurdjic, “US Sees Russia’s ‘Humanitarian Center’ as Spy Outpost,” *VOANews*, 15 June 2017, at <https://www.voanews.com/a/united-states-sees-russia-humanitarian-center-serbia-spy-outpost/3902402.html>. See also See Maja Zivanovic, “Russian Center in Serbia Scorns Espionage Claims,” *BalkanInsight*, 11 September 2017, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/russian-serbian-humanitarian-centre-rebuffs-spy-accusations-09-08-2017>.

⁵⁰ See Cappello, “Russian Information Operations in the Western Balkans,” *RealClearDefense.com*, 2 February 2017, at http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2017/02/02/russian_information_operations_in_the_western_balkans_110732.html. Regarding the MIG-29s, one report noted that “Belgrade will have to pay close to €200 million to rebuild them. It will take some time before the newly delivered MiGs are in good enough shape to start flying, putting in doubt their ability to really strengthen the Serbian armed forces.” See “Second-hand Russian jet fighters arrive in Serbia,” *EurActiv.rs*, 6 October 2017, at http://www.euractiv.rs/vesti/11862--secondhand-russian-fighter-jets-arrive-in-serbia-.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+euractiv%2Faenglish%28EurActiv+English%29.

⁵¹ See Daniel Server’s comments in “Lavrov: BiH ne bi izdržala Dejton 2,” *Deutsche Welle*, 23 January 2018, at <http://www.dw.com/bs/lavrov-bih-ne-bi-izdrzala-dejton-2/a-42271083>.

Russian Federation shows that relations with NATO are much more complex and deeper, since various forms of cooperation based on training, equipping and international engagement are intertwined."⁵²

During his visit to Belgrade in April 2017 the late Senator John McCain noted that the U.S. is Serbia's most important defense partner, with the two countries engaging in 90 joint activities a year.⁵³ In 2015, for example, Serbia held 567 military activities with NATO or with NATO countries bilaterally. In the same year Serbia had a total of 36 similar activities with Russia.⁵⁴ In 2017, Serbia was reported to have held two military exercises with Russia, thirteen with NATO or with members of the alliance, and seven with American forces.⁵⁵

The Balkan Diplomatic Tug-of-War

Diplomatically, the U.S. and the EU also enjoy a dominant position. The official foreign policy goal of every country in the Western Balkans is to join the European Union, while not a single country in the region has applied for membership in the Moscow-sponsored Eurasian Economic Union (see Table 2). In keeping with this, most states in the region have aligned their foreign policies with those of Washington and Brussels. Even Serbia, which has not joined the sanctions regime against Moscow, has at the same time refused to recognize Russia's annexation of Crimea. The current Serbian prime minister (who worked with USAID for a decade) has publicly said that if it came to a choice between Russia and the EU, Serbia would pick the EU,⁵⁶ and to accentuate the point her first official foreign trip was to Brussels.

Much of the current commentary on Russia in the Balkans also misses how often Russian positions have aligned with Western policies in the region. In 1998-99, Russian diplomats worked closely with American and European officials in trying to avert and end the Kosovo war.⁵⁷ Indeed, in May-June 1999, Russian security services, working through the private offices of Swedish businessman Peter Castenfelt, played a key role in convincing Milošević to accept terms to end the conflict.⁵⁸ In 2006, when Western countries support-

⁵² See Radić, "Whom to Rely On: Serbia Between East and West," *European Western Balkans*, 6 December 2017, at <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2017/12/06/rely-serbia-east-west>.

⁵³ See "Vučić i Mekejn o regionalnom miru, saradnji i zajedničkim akcijama," *Politika* (Belgrade), 10 April 2017, at <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/378089/Vucic-i-Mekej-n-o-regionalnom-miru-saradnji-i-zajednickim-akcijama>.

⁵⁴ Figures according to Sergey Belous, "How long will Belgrade seesaw between NATO and Russia?", *Oriental Review*, 23 April 2016, at <http://orientalreview.org/2016/04/23/how-long-will-belgrade-seesaw-between-nato-and-russia>.

⁵⁵ See Emili Šervin, "Na dve stolice, dok god može," *Deutsche Welle*, 19 December 2017, at <http://www.dw.com/sr/na-dve-stolice-dok-god-mo%C5%BEe/a-41855320>.

⁵⁶ See Brnabić's comments in Misha Savic and Gordana Filipovic, "Serbia Will Choose EU Over Russia If Forced to Choose, Premier Says," *Bloomberg.com*, 4 July 2017, at <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-07-03/serbia-will-pick-eu-over-russia-if-made-to-choose-premier-says>.

⁵⁷ Regarding Moscow's participation in efforts to avert and end the Kosovo conflict, see the recollections of a senior European diplomat involved, Wolfgang Petritsch, about this period: "Russia, Kosovo and Europe: A Case-Study in Post Cold-War Conflict Management," in Petritsch, *Zielpunkt Europa: Von den Schluchten des Balkan und den Mühen der Ebene* (Klagenfurt/Celovec: Wieser Verlag, 2009), 275-289.

⁵⁸ On Castenfelt's role, see "Swede's Secret Channel to Milosevic," *BBC News*, 9 March 2000, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/671574.stm>; and Roger Cohen, "In Secret Belgrade Talks, London Financier Seems to Have Helped Milosevic Accept Accord," *The New York Times*, 15 June 1999, at <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/06/15/world/crisis-balkans-diplomacy-secret-belgrade-talks-london-financier-seems-have.html>.

ed Montenegro's declaration of independence, Moscow voiced no objections and quickly followed suit. In December 2017, as a rhetorical escalation of tensions between Belgrade and Zagreb broke out, both American and Russian diplomats advised Serbian president Aleksandar Vučić to "drop it" so that the situation did not get out of control.⁵⁹ In September 2017, Putin's United Russia Party endorsed the decision of Kosovo Serbs to enter the Kosovo government, a policy in line with U.S. preferences.⁶⁰

Diplomatic differences do of course exist between Washington, the EU and Moscow, but to dismiss these as Russian attempts destabilize the Balkans trivializes serious international problems. The Kosovo issue is a prime example. Moscow's refusal to recognize Kosovo is frequently described as "Russian obstructionism,"⁶¹ but Georgia and Ukraine similarly refuse to recognize Kosovo, and it is difficult to see why they would be following Russia's lead. Spain, for understandable reasons, also refuses to recognize Kosovo, as do four other EU members, as well as Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and other states representing 60-70% of the world's population. Clearly, any serious understanding of global politics has to recognize that the refusal of so many countries to recognize Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence is not caused by "Russian obstructionism"; rather, it is driven by the very considerable implications the Kosovo case has for any multiethnic state facing an actual or potential secessionist movement.

Table 2.

Balkan Countries' Memberships in International Economic/Political/Trade Organizations

European Union	Eurasian Economic Union
Albania (candidate country)	
Bosnia & Herzegovina (potential candidate)	
Bulgaria (full member)	
Croatia (full member)	
Greece (full member)	
Kosovo (potential candidate)	
Macedonia (candidate country)	
Montenegro (candidate country)	
Romania (full member)	
Serbia (candidate country)	

In Bosnia, Russian policy has been broadly in line with the West. Since recognizing Bosnia on 27 April 1992, Russia has consistently supported the country's sovereignty and

⁵⁹ See Jurica Korbler, "NOVO ZAOŠTRENJE ODNOSA HRVATSKE I SRBIJE Sve su manje šanse da Vučić početkom 2018. godine u Zagreb," *Jutarnji list* (Zagreb), 26 December 2017, at <http://www.jutarnji.hr/vijesti/hrvatska/novo-zaoستنje-odnosa-hrvatske-i-srbije-sve-su-manje-sanse-da-vucic-pocetkom-2018-godine-u-zagreb/6878493>.

⁶⁰ See Maja Zivanovic, "Russia Backs Serb Party Joining Kosovo Govt," *BalkanInsight*, 14 September 2017, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/putin-s-united-russia-supports-kosovo-serb-party-09-14-2017>.

⁶¹ See Bernd Riegert, "EU looks to contain Russian influence in the Balkans," *Deutsche Welle*, 10 March 2017, at <http://www.dw.com/en/eu-looks-to-contain-russian-influence-in-the-balkans/a-37891857>.

territorial integrity, and even the Muslim member of the country's joint state presidency recently said that Russia does not have a destabilizing policy towards his country.⁶² Similarly, when the current international High Representative in Bosnia, Valentin Inzko, was asked "Do you mean to say that Russians are more constructive than destructive with regards to Bosnia?" his answer was "Absolutely."⁶³

Concrete evidence of Inzko's claims could be seen in a June 2017 communiqué issued by the international body overseeing the Bosnian peace process, the so-called "Peace Implementation Council," in which Moscow joined with Bosnia's other international overseers stating that it

... reaffirmed its unequivocal commitment to the territorial integrity and fundamental structure of BiH as a single, sovereign state comprising two entities. The PIC SB restated that the entities have no right to secede from BiH and only exist legally by virtue of the BiH Constitution.⁶⁴

Where differences have existed between Russia and western countries on Bosnian matters, they have been either over legitimate issues or trivial ones. An example of the former was seen in Russia's rhetorical support for the Bosnian Serbs' plan to hold a referendum on the judiciary,⁶⁵ although most Americans would also take issue with a legal system in which three foreigners sat on the Supreme Court, legal practices such as the retroactive application of laws were in effect, and an Islamist party controlled the attorney-general's office.⁶⁶

Moreover, despite frequent claims that Russia supports "Bosnian Serb separatism," Moscow has in fact consistently supported Bosnia & Herzegovina's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Nevertheless, sloppy research allows this claim to continue to be made. For

⁶² See "Izetbegović: Rusija nema destabilizujuću politiku prema BiH," *N1info.com*, 19 May 2017, at <http://ba.n1info.com/a154923/Vijesti/Vijesti/Izetbegovic-Rusija-nema-destabilizujucu-politiku-prema-BiH.html>.

⁶³ See "Valentin Inzko iz Nju Jorka za 'Avaz': Bosna nije turski, već američki amanet," *Dnevni Avaz* (Sarajevo), 10 November 2017, at <http://avaz.ba/vijesti/intervju/319973/valentin-inzko-iz-njujorka-za-%E2%80%9Eavaz%E2%80%9C-bosna-nije-turski-vec-americki-amanet>.

⁶⁴ Srećko Latal, "Russian Visits Reveal Push for Influence in Bosnia," *BalkanInsight*, 25 April 2018, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/russian-visits-reveal-push-for-influence-in-bosnia-04-25-2018>.

⁶⁵ James Lyon, "Is War About to Break Out in the Balkans?" *Foreign Policy*, 26 October 2015, at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/10/26/war-break-out-balkans-bosnia-republika-srpska-dayton>.

⁶⁶ For instance, in July 2015 the U.S. deputy chief-of-mission in Sarajevo, Nicholas Hill, noted in a commentary "that the state prosecutor's office under the leadership of a Chief Prosecutor largely believed to be heavily influenced by Bosniak political forces . . . the prosecutor's office has too many strong-willed SDA acolytes on its staff." See "Moving Beyond Narrow-Minded Politics," (Nicholas Hill's blog on the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo's website, 8 July 2015, at <http://usembassysarajevo.blogspot.com/>). Along the same lines, a prominent Sarajevo lawyer, Vasvija Vidović, claimed that "There are actors within the SDA who without a doubt control part of the Prosecutor's Office . . . [the SDA] controls the most influential part of the Prosecutor's Office—the department for the Chief Prosecutor and the department for organized crime—the ties between the Prosecutor's Office and the SDA are completely clear and very strong." See Vidović's interview on Bosnian TV's Central Daily *Face TV* with Senad Hadžifejzović, which aired on 12 February 2016, available at <http://www.avaz.ba/clanak/219694/vasvija-vidovic-svima-je-jasno-da-se-protiv-radoncica-vodi-politicki-montiran-proces?url=clanak/219694/vasvija-vidovic-svima-je-jasno-da-se-protiv-radoncica-vodi-politicki-montiran-proces>. Even Muslim media tacitly acknowledge that the BiH Prosecutor's office is controlled by SDA loyalists. Thus, an analysis in *The Bosnia Times* claimed that the BiH Prosecutor's Office has to seek "the blessing" of high-level Muslim officials, and specifically Bakir Izetbegović, to indict Muslims for war crimes. See "Ko su Bakirovi kurbani?", *The Bosnia Times*, 3 August 2015, at <http://thebosniatimes.ba/clanak/994>.

instance, in a recent Minority Staff Report of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, it was claimed that Russia has supported Bosnian Serb efforts to hold a referendum on independence. In fact, the article the report cites refers to Moscow's support for a Bosnian Serb referendum on choosing a holiday.⁶⁷

Moreover, few observers picked up on perhaps the most important development related to Russia-Bosnia relations in years-- that it was precisely in Moscow on 2 March 2017, after meeting with Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov, that Bosnian Serb president Dodik walked back earlier plans to hold an independence referendum. Ironically, then, in this instance, instead of destabilizing Bosnia & Herzegovina, Moscow appears to have played a role in stabilizing it.

In Macedonia, meanwhile, a much-publicized, leaked "intelligence analysis" on Russian activities there was so generic that if nouns and adjectives were redacted from the report it would be impossible to tell whether it was about what the Russians, the Americans, the Brits, the Germans, or the Turks were doing there.⁶⁸ In fact, the degree to which Macedonia factors in to Russian concerns is debatable; according to Julija Brsakoska-Bazerkoska, professor of international relations in Skopje, "Macedonia is not and never was a vital part of Russian foreign policy."⁶⁹

The problematic nature of much of the commentary and analysis on the topic of Macedonia and Russia was most prominently seen in the aftermath of the failed September 2018 referendum on the Macedonian name issue. In the runup to the referendum, German chancellor Angela Merkel, Austrian chancellor Sebastian Kurz, U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg had all traveled to Skopje to encourage Macedonian voters to support the referendum, and both the U.S. Congress and the British Foreign Office provided financial support to bolster a "Yes" vote.⁷⁰ (Interestingly, one would be hard-pressed to find a "Balkan expert" or western news reporter claim that these were examples of "meddling.")

That a substantial majority of Macedonia's population refused to endorse the name change was not surprising. Across the Balkans, decades-old promises that these countries may someday be granted EU membership are no longer taken seriously, and the EU itself has clearly and repeatedly shown that it is incapable of formulating a coherent and credible policy for southeastern Europe. Moreover, in Macedonia itself many citizens probably came to the conclusion that joining NATO and the EU might not be worth the trouble anymore.⁷¹

⁶⁷ See "Putin's Asymmetric Assault on Democracy in Russia and Europe: Implications for U.S. National Security" (Washington, DC: Minority Staff Report Prepared for the Use of the Committee and Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, 10 January 2018), 83.

⁶⁸ A redacted version of the Macedonian intelligence report is available at <https://www.occrp.org/documents/spooksandspin/Document4.pdf>.

⁶⁹ As quoted by Boris Georgievski, "Macedonia: A Pawn in the Russian Geo-Political Game?", *Deutsche Welle*, 26 May 2015, at <http://www.dw.com/en/macedonia-a-pawn-in-the-russian-geopolitical-game/a-18476013>.

⁷⁰ See Simon Tisdall, "Result of Macedonia's Referendum is another victory for Russia," *The Guardian*, 1 October 2018, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/01/result-of-macedonia-referendum-is-another-victory-for-russia>.

⁷¹ For analyses along these lines, see Florian Bieber, "For Macedonia, is Joining the EU and NATO Worth the Trouble?" *Foreign Policy*, 13 September 2018, at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/09/13/for-macedonia-is-joining-nato-and-the-eu-worth-the-trouble/>, and Srecko Latal, "EU's Withdrawal is Creating 'Domino Effect' Across Balkans," *BalkanInsight*, 4 October 2018 at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/eu-s-withdrawal-is-creating-domino>

Predictably, however, in the aftermath of the name-referendum debacle, media reports quickly claimed that the effort had failed due to Russian interference. A typical example of such vacuous reporting claimed that the name-referendum's failure was the result of Russian "disinformation campaigns and "fake news", cyberwarfare and hacking, phoney Facebook and Twitter accounts and secret cash payments . . . [Western countries] were out-thought, outspent and outmanoeuvred by Moscow."⁷² Such simplistic explanations of complex problems, however, only prove a point made by Dimitar Bechev, who has noted that for U.S. and EU diplomats and journalists unwilling to accept the fact that western policies in the Balkans might be misguided, blaming Russia has become "the default option when anything goes wrong in this part of Europe."⁷³

The Balkan "marketplace of ideas" and the overall media and public relations environment in southeastern Europe is another arena in which it is useful to compare the relevant strengths of Russia and the West. While Moscow's media efforts in the region have drawn increasing attention,⁷⁴ serious examination of this topic makes it difficult to sustain the claim that such a modest investment in information operations is particularly influential.

Russia's main media initiative in the region has been opening bureaus of *Sputnik* and *RT* in Belgrade, which are staffed by some thirty people. By way of comparison, the newly-reopened BBC Serbian service bureau has twenty people on its staff, and a reported budget of close to \$800,000 annually,⁷⁵ while the N1 news channel (a CNN-regional-affiliate) has some 200 employees in the region.⁷⁶ Along with the BBC and N1 are numerous other long-established Western media organizations such as *Deutsche Welle*, *Radio-Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, and *Voice of America*, and even the Qatar-based *Al Jazeera* is now a prominent feature of southeastern Europe's media landscape. All told, Western investments in the Balkan media market are vastly greater than Moscow's.

Perhaps most interesting is to compare Moscow's *RT* and *Sputnik* initiatives with what a private Western-owned media organization is doing in the region. United Group, whose majority owner until recently was the American investment fund KKR, is considered "the most powerful telecommunications company in the territory of the former Yugoslavia," and in Serbia itself the United Group is the largest cable and internet services provider.

effect-across-balkans-10-04-2018. It is worth noting that in Latal's useful analysis of the problems confronting southeastern Europe, neither "Russia," "Moscow" nor "Putin" are mentioned.

⁷² See Tisdall, "Result of Macedonia's Referendum is another victory for Russia," op. cit.

⁷³ See Dimitar Bechev, "What is Happening in Macedonia?" *Al Jazeera*, 30 April 2017, at <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/04/happening-macedonia-170430135004624.html>.

⁷⁴ See for instance, Andrew Byrne, "Kremlin-backed media adds to western fears in the Balkans," *The Financial Times*, 19 March 2017, at <https://www.ft.com/content/3d52cb64-0967-11e7-97d1-5e720a26771b>; Jaroslaw Wiśniewski, "Russia has a years-long plot to influence Balkan politics. The U.S. can learn a lot from it." *The Washington Post*, 19 September 2016, at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/09/19/heres-how-russias-trying-to-sway-opinion-in-serbia-and-the-balkans/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.975241a9e61a; Cappello, "Russian Information Operations in the Western Balkans," op. cit.; and Valerie Hopkins, "In Balkans, Britain rejoins battle for influence," *Politico.eu*, 30 March 2018, <https://www.politico.eu/article/balkans-bbc-britain-rejoins-battle-for-influence-russia-soft-power/>

⁷⁵ Hopkins, "In Balkans, Britain rejoins battle for influence," op. cit.

⁷⁶ See Bojan Vučićević, "Growing Influence of Global Media in the Balkans," *MediaCentar_Online* (Sarajevo), 14 July 2016 at <http://www.media.ba/en/mediametar/growing-influence-global-media-balkans>

Particularly active in lobbying for the United Group's entry into the Serbian market was the director of the KKR Global Institute, former CIA director David Petreaus.⁷⁷

Western countries have also been incomparably more active and influential in shaping the legal and regulatory environment in which Balkan media operate. According to the watchdog group Media Observatory, for instance, "*the European Commission enabled changes to the Serbian media laws, and the Serbian government unquestioningly conformed to it* . . . people working at the European Commission Directorate for Enlargement's Unit on Relations with Serbia have adjusted the country's draft laws according to the comments they got on the issue from major powers that threaten to undermine media pluralism in the country."⁷⁸

Given these realities, Balkan public opinion is probably shaped more by Western policies than by Russian propaganda. This is a double-edged sword, however, because Western policy is not always interpreted as benignly as its formulators think it will be. In the U.S. Army's Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) community, for example, there is a saying that "If your policy is broke, PSYOPS can't fix it." In other words, information operations specialists know that most people are intelligent enough to understand when information campaigns conform to the realities of their daily lives and to their interests; just as importantly, most people are also able to distinguish propaganda to the contrary. The political analyst Srdjan Garčević neatly summed up this phenomenon in the case of Serbia when he noted "Any analysis of Russia's popularity in Serbia which does not start from the fact that Russia did not bomb Serbia in '99, is an analysis which ignores the most important reason for Russia's popularity in Serbia. Sometimes it's that simple."

Russia's Weak Economic Hand in the Balkans

Economically, Russia also has a weak position in the Balkans. Apart from some high-profile acquisitions, Russian investment and trade with southeastern Europe is relatively minor. As a recent *Financial Times* editorial noted, "As a source of trade, aid and investment, the EU dwarfs Russia. For all the Russian cultural links, migration flows from the Balkans are almost entirely to the rest of Europe."⁷⁹

The above-mentioned high-profile Russian economic moves in the region have included acquiring a controlling stake in Serbia's state oil company (*Naftna Industrija Srbije*), and providing Serbia an \$800 million credit (at a 4.1% interest rate) in 2013 to modernize its railway system.⁸⁰ In 2005, Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska bought Montenegro's largest industrial concern, *Kombinat Aluminija Podgorica* (KAP) and in Bosnia, Zarubezhneft

⁷⁷ See Bojan Vučičević, "Growing Influence of Global Media in the Balkans," *MediaCentar_Online* (Sarajevo), 14 July 2016 at <http://www.media.ba/en/mediametar/growing-influence-global-media-balkans>.

⁷⁸ See Bojana Barlovac, "Major powers tailored Serbian media-legislation for 'Balkan CNN'," *MediaCentar_Online* (Sarajevo), 12 September 2014, at <http://www.media.ba/en/magazin-novinarstvo/major-powers-tailored-serbian-media-legislation-balkan-cnn>.

⁷⁹ See "Europe and the US face a challenge in the Balkans," *The Financial Times*, 10 March 2017, at <https://www.ft.com/content/ce3bd714-058a-11e7-ace0-1ce02ef0defg>.

⁸⁰ See "Rusi proizili rok za otplatu kredita železnice," *Tanjug*, 6 December 2016, at <http://www.blic.rs/vesti/ekonomija/rusi-proizili-rok-za-otplatu-kredita-zeleznice/2mkb26s>.

acquired an oil refinery in 2007, but both purchases have been bad economic investments. The Russian-owned oil refinery in Bosnia has lost a reported €300 million over the past several years, and Deripaska has been in a legal battle with the Montenegrin government over debts owed to him for almost a decade.⁸¹

In Croatia, Gasprom has expressed an interest in acquiring Croatia's INA energy company from Hungary's MOL, although little progress has been made. Sberbank and VTB own approximately \$1.4 billion of the bankrupt Croatian retail giant Agrokor's debt; however, according to the *Financial Times*, Agrokor's Russian creditor banks have not sought to use the situation to increase Moscow's influence in the country; according to one person involved in Agrokor's restructuring, "this is purely business."⁸²

Apart from these economic moves, Russia has been a relatively minor economic actor in the Balkans. China now accounts for a larger percentage of foreign trade for Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Macedonia than Russia does, and Croatia and Serbia both import more from China than from Russia. EU sanctions imposed on Moscow after the latter's annexation of Crimea have reduced Western Balkan—Russia trade even more. In 2015, Croatian imports from Russia dropped almost 55% over 2014 levels, and exports dropped some 30 percent.⁸³ And despite the fact that Serbia has signed a free-trade agreement with Russia, 62.48 percent of the country's foreign trade is with the EU, compared to 7.9 percent with Russia. The overwhelming percentage of Serbia's foreign investment comes from EU countries. In 2016, for instance, EU states invested a total of USD 1.5 billion in Serbia. Investment from Russia, by comparison, was a relatively meager \$80 million.⁸⁴

The one area in which Russia plays a significant role in Balkan economies is the energy sector, with Russian energy products providing well over half of each country's supply. Nevertheless, Russia's role as an energy supplier has given it little leverage in swaying political and strategic priorities. Consider the following: Russian individuals and businesses account for 22 percent of the tourist arrivals in Montenegro, own almost one third of all businesses in Montenegro and 40 percent of the country's real estate, and Russia has provided one third of Montenegro's foreign direct investment.⁸⁵ Yet despite this significant Russian economic position in Montenegro's economy, it was still unable to prevent the country from joining NATO.

This inability to translate economic investment into political influence perhaps shows why the Kremlin has been relatively disinterested in providing alleged Balkan clients financial support. In the case of Greece, for instance, consider the treatment Greek prime minister Alex Tsipras received on a trip to Moscow in 2015:

⁸¹ On the Russian economic losses in Bosnia, see Mladen Lakić, "Russia Investors Lose Money in Bosnia," *BalkanInsight*, 17 April 2018, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/russia-investments-face-losses-in-bosnia-04-16-2018>.

⁸² See Neil Buckley, "Crisis at Croatia's Agrokor poses threat beyond creditors," *The Financial Times* (London), 12 April 2017, at <https://www.ft.com/content/ad8ecc4e-1edd-11e7-a454-ab04428977f9>.

⁸³ See Sven Mikelic, "Croatia Shrugs Off Slump in Trade with Russia," *BalkanInsight*, 1 December 2016, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatia-russia-trade-unaaffected-by-political-disputes-11-30-2016>.

⁸⁴ See "Hojt Ji: Srbi da budu svesni koliko dajemo mi, koliko oni," *B92.net*, 25 October 2017, at https://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2017&mm=10&dd=25&nav_category=11&nav_id=1318158.

⁸⁵ See Leonid Bershidsky, "Why NATO Wants Montenegro (Not for Its Military Might)," *Bloomberg.com*, 1 May 2017, at <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2017-05-01/why-nato-wants-montenegro-not-for-its-military-might>.

... when [Tsipras] dramatically showed up in Moscow with his begging bowl, hoping Russia would stump up the cash to enable Greece to defy the West's harsh bailout terms, Putin turned away, unwilling to shoulder the burden. Tsipras was forced into a humiliating retreat, thrust right back into the hands of the dreaded Europeans under whose economic tutelage Greece has remained since.⁸⁶

Such miserliness on Putin's part hardly smacks of someone seriously trying to buy friends and influence people. It should also raise question marks about the often-repeated claim that Putin's goal is to break-up the EU. Literally presented on his own doorstep with a strategic opportunity to cleave off an EU member, Putin refused to ante up.

The story is much the same throughout the region. Despite the fact that the Serb entity in Bosnia & Herzegovina, the *Republika Srpska* (RS), is frequently described as Moscow's outpost in the Balkans, for the past decade Putin has shown no willingness to support it financially.⁸⁷

Indeed, a recent article claiming that Putin had thrown the RS "a financial lifeline" shows the extent to which absurd claims are being used in the current propaganda wars.⁸⁸ The "financial lifeline" Putin allegedly gave the RS was in fact part of Moscow's repayment of 152.2 million (USD) of Soviet-era debt to Bosnia & Herzegovina, of which the RS received 29 percent. Thus, the "logic" of the financial lifeline argument is that Moscow gave its alleged antagonists in the Muslim-Croat Federation 108 million (USD) so that it could give its supposed RS clients 44 million—which, in any case, is not much of a lifeline, as it amounts to only ten days worth of the RS's annual budget.⁸⁹ In fact, Moscow's policy here again seems to be fully in line with Western policy. In late 2016, for instance, the International Monetary Fund (which generally follows U.S. government policy preferences) provided Bosnia with a three-year, 563 million (USD) credit agreement, of which the RS was scheduled to receive approximately 185 million.

The Misdirection Strategy: Playing the Russia Card

In sum, viewed from the military, diplomatic and economic perspectives, it is difficult to see Russia as a serious threat to Western interests in southeastern Europe. Indeed, more knowledgeable observers of Russian foreign policy debate the extent to which the Balkans really factor into Russia's foreign policy priorities. Neither the Balkans as a region

⁸⁶ See Marcus Tanner, "Busting Myths About Russia's Balkan Designs," *BalkanInsight*, 27 July 2017, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/busting-myths-about-russia-s-balkan-designs-07-26-2017>.

⁸⁷ See, for instance, the analysis provided by two Banja Luka economists, Zoran Pavlović and Damir Miljević, in the *Radio Slobodna Evropa* program *Most*, entitled "Zašto Putin ne daje pare Dodiku," which aired on 13 August 2017, at <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/putin-dodik-rs-rusija-pare-most/28672867.html>.

Maxim Samorukov makes the same points, noting that "Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik spent two full years between 2014 and 2016 negotiating a Russian credit, which was reported to amount to several hundred million euros. But to no avail." See Samorukov, "Russia's Tactics in the Western Balkans," *Carnegie Europe*, 3 November 2017, at <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/74612>.

⁸⁸ Mujanovic, "Russia's Bosnia Gambit: Intrigue in the Balkans," op. cit.

⁸⁹ See "Rusija plaća sovjetski dug BiH od 125 miliona dolara," *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 21 March 2017, at <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/28383643.html>.

nor any of the countries therein are mentioned in the 10,000 word-plus “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation” released in December 2016.⁹⁰ Nor were the Balkans a topic in Russia’s recent presidential election campaign. As one analysis noted, the extent to which southeastern Europe was present was “almost not at all . . . Analysis of the election programs in Russia, especially those sections related to foreign policy, show that the term “Balkan” cannot be found listed among any of the candidates’ priorities.”⁹¹

At least as of September 2015, Maxim Samorukov of Carnegie’s Moscow Center could argue that:

the Kremlin gave up on the Balkans a long time ago, and cares even less now that it is not concentrating on energy projects in the region . . . it is highly unlikely that Russia will make any big steps in the Western Balkans. All of Russia’s major projects in the region have already run out of steam. Russia is divided from the region by a cordon of EU states, and this small, financially-strapped segment of Europe carries no economic interest for Russia. Furthermore, the local leaders, even in Serbia, do not want to jeopardize their relations with the West for Russia’s sake.⁹²

Along similar lines, Mark Galeotti claimed that there was little evidence in 2017 that Russia was engaged in a “systematic campaign to assert its influence in the region, let alone a successful one.”⁹³

Nevertheless, despite Russia’s overall weak hand in the region, the inflated and overblown accounts of “Russian meddling” in the Balkans are having very significant—and detrimental—policy consequences. For more than a decade, U.S. and European support for democratic institutions and the rule of law in southeastern Europe have been consistently sacrificed for the sake of legitimizing authoritarians who know that by declaring themselves to be “fighting Russian advances” in the Balkans and expressing a few platitudes about democracy and human rights they can—quite literally—receive a get out of jail free card.

Consider, for instance, the case of Milo Djukanović, who has served as Montenegro’s president or prime minister for most of the past 30 years, during which time he succeeded in turning Montenegro into what the political scientist Moises Naim has called a “mafia state.”⁹⁴ In 2015, Djukanović was even named “Man of the Year in Organized Crime” by an international anti-corruption monitoring group. As the award announcement noted, “Nobody outside of Putin has run a state that relies so heavily on corruption, organized crime and dirty politics. It is truly and thoroughly rotten to the core.”⁹⁵

⁹⁰ See “Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,” Moscow: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 1 December 2016, at http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk6BZ2g/content/id/2542248.

⁹¹ See Ljubomir Filiopvic, “Balkans Fail to Feature in Russia’s Election Race,” *BalkanInsight*, 12 January 2018, at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/balkans-fail-to-feature-in-russia-s-election-race-01-11-2018-1>.

⁹² See Maxim Samorukov, “The Montenegro Gambit: NATO, Russia and the Balkans,” *Carnegie Moscow Center Global Think Tank*, 12 September 2015, at <http://carnegie.ru/commentary/62232>.

⁹³ See Galeotti, “Do the Western Balkans face a coming Russian storm?,” op. cit., 2.

⁹⁴ See Moises Naim, “Mafia States: Organized Crime Takes Office,” *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2012).

⁹⁵ See “2015 Man of the Year in Organized Crime: Milo Djukanović,” Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, at <https://www.occrp.org/personoftheyear/2015>.

Despite such a background, the Djukanović regime over the past several years managed to ingratiate itself in Washington and Brussels by playing the Russian card and moving the country towards NATO accession, and Djukanović himself even received an invitation to the White House. Dire warnings about the Russian threat are now a staple feature of public statements by Djukanović and his surrogates; in one recent interview, Djukanović claimed that after Ukraine and Syria “Montenegro has found itself in the line of fire.”⁹⁶

Close observers of the Montenegrin political scene, however, claim that the purpose of such rhetoric is to distract attention from the real problems facing the country. As one of Montenegro’s leading human rights and anti-corruption activists, Vanja Čolović, observed,

Djukanović portrays NATO and Russia as the major issue; and he’s succeeding because looking at Montenegro from London or Washington, of course you’re going to say this is more important than what’s actually happening in the country: the corruption and human rights violations. Montenegro is a haven for criminals and provides them with different kinds of support like money laundering. This is what Djukanović is trying to hide from the West by putting NATO as the major issue.⁹⁷

Of course, this sort of critique does not go unpunished. For people who find Donald Trump’s comments about women unacceptable, Djukanović has taken such misogyny to a whole new level—in 2015 he and his surrogates accused Čolović of having sex with dogs. It bears noting that in the same year the U.S. Embassy in Podgorica named Čolović the “Most Courageous Woman in Montenegro.”

A similar dynamic has taken place in Kosovo, where officials routinely claim any attack against them is “Russian propaganda.” A clear example of this came in April 2018, when American reporters confronted Kosovo president Hashim Thaci with claims lodged by the Council of Europe that Thaci and his colleagues had been involved in war crimes and human organ trafficking. According to the reporters,

Mr. Thaci dismissed the Marty report as part of a Russian-orchestrated program of ‘fake news,’ a farrago of lies and disinformation intended to undermine Western influence in the Balkans. Calling Kosovo ‘the most pro-American country in the world,’ he said that by blackening its name, Russia, a firm ally of Serbia, wanted to damage the United States. He produced no evidence that Russia had a hand in Mr. Marty’s report.⁹⁸

Similarly, in a recent op-ed Kosovo’s former foreign minister, Enver Hodxaj, claimed that

Russia is clearly using Serbia not just to regain a foothold in the Balkans, but also to seek vengeance on NATO, the United States and the West with schemes to restore the regional prominence it lost when the Soviet empire collapsed.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ See Djukanović’s comments in Dusan Stojanovic, “Montenegro leader: Russia wants to destroy EU,” *The Associated Press* (Dateline Podgorica), 14 March 2017, at <https://www.apnews.com/7b98aaea166b4b77ab0145aa91916ab3>.

⁹⁷ See Ellis and Barushka, “A Very Montenegrin Coup,” op. cit.

⁹⁸ See Andrew Higgins and Valerie Hopkins, “Kosovo’s War Ended, But the Shooting Didn’t. A Court Promises Justice,” *The New York Times*, 3 April 2018, at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/03/world/europe/kosovo-war-crimes-trial.html>.

⁹⁹ For an example of this as it pertains to Kosovo, see Enver Hoxhaj, “Kosovo Feels Russia’s Heavy Hand, via Serbia,” *The New York Times*, 13 April 2017, at https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/13/opinion/kosovo-feels-russias-heavy-hand-via-serbia.html?_r=0.

Hodxaj's rhetoric is typical of the propaganda tactics used by a political-criminal elite desperately trying to stay out of prison. Over the past few years the very top levels of Kosovo's political class have been accused of trafficking in women,¹⁰⁰ drug smuggling,¹⁰¹ and, most grotesquely, harvesting human organs.¹⁰² And just as in the case of Montenegro, facing the prospect of imminent prosecution at a newly-established international war crimes court in The Hague, Hodxaj and his colleagues have found it convenient to play the Russia card.

Indeed, across the western Balkans local leaders have learned that by promising to fight "the Russians," Washington will give them a free pass to crack down on the political opposition, independent media, engage in large-scale corruption, etc. As one scholar has described this process:

A new generation of autocrats has been taking over the region, sometimes with the direct complicity of overzealous American policymakers and distracted EU officials . . . Both U.S. and EU policymakers have been willing to turn a blind eye to corruption, which plagues the region's governments, and have either downplayed or ignored the creeping rise of autocratic rulers . . . [who] are well-coached in telling Western diplomats what they want to hear, while blatantly undermining democratic principles and the rule of law at home . . . U.S. and EU policymakers need to ask themselves if oligarchs, autocrats and kleptocrats, who happen to be pro-Western, are any better than Putin—or helpful for the West's long-term interests in the region.¹⁰³

If we do not get wise to this game and continue to view southeastern Europe as yet another front in the New Cold War, and our overarching goal remains "keeping Putin out of the Balkans," we will be sacrificing Balkan democracy and regional stability for another generation. Leaders and groups that believe they enjoy Washington's favor—or believe they know how to manipulate American policymakers—will increasingly press their advantages against both domestic and foreign opponents, resulting in less democracy in-

¹⁰⁰ For articles on the involvement of Kosovo's political-criminal structures in trafficking in women and sex slavery, see Matt MacAllester and Jovo Martinovic, "Kosovo's Mafia: A Hotbed of Human Trafficking," *GlobalPost*, 27 March 2011, at <https://www.pri.org/stories/2011-03-27/kosovos-mafia-hotbed-human-trafficking>; and Sebastian Junger, "Slaves of the Brothel," *Vanity Fair* (July 2002).

¹⁰¹ See Paul Lewis, "Report Identifies Hashim Thaci as 'big fish' in organized crime," *The Guardian* (UK), 24 January 2011, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/24/hashim-thaci-kosovo-organised-crime>; see also a leaked German intelligence report detailing the links between Kosovo political leaders and organized crime, at <https://file.wikileaks.org/file/bnd-kosovo-feb-2005.pdf>.

¹⁰² See Dick Marty, rapporteur, "Inhuman treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo" (Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, 12 December 2010), at http://assembly.coe.int/CommitteeDocs/2010/20101218_ajdoc462010provamended.pdf. For a journalistic investigation into allegations of human organ trafficking in Kosovo, see Carrie Ching, Michael Montgomery, and Brian Pollack, "Searching for Kosovo's Missing," *The Center for Investigative Journalism*, 9 April 2009, at <http://cironline.org/reports/searching-kosovos-missing-2267>; and for a report by the Special Investigative Task Force for Kosovo led by U.S. ambassador Clive Williamson, see <http://sitf.eu/index.php/en/news-other/42-statement-by-the-chief-prosecutor-clint-williamson>. For an account by Carla Del Ponte, the former chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, see Del Ponte (with Chuck Sudetic), *Madam Prosecutor: Confrontations with Humanity's Worst Criminals and the Culture of Impunity* (New York: Other Press, 2008), Chapter 11.

¹⁰³ See Besnik Pula, "The Budding Autocrats of the Balkans," *Foreign Policy*, 15 April 2016, at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/04/15/the-budding-autocrats-of-the-balkans-serbia-macedonia-montenegro>.

ternally and more aggressive policies externally.¹⁰⁴ Meanwhile, leaders and groups that do not enjoy Washington's favor will increasingly feel the need to turn to Russia (or to China in the not-too-distant future) for support. The result will be a self-fulfilling logic in which the Balkan states are *impelled* into more and more hostile, divided camps. Given the right circumstances and taken to the most dangerous extreme, this could result in the kinds of proxy wars we are witnessing in Syria and Ukraine.

A New Approach to Southeastern Europe

As seen above, by almost every measure Euro-Atlantic institutions have achieved dominant positions in southeastern Europe. Nevertheless, these same institutions currently expend more effort parrying relatively weak Russian moves in the Balkans instead of addressing the region's real problems—weak democratic institutions, serious official corruption, and stagnant economies.

In this situation, opening a Balkan front in the New Cold War will likely derail southeastern Europe's already weak democratization processes for another generation. And the dangers resulting from pursuing unremitting conflict with Russia—both for the Balkans and for the broader East-West relationship—are already immense; lest anyone believe this is too alarmist, the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* recently set the Doomsday Clock to its most advance timing (11:58:30) since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Clearly, a new strategic and intellectual approach is needed for the region. In broad outline, this would entail four elements. First, a realistic understanding of Russian intentions and capabilities in southeastern Europe is needed. Unfortunately, most of the public debate about what Russia is allegedly doing in southeastern Europe is based on the work of petty authoritarians and propagandists trying to tilt western policy to their own advantage. In so doing, they are both sabotaging the chances for real reform and democratization in southeastern Europe, and diverting the West's attention from far more dangerous political and security challenges in the region. In October 2018, U.S. Vice-President Mike Pence noted that "what the Russians are doing pales in comparison to what China is doing across [the United States]."¹⁰⁵ Much the same can be said about Russia in the Balkans. As has been argued above, NATO, the EU, and the U.S. have achieved dominant positions in southeastern Europe. Over the past twenty-five years, using literally all of the military, political/diplomatic and economic levers of power at their disposal, these actors have shaped and transformed the political and strategic landscape of the Balkans according to their own preferences. To paraphrase Pence, what Russia has done in the region (or what it has the capability to do) pales in comparison. Moreover, the obsessive and destructive

¹⁰⁴ For an example of this as it pertains to Kosovo, see Enver Hoxhaj, "Kosovo Feels Russia's Heavy Hand, via Serbia," *The New York Times*, 13 April 2017, at https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/13/opinion/kosovo-feels-russias-heavy-hand-via-serbia.html?_r=0. For a Montenegrin example, see Dusan Stojanovic, "Montenegrin leader: Russia wants to destroy the EU," *The Associated Press* (dateline Podgorica), 14 March 2017, at <https://www.apnews.com/7b98aaea166b4b77ab0145aa91916ab3/AP-Interview:-Montenegro-leader:-Russia-wants-to-destroy-EU>.

¹⁰⁵ See "Remarks by Vice President Pence on the Administration's Policy Toward China" (Washington, DC: The White House, 4 October 2018), at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-administrations-policy-toward-china>.

obsession with Russia in the Balkans is distracting us from other, more dangerous challenges the Balkans will pose to Western interests in the future—the increasingly important role of China in southeastern Europe, and the threat that militant Islamism poses to the continent.

Second, we need to understand that what is commonly called “the Russian challenge” in the Balkans (and by extension throughout East-Central Europe) is best met by addressing the internal problems countries have with their democratic institutions and economies.¹⁰⁶ Current U.S. and EU policy, based on looking the other way as authoritarian-criminal elites trample on democratic principles and procedures, is doing more damage to southeastern Europe’s nascent democracies than anything the Kremlin is capable of. As one scholar has argued,

EU members have turned a blind eye to the less appetizing aspects of Balkan politics . . . if there is trouble brewing in the Balkans, it has more to do with the perverse effects of the “stability” provided by incumbent governments than with the risk of all-out conflict. Combined with the weakening pull of the EU and the United States’ relative disengagement, democratic decay and insufficient economic growth add up to a general state of stagnation . . . [The West] should take a look at what has gone wrong in the domestic politics of post-Yugoslav states and apply pressure on leaders to take seriously the rule of law, media freedom, and independent civil society.¹⁰⁷

Being serious about respect for democratic principles and the rule of law, in turn, will smooth the way for the third element required for a new approach to southeastern Europe—providing western Balkan states with clear pathways and timetables for joining the EU. Barring a significant change in outlook in Brussels and other EU capitals, it is difficult to see any of the countries in the region joining before 2030. But keeping the reward of EU accession so many electoral cycles down the political and strategic horizon provides little incentive for would-be reformers to enact the difficult reforms needed for EU accession. Clearly, the easiest way to reduce Russian influence in the Balkans is to make these countries a part of the EU, as quickly as possible.

Fourth and finally, foreign policy establishments in both Washington and European capitals need to transcend the view that dealing with Russia in the Balkans is a zero-sum competition. The goal of U.S., EU and NATO policy should be to make Russia part of the solution to difficulties in the Balkans, rather than insist it is part of the problem. As former NATO supreme commander James Stavridis has argued, the EU and NATO can still usefully cooperate with Russia on a number of issues in southeastern Europe.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, the belief that stability in Europe can be achieved without Russia is a dangerous illusion that could lead to even more dangerous consequences. As Robert Legvold has argued,

¹⁰⁶ An argument made by Thomas E. Graham; see “Toward a New Equilibrium in U.S.-Russian Relations,” *The National Interest*, 1 February 2017, at <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/toward-new-equilibrium-us-russian-relations-19281>.

¹⁰⁷ See Dimitar Bechev, “The West Needs to Call Russia’s Bluff in the Balkans,” 23 February 2017, at <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/the-west-needs-to-call-russia-s-bluff-in-the-balkans>. Mark Galeotti argues along similar lines; see “Do the Western Balkans face a coming Balkan storm?”, *op. cit.*, 20.

¹⁰⁸ See Stavridis, “Avoiding the New Cold War with Russia,” *Foreign Policy*, 20 April 2016, at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/04/20/avoiding-the-new-cold-war-with-russia>.

"European security will remain incomplete and subject to rupture until there is a genuine "common security space" incorporating Russia and its neighbors."¹⁰⁹

There is another important reason to avoid zero-sum competition with Russia in the Balkans. For a host of cultural, historical and religious reasons, many countries and peoples in southeastern Europe (and particularly the Orthodox Christian populations) have positive attitudes and views towards Russia. To insist that such states make an either-or choice between "the West" and Russia will impose yet another damaging political and social cleavage onto polities and societies still recovering from decades of war, sanctions, and economic depression. There is little understanding in western capitals that the states of southeastern Europe are small, poor countries that cannot afford to deny themselves access to potential markets and capital, and do not have the diplomatic luxury of ignoring major international powers.

Fortunately, some experts have shown themselves to be sensitive to this problem. As Sir Alan Thomson, former UK permanent representative to NATO recently noted, "if NATO governments dwell too much on a NATO/Russia competition, they are unlikely to be doing any favours to stability in the region ... NATO's interests ... need to be played in a more nuanced way than a straight black and white West/Russia competition."¹¹⁰ Similarly, Cameron Munter, a former U.S. ambassador to Belgrade has also expressed confidence that the competition between Moscow and Washington in the Balkans need not be zero-sum, for any of the parties involved. As regards Serbia for instance, Munter argues,

Russia is a friend of Serbia, just as the United States is a friend of Serbia. I think it's wise for Serbia to work with both countries, since both are on record as supporting the Serbian goal of joining the EU and contributing to peace and stability in the Balkans the best contribution America can make is by increasing investment, taking advantage of the talent countries like Serbia offer, and the promising sectors of the economy that have enormous potential for success.¹¹¹

Given the current political and media environment in Washington and other Western capitals, there is little reason to believe that politicians and diplomats will have the strategic foresight and political courage to move in these directions. Until such time, unfortunately, we can expect the western Balkans drift and descent into illiberal democracy to continue.

¹⁰⁹ See Robert Legvold, "Include Russia and its Neighbors: How to Move Toward a Common Security Space" in *A New European Order?* (Brussels Forum Paper Series, March 2010), 5.

¹¹⁰ See Thomson's comments in "The UK and the Future of the Western Balkans" (London: House of Lords, Select Committee on International Relations, HL Paper 53, 10 January 2018), paragraph 81.

¹¹¹ See Cameron Munter's interview with the *Tanjug* news agency, "Cameron Munter Discusses Western Balkans," *EastWest.ngo*, at <https://www.eastwest.ngo/idea/cameron-munter-discusses-western-balkans>.

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Nord Stream 2
Current State of the Project and its implications
for European Energy Security

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History of the Project

Nord Stream 2 is a planned pipeline through the Baltic Sea within the project Nord Stream. The pipeline Nord Stream 2 would flank the already existing Nord Stream 1 in transporting natural gas over 1,220 km from the large reserves in North-Western Russia to the German Baltic coast. In particular, Nord Stream 2 is expected to link Ust Luga in Russia with Greifswald in Germany. The project is planned to double the existing Nord Stream 1 pipeline, with the total volume of both ventures being a maximum of 110 bcm per year. Indeed, Nord Stream 2 is expected to transport annually 55 billion cubic metres (bcm), which is the same amount of Nord Stream 1.

The history of Nord Stream project began in 1997, when the Finnish-Russian consortium "North Transgas Oy" was established to explore the possibilities of transporting gas from Russia to Europe. In 1999 the consortium concluded the exploration stating that an offshore route through the Baltic Sea is the best option from economic, technical and environmental points of view. Then, in 2000 the EU recognized the need for a new pipeline. In 2005, the North Stream consortium was formed with the participation of Gazprom, the German companies Wintershall and E.ON Ruhrgas. Later two other companies joined the consortium: the Dutch company Gasunie and the French GDF SUEZ SA. The construction of the lines of Nord Stream 1 lasted from April 2010 until October 2012, when Line 2 of Nord Stream 1 officially became operational.

In June 2015, Nord Stream 2 was officially announced with the signing of a memorandum and the establishment of the company Nord Stream 2 AG. The financing agreement between Gazprom, the French company ENGIE, the Austrian OMV, the British-Dutch Shell and the German Uniper and Wintershall was confirmed in April 2017. The cost of the project is estimated to be €9,5 billion, but some documents reported that it will cost €9,8 or even more if there will be any changes in the project, as in the event of the modification of

the expected route.¹ Late 2019 is the target date set for completion of Nord Stream 2, but there are already some doubts regarding the actual construction times.² Furthermore, it should be noted, that the cost of Nord Stream is only the cost of the offshore pipeline and it excludes for example the cost of the EUGAL pipeline, which has to be built in order to transport the gas through Germany.³

The landfall of Nord Stream in Germany. Current State of the Project in March 2019.



Photo credit: www.nord-stream.com.

The creation of Nord Stream 2 AG immediately ran into some problems, because the Polish Office of Competition and Consumer Protection forced a change in the participation quotas in the project. In fact, Gazprom had to bear the entire financial cost of the project and by doing this Gazprom remained the sole shareholder of Nord Stream 2 AG. The signed agreement of 2017 provided loans from the European companies interested in the project to Nord Stream 2 AG.

The transported gas of Nord Stream 2 is expected to be transferred to other European states through Germany. Nord Stream 2 is being promoted as a solution to the EU's growing gas demand in the near future and the decreasing domestic production of the blue fuel in the

¹ Alan Riley, "Nord Stream 2: Understanding the Potential Consequences," Atlantic Council, June 2018, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Nord_Stream_2_interactive.pdf.

² "Kommersant": Nie uda się zapętnić Nord Stream 2 do końca 2019 roku," GazetaPrawna.pl, last modified March 20, 2018, <https://serwisy.gazetaprawna.pl/energetyka/artykuly/1112224,nord-stream-2-opozniony.html>.

³ Alan Riley, "Nord Stream 2: Understanding the Potential Consequences."

EU countries and in Norway. In addition, the advocates of Nord Stream 2 justify the project by saying that Nord Stream is the best way to transport gas to Europe since it is the shorter and the cheapest one. Another argument used by the supporters of Nord Stream is that a low-emission transition can only be achieved with natural gas. Finally, they are convinced that Nord Stream 2 would definitively guarantee the security of energy supply for Europe.

In January 2018 Nord Stream 2 AG received permits from the Russian Environmental Authority. In the first months of 2018 Germany gave all the needed permits to build the pipeline in its territorial waters and in the German Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). In April 2018 also Finland gave a full set of permits for the construction of the 374-kilometre Finnish section of the pipeline. On 15 May 2018 Nord Stream 2 AG started offshore preparatory works for the pipe-laying in the Bay of Greifswald. In June 2018, Nord Stream 2 AG received permits from Sweden for the approximately 510-kilometres to build in the Swedish EEZ and from Russia by the Russian Ministry of Construction and Utilities. In August 2018 Russia gave all the necessary permits, then in September work started in Finland and in October in German territorial waters. On 6 November, Nord Stream 2 AG announced that the project was progressing as planned, and to date over 200 kilometers of pipeline have been laid in the Baltic Sea.⁴ The last permit needed for the completion of the pipeline was the Danish one, which was finally given on the 30th October 2019. As reported by the official sources, today: "more than 2,100 km of the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline have been laid. Pipelay has been completed in Russian, Finnish and Swedish waters, and for the most part in German waters. The construction of both landfall facilities in Russia and Germany is nearing completion."⁵

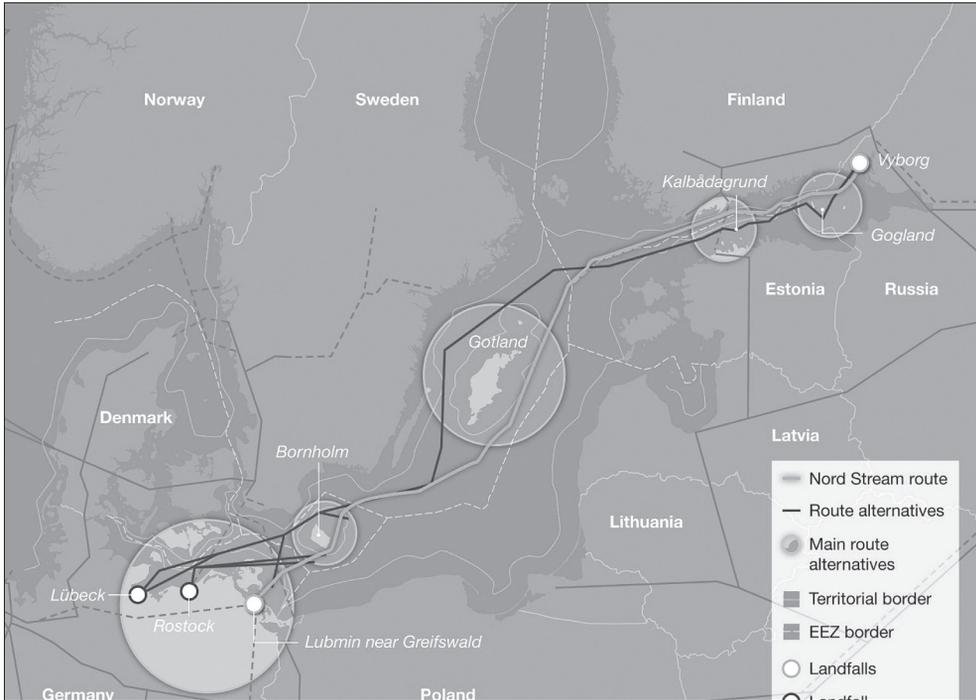


Photo credit: sputniknews.com

⁴ "Nord Stream 2 Has Laid over 200 Kilometres of Pipeline," Nord Stream 2, November 6, 2018, <https://www.nord-stream2.com/media-info/news-events/nord-stream-2-has-laid-over-200-kilometres-of-pipeline-113/>.

⁵ "Nord Stream 2 Granted a Construction Permit by Denmark," Nord Stream 2, October 30, 2019, <https://www.nord-stream2.com/media-info/news-events/nord-stream-2-granted-a-construction-permit-by-denmark-139/>.

The alternative routes for Nord Stream 2.



WPhoto credit: www.nord-stream.com

Nord Stream 2 and Denmark

Denmark was the last country to authorize the laydown of Nord Stream 2 in its continental shelf area. Before, in August Nord Stream 2 AG applied for an alternative to the initially planned route, bypassing Danish territorial waters and passing only through the Danish EEZ north of Bornholm, while the original route should have passed to the south of Bornholm, along the same route of Nord Stream 1. However, this possibility was also perplexing for Copenhagen. The biggest problem for Nord Stream 2 appeared at the moment when, on the 30th November 2017, Denmark changed the law regarding the laying of pipelines in the territorial waters deciding that this kind of infrastructure has to be compatible with Denmark's foreign and security policy interests. At this time the majority of parties in Danish Parliament oppose Nord Stream 2, but the Danish government does not want to take sole responsibility for taking such an important decision that divides two of the most important allies of Denmark, which are Germany and the US.⁶ Danish ex-Prime Minister

⁶ Agata Łoskot-Strachota, Rafał Bajczuk, Szymon Kardas, "Nord Stream 2 divides the West," June 18, 2018, Centre for Eastern Studies, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2018-06-18/nord-stream-2-divides-west>.

Lars Rasmussen, after a meeting with the prime minister of Ukraine, expressed the will of Denmark for a decision to be made at the European level.⁷ However, a decision at European level still seems unlikely due to the complex situation within the EU members and the different interests.

Finally, on 30 October 2019 Denmark gave Nord Stream 2 AG a permit to construct its planned pipeline system in the Danish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) south-east of Bornholm. The chosen route was the last one proposed by the Danish government. Indeed, the Danish Energy Agency considers this route as the best one, because it is the shortest one and it is the less dangerous in environmental terms.⁸ Probably, it is not by chance that the decision of the Danish government to permit the construction of Nord Stream 2 came just few days after the Danish decision to approve the offshore part of the Baltic Pipe⁹ project. Arguably, the new Danish center-left government headed by Mette Frederiksen chose to act in the most neutral way possible.

Nord Stream 2 and the US

Another obstacle in the realization of the pipeline is represented by the United States' sanctions on Russia. The US has opposed Nord Stream since it was announced in 2015, and the opposition has become stronger with Donald Trump's administration. The reasons why the US opposes Nord Stream 2 are basically two: in the first place the Americans perceive the project as a threat to European Energy Security, because it goes against the policy of diversification of the gas supply and could represent a serious danger for the Central and East European countries, mainly for Ukraine. The second reason is related to the Trump administration's energy policy goal, which is to increase exports of American LNG to Europe.¹⁰ This strategy is warmly approved by Poland, Lithuania, Croatia, and Greece, which are building new LNG terminals in order to decrease their dependence on the Russian gas supply. The opposition of the US is becoming a real danger, because of the implementation of the so-called CAATSA, the sanctions package imposed on Russia in 2017. This package affects the Russian energy sector and existing or planned export pipelines from Russia and gives the US president the right to impose decisions. The risk is to see the American sanctions imposed on the European companies, which are working on the pipeline. The American attitude towards Nord Stream was probably the main reason for Berlin's change of rhetoric regarding the project in 2017-2018. Indeed, Germany started to build an LNG terminal and began to care more about the Ukrainian transit, trying to be a mediator between Kiev and Moscow, guaranteeing that Germany will not allow the

⁷ Andrzej Kublik, "Dania blokuje Nord Stream 2 i chce decyzję całej Unii w sprawie rosyjskiej rury," *Wyborcza.pl*, June 27, 2018, <http://wyborcza.pl/7,155287,23599065,dania-chce-decyzji-ue-w-sprawie-nord-stream-2-a-bruksela-grozi.html>.

⁸ Barbara Bodalska, "Dania zgodziła się na budowę Nord Stream 2," *Euractiv.pl*, October 31, 2019, <https://www.euractiv.pl/section/energia-i-srodowisko/news/dania-zgodzila-sie-na-budowe-nord-stream-2/>.

⁹ Baltic Pipe is a pipeline project between Norway and Poland, which passes through Denmark and should be operational in 2022. The project is recognized as "a project of common interest of the EU" and it is viewed as fundamental for the diversification of gas suppliers in many Central-Eastern European countries.

¹⁰ Agata Łoskot-Strachota, Rafał Bajczuk, Szymon Kardaś, "Nord Stream 2 divides the West."

completion of Nord Stream 2 if the Ukrainian gas transit will not be renewed.¹¹ It remains to be seen whether Germany will succeed in its attempt. Meanwhile the American threats are well received in Poland, where Prime Minister Morawiecki has said:

*I welcome today's statement of the State Department on sanctions that may be encountered by companies involved in the Nord Stream II project. It is washing up European energy security, leading to the monopolization of gas supplies and threatening Ukraine. It should be detained.*¹²

It remains disputable whether the US will impose sanctions on the companies involved in the construction of the pipeline. If on one hand the American Congress seems ready to vote in favor with the support of the majority of Democrats and Republicans of imposing sanctions on the ships laying the pipeline in the framework of the law for the protection of the European Energy Security, on the other hand the unpredictability of Donald Trump must always be taken into consideration. In addition, the rules concerning the CAATSA package have been updated under pressure from Germany and Jean-Claude Juncker and now each decision has to be taken after consultations with the allies of the US, Germany included.¹³

Nord Stream 2 and the EU

In Europe the opponents of Nord Stream 2 put their hopes on EU law. Indeed, if the Third Energy Package would be applied to Nord Stream 2, it would bring many troubles concerning even the realization of the project. The Polish Institute of Foreign Affairs mentions also the non-binding so-called IGA decision of the European Parliament and Council, which clearly states that the "proper functioning of the internal energy market requires that the energy imported into the Union be fully governed by the rules establishing the internal energy market."¹⁴ This idea is also supported by the Commission, which in 2016 stated that: "each of the potential new infrastructures can have a systemic impact on the entire European Union energy market. It is therefore essential that they are compatible with EU law."¹⁵ In view of this, the European Commission becomes an important actor that could solve these conflicts. In June 2017 it launched the process to obtain a mandate from the member states to negotiate an international agreement with Russia on the legal regime

¹¹ "Merkel: No Nord Stream 2 without guarantee for Ukraine's gas transit role," Euractiv.com, April 10, 2018, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/europe-s-east/news/merkel-no-nord-stream-2-without-guarantee-for-ukraines-gas-transit-role/>.

¹² "Premier Morawiecki: Nord Stream 2 podmywa europejskie bezpieczeństwo energetyczne," TVP Info, March 21, 2018, <https://www.tvp.info/36466760/premier-morawiecki-nord-stream-2-podmywa-europejskie-bezpieczenstwo-energetyczne>.

¹³ Andrzej Kublik, "Blżej sankcji USA za budowę Nord Stream 2," Euractiv.pl, August 2, 2019, <https://www.euractiv.pl/section/gospodarka/news/blizej-sankcji-usa-za-budowe-nord-stream-2/>.

¹⁴ Aleksandra Gawlikowska-Fyk, Marcin Terlikowski, Bartosz Wiśniewski, Szymon Zaręba, "Nord Stream 2: Inconvenient Questions," The Polish Institute of International Affairs, July 2018, <http://www.pism.pl/Publikacje/PISM-Policy-Paper-no-165>.

¹⁵ Aleksandra Gawlikowska-Fyk, Marcin Terlikowski, Bartosz Wiśniewski, Szymon Zaręba, "Nord Stream 2: Inconvenient Questions."

concerning the pipeline. The attempt was to make Nord Stream 2 subject to EU energy law in the broadest scope possible. This attempt was protested by many European states, including Germany, which questioned the European Commission's competence regarding the project. In particular, the Council Legal Service disagreed with the European Commission stating that there is no legal basis for granting a negotiating mandate to the European Commission.¹⁶ In November 2017 the European Commission started a legislative process to amend the gas directive adopted in 2009, which was supported by the European Parliament. Indeed, there were many doubts as to whether the new infrastructure is subject to EU law, and more specifically to the established rules of the 2009/73/EC Directive on natural gas. In addition, some legal proceedings of the European Court of Justice indicated that the rules laid down in specific EU legislation are to be implemented in the EEZ of the member states concerned, and not only in their territorial waters. From the Russian perspective, the possibility of seeing the implementation of the EU law on gas to Nord Stream 2 is problematic, and both Gazprom and the Russian Government oppose any attempt to ensure the compliance of Nord Stream 2 with EU energy law.¹⁷

The European Commission has raised this issue numerous times, arguing that the Gas Directive should be fully applicable, and that Nord Stream 2 cannot be constructed in a "legal void" or in a context in which different parts of the pipeline would be governed by different legal regimes.¹⁸ Applying the Gas Directive to Nord Stream 2 would mean that Gazprom would have to comply with provisions for ownership unbundling, third-party access and non-discrimination in tariff setting. At present Nord Stream 2 does not comply with these provisions. To meet these requirements, Nord Stream 2 would have to offer some of the gas it delivers each year to third parties and to comply with the provision that the pipeline owner and the gas supplier cannot be the same legal entity. In particular, Gazprom, being the owner of the pipeline, could use 50% of the pipeline's transfer capacity. The European Commission claims that these rules are fully applicable to new gas infrastructure entering the internal energy market of the EU through member state waters. Furthermore, the Commission holds that the project may go against the Energy Security Strategy and the goals of the recently established European Energy Union. According to Commission President Juncker, Nord Stream 2 raises questions that go beyond legal matters, since it could not give access to a new source of supply or a new supplier and by doing this alter the EU's gas market.¹⁹

¹⁶ Szymon Kardaś, "Projekt nowelizacji dyrektywy gazowej przyjęty przez Radę UE," February 13, 2019, Centre for Eastern Studies, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/node/27054>.

¹⁷ Aleksandra Gawlikowska-Fyk, Marcin Terlikowski, Bartosz Wiśniewski, Szymon Zaręba, "Nord Stream 2: Inconvenient Questions."

¹⁸ Dimitar Lilkov, Roland Freudenstein, "The Case Against Nord Stream 2," April 2018, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, <https://www.martenscentre.eu/publications/european-energy-security-focus-case-against-nord-stream-2>.

¹⁹ Dimitar Lilkov, Roland Freudenstein, "The Case Against Nord Stream 2."

Amendments to the European Gas Directive

There was, therefore, the need to amend the Directive of 2009 in order to remove all doubts regarding its implementation. This process, after many obstacles put in place by Germany and Austria that in fact delayed works on the Directive, led to a meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives which was held on 8 February 2019. The decision taken at this meeting was to transfer the draft amendments to the gas directive to further legislative work. The Gas Directive, amended by France and Germany, provide for a solution that makes it uncertain to fully submit the Nord Stream pipeline to the principles of EU energy law.²⁰ In light of the draft amendment, if a pipeline is completed before the entry into force of the Directive, that is before the 23rd May 2019, each EU country obtains the right to grant unilateral exemptions from many rules of EU law with absence of clarity as to the European Commission's control. In the case of Nord Stream 2, where the entry into force of the Directive happened before the completion of the pipeline, the principles of exploiting new infrastructure become de facto subject to bilateral Russian-German arrangements limited by the control powers of the European Commission granted in the Directive.²¹ However, with this amended Directive the role of the European Commission can only affect the works in German territorial waters and on the German coast, while Danish territorial waters would not be subject to this Directive. This excludes other member states and assign to Germany all the tasks related to the negotiations with Russia, but the European Commission could stop negotiations between Russia and Germany if: 1) such negotiations were contrary to EU Law; 2) would have a detrimental effect on the functioning of the internal market, competition or security of supply of a Member State or of the EU; 3) negotiations would undermine the objectives of the ongoing inter-governmental negotiations conducted in parallel by the EU; or 4) negotiations would be discriminatory. In addition, the Directive gives the European Commission the opportunity to propose negotiating directives and requests to include specific clauses in contracts concluded to ensure compliance with EU law.

Diversification Vs Non-Discrimination

Nord Stream 2 AG and Gazprom have reacted immediately saying that the European directive damages the company's interests. In July has elapsed the deadline Nord Stream 2 gave to the European Commission, in order to settle the dispute.²² Immediately, in April 2019, the company sent a letter to the president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, in which was basically stated that the European Union is treating the new pipeline with a discriminatory legislation, since Nord Stream 2 would be the only pipeline that cannot benefit from the derogation mentioned in the Directive as it would be com-

²⁰ Szymon Kardaś, "Projekt nowelizacji dyrektywy gazowej przyjęty przez Radę UE."

²¹ "Gas directive: Council agrees negotiating mandate," February 8, 2019, European Commission, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/02/08/gas-directive-council-agrees-negotiating-mandate/>.

²² Georgi Gotev, "Nord Stream 2, EU drifting towards legal arbitration," Euractiv.com, July 12, 2019, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/nord-stream-2-eu-heading-towards-legal-arbitration/>.

pleted after the 23rd May 2019, the date in which the new amendments entered into force. At the end of the letter, the company mentioned the possibility of some legal arbitrations.²³

One possible international arbitration could be the one based on the Energy Charter Treaty,²⁴ which would be the riskiest one for both parts since the court can impose fines of billions of Euros. At the end of September 2019, Nord Stream 2 AG eventually decided to appeal to this court. Moreover, In July 2019, Nord Stream 2 AG appealed to the Court of Justice of the European Union, which can impose changes to the European legislation. It worth to mention that legal arbitrations against the "discriminatory" European legislation are not an innovation, given that Russia already in 2018 appealed without success to the World Trade Organization.²⁵

The results of all these trials are still uncertain, especially the one based on the Energy Charter Treaty. In the meantime, Germany is trying to take advantage of the provisions of the European Directive changing the law governing the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. What the German parliamentary majority is now trying to do, is to change the European legislation, which must be accepted by each member state, modifying one fundamental provision. The majority coalition is trying, indeed, to exempt from the European antitrust laws also those pipelines that were laid in German territorial waters before the Directive was introduced, not taking into consideration the entire pipeline route.²⁶ It remains to be seen, whether Germany will succeed with its attempt and what will be the results of the ongoing arbitration proceedings.

Possible outcomes

If on one hand it is worth noting that there are even some voices in Germany which are against Nord Stream 2, as the Leader of the European People's Party Manfred Weber, the amendments to this Directive put in doubt the willingness of Germany to act as a mediator between Moscow and Kiev and reminds everyone that eventually Germany wants to complete this project.²⁷ The support for the completion of the pipeline is also confirmed by the speeches of Chancellor Angela Merkel, who during the Munich Conference warned about the risk of seeing a rapid rapprochement between Russia and China, which includes a nar-

²³ Nord Stream 2 AG, Letter to the President of the European Commission Mr. Jean-Claude Jucker, April 12, 2019, <https://www.euractiv.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/07/Letter-CEO-Nord-Stream-to-Juncker.pdf>.

²⁴ The Energy Charter Treaty is document that regulates the energy trade and investments in Europe. It was signed in 1991 by 46 countries. The basic goal of the Treaty was the settlement of the disputes between the Western European energy companies and their counterparts in the Post-Soviet space. Russia signed it, but it has not ratified the document until now. Nevertheless, a legal arbitration is possible since the company Nord Stream 2 AG is registered in Switzerland, which is a full member of the Charter.

²⁵ Michał Strzałkowski, "Spółka Nord Stream 2 znów pozwała UE ws. dyrektywy gazowej," Euractiv.pl, September 12, 2019, <https://www.euractiv.pl/section/polityka-zagraniczna-ue/news/spolka-nord-stream-2-znow-pozwala-ue-ws-dyrektywy-gazowej/>.

²⁶ Andrzej Kublik, "Niemcy chcą zwolnić Nord Stream 2 z unijnych przepisów," Euractiv.pl, November 12, 2019, <https://www.euractiv.pl/section/energia-i-srodowisko/news/niemcy-chca-zwolnic-nord-stream-2-z-unijnych-przepisow/>.

²⁷ Szymon Kardaś, "Projekt nowelizacji dyrektywy gazowej przyjęty przez Radę UE."

row collaboration in the energy sector, that goes to the detriment of European countries. She also stated that:

...no one wants to be unilaterally dependent on Russia, but if we received Russian gas during the Cold War, not only in the DDR where I lived but also in West Germany, then I do not see why the times and the situation today should be so much worse that we can no longer say that Russia remains a partner.²⁸

US Vice President Mike Pence did not hesitate to respond to the German Chancellor, and just after her speech he said:

The United States commends all our European partners who have taken a strong stand against Nord Stream 2 and we recommend others to do the same.²⁹

German gas system.



Photo credit: www.euroactive.com.

The threats posed by the US are perceived in Germany as proof of the European need to become more independent from Washington, at least in the energy sphere. Not by chance in June 2017 the former German Minister of Foreign Affairs and the former Chancellor of Austria in a letter warned against: "US interference in the EU's energy security."³⁰

²⁸ "Merkel backs Nord Stream 2 hitting out at pipeline's critics," YouTube video, RT, February 16, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnXbcYKEdYk>.

²⁹ "Merkel backs Nord Stream 2 hitting out at pipeline's critics," YouTube video.

³⁰ Aleksandra Gawlikowska-Fyk, Marcin Terlikowski, Bartosz Wiśniewski, Szymon Zaręba, "Nord Stream 2: Inconvenient Questions."

The outcome of all these negotiations could be similar to that regarding the OPAL pipeline, which connects Nord Stream 1 to the existing grid in Germany and the Czech Republic. This case shows how difficult it is to implement EU law if the gas is imported through a pipeline that does not operate in line with EU gas rules. In fact, in OPAL's case, Gazprom has a monopoly on gas transited through Nord Stream 1 and requested the Commission exempt it from the EU's Third Energy Package with respect to OPAL, in accordance with the EU gas directive. Upon receiving the exemption, which had been limited only to a certain portion of the pipeline's capacity, Gazprom claimed that the remaining portion was left unused because of a lack of interest among its competitors. This came as no surprise, since there was no other way to feed the pipeline with gas from any other source than Nord Stream 1. Gazprom was then allowed to "access" the remaining "under-utilized" capacity by the European Commission.³¹ In 2017 a Polish diplomatic effort sought to annul the decision of the European Commission by appealing to the European Court of Justice, but the Court dismissed the complaint.³²

If Nord Stream 2 faces serious troubles, as it could under the obligation to use no more than the 50% of the pipeline's capability or even the non-realization of the whole project, Gazprom will have to seek other routes for the gas, as the Russian journal *Kommersant* has reported. Indeed, to avoid the renewal of the contract with Ukraine about transit costs or at least to minimize the amount of gas that would transit through Central Europe, the Turk Stream project might be resumed. In fact, with Turk Stream Russian gas would enter into European Union through Turkey and there would be no difficulties under EU law.³³ Another possibility if the European Commission implements EU law on Nord Stream 2 would be the end of Gazprom's monopoly over external Russian pipelines. The fact should also be considered that there are other big energy Russian companies that would be interested in selling gas abroad. In 2013 Russia liberalized the rules concerning the trade of LNG and since that time Novatek and Rosneft started to sell LNG in other countries. Anyhow, Rosneft did not get a permit to sell gas to China through the pipeline "Power of Siberia" built by Gazprom. Surely Russia would not be happy to respect EU law concerning a pipeline built by a company (Nord Stream 2 AG) which belongs 100% to Gazprom. On one hand the monopoly of Gazprom on external Russian pipelines seems to be almost untouchable, on the other hand Rosneft and Novatek are also strictly connected with the Kremlin. As a matter of fact, Rosneft is mostly controlled by Rosneftegaz, which is controlled by the state, and the Head of the Directors' Board of the company is Gerhard Schroeder, the ex-German chancellor who had been directly involved in the Nord Stream consortium.³⁴

³¹ Aleksandra Gawlikowska-Fyk, Marcin Terlikowski, Bartosz Wiśniewski, Szymon Zaręba, "Nord Stream 2: Inconvenient Questions."

³² "Sąd UE oddalił wniosek Polski i PGNiG ws. gazociągu Opal," TVP Info, July 22, 2017, <https://www.tvp.info/33317158/sad-ue-oddalil-wniosek-polski-i-pgnig-ws-gazociagu-opal>.

³³ "Decyzja ws. dyrektywy gazowej, to potężny cios w Nord Stream 2. Przyznają to nawet rosyjskie media." *Niezależna.pl*, February 18, 2019, <https://niezalezna.pl/259319-decyzja-ws-dyrektywy-gazowej-to-potezny-cios-w-nord-stream-2-przyznaja-to-nawet-rosyjskie-media>.

³⁴ Bartosz Bieliszczuk, "Konkurencja pod kontrolą: perspektywa zastosowania prawa UE wobec Nord Stream 2," *The Polish Institute of International Affairs*, December 6, 2017, <http://www.pism.pl/publikacje/biuletyn/nr-122-1564>.

Implications of Nord Stream 2 for European Energy Security

Some positive aspects of Nord Stream 2 is presented as the solution to compensate for decreasing domestic gas production and fill a part of the growing demand for imported gas. Moreover, Nord Stream 2 would represent an additional option for importing gas, and this would make the EU's gas supply more robust and safer.

The idea that Europe will need more gas in the next years is doubtful, since even the EU Reference Scenario 2016 says that Europe's gas demand is expected to remain stable over the coming 20 years. On the other side, the fact that domestic production of gas in Europe is decreasing is irreproachable. In addition, the supporters of Nord Stream 2 argue that gas exports from Northern Africa will be increasingly constrained by its own consumption while only small amount of gas will go to Europe from the Caspian region.

The advocates of Nord Stream 2 also justify the project saying that the LNG gas market is more oriented towards Asia, where little pipeline capacity exists, and is subject to cyclical market shifts. Instead of this, Nord Stream 2 will offer capacities to compensate lower LNG availability in Europe and will cover the gap of 120 bcm caused by the decreasing European domestic production. Another reason in favor of Nord Stream 2 is the economic one: the Russian reserves are among the most cost-effective sources from which Europe can be supplied with gas and this would mean for some European countries lower prices for gas already in 2020.³⁵

The opponents respond to these arguments saying that even in 2017, when the import of gas from Russia to EU peaked, only 62% of the existing pipelines' capacity has been used.³⁶ Moreover, they raise the question related to the importance of LNG, since thanks to imports by European countries from mainly the US and Qatar, all gas prices were lowered.

Energy as a tool of Russian Foreign Policy

The fact that energy can be used as a means of coercion is very well known. The Swedish Research Agency reported that the majority of the 55 supply interruptions to Russia's near abroad between 1991 and 2006 were driven by political or economic factors. The dominant position of Gazprom, which has a monopoly over all the pipelines that link Russia to Europe, has been recognized as a problem also by the European Commission in 2015 and in relation to this the Commission started proceedings against the Russian company.³⁷ In fact, the Statement of Objections sent by the European Commissioner for Competition notes that the three Baltic States, Poland and Bulgaria have to pay unfairly high prices. From the perspective of the Central European Countries, with Nord Stream 2 Russia will achieve two strategic goals which are the limitation of the Ukrainian role in talks with Gazprom and

³⁵ "Nord Stream 2: New Pipeline for Europe's Energy Future," Nord Stream 2, April 2018, <https://www.nord-stream2.com/en/pdf/document/4/>.

³⁶ Aleksandra Gawlikowska-Fyk, Marcin Terlikowski, Bartosz Wiśniewski, Szymon Zaręba, "Nord Stream 2: Inconvenient Questions."

³⁷ Dimitar Lilkov, Roland Freudenstein, "The Case Against Nord Stream 2."

the strengthening of political and economic German-Russian ties.³⁸ The Russian action is perfectly in line with the policy of “divide et impera” from the Central and Eastern European point of view. These countries argue, that despite the hopes of Western countries, which had believed in a normalization of relations with Russia through commerce, Russia will not change the attitudes towards neighboring countries thanks to European-Russian relations’ normalization. In fact, even the completion of Nord Stream 1 did not prevent Russia from the aggression on Ukraine. In addition, as the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM) pointed out, Nord Stream would imply an increasing Russian presence in the Baltic sea through the creation of a zone with privileged interests. In fact, there is the risk of transforming Nord Stream 2 into a game-changer in a number of crisis scenarios.³⁹

European gas need.

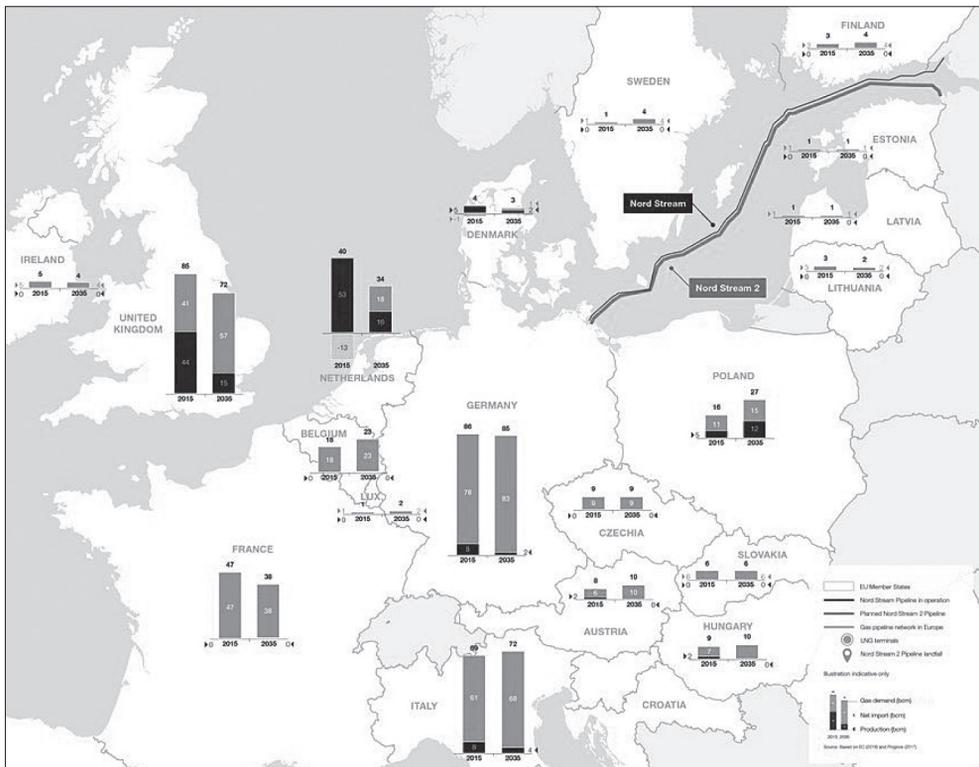


Photo credit: www.nord-stream.com.

³⁸ Aleksandra Gawlikowska-Fyk, Marcin Terlikowski, Bartosz Wiśniewski, Szymon Zareba, "Nord Stream 2: Inconvenient Questions."

³⁹ Aleksandra Gawlikowska-Fyk, Marcin Terlikowski, Bartosz Wiśniewski, Szymon Zareba, "Nord Stream 2: Inconvenient Questions."

Increasing Dependence on Russian Gas

Russia is already the most important supplier of gas to European Union, and surely with Nord Stream 2 this position would be strengthened. Today dependence on Russian gas is a serious problem in the eastern countries of the EU, since there are 8 countries that receive more than 80% of their annual consumption of gas from Russia. These countries are Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia. It is not by chance that at least 6 of these countries are strongly against Nord Stream 2. Indeed, the consequence of the construction of the pipeline could be, among others, higher gas prices in this region. This would happen because Gazprom would transport Russian gas into this area not only from East, but also from the West, since Germany and Austria are the staunchest supporters of having Russian gas in their countries. Moreover, Gazprom could cease to deliver gas through Ukraine, and this could force East European countries to buy Russian gas paying more for the longer transport which would have to go through the Baltic Sea and Germany at least.⁴⁰

Table 1.
Major Russian export pipelines to Europe

Pipeline project	Ukrainian gas network to the EU	Nord Stream 1 (to Germany)	Yamal pipeline (via Belarus to Poland)	Blue Stream (to Turkey)	Nord Stream 2 (planned)	TurkStream (planned)	South Stream (cancelled)
Maximum capacity (per annum)	143 bcm	55 bcm	32.9 bcm	16 bcm	55 bcm	31.5 bcm	63 bcm

Nord Stream 2 would not help to diversify the external suppliers of gas to the EU, since the amount of Russian gas would increase. From the legal perspective this project is not in line with the Energy Security Strategy of 2014 and the established European Energy Union. If Nord Stream 2 will be completed, it will reduce route diversity.⁴¹ Europe probably would be left with the Yamal pipeline carrying about 30 bcm of Russian gas into Poland and Nord Stream 1 and 2 will transport 110 bcm, excluding completely transit across Ukraine and leaving just two routes instead of today's four. The concentration of routes in one place is dangerous, since an accident can block the whole supply even to an entire country.⁴²

Furthermore, the minor diversification of gas suppliers could undermine future diversification efforts by lowering the profitability and increasing the economic risk of some investments. Among those investments are: the Baltic Pipe, which is designed to transport Norwegian gas to Poland; the Easting, a pipeline that has the goal of connecting the

⁴⁰ Dimitar Lilkov, Roland Freudenstein, "The Case Against Nord Stream 2."

⁴¹ Dimitar Lilkov, Roland Freudenstein, "The Case Against Nord Stream 2."

⁴² Alan Riley, "Nord Stream 2: Understanding the Potential Consequences."

gas systems of Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Hungary and Slovakia; and the planned inter-connectors between Poland and Slovakia and between Poland and the Czech Republic, which could transport the gas delivered to the Polish LNG terminal on the Baltic coast.⁴³

Debate on Decarbonization

The argument on the de-carbonization is also questionable. The supporters of the project are convinced that a low-emission transition can only be achieved with natural gas. A modern offshore pipeline produces a smaller carbon footprint than onshore transportation, say the supporters of Nord Stream 2. Compared to transport through Ukraine, the official documents of Nord Stream 2 AG report that the new pipeline can save 8,9 million tonnes of CO₂ per year.⁴⁴ Offshore transportation is also greener than the energy intensive liquefaction needed for the production of LNG. And more gas will be indispensable to substitute for coal, since it can be said that natural gas is the cheapest means of carbon reduction.⁴⁵

On the other hand, the opponents of the project point out the fact that the pipeline is located near Natura 2000 conservation sites in eight countries. Moreover, there is a risk related to the presence of four pipelines in the Baltic Sea, where World War II munitions were dumped including explosives and large quantities of chemical warfare agents, among which there is even the Zyklon B gas. The Polish Institute of International Affairs mentions the example of the United Kingdom, one of the more advanced countries which is increasing its use of renewable resources. In the process of increasing the use of green resources, the UK has had the biggest decline in gas consumption observed in Europe (1,7 bcm). According to the Polish Institute, soon under the Paris Agreement EU countries will have to put forward also gas reduction aims. Thus, according to PISM, Nord Stream 2 instead of giving Europe an environmentally friendly resource, can petrify the structure of the energy mix in some European countries and slow the transition to renewable energies.⁴⁶

A New Division within the EU?

The division within the European Union in the attitude towards Nord Stream 2 project is already visible. It is not the only critical issue that divides the EU, since in past years topics such as migration policy, the EU budget, and differences in food product quality have been hotly debated. Nord Stream 2 can be seen as a project that Germany wants to pursue for its own interest, and this would confirm the popular idea that Berlin has too much influence on the EU.

⁴³ Aleksandra Gawlikowska-Fyk, Marcin Terlikowski, Bartosz Wiśniewski, Szymon Zaręba, "Nord Stream 2: Inconvenient Questions."

⁴⁴ Nord Stream 2 AG, "Project Background", 4, July 2019, <https://www.nord-stream2.com/document>.

⁴⁵ "Nord Stream 2: New Pipeline for Europe's Energy Future," Nord Stream 2.

⁴⁶ Aleksandra Gawlikowska-Fyk, Marcin Terlikowski, Bartosz Wiśniewski, Szymon Zaręba, "Nord Stream 2: Inconvenient Questions."

The realization of Nord Stream 2 goes also against the liberalization of the European gas market, whose characteristics are competition, liquidity and gas trading. The European gas market needs also a big number of inter-connectors and there are still problems with this issue, since there is a lack of them. Nord Stream 2 surely would not lead to an increasing of inter-connectors, since it will double the OPAL pipeline capacity. As a matter of fact, inter-connectors are needed if there are new sources, such as the realization of the Baltic Pipe from Denmark to Poland or the construction of new LNG terminals on the Baltic coast. A clear example of diversifying supplies could be the expansion of capacity of the pipeline between Spain and France, in order to transport more gas from the LNG terminal in Spain to France. Nord Stream 2 can liberalize market gas only in northwestern Europe, where there are already many alternative suppliers. On the contrary, it leaves the central part of the European Union with one big supplier, that is Gazprom. Finally, it is worth noting that Central European Countries began to liberalize the gas market much more later than the Western countries, after they joined EU in 2004. For this reason, these countries are still living in a space with a strong Soviet legacy, which in the gas market is manifested by a single east-to-west pipeline.⁴⁷

Germany

Thanks to Nord Stream 2 Germany could become the potential recipient of the majority share of the gas coming from Russia to the EU. Germany already exports more than 20 bcm yearly. If Nord Stream 1 and 2 work at full capacity, 70%-80% of the Russian blue fuel and about 1/3 of total EU imported gas would pass through Germany. This would mean that Germany would replace completely Ukraine and the United Kingdom as the major European gas hub.⁴⁸

Alan Riley from the Atlantic Council argued that Nord Stream 2 can bring some problems even for Germany. This can come as a surprise, since with Nord Stream 2, Germany, as the European gas hub, and this would presumably enjoy lower prices and greater gas exports. However, reducing route diversity for Germany should not be forgotten. As pointed out above, Germany will have only two gas routes, and the risk of that situation was illustrated in September 2017. At that time, maintenance work on Nord Stream 1 impeded gas transit through the Baltic and increased the gas flow through the Ukrainian Brotherhood pipeline. When Nord Stream 2 becomes operational, the same issue would be more difficult since it is unlikely that the Brotherhood pipeline will be able to maintain today's capacity of transport. Then, with Nord Stream 2 operational it would be very difficult for Germany to reduce dependence on Russian gas.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Alan Riley, "Nord Stream 2: Understanding the Potential Consequences."

⁴⁸ Dimitar Lilkov, Roland Freudenstein, "The Case Against Nord Stream 2."

⁴⁹ Alan Riley, "Nord Stream 2: Understanding the Potential Consequences."

Ukraine

It can be said that Nord Stream 2 is maybe the most famous effort made by Gazprom to circumvent Ukraine as a transit country. Since Nord Stream 1 became operational in 2011, the volume of gas transported to Europe through Ukraine has declined. As a matter of fact, in 2004 137 bcm of Russian gas passed through Ukraine, in 2014 62 bcm.⁵⁰ In view of this, the idea that Nord Stream 2 is built with the sole goal of meeting a growing need for gas from Europe does not seem to be reality. Someone has argued that the current transit infrastructure located in Ukraine needs expensive technical improvements to function optimally and to satisfy the growing need for gas in Europe. However, according to the World Bank, those costs would be much lower than the cost of Nord Stream 2. Moreover, the Ukrainian gas market is being reformed and thanks to this it is now certain that Ukraine has the economic means to undertake proper maintenance of the pipelines.⁵¹ With a fully operational Nord Stream 2, Ukraine could lose \$2 billion in transit fees annually, which represents more than 2% of the Ukrainian GDP.⁵² The existing Russia-Ukraine transit contracts expire in 2019 and if Nord Stream 2 is completed by that time, the next contract would be totally different than the current one. As expected, Gazprom wants to maintain only 15 bcm of gas transiting through Ukraine and this amount is unacceptable for Kiev, since the costs of maintaining the transporting system required at least 50 bcm of gas.⁵³ Since 2015, when Gazprom halted direct exports to Ukraine, Kiev has been buying re-exported gas from Slovakia, although this gas has been arriving to Slovakia through Ukraine. Obviously, if Slovakia would not have the gas coming from Ukraine but from Nord Stream 2 or other sources located in Central or Western Europe, the cost of transit for Ukraine probably would be higher than for any other country in Europe. In addition, it would be impossible for Ukraine to benefit from the reverse flows of gas coming back from European countries.

The need to maintain an amount of gas transiting through Ukraine is recognized by the whole EU, but it may not be enough to avoid a worsening of the geopolitical position of Ukraine.⁵⁴ Until today the European Commission has not had the chance to play a key role in resolving the Russia – Ukraine gas conflict. Will Ukraine lose one of its most important trump cards in its confrontation with Russia, namely, the status of transit country for Russian gas?

Conclusions

In any scenario, the controversial Nord Stream 2 pipeline will leave someone unhappy. At this time the project does not seem to be compromised. However, the possibility of applying EU law to the project could become a problematic issue for Germany and especially for Russia. Moscow could be forced to accept European law or, more probably,

⁵⁰ Bartosz Bieliszczuk, "Negocjacje w sprawie utrzymania tranzytu gazu przez Ukrainę," The Polish Institute of International Affairs, August 14, 2018, <http://www.pism.pl/publikacje/biuletyn/nr-108-1681>.

⁵¹ Alan Riley, "Nord Stream 2: Understanding the Potential Consequences."

⁵² Dimitar Lilkov, Roland Freudenstein, "The Case Against Nord Stream 2."

⁵³ Bartosz Bieliszczuk, "Negocjacje w sprawie utrzymania tranzytu gazu przez Ukrainę."

⁵⁴ Bartosz Bieliszczuk, "Negocjacje w sprawie utrzymania tranzytu gazu przez Ukrainę."

find another 'legal void' that will annoy even more the Central European countries and the US. The final outcome of the whole controversial history concerning the pipeline could illustrate whether the EU is becoming more independent from the US by not considering Russia such an enemy as the Americans now believe it is. In my opinion this scenario of a European-Russian rapprochement can split the EU even more and above all can undermine the Ukrainian approach to Europe. Are the Europeans, and especially the Germans, ready to take such a risk?

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Climate change and health

Introduction

The phenomenon of climate change, observed for years and constantly intensifying, has had a negative impact on health, significantly deteriorating the quality of life of people in many regions of the world, including Poland. Already now we are dealing with increasingly frequent extreme weather phenomena; hurricanes, storms and increasingly longer heat waves no longer surprise us. Unfortunately, this is merely the beginning of the negative effects of climate change. Others will come before long.

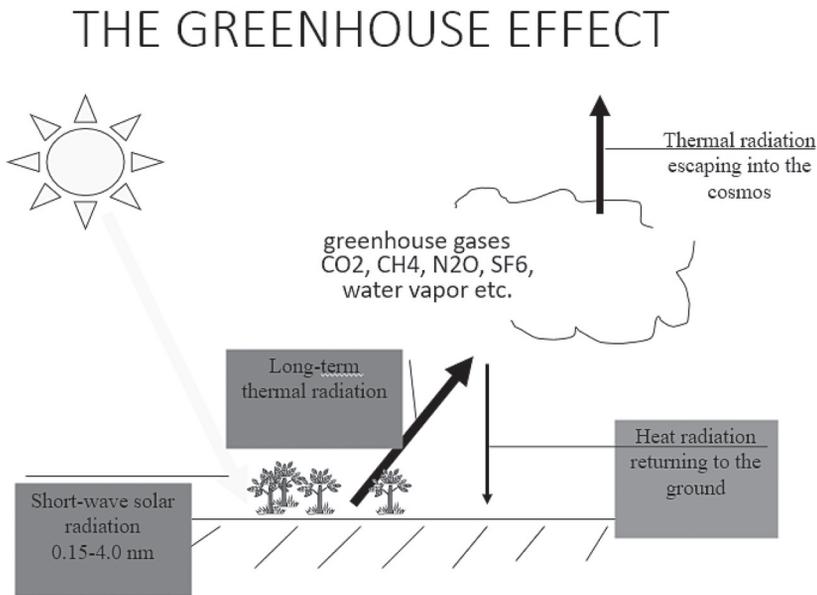
In the coming years, many other new threats will be observed, such as flooding of ocean islands, desertification of areas exposed to water scarcity or serious loss of biodiversity, which will translate into food security. Unfortunately, it does not end there.¹

The greenhouse effect is a process by which radiation from the Earth's atmosphere warms the planet's surface to a temperature above what it would be without this atmosphere. We can differentiate short-term solar radiation (0.15-4.0 nm) and long-term radiation. Thermal radiation escapes into the cosmic sphere and heat radiation returns to the ground, being stopped by a layer of GHG – greenhouse gases (CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, SF₆, water vapor etc.), which warm up Earth's atmosphere to a dangerous level – even a 1°C degree increase (in comparison to pre-industrial level, when emissions started to rise) in the average world temperature can be detrimental to human health and change the conditions of life on this planet (Figure 1). However, we currently face a risk of global warming even up to 3°C degrees, unless GHG emissions are significantly reduced. Any further rise of the global temperature will have deteriorating impact on people and whole humanity, as well as staying at the current level of emissions.

¹ HEAL, Koalicja Klimatyczna, 2018: Wpływ zmiany klimatu na zdrowie

Figure 1.

The greenhouse effect (Source: IPCC, 1990³)



It has not always been obvious for scientists as to how to approach this issue and the level of trust has changed over the past decades. In 1990 there was a common understanding that there is a natural greenhouse effect and anthropogenic emissions of CO₂, NH₄ and CH₄ contribute to their concentration in the atmosphere. Eleven years later (IPCC 1990), in 2001, it was understood and proved by scientific evidence that in the last 50 years man has had the greatest impact on the climate³. In 2014, the percent of scientists convinced that climate change has an anthropogenic background extended to over 95%⁴. A year ago (2018) scientists spoke with one voice: we can still stop the changes. But we have about 12 years to do so, as the CO₂ concentration rises, followed by a significant rise in the worldwide average temperature. It is crucial to stop the rise under 1.5°C compared to the pre-industrial level. At the same time a group of hundreds of scientists gathered around the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported that to keep the rise in global temperatures below 1.5°C this century, emissions of carbon dioxide would have to be cut by 45% by 2030. That is why climate policy (also with regard to health pro-

¹ IPCC, 1990: The first assessment report – overview. The Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, New York.

³ IPCC, 2001, Climate change 2001: impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability. The Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, New York

⁴ IPCC, 2014: Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, R.K. Pachauri and L.A. Meyer (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 151 pp.

tection) must be strictly based on scientific data. If it remains undermined – there will be always an argument for not taking action⁵.

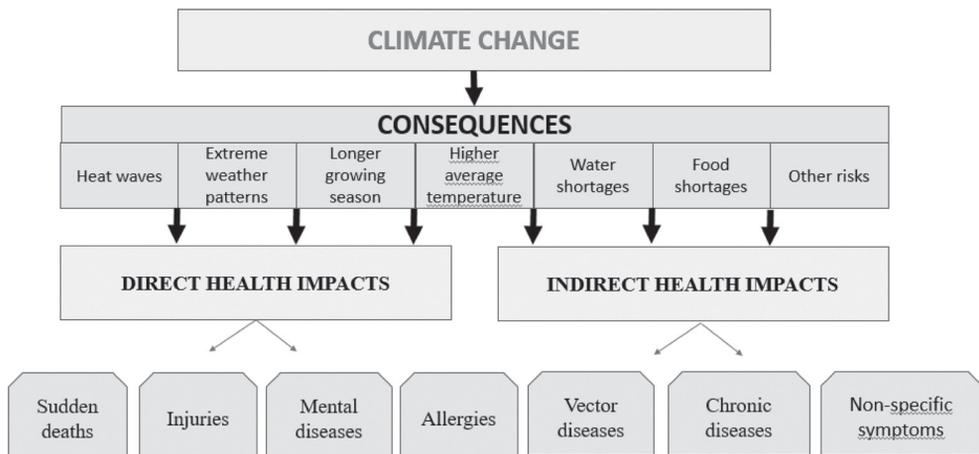
What is particularly important is that climate change is not the future. Its negative effects are already present today, felt by hundreds of millions of people every day. There is no, and probably will not be a, disease entity named climate change. But climate change affects health and the healthcare system, causing extremely high external health costs, suffering and the death of numerous people. The purpose of the article is to discuss the main directions of this impact⁶.

Climate change and health

Climate change leads to a number of negative health effects, through direct consequences of this process like heat waves, extreme weather patterns, longer growing seasons, higher average temperature, water and food shortages and other risks. Health impacts of these consequences can be divided into direct impacts – like sudden deaths, injuries, mental diseases or allergies, and indirect impacts – like vector diseases, chronic diseases and non-specific symptoms, all related to climate change (Figure 2).

Fig. 2.

Impact of climate change on human health



⁵ IPCC 2018 : Global warming of 1.5 °C: an IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty. Synthesis Report. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 32 pp.

⁶ Please note that only selected issues concerning climate change are discussed in this article. Climate change has also direct links to worldwide streams of migrations, likelihood of international and internal conflicts, probability of limiting food production, probable impact on the effectiveness of drugs and therapies (initially confirmed by results in psychiatry).

The World Health Organization estimates that currently climate change is directly responsible for more than 140,000 deaths per year, particularly in Africa and South-East Asia. By 2040, this number will increase by 250,000 deaths per year due to malaria, heat stress, diarrhea and malnutrition. On a global scale, the direct economic costs of climate change in terms of health deterioration may amount to USD 2–4 billion per year⁷.

According to the Global Risks Report 2018 published by the World Economic Forum, extreme weather phenomena are the greatest threat to world order and stability over the next decade. With each passing year, not only does the frequency of their occurrence increase perilously, but also the severity of their devastation⁸.

Research has shown that the effects of climate change have a greater negative impact on the health of children and pregnant women than on adults⁹. Women and children are particularly vulnerable to negative impacts in low and middle-income countries, especially those where the air quality is bad¹⁰.

It is also estimated that almost 88% of all cases related to the effects of climate change occur in children under five years of age¹¹. Children are particularly vulnerable to dehydration. There is also a high risk of kidney disease, mental health problems and emotional disorders in children¹².

High temperatures and high humidity may increase the risk of pregnancy poisoning including preeclampsia and eclampsia. Exposure of pregnant women to very high air temperatures, especially in the second and third trimester, increases the risk of prematurity and/or low birth weight¹³. Pregnant women and nursing women are more exposed to kidney problems in periods of heat waves. There is a statistically confirmed difference in hospitalization for this reason in periods of high temperatures.

They are (indirectly) the cause of premature deaths, hospitalization, and lowering of work efficiency. US research shows that during heat waves, premature deaths increase by 1.1 people/1,000,000 inhabitants. Data from Hungary are even more severe from 10.1 to even 38.2 people/1,000,000 inhabitants¹⁴.

⁷ <https://www.who.int/globalchange/publications/COP24-report-health-climate-change/en/>

⁸ The Global Risks Report 2018, World Economic Forum. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GRR18_Report.pdf. Accessed: 5/13/2018

⁹ Kelishadi R., Poursafa P., 2014 : The effect of climate change and air pollution on children and mother's health [in] Global Climate Change and Public Health. Business Media. New York

¹⁰ Haines A., Kovts R.S., Campbell-Lendrum D., Corvalan C., 2006 : Climate change and human health : impact , vulnerability and mitigation. *Lancet* 367 : 2101 2109

¹¹ Kelishadi R., Poursafa P., 2014 : *Ibidem*

¹² Mandeville J.A., Nelson C.P. 2009 : Pediatric urolithiasis. *Current Opinion in Urology* 19(4): 419 23

¹³ Rylander C., Odland J., Sandanger T.M., 2013: Climate change and the potential effects on maternal and pregnancy outcomes: an assessment of the most vulnerable – the mother, fetus, and newborn child. *Global Health Action* 6: 1 9

¹⁴ Paldy A., Bobvos J., 2010: Health impacts of heat waves of 2007 in Hungary – background and experiences. In: Dincer, I. et al. (eds.): *Global Warming. Green Energy and Technology*. Springer : 629 642

Paldy A., Bobvos J., 2012: Impact of heat waves on excess mortality in 2011 and 2012 in Hungary. *Central European Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 67(2): 33–39.

Heat waves in Europe in 2003 caused premature death in at least 70,000 people¹⁵. In Russia, in 2010, 11,000 people died prematurely.¹⁶ In Poland, during the heat wave in July 1994, the risk of premature deaths increased from 23% (Szczecin) to 63% (Łódź)¹⁷.

Heat waves also increase the number of hospitalizations and days with limited work capacity and affect the increase in the concentration of ground-level ozone, which also has a negative impact on human health. Interactions with other pollutants require further research, but a high probability of a significant relationship with the increase in suspended particulate matter. In Poland, the length of the growing season has increased by more than 25 days since 1970¹⁸. This leads to a prolonged period of high concentrations of plant pollen in the air and increases the risk of allergies, as well as affects the reduction of Poland's food security. In hot weather, in the absence of wind and rainfall, the concentration of allergens and pollen in the air increases. This results in the malaise and poor health condition of allergy sufferers and asthmatics, whose number is estimated to be over 300 million.

Climate change is also associated with the spread of infectious diseases transmitted by living organisms (vectors) such as flies, mosquitoes, ticks, lice and rodents which increase a risk of vector diseases: dengue, malaria or Lyme disease. In 2018, in the Czech Republic, the first death of a person who never traveled outside the country was recorded. Vector-borne diseases already account for more than 17% of all infectious diseases, causing more than 700,000 deaths per year¹⁹.

Also extreme weather events like hurricanes or floods are direct consequences of the global warming. In 2005 hurricane Katrina caused the death of 1,836 people in the USA. A further 705 people were declared missing. Hurricanes are also a problem in Europe. Hurricane Ophelia, which hit Ireland in October 2017, caused three deaths. Floods comprise nearly 40–50% of all natural disasters. In 2000–2014 they caused over 2,000 deaths in Europe, with approximately 8.7 million people exposed to their effects²⁰.

The greatest threat to health and life from floods occurs in Asia, especially in developing countries. In recent years, ca. 400 million inhabitants of the continent have been exposed to the adverse effects of floods every year. Between 1987–1997, 228,000 people died in floods on the Asian continent.

The number of extreme meteorological and weather events is increasing. Since 1970, the frequency of hydrological disasters (floods) has increased four times (since 2004 twice), and storms and droughts have doubled²¹. The increase in the frequency of these phenomena causes an increase in the number of people losing their lives or seriously injured. Extreme weather phenomena also affect mental health, leading to numerous disorders.

¹⁵ Bono A de, Giuliani G, Kluser S, Peduzzi P., 2004: Impacts of summer 2003 heat wave in Europe. Environment Alert Bulletin 2. UNEP-GRID Europe.

¹⁶ Shaposhnikov D¹, Revich B, Bellander T, Bedada GB, Bottai M, Kharkova T, Kvasha E, Lezina E, Lind T, Semutnikova E, Pershagen G., 2014: Mortality related to air pollution with the moscow heat wave and wildfire of 2010. *Epidemiology* 25(3):359-64. haposhnikov et al., 2014

¹⁷ Błażejczyk K., Baranowski J., Błażejczyk A., 2015: Wpływ klimatu na stan zdrowia w Polsce: stan aktualny oraz prognoza do 2100 roku. Instytut Geografii i Przestrzennego Zagospodarowania PAN Warszawa 2015. pp. 226

¹⁸ Lorenc 2013

¹⁹ Vector-borne diseases, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs387/en/>, accessed: 4/1/2018

²⁰ R. D. Knabb, J. R. Rhome, D. P. Brown, Tropical Cyclone Report Hurricane Katrina 23-30 August 2005, National Hurricane Center 2005 [updated in 2011], p. 11.

²¹ www.omicsonline.org/open-access/trends-in-extreme-weather-events-since-1900 Access 30.08.2019

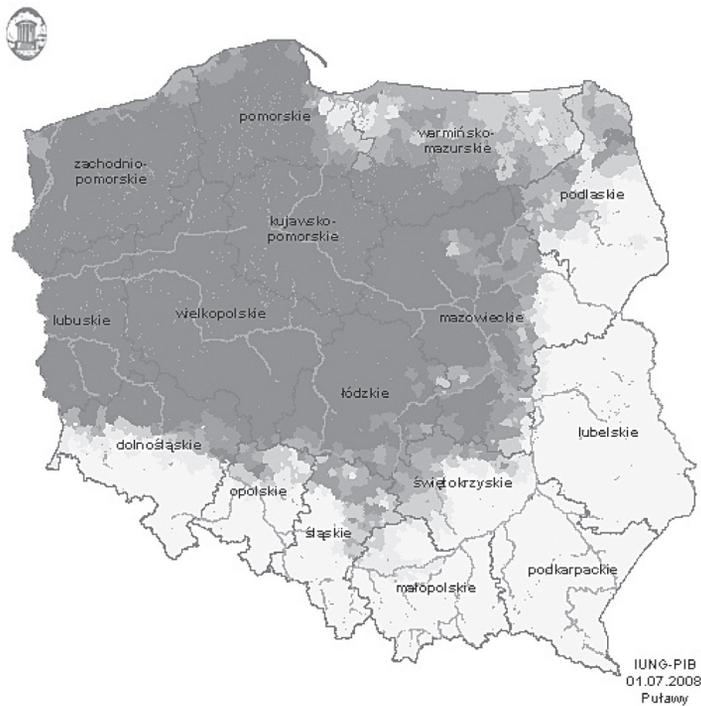
Climate change effects in Poland

The health effects of climate change are also present in Poland, through consequences of drought, hail, hurricane winds, floods and heat waves.

The increase in drought frequency is alarming, as in the years 1951-1981 there were 6 noted droughts (one every five years), in the years 1982-2011 18 droughts (one every 2 years), and after 2012 there is a permanent summer drought in Poland²². The droughts in 2018 and 2019 were the most serious since at least 100 years.

Fig. 3

Summer drought in Poland, 2008 (Source: IUNG -PIB, 2008)²³



Apart from crop losses and damage drought directly contributes to illnesses and premature deaths of citizens. The heat wave in 1994 contributed to the increase in mortality by 66 deaths in Warsaw alone (30 people died due to cardiovascular diseases). An increased risk of death occurred in many Polish cities: in Szczecin the risk increased by 23%, Wrocław – 43%, Poznań – 49%, Łódź – up to 63%. According to research carried out in Poland, air temperature has an impact on the increase in mortality due to circulatory failure. The num-

²² System monitoring Suszy Rolniczej. <http://www.susza.iung.pulawy.pl/> Access 30.08.2019

²³ System monitoring Suszy Rolniczej. Ibidem

ber of deaths in the years 1960–1990 increased from 100 to over 550 per 100,000 inhabitants. The rise of air temperature in Poland is also related to the increase in the incidence of allergic diseases. The number of patients with allergic rhinitis and bronchial asthma has doubled in the last decade.

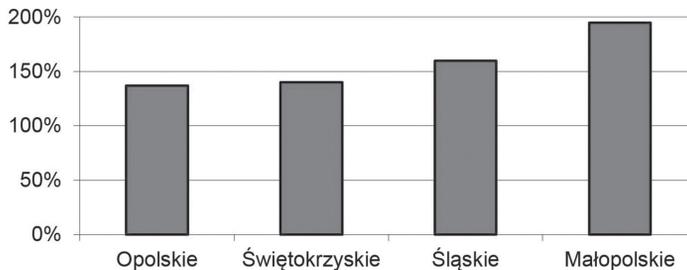
The risk of violent weather events is growing year on year. Between 1997–2012 there were 9 floods in Poland, affecting nearly 370,000 people and causing the deaths of 113 people. In 2010, more than 20 people died as a result of floods, with damage estimated at more than PLN 10 billion. The flood in 1997 was even more severe, contributing to 55 deaths and damage at the level of PLN 12.8 billion. In 2001–2011, the costs caused by the effects of climate change in Poland, including violent weather events, amounted to as much as PLN 56 billion. Meanwhile, damage caused by atmospheric phenomena at that time reached PLN 90 billion.

An increased frequency of hurricanes and whirlwinds has been observed, as in the 1980s, there were 1-2 incidences per year, in the 1990s already 4-5, after 2001 – 7-8 per year, and in 2006 – even 52 noted incidences of hurricane winds or whirlwinds. Currently each year there are constantly over 20 events of this type in Poland²⁴.

Also a significant increase in the frequency of hail – directly threatening human health and life, but mostly causing economic loss (compared to 1960 78) in the years 2010 – 2012 has been noted in many of the Polish voivodships, with the highest increase rate in the southern part of Poland²⁵ (Figure 4):

Fig. 4

Changes in frequency of hail in selected voivodeships in Poland
(Source: Kołkowska K, Lorenc H., 2014²⁶)



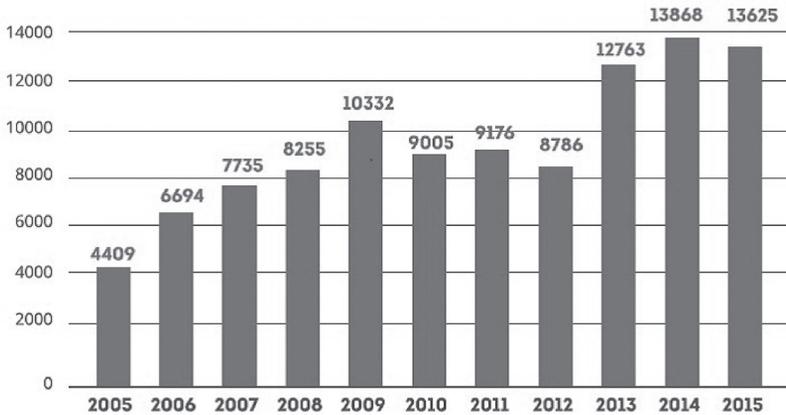
The spread of infectious vector-borne diseases is a major threat to health in Poland. One of the biggest threats is posed by the castor bean tick, which causes Lyme disease. Between 2005–2014, the number of cases more than tripled from 4,406 to 13,868 per year (Figure 5), and now extends to over 20,000 incidences per year.

²⁴ Lorenc H., 2012 : Struktura maksymalnych prędkości wiatru w Polsce. [w] Kłęski żywiołowe a bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne kraju. Pod red. Lorenc H. IMGW. Warszawa pp. 33-60

²⁵ Kołkowska K, Lorenc H., 2012: Ryzyko występowania gradu w Polsce. [w] Kłęski żywiołowe a bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne kraju. Pod red. Lorenc H. IMGW. Warszawa pp. 80-98

²⁶ Ibidem

Fig 5
 Number of Lyme disease in Poland 2005 – 2015
 (Source: National Institute of Public Health)



All above-mentioned factors, extreme weather patterns, illnesses, premature deaths and external health costs will most likely be escalated in the upcoming years, unless a strict and urgent climate policy is implemented. The only way to reduce these risks is to reduce the GHG concentration in the atmosphere (which also contributes to reducing air pollution which kills seven million people worldwide each year).

PCC and HEAL report on climate change health impacts

A report by the Polish Climate Coalition and HEAL Poland entitled "Climate change health impacts" (2018) presents two scenarios presenting the health impacts of climate change. The first assumes that by 2100 the increase in global average temperature will exceed 3°C, i.e. measures to protect the environment will be insufficient to halt climate warming. In the second one, the increase in global average temperature will be limited to well below 2°C, thus achieving the 2100 objective set in the Paris agreement.

The analysis showed, both globally as well as with regard to Poland, that the implementation of the second scenario means a significant reduction in the negative health effects of climate change, but does not eliminate them altogether. The number of premature deaths from fossil fuel combustion in the EU, the US and China would decrease by nearly 1.2 million. This scenario would create savings of around USD 490 billion in these three regions by 2030 by reducing coal transport costs alone! These funds could be used, for instance, to improve the quality of the health care system. The fact that an average of 27% of the EU population negatively assesses the overall quality of health care (in Poland this number is several times higher and equals 62%) proves how much this is needed.

The health care system will have to prepare for a number of new challenges which lie ahead. These include the need to identify and monitor the growing public health risks as-

sociated with the direct effects of climate change (e.g. droughts, floods, extreme weather events). Of extreme importance is also the ability to cope with the indirect effects of warming, such as the deepening social inequalities or threats to the groups most at risk. Further challenges include preparing physicians and medical staff for the treatment of diseases which may occur in Poland, as well as developing strategies to combat the spread of vector-borne diseases. Educating patients about the risks of climate change is also immensely important.

Achieving the above objectives will require an increase in financial outlays on the health care system. In 2016, the value of public subsidies for mining and coal-fired power generation in Poland amounted to PLN 9,2 billion. This is more than 11% of the state's health care spending. If these resources were to support the health care system, it would facilitate the preparation for the challenges linked to the current and projected effects of climate change. It would also increase the safety and quality of life of Polish citizens.

Conclusion

Climate change has and will have an impact on health and the health care system. Some of these impacts will be directly related to the effect of climate change, others to degradation and environmental pollution resulting from activities contributing to anthropogenic climate change.

In Poland, politicians and the healthcare system are poorly prepared to manage these effects (due to climate skepticism and a low level of awareness). Therefore, the most urgent actions are required – including further research, education and investment to both mitigate the consequences and adapt to its effects already felt by the healthcare system and all citizens.

