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The European Union and the Black Sea Region in Search of a Narrative or a New Paradigm

Dimitrios Triantaphyllou

The European Union (EU) has over time formulated and implemented various policies to address its Eastern neighbourhood and, in particular, the Black Sea region; yet, it still finds itself in search of the right mix of policy and strategy towards its neighbours to the East. With the post-Cold War goal posts shifting to reflect the growing realist approach of its biggest neighbour, the Russian Federation, toward their shared neighbourhood, the EU finds itself in a quandary regarding its ability to react and to postulate proactive policies that reflect its engagement. The post-Vilnius Summit environment echoes the urgency of the exercise and the dilemmas that present themselves for the Union. The tugs of war between Russia and the EU and to a lesser extent between the EU and Turkey are at the core of the challenge of transforming the Black Sea region from being a ‘grey zone of instability’ to one of peace, freedom, security and prosperity. This could only come about if the EU could construct a common narrative that meets the demands and expectations of its member states and institutions as well as those of its partners in the Black Sea region.

Introduction: The Setting

The Black Sea region is a space where the ‘normative power Europe’ concept introduced by Manners and by extension its impact on the Union’s ability to conduct its ‘soft power’ foreign policy such as the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership (EaP), is being challenged by the offensive realism of Russia as the events in Ukraine unfold.¹ In other words, what Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeir refer to as ‘governance by conditionality’, albeit in a weakened form when it comes to the countries of the Union’s Eastern neighbourhood, is now confronted by a revisionist Russia which seeks to challenge what it perceives to be the status quo—the power of the ideational—cultural aspects of European foreign policy with its emphasis on, *inter alia*, interests, values, norms, principles, customs and institutions as manifested through its various policies

towards its neighbours.² It is a space where the transformative power of the Union finds its limits. To paraphrase Ivan Krastev, it is also a space where weak states weakly connected to weak societies abound.³ The Black Sea region is thus a space of growing uncertainty, replete with paradoxes, competing visions and growing expectations within which the European Union (EU) finds itself especially challenged for a number of reasons that will be elaborated below.

The telltale signs regarding the future of the region do not necessarily augur well. The reasons for the pessimism are many. They take into account the evolution of the region since the early 1990s when it became a regional project and project themselves into the future. The paper will address the search of a narrative by the Union by first focusing on its partners in the Black Sea region and their quandaries regarding their orientation. It then assesses the EU's own contradictions as it seeks to (re)define its narrative towards the Eastern neighbourhood. The mitigated role of the regional powerhouses, Russia and Turkey, is then evaluated. The paper then presents a number of propositions that the author considers crucial for the EU to consider as it struggles to formulate a new paradigm towards the region.

The Neighbours in Search of a Narrative

None of the EaP countries 'have pursued a determined long-term perspective or aim' regarding where they want to go or belong to as countries and societies.⁴ Unlike the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) that were committed to Westernization and Euro-Atlantic integration, the countries of the Eastern neighbourhood of the EU, facing an assertive Russia and unable to rid themselves fully of their Soviet legacies, have pursued a balancing act between Russia and the West. In other words, this balancing act has not necessarily led them closer to the West. While a change in mentalities among both elites and their civil societies might be taking place, it is too slow. In addition, there is a growing disconnect between the political elite and their civil societies. The question thus asked is can the ENP be considered an 'instrument of a normative actor if it is not regarded as legitimate by the partner countries' given the lack of a membership perspective?⁵ Alternatively, are the reasons for this lack of clear orientation by the countries in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood symptomatic of deeper causes? According to Lavenex and Schimmelfennig, the domestic conditions of the neighbouring countries impede 'effective political conditionality' as many of these are governed by autocratic regimes 'for which complying with the EU's political conditions would be tantamount to regime change'.⁶

Writing in 2008, Felix Ciuta had argued, in favour of a Black Sea region project which included the presence of the EU, NATO and the USA in order 'to continue the transformation of European security through internationalisation, institutionalisation and democratisation, in order to avoid repeating in the Black Sea region the Balkan failures of the 1990s'. For Ciuta, the Black Sea region 'acquires significance . . . as a security problem' given that it is at a point of convergence both in geographic and normative terms between the most recent phase of European integration and the US-led War on Terror.⁷ To date, the aforementioned proposed approach has failed to

materialize as the process of embedding with EU norms has faced substantial delay. In part, the EU has contributed in making and defining the Black Sea region as it is 'not only a model to be mimed, or a ready-made blueprint to be applied locally, (EU) rope is also simultaneously the beginning, end and reason for region-building'.⁸ Hence, the EU's role in shaping and influencing the region is a key to determining its ability to actually influence it. The cases of Ukraine and Georgia are telling.

Take Ukraine, for example, which keeps vacillating between the 'no pole' or multi-vector policy of its former president, Viktor Yanukovich, or the 'Strategic Asset' argument propounded by his then supposedly pro-Western opposition.⁹ Neither implies a deep-rooted commitment to the West and its values, norms, ideas and identity. The recent saga regarding the signing of an Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU in the run-up to the EaP Summit of November 2013 and the political stalemate in Ukraine since is a case in point. Ukraine's 'pendular' foreign policy suggests that the perspectives between its elite and its citizens differ when it comes to the role and contribution of the EU to the promotion of democracy and the role of Russia which seeks to maintain control over assets.¹⁰ Structural constraints in Ukrainian politics including regional divisions leave the country's elites with no other option than to vacillate between East and West. It is in this context that the multi-vector foreign policy of the country should be assessed as a move toward the EU and/or Euro-Atlantic structures inevitably leads to a bark and even a bite from its East, in the form of today's Russia.¹¹ In fact, the multi-vector policy approach is not unique to Ukraine. Important post-Soviet states like Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, for example, also play their own form of balancing between Russia and the West.¹²

Georgia, the other Western champion of the region, is also uncertain as to both its Western prospects and its commitments. In an assessment of Mikhail Saakashvili's legacy, who served as the country's president for 10 years, *The Economist* reaches a mitigated conclusion: Saakashvili led Georgia

through a mental revolution, modernizing it, shaking off its Soviet legacy and putting it back on the map. He also fought and lost a war with Russia, cracked down on the opposition, dominated the media, interfered with justice and monopolised power.¹³

His attempt to modernize society from above without engaging society by all available means leaves much to be desired.¹⁴

The ambivalence in both countries implies two things. The first is what Tedo Japaridze coins as the 'role of geography' or what Lilia Shevtsova refers to as remaining 'hostage to geography' thereby leaving the 'in between' countries with no choice but to play off Russia and the West.¹⁵ While Ukraine is currently bearing the brunt of a *Novorossiia* campaign by Moscow, Russia's war in Georgia in 2008 becomes even less than an aberration. According to Alexander Rondeli, the Russo-Georgian war was 'a manifestation of the dangerous tendency of the revival of *Realpolitik*'. Continues Rondeli:

In punishing Georgia and President Saakashvili, one of Russia's goals was to teach a lesson to others not only on its borders but inside Russia proper. Defeating 'pro-Western' Georgia was necessary to postpone, if not prevent, the spread of pro-Western 'epidemics' and democratization in the post-Soviet space.¹⁶

The European Union and its Dilemmas

The second implication of the mitigated response of the Black Sea states towards the EU is the importance of the attractiveness of the West and its values (the normative dimension). Is the EU committed? Does it have a strategy towards the East and its Eastern neighbours? What is the EU's goal in its Eastern neighbourhood? The EU seems to lack a strategy—a strategic vision even though it possesses more instruments, initiatives and policies than ever before. An alphabet soup of these includes, *inter alia*, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP); the Black Sea Synergy; the Eastern Partnership (EaP); the EU Strategy for the Danube Region; the Black Sea Synergy Environmental Partnership; the Association Agreements; the Integrated Maritime Policy; the Communication on 'The EU and its Neighbouring Regions: A Renewed Approach to Transport Cooperation'; the TRACECA and INOGATE programmes;¹⁷ the Energy Charter Treaty; the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTAs); the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI); the Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) initiative under the ENPI; the Conference of the Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP); the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (CSF); the Eastern Partnership and Cooperation Programme (EaPIC); the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly; the renewed ENP; the more-for-more approach; the European Endowment for Democracy; and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). The establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) in an attempt to make the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) more efficient, the role of the EU Special Representatives (EUSRs) and the various Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions in the region with the aim to strengthen the EU's external ability to act through the development of civilian and military capabilities in conflict prevention and crisis management also attest to the EU's involvement in the region.

Yet the overall strategic blueprint is lacking. Amanda Paul is to the point when she writes that '[w]hile Russia sees its Western neighbourhood strategically, the EU has suffered from a lack of strategic vision, rather viewing it as a technical process'.¹⁸ Other analysts suggest that most EU-led pro-democracy programmes have failed to meet their ambitions while facing competition from pro-Russian illiberal groups supported by Moscow.¹⁹ M. R. Freire and Licinia Simao suggest that on the EU's end there is a mismatch between 'discourse and action and the meaning of these conflicting practices to the attainment of the stated goals of regional stabilization and deepening political and economic integration with EU structures'.²⁰ While the ENI has more money budgeted for democracy promotion for the Eastern neighbourhood countries, the effectiveness of EU instruments in place is unclear.²¹ In other words, the policies and instruments in place do not necessarily translate into coherent and

cohesive policies. The evident technocratic and depoliticized EU foreign policy approach as epitomized by the aforementioned list needs to be rethought as its effectiveness and coherence is being fundamentally challenged by the Russian Spring 2014 'assault' on its neighbourhood.²² The need of a paradigm shift in policy and approach becomes all the more relevant.

The aforementioned challenge touches upon the limits of the democratization process and the level of commitment by the EU and the USA towards the region. One can also add to the equation the underperformance of both the CFSP and the CSDP that contributes to the feeling that the Union is not pulling its weight strategically.²³ The reasons are many. The intrusion of national prerogatives into EU foreign policymaking by member states in light of the absence of Germany to act strategically in terms of the Union's Ostpolitik is part of the problem. The absence of Germany is detrimental to a cohesive policy. The ongoing financial and monetary crisis has made the Union more inward looking to the detriment of strategic thinking. Finally, the current age of populism given its emergence within the EU limits the priorities of the member states and the Union as a whole to formulate a consistent foreign policy. It also points to the 'mutual dependency between the EU's internal and external roles'.²⁴ Under these conditions, two interlinked factors stand out. The first is what Solonenko in her paper to this issue refers to as 'the challenge of domesticating democracy' so that it is not perceived to be an exported value that replicates the 'othering' divide instead of a home-grown one.²⁵ The second challenge is that, unlike Central and Eastern Europe where the process of 'governance by conditionality' was successful and in South-eastern Europe where it seems to be on track albeit with some setbacks, the presence of Russia in the Black Sea region resonates as a powerful lever or barrier on the requisite transformational agenda that the EU promotes irrespective of whether the states of the region are on the membership track or not.²⁶

The USA's role and vision in and toward the region is also crucial as it views the region as a transit corridor. In line with the New Silk Road concept introduced by Hillary Clinton in 2011 when she was the Secretary of State, there is a school of thought contending that the Black Sea region is rather part of a wider 'East–West Black Sea/Caspian Sea Corridor' where the emphasis is on 'transportation, trade, and energy linking Central Asia via Afghanistan to Pakistan, India, and China, re-connecting economies that have been torn apart by decades of war and rivalry'.²⁷ This implies less of a concern on value and norms and more of an unease about meeting the challenges of a post-2014 withdrawal from Afghanistan and the focus on the apparent much discussed Asian pivot of US foreign policy.²⁸

The Russian and Turkish Exceptionalisms

The growing twin exceptionalisms of Russia and Turkey, the region's key stakeholders other than the EU, present their own sets of concerns. In both the Russian and Turkish cases, the issue is not so much the pivot of these countries to the East but rather the stress on a different set of value systems.

Vladimir Putin's speech at the 2013 Valdai Conference is indicative of the Russian approach. Speaking on 19 September, Putin suggested that 'We are not the West' and

‘We know better ourselves.’ The stress on Russian identity and values and the invocation of morality and spirituality (including homophobic pronouncements) reflects a Russia pivoting inwards.²⁹ Dmitri Trenin captures today’s Russia well when he suggests that it is ‘a country in search of a nation.’³⁰ The strong-arm tactics used on neighbours either by forcing them to join the Eurasian Union (e.g. Armenia) or the trade wars or threats thereof with Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova and Lithuania coupled with the possible loss of Ukraine exacerbate the divide with the West. In his 17 April 2014 press conference, Putin took his argument even further when he elaborated on a New Russia concept:

I would like to remind you that what was called Novorossiia back in the tsarist days—Kharkov, Lugansk, Donetsk, Kherson, Nikolayev and Odessa—were not part of Ukraine back then ... The centre of that territory was Novorossiysk, so the region is called Novorossiia. Russia lost these territories for various reasons, but the people remained.³¹

Another concern for Moscow is that Germany cannot be considered a given anymore as its evolving foreign policy approach stresses an element of ‘inclusivity’ which Russia dislikes. This suggests a policy that includes dialogue with civil society, individuals and pro-democracy movements on top of the official contacts with the Kremlin. It clashes with the policy of exclusivity that Moscow favours. As Judy Dempsey writes, the Partnership for Modernization that is at the crux of EU–Russia relations today should not just focus on technological change but should also be about societal change.³²

In Turkey’s case, the ruling AKP seems to be pivoting towards creating its own normative space; its own 21st-century version of the ‘caliphate-light’ where Islam combined with economic diplomacy shapes its ties with other Muslim countries as it tries to place itself and its model of governance as the champion of modern Islamic values and modernity. It could be described as a type of ‘absentee exceptionalism.’³³ As a consequence, it further loosens its bonds from the West to which it has been anchored at least since 1947 (since the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan) and institutionally since joining the Atlantic Alliance in 1952. Cengiz Candar, a seasoned Turkish journalist, suggests that:

Turkey is behaving like a non-aligned country of the 1970s. Its foreign policy and concepts of security and defense resemble more that of a non-aligned nation instead of a NATO country. Can Turkey be a NATO member with a non-aligned foreign policy?³⁴

The growing apart from the EU also needs to be factored in as it reveals a fundamental lack of commitment towards integration.³⁵ This is reflected in Turkish public opinion polls where support for EU membership has been dropping steadily thereby reflecting a growing divide in convergence criteria in particular the ‘democracy standard’, which is all the more wanting.³⁶ For example, according to the 2013 Global Trends poll, 44 per cent of Turkish respondents were in favour of EU

membership in 2013, down from 48 per cent in 2012 and 73 per cent in 2004.³⁷ It seems nowadays that the integration process is measured in terms of visa liberalization for the growing Turkish middle class that wants to spend its money in EU countries; yet no systematic campaign to educate the public on accepting convergence criteria is in place. The theme of difference from Europe and European values is becoming all the more relevant and prevalent in academic, social and public discourse. Though the convergence between Turkey and the EU is undeniable, there seems to be a lack of understanding that belonging to the Union is more than simply the application of the four freedoms and that the lifting of the impediment of visa restrictions is simply not enough to transform and socialize Turkish society toward adopting EU norms and values.³⁸ The 2013 European Commission Progress Report on Turkey is clear in this regard. While it welcomes the announcement of the Democratization Package of 30 September, it decries the crushing of the Gezi Park protests of June 2014 which reflect 'the emergence of vibrant, active citizenry'.³⁹ Ziya Onis correctly writes that Turkey's foreign policy therefore shows signs of both continuity and rupture with some sort of 'axis shift' underway.⁴⁰

This is all coming to a head as both Turkey and Russia converge in their interests in particular in the Black Sea region by refusing to accept the role of the EU as an equal regional stakeholder while preferring the status quo and the limited definition of the region based on the six littoral states.⁴¹ The parallelism between their leaders also gives pause for concern whereby apart from their increasing authoritarianism, a majoritarian rather than pluralist interpretation of the ballot box is decidedly the only source of their political legitimacy.

The Way Forward

The first question that needs to be asked and answered is: 'Where's the beef?' It is especially relevant for the post-Vilnius EaP Summit whose mitigated results need to be strengthened with policies, objectives and vision by the EU if it wants to ensure for itself and for the countries of the region the role of a stabilizer. In other words, there is a need to address the roots of the 'either or' pendular policy fluctuations of the Eastern partners, especially the ones that have signed Association Agreements with the EU or those that would want to.⁴² The case for a clear-headed EU strategy is obvious as the calls to focus beyond Vilnius are growing. As Michael Emerson writes regarding the Vilnius Summit, if 'Russia was able to be the wrecker, the EU must have miscalculated somewhere along the line to have made this possible'.⁴³ The EU has many options at hand including the prospects of putting visa liberalization on the fast track;⁴⁴ providing unilateral DCFTA trade concessions; focusing on 'bottom-up' approaches which reach out directly to the civil societies of the EaP countries; the creation of an EU investment fund for EaP countries, among others.⁴⁵ As Christopher Browning and George Christou suggest, 'the ENP is about drawing borders and othering'.⁴⁶ This implies that for an EaP country, 'simply reproducing itself on its outside is no longer enough to ensure European stability in the face of a revanchist Russia, only membership will do'.⁴⁷ Hence, the challenge for the Union is to match expectations with policy outputs.

Linked to the above is a determined focus on democracy. The emergence of a democratic alternative in both Russia and Azerbaijan suggests the beginning of an incipient civil society. The strong showing by Alexei Navalny in the Moscow mayoral elections in September 2013 demonstrates that viable credible options to President Putin can emerge from civil society and the ballot box.⁴⁸ Similarly, in the October 2013 presidential elections in Azerbaijan, the emergence of a new political process was in evidence with the regime being 'confronted with a serious opposition' for the first time.⁴⁹ In Turkey's case as well, the centrality of the Gezi Park protests in the European Commission's 2013 Progress Report suggests that more needs to be done on the promotion of democracy. The issue and relevance of 'domesticating democracy' cannot be overstressed.

The need for a more proactive Germany in neighbourhood issues is vital both as a generator of a new Ostpolitik for the EU and one which focuses on the direct dialogue with the civil societies of the partner countries and Russia. The limits of the old Ostpolitik and its various permutations from Willy Brandt to Helmut Schmidt to Gerhard Schröder and to Frank-Walter Steinmeier are telling of the evolving relationship between Russia and Germany as well as Russia and Europe. These are also under scrutiny, as the rulebook of international conduct seems to be revised with the Russian actions in Ukraine. As Mischke and Umland suggest, '[i]f the West's confrontation with Russia deepens, Germany's traditional understanding of Ostpolitik, with its emphasis on conflict avoidance through constant communication, may have to be abandoned for good'.⁵⁰ The German question is just as fundamental as whether the USA will remain a European power albeit its pull to the East. Apart from its much needed leadership role, the question that arises is whether Germany can 'be kept inside the Western family of nations? The battle for a Europe whole and free is a battle over German *Wesbindung*'.⁵¹ That is to say, Germany's post-Second World War bonding with the West is now hostage to legacy and history be it the fear of a conflict with Russia and doubts about the 'modern Western capitalist society'.⁵² The question is whether Germany is willing to and can lead and act even against its own economic interests, which are intertwined with the postmodern European world order of stability and prosperity as well as with Russia as a trading partner.⁵³ The divergent positions between the USA and Germany on the strategic front, with regard to how to deal with Russia,⁵⁴ need to be bridged just as much as German leadership in ensuring a common front toward the East is sought out.

The EU also needs to find a *modus vivendi* between the promotion of its norms and values and thinking and acting geostrategically. Whether this can be achieved as Youngs and Pishchikova suggest through a 'value-based geostrategy'⁵⁵ or through the selective usage of the normative approach with the EaP countries that profess closer ties to the Union and turning a blind eye to protect its interests such as in the case of its energy deals with Azerbaijan is a subject for further discussion.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, the current approach is not dynamic enough and needs to be reconsidered. Giovanni Grevi's suggestion that '[s]trategic vision and policy flexibility should go hand in hand' is spot on.⁵⁷

The interplay between the EEAS and the member states is another area where remedial work needs to be done. Although, the EU's external action institutions have

improved their performance of late, the divergences between the foreign policy interests and preferences of the member states persist. The divide among the EU's new Eastern members with regard to addressing the EU's reaction toward Russia in light of the Ukraine crisis is a case in point as countries like Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Czech Republic have been eerily silent in juxtaposition to Poland and the Baltic states.⁵⁸ The same applies to the relationship between the EEAS and other European institutions such as the European Commission and the European Parliament.⁵⁹

In parallel, the EU needs to strengthen the efficacy of its CFSP and CSDP as these serve the role of ensuring 'stability, security, and prosperity' in the European continent irrespective of the process of integration. The Union needs a 'culture shift' in thinking in order to fortify its foreign policy. As Jan Techau suggests, '[t]he bottom line is that Europe's desired end state—freedom, peace, prosperity—is more important than the process by which it gets there'.⁶⁰ Its apparent weakness in these areas is reflected as a general limitation in its ability to deliver on the EaP. The December 2013 publication of a joint communication by the European Commission and the EEAS on a comprehensive approach to external conflict and crises is a good starting point.⁶¹ Although it does not address the real issue of the strategic imbalance within NATO, where the USA provides almost 75 per cent of the Alliance's military expenditure while only a handful of countries meet the agreed-upon 2 per cent of GDP.

Finally, with the passage of time and the mounting dilemmas regarding the efficacy of its neighbourhood policy, the EU needs to review its European Security Strategy (ESS), which dates back to December 2003.⁶² The ensuing 10 years have witnessed fundamental strategic changes in Europe and elsewhere yet deep divisions between key EU member states over defence and other priorities have made a strategic review a difficult endeavour. The 2008 Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy merely makes reference to the evolving security environment while failing 'to meet the mark as a strategy document'.⁶³ Whether the review leads to the drafting of a new security strategy or a wider inter-governmental strategic debate is not important as long as there is movement on this front.⁶⁴

Conclusion

The multiple identities of the Black Sea region and its stakeholders have been compounding its stability and development as the region's strategic environment is being constantly remodelled and challenged as the strategic debates keep changing reflecting the fortunes and priorities of the key stakeholders. The tugs of war between Russia and the EU and to a lesser extent between the EU and Turkey are at the core of the challenge of transforming the Black Sea region from being a 'grey zone of instability' to one of peace, freedom, security and prosperity. Similarly, the German question is also beginning to loom large within the Western camp. The drama surrounding the Vilnius EaP Summit of November 2013 for the heart and soul of the countries that are contested by both the Russian Federation and the EU can only suggest that a smarter, coherent and consistent approach is necessary in order to

avoid defining the countries of the region as the ‘in between’. The stakes are high for all concerned especially the Union which needs to add a political and strategic element to ensure that its impact is long-lasting and truly transformative as the civil societies of its neighbours would wish it to be. The Black Sea region may be down but should rational thinking and action prevail, it could rebound. This could only come about if the EU, which has been instrumental in the region-building exercise, could come up with a common narrative that meets the demands and expectations of its member states and institutions as well as those of its partners. The challenge can only be met by understanding and factoring in as well the, albeit different, twin exceptionalisms of Turkey and Russia. In other words, bridging the gap between ‘us-ness vis-à-vis other-ness’ remains the primordial concern for the Union if a new narrative and paradigm is to developed.⁶⁵

Notes

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- [26] See, for example, Svetlozar A. Andreev, 'Sub-regional cooperation and the expanding EU: the Balkans and the Black Sea area in a comparative perspective', *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 11(1), 2009, pp. 83–106. According to Panagiotou, the economic crisis has led to a stalling of the enlargement process for the Western Balkan countries to the point that their impatience runs thin as the demands for reform are great and this 'may lead to a backlash and a derailing of the negotiation process'. See Ritsa A. Panagiotou, 'Effects of the global economic crisis on South-east Europe', *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 12(2), 2010, pp. 192–193.
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- [30] Dmitri Trenin, 'A country in search of a nation', *Eurasia Outlook*, Carnegie Moscow Center, 4 November 2013, <<http://carnegie.ru/eurasiaoutlook/?fa=53488>> (accessed 15 March 2014).
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- [34] Cengiz Candar, 'Turkey goes ballistic for China', *Turkey Pulse*, *Al-Monitor*, 10 October 2013, <<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/10/turkey-nato-eu-china-ballistic-missile-system-lockheed.html>> (accessed 14 March 2014).
- [35] On the Europeanization debate among elites in Turkey, see Başak Alpan and Thomas Diez, 'The devil is in the "domestic"? European integration studies and the limits of Europeanization in Turkey', *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 16(1), 2014, pp. 1–10; Alper Kaliber, 'Europeanization in Turkey: in search of a new paradigm of modernization', *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 16(1), 2014, pp. 30–46.
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- [37] German Marshall Fund of the United States, *Transatlantic Trends Key Findings 2013*, 2013, p. 46, <<http://trends.gmfus.org/files/2013/09/TT-Key-Findings-Report.pdf>> (accessed 20 April 2014).
- [38] Emre Erdogan has written a brilliant comment on the xenophobic tendencies of Turkish society and their impact on the country's perception of where it belongs. See Emre Erdogan, 'The unbearable heaviness of being a Turkish citizen', *On Turkey*, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 21 February 2014, <http://www.gmfus.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files_mf/1393000603Erdogan_UnbearableHeaviness_Feb14.pdf> (accessed 15 March 2014).
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- [41] For more on Turkey and Russia's Black Sea policies, see Mustafa Aydin, 'Geographical blessing versus geopolitical curse: great power security agendas for the Black Sea region and a Turkish alternative', *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 9(3), 2009, pp. 271–285; Nadia Alexandrova-Arbatova, 'Regional cooperation in the Black Sea area in the context of EU–Russia relations', *ICBSS Xenophon Paper*, 5, ICBSS, Athens, 2008; Sergey Markedonov and Natalya Ulchenko, 'Turkey and Russia: an evolving relationship', Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 19 August 2011, <<http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/08/19/turkey-and-russia-evolving-relationship/4sy3>> (accessed 15 March 2014). See also Mustafa Aydin's contribution to this issue.
- [42] See Richard Youngs and Kateryna Pishchikova, *Smart Geostrategy for the Eastern Partnership*, Carnegie Europe, November 2013, <<http://www.carnegieeurope.eu/2013/11/14/smart-geostrategy-for-eastern-partnership/gtqr>> (accessed 15 March 2014).
- [43] Michael Emerson, 'After the Vilnius fiasco: who is to blame? What is to be done?', *CEPS Essay*, 8, 21 January 2014, p. 2, <<http://www.ceps.be/book/after-vilnius-fiasco-who-blame-what-be-done>> (accessed 17 April 2014).
- [44] Since 28 April 2014, Moldova's citizens have benefitted from the use of visa liberalization procedures.
- [45] For a number of policy proposals beyond Vilnius, see Iana Dreyer and Nicu Popsecu, 'A solidarity package for the eastern partners', *ISS Issue Alert*, European Union Institute for Security Studies, September 2013; Laurynas Kasčiūnas, Vytautas Keršanskas, Kristina Vaičiūnaitė and Balázs Jarábik, 'Eastern partnership after Vilnius: a mission accomplished, mounting tasks ahead', Eastern Europe Studies Centre, 8 November 2013; Laure Delcour and Kataryna Wolczuk, 'Beyond the Vilnius Summit: challenges for deeper EU integration with Eastern Europe', *EPC Policy Brief*, 31 October 2013, <http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_3889_beyond_the_vilnius_summit.pdf> (accessed 15 March 2014).
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- [52] *Ibid.*
- [53] On the special relationship between Germany and Russia, see Alexander Rahr, 'Germany and Russia: a special relationship', *The Washington Quarterly*, 30(2), 2007, pp. 137–145.
- [54] See, for example, Hannes Adomeit, 'U.S. and German policies toward Russia: common approaches or bone of contention?', American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 29 April 2014, <<http://www.aicgs.org/issue/u-s-and-german-policies-toward-russia-common-approaches/>> (accessed 29 April 2014).
- [55] Youngs and Pishchikova, *op. cit.*

- [56] The energy security debate has been consciously left out of this paper in order to put the stress on the 'normative' aspects of the EU approach towards its East.
- [57] Giovanni Grevi, 'Re-defining the EU's neighbourhood', in Giovanni Grevi and Daniel Keohane (eds), *Challenges for European Foreign Policy in 2014: The EU's Extended Neighbourhood*, Fride, Madrid, 2014, p. 19.
- [58] See Judy Dempsey, 'The EU's flawed Eastern enlargement', *Strategic Europe*, Carnegie Europe, 2 May 2014, <<http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/?fa=55492>> (accessed 3 May 2014).
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- [60] Techau, 'Will EU foreign policy save the integration process?', op. cit.
- [61] See European Commission and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the EU's comprehensive approach to external conflict and crises, JOIN(2013) 30 final, Brussels, 11 December 2013.
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