

Tatiashvili, Nona

Article

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THE EAP: A FAILURE OF THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY OR SHARING A POWER BALANCE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD?

Nona TATIASHVILI*

Abstract: *The present paper analyses achievements and challenges of the EaP in the prism of EU-Russia asymmetric energy interdependence, as the major factor affecting the successful implementation of the Eastern partnership. To identify whether energy interdependence is the main sphere of interest in the EaP neighbourhood, where EU-Russia common interests intersect in one point or is it a sharing a power balance in “common neighbourhood”?. The research paper reviews major policy documents of the ENP/EaP, in order to analyze to what extent is policy coherent/incoherent towards partner countries. Moreover, the paper evaluates the European neighbourhood external policy instruments (the ENP/EaP) from the perspective of three prioritised countries of the Eastern partnership: Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine, including the analysis of the effectiveness of proposed incentives under the ENP/EaP, as sufficient instruments for successful implementation of the Eastern partnership, in the presence of unpredictable external veto player.*

Keywords: ENP/EaP; Energy interdependence; Russian Influence; the EaP countries’ attitude

Introduction

The present paper analyses achievements and challenges of the EaP in the prism of EU-Russia asymmetric energy interdependence (Keohane and Nye, 2001, pp.13-16), as the major factor affecting the implementation of the Eastern partnership (Proedru, 2007; Casier 2011). Since 2004, initiating of the ENP, in the purpose of creating a stable neighbourhood closer to its borders, and European policy makers’ ambitious goal to combine “a ring of neighbours” became reason of instability. Moreover, despite of conditionality based attractive policy incentives proposed to partner countries within the framework of the ENP-EaP, introduction of the policy transformed region into “economic and diplomatic battlefield”(Lo`wenhardt, 2005). In particular, policy became subject of acute discourse in two confusing dimension. Firstly, due to coherence/incoherence of the policy itself, including conditionality based external incentives offered to partner countries, which was neither sufficient nor attractive for some of the EaP members. Second, the EU-Russia strategic partnership raised vague questions about the Eastern partnership, whether this is a real failure of the European neighbourhood policy or sharing a power balance in the neighbourhood? To answer these questions paper identifies whether energy interdependence is the main sphere of interest in the EaP neighbourhood where EU-

* PhD Candidate TSU, TTU, School of Law, e-mail: nonachka.17@hotmail.com

Russia common interests intersect in one point or is it a sharing a power balance in “common neighbourhood”? In this respect, study reviews major policy documents the ENP/EaP, analysing to what extent is policy coherent/incoherent (Korosteleva, 2011) towards partner countries, in particular, three most prioritised countries of the Eastern partnership from the EU perspective, namely, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. On the contrary, it is worth to evaluate from the perspective of those countries’ whether the incentives offered by the ENP/EaP can be concluded effective (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005, pp.10-17) for successful implementation of the Eastern partnership in the presence of unpredictable external veto player Russia (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005, pp.10-17).

On the long path since implementation the ENP/EaP, the development of ambitious external policy of the European Union, especially, after Russia’s self-exclusion from the ENP, transformed EU-Russia relations into constant conflict in the common neighbourhood (Delcours and Kostanyan, 2014; Bechev, 2015). In particular, EU-Russia relationship, which is based on four common spaces (European Commission, PCA, 1997) points to Russia’s impressive role, as it’s the third great trade partner of the EU, and provides with energy supply. Thus, the EU’s trade partnership for Russia is significantly profitable as it makes considerable contributions in Russia’s economy.

Apart from economic interdependence, external security policy area can be distinguished out of common spaces, which outlines EU strategy in the frame of enforced common cooperation of Russia’s engagement in the adjacent, aiming at stabilizing existing regional conflicts in Moldova (Transnistria) and the South Caucasus (Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh). Aforementioned arguments about EU-Russia cooperation raise considerable confusion on this style of cooperation. Moreover, despite of Russia’s self-exclusion from the ENP, this particular relationship equips Russia with the same profitable presence, and from external security perspective legally justifies its engagement in the adjacent. Therefore, this specific partnership arise question about sharing a power balance in the region. Prominent scholar Waltz assumes that “states act on the basis of self-help: They operate with the aim of survival and their interactions with other states reflect their desire to survive” (Waltz, 2010, pp. 103-128), but Great powers often struggle to gain power and strive for hegemony (Mearsheimer, 2014, pp. 29-54). Though, distinct from these assumptions, Keohane and Nye suggest that asymmetric interdependence can be concluded as a source of power. Indeed, no one can assure whether this type of interdependence lead countries to reliable cooperation or confrontation (Keohane and Nye, 2001, pp.14-16). Economic relations shall be also determined as the major cause of asymmetric interdependence. However, the issue of the ENP-EaP implementation arise contradictory statements that justify Russia’s aggressive activities in the “shared neighbourhood”. Mearsheimer argues that “*the West had been moving into Russia’s backyard and threatening its core strategic interests*” (Mearsheimer, 2014).

On the basis of given arguments, it should be concluded that from the EU initiated EaP as the “intervention” in post –soviet space was perceived by Russia as provocative action addressed to the violation of power balance which forced it urgently take appropriate measures for “restoring balance of power” in the neighbourhood.

1. From the ENP to the EaP-Challenges and perspectives

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) launched in 2003-2004, as a consequence of successful “big-bang” enlargement, transformed into new institutional design into its substitute the EaP, launched in 2009, which explicitly constitute its ambitious goal “to prevent the emergence of a new dividing line between the enlarged EU and its neighbours” (European Commission, 2003).

Through the ENP the European Union proposed its southern and eastern neighbouring countries a joint cooperation that would promote further economic integration and political association, grounded on democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and social cohesion, as well as market economy access. In order to achieve this ambitious goal the European Union supported countries in four basic platform, which envisaged financial assistance, economic integration and access to EU markets, easier travel to the EU – 3.2 m Schengen visas were issued to citizens, and in particular to students from ENP countries in 2012 and technical and policy support.

Notwithstanding to its great effort, the policy is characterized to be incoherent (Korosteleva, 2014) based on the principle of conditionality that unlike from Baltic countries envisaged to offer partner countries "sharing everything with the Union but institutions" (Prodi, 2002; Christou, 2010). The ENP, which was grounded on “common interests and on values — democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and social cohesion”, actually, the main objective laid beneath the ENP was “politically stable neighbourhood” closer to its borders. However, instead of stability in the adjacent, implementation of the ENP became reason of great political insurgence in the contested neighbourhood. In this respect, the value for the European aspiration was assessed to be very expensive for member countries, which was further reflected in secessionist, conflict regions, for instance, Transnistria still remains an obstacle for Moldovan republic which prevents now the EaP Association agreement signatory state transformation to western orbit, and instead helps to return it Russian sphere of influence. Ukraine’s crisis (Bechev, 2015; Radchuk, 2011) and creeping occupation in Georgian territories is the great dilemma for successful implementation of the EaP, despite the EU’s ambitious decision to prevent Russia as main “scenario-setter” of the EaP. Thus, prioritized states of Eastern Partnership countries pay a great tribute for their choice of European integration. Moreover, ENP-EaP became a subject of sharp criticism amidst prominent scholars, as a failure of

EU's external policy, whose concomitant always was Russian factor as a sole constant impeding actor.

It became clear that this joint initiative obviously failed to accomplish its overarching goal towards building more stable and democratic neighbourhood (Delcour and Wolzhuk, 2015). Russia-Georgia war in 2008 had decisive impact for rethinking the future of ENP as main progressive external policy of the EU in the wider neighbourhood. Unless, Russia was considered as a key strategic partner (Delcours and Kostanyan, 2014) of the EU in successful implementation of the ENP in the region, 2008 August war revealed that "enlarged European union" proposal about common neighbourhood was neither acceptable nor desirable for "Sovereign player". The latter became the key factor of implementation of the new institutional/policy redesign in the European external policy agenda.

In 2009, the EaP, a more comprehensive, a new partnership instrument has been proposed to its eastern and South Caucasian neighbours to provide stability, good governance, and economic development near its neighbourhood. Distinct from the ENP, EaP was proposed to six member countries Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine.

The main objective of the joint Swedish-Polish ambitious proposal initiated in 2009, Prague, was "to create the necessary conditions to accelerate political association and further economic integration between the European Union and interested partner countries" (Council of the European Union, 2009). As commissioner Štefan Füle commented: "The Eastern Partnership, a key policy initiative in the Neighbourhood, aims to bring our eastern neighbours closer to the European Union. Drawing on the EU's unique range of instruments, we are seeking to achieve a new, innovative style of partnership. We want to engage further in cooperation with our neighbours to support their democratic transformation. We encourage reforms in key policy areas. We offer stronger links of political association and economic integration, adapted to our partners' wishes and capacities. EU funding channelled via budget support programmes is an important tool to achieve these goals."

To achieve the overarching goals set by the EaP, partner countries had to implement a wide range of political and economic reforms with approximation of their national legislation to the EU *acquis communautaire*. In this respect, special importance is given to four thematic platforms outlined in the Policy: democracy, good governance and stability, sustainable economic development, energy security and people-to-people contacts and six flagship initiatives to strengthen its ties in the neighbourhood (Council of the European Union, 2009).

Budget support is provided to five partner countries (except of Belarus), which is basically outlined for accomplishing political and socio-economic reforms set out in bilateral Association agreements and DCFTA, which represent the main policy instruments vis-à-vis to EaP members,

Moreover, Association agreements provide partner countries with DCFTA: 'where the positive effects of trade and investment liberalization will be strengthened by regulatory approximation leading to convergence with EU laws and standards' (Council of the European Union, 2009). In the end, the EU and partner countries said that the EaP 'will also take gradual steps towards full visa liberalization as a long-term goal for individual partner countries on a case-by-case basis' (Council of the European Union, 2009). However, in the light of attractive propositions via AAs and DCFTA, likewise the ENP, the Eastern partnership caused although quite more challenges in the shared neighbourhood, and particularly, to the EU through this neighbourhood, especially in terms of energy security, while the EU's endeavour of energy diversification through various transit routes, including the ENP /EaP partner countries. Energy security is the main priority area implemented in both EU external policy instruments, ENP (European Commission (2004) and , in particular: "The Eastern Partnership aims to strengthen energy security through cooperation with regard to long-term stable and secure energy supply and transit, including through better regulation, energy efficiency and more use of renewable energy sources" (Council of the European Union, 2009).

Summing up the given arguments, two key factors should be outlined that crucially affected on successful implementation EaP as a substitute of the ENP: firstly, EU-Russia energy interdependence, EU-Russia strategic partnership that is based on common spaces as agreed in 2003, outlines energy dialogue between EU and Russia one of the spaces out of four, and external security policy area enables legal engagement of Russia in the neighbourhood as a key partner in developing ENP-EaP, and conflict stabilization. To conclude, this type of asymmetric interdependence which has been transformed into confrontation instead of cooperation (Koehyne and Nye, 2001, pp.13-16) considering recent great power actions exerted by Russia in the EaP countries definitely makes questionable EU-Russia partnership in already contested neighbourhood and simultaneously affects the EaP successful development.

2. Great expectations vs. Unpredictable incentives

European Union European Neighbourhood policy mainly stands on the policy of conditionality vis-à-vis to non-member states (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005, pp.10-17), Indeed, distinction between CEEC and EaP countries apparently vivid. Here, the major problem concerns to the designing of same conditionality policy with the same external incentives and unpredictable domestic costs, international veto players, which became clear since the launch of the ENP in 2004, described as the most powerful external policy instrument. However, due to coincidence of internal and external factors this powerful European external policy caused more challenges than positive for

the partner countries and the EU itself, firstly, it became necessary to rethink the ENP, in particular, with regard to those six post-soviet countries later comprised in the EaP.

The main dilemma of policy redesign since the ENP to EaP stands in the policy developed towards each partner countries, but “does one fit for all”? Since the great enlargement a newly emerged ENP policy proposed to eastern member countries is sought to be a great success of European external policy, but unlike to Balkan countries the ambitious policy did not envisage membership objectives for partner countries, and the same policy has been designed for EaP. Moreover, by contrast, EaP countries have been classified in different categories, neither privileged nor less prioritized, hence, three countries Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia are amongst privileged ones.

ENP/EaP external incentives model of rationalist bargaining model (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005, pp.10-17) puts the policy doubtful- “does one fit all?” The question can be analysed in two approaches, the first, EU conditionality did not appear acceptable for all EaP member countries, strategy of reactive reinforcement was not attractive for Azerbaijan, as its broadly known it’s a desirable and would be a crucial partner in terms of energy sector for the EU in terms of energy diversification, hence, no agreement has been achieved between them. Belarus and Armenia is absolutely far away from the EaP discussion due to its clear-cut position towards Russia, instead of signing AAs and DCFTA, it joined Eurasian Union in September 2013 before Vilnius Summit.

However, a “golden” Carrot-stick model quite impressively has been implemented in those privileged countries of Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. “Three Ms” –s Money, Market, and Mobility (Cadier, 2010) successfully was introduced in these countries domestic and foreign policy without “upsetting domestic equilibrium” (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005, pp.10-17). Thus, conditionality based reinforcement rewards encompassed for EaP countries that comprise to accept the EU rules and conditions, reforms in political, economic, and democracy, including energy field which envisages joining in Energy Community, and harmonization of domestic legislation in all aforementioned fields to *acquis communautaire*, actually means unconditional approve of EU set rules.

Accordingly, proposed external incentives model, which is considered as the most significant rewards for non-member countries and comprise assistance and institutional ties differs from trade and cooperative agreements via association agreements to full membership. Moreover, institutional ties also consider market access to the EU which finally means increased gain from trade, investments, and participation in EU decision making. In the light of external incentive model, research paper, alongside to other issues, identifies how the EU proposed incentives are adopted in those privileged EaP partner countries, or whether this incentives are sufficient for both the EU and

partner countries to avoid institutional redesign, as it occurred in 2009 with the need of establishing new policy instrument, since 2004 of the launch of ENP.

Institutional ties, which is represented via AAs and DCFTA provides partner countries with wide range of financial aid for the implementation of particular reforms through European investment Bank and European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD); The most significant value of signing DCFTA, which in turn requires immense work for the implementation of appropriate legislative package and technical harmonization with the EU *acquis communautaire*); Finally, the last incentive ensured by the EaP, visa liberalization is considered the most crucial incentive in the process of integration (Cadier, 2010).

Moldova's progress towards its way of Europeanization can be considered as achieved mission, it ranks first place among privileged countries, which already signed AAs and DCFTA and received the best reinforcement reward, a visa free regime (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005, pp.10-17), and already a member of Energy Community, The rate of democracy according to the EU official appraisal is at normal rate, but deep analysis clarifies country's resent attitude towards the rapprochement of the EU, firstly, Russian factor, to be a second great trade partner for Moldova, conditions Moldova's energy dependence on Russia. Moreover, with energy import and due to its geographical location, when Moldova also is a transit country that provides supplying of Russian gas to Romania and Ukraine makes country absolutely depended on its neighbour. Second, on the Contrary to its positive democratic benchmark which was appraised by the EU after its elections, National democratic Institute survey of 2015 reveals that only 40% of Moldovan citizens support European integration, while 44% are in favor of Eurasian integration (NDI, 2015; Kostanyan, 2016) and other discrepancies, namely, reflected in prolonged "frozen" conflicts in Transnistria and Gagauzia, like Georgia and Ukraine, hampers the country's real integration with the EU.

Georgia's is amidst of privileged partners which signed AAs and DCFTA in 2014, legal acts and regulations enshrined into the treaties is the clear-cut political choice of Georgia on the way ahead of transformation to west. According to most scholars and experts it successfully managed to harmonize a full package of domestic legislation with EU *acquis*, indeed, there is a wide range of legal acts, including energy security regulations, as Georgia is not a member of Energy Community yet, which is obligatory for further cooperation under the AAs and DCFTA multi and bi-lateral agreements. VLAP is discussed for the nearest future. Indeed, it should be noted that country was more pro-western oriented during Mikheil Saakashvili's office. In 2012 a newly elected government Georgian Dream firmly confirmed following of its European choice. Indeed, despite of well-established will about integration with EU, situation really changed, in particular, billionaire B. Ivanishvili's government has been criticized for his ambivalent, double approach foreign policy, stalk

between western sounded ideas and second eye glared to Russia. Moreover, from this outlook government is sharply criticized for its inconsistent, irrelevant attitude and work in harmonization of appropriate legal acts required under AAs and DCFTA. In particular, constant internal political confrontation between governmental parties in parliament, coming elections, and thinking constantly on retaining their titles, seats in future parliament, than adopting proper legal acts, really makes the integration process questionable, alongside to increasing Russian factor. However, unlike to Moldova, the resent NDI survey confirms that 79 % is aware, while 69 % positively approves signing the AAs and DCFTA with the EU in the aim of improvement Georgia's economic condition, when benefits from joining to NATO at the same time is approved by 38 %. Accordingly, it should be noted that out of this partner countries Georgia contributes greatly with its arm forces in the international Afghanistan under the aegis of NATO. This survey explicitly shows that country is more pro-western despite of external obstacles and unpredictable interventions, and ceaseless conflicts in its breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Case of Ukraine is more complicated comparing to rest of the two partner countries discussed in the research paper. Country is particularly desirable partner, both in terms of trade and energy security, for both the EU and Russia. Ukraine defined its political choice in early 1998s, since then despite of numerous obstacles (Stegniy, 2011) it firmly continued overcoming challenges to the European integration. Unlike, the "success story" of the EaP, the republic of Moldova, negotiations between EU-Ukraine Association agreement and DCFTA, in 2013 during the ex-president office, under Russian hard pressure over the country led Ukraine to Maidan, which alongside to European integration, brought more challenges than positive to the country, namely, annexation of Crimea, and ongoing unrest in Donbas. In addition to political instability, internal destabilization inside the country deters its transformation to Europe. In 2013 at Vilnius summit Yanukovich's proposal on trilateral signing of the EU-Ukraine association agreement has been harshly criticized and rejected. However, Russian pressure is harder than it seems. Association agreement in economic part, DCFTA part have been signed in two part within the framework of tripartite EU-Ukraine-Russia negotiations on signing DCFTA, as a result of Russia-EU-Ukraine complicated negotiations. Consequently, In 2014, political part of AAs was signed and the economic part of DCFTA, in particular, signing of trade related provisions have been postponed until 31 December of 2015. Furthermore, current war, in addition to lack of professional staff, like Georgia, and instability impedes to implement proper reforms in this direction of Europeanization. Moreover, Russia's hard power, including "soft power elements" obviously remains a great rival against EU's normative power. From this outlook it's unpredictable to make positive comments about Ukraine's successful integration.

Summing up the brief analysis of the EaP partner countries, it's vivid that since the launch of its implementation, in line with the achievements that was ensured with the ratification of three remained partner countries, which indicates that the policy explicitly can be considered incoherent, whereas, in 2009 its ambitious goal addressed to a new initiative "a more for more". Apparently, the conditionality policy did not appear suitable for all, because the external incentives were less attractive for other three countries. Furthermore, this can be acknowledged not only less coherent as most of the scholars argue (Korosteleva, 2014) but the Given arguments clarify that the "Carrot-stick" based conditionality policy can be considered as incoherent due to less favourable "sticks", and indifferent attitude from Azerbaijan, Belarus and Armenia who apparently defined their attitude towards the way of European integration. Moreover, two latter countries joined Eurasian economic Union under Russian hard pressure, this assumptions enables us to conclude that more attractive external incentives should be offered while intergovernmental bargaining process, in consideration of domestic costs alongside to external veto players. A new ambitious partnership designed for gathering "a wide range of countries" from closer neighbourhood, points to failure, even in case of "privileged" partners, due to united trilateral and interdependent trade relations amid EU-Russia and Ukraine, and constant international pressure, reflected in instability and conflicts. In addition, to the fact that unlike CEE countries membership is entirely exempted from this policy, EU gradually implements new policy instruments, revised "A new ENP 2015" addressed to these countries, new phases of negotiations began with Armenia, gives a clear explanation of the failure of the EaP.

Finally, it can be concluded that as Schimmelfenning (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005, pp.10-17) argues effectiveness of political conditionality consists of three major interdependent conditions: favourable external incentives, size and speed of domestic adoption costs, and credibility of political conditions. Based on this argument, the EaP should be defined that in overall, condition of favourability of external incentives, alongside to its speed finally negatively affected on the successful implementation of the EaP.

3. Russian influence-struggle for gaining the lost influence

Ongoing political processes in the Eastern partnership countries, namely, crisis in Ukraine, ceaseless creeping occupation in Georgia's breakaway region "South Ossetia" that lasts for years, explicitly indicates that EU-Russian relationship from strategic partnership changed into confrontation in contested neighbourhood (Haukkala, 2015). In 2004, launch the ENP as an EU's aspiration to bring its eastern neighbouring countries "closer to the Union". Russia was exempted from this ambitious proposal, but instead as aforementioned discussion crystallizes, Russia's role in

successful development of ENP in common neighbourhood from EU side that sought to be more ambitious, actually raised a question: how did Russia itself perceive this ambitious proposal from the EU to cooperate in common neighbourhood and contribute in developing of common interests? As Schimelfenning (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005, pp.10-17) argues the “EU’s acquis conditionality in the neighborhood also is characterized with lack of weakness because of credibility of the market access incentives...this argument is also true for energy exporting countries of the region... with this decision EU competes with other powerful providers of external governance, namely Russia.” (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005, pp.10-17). This approach is enshrined in the replicated policy of the ENP, in the EaP.

The launch of the ENP elucidated that EU-Russian relationship have been transformed into rivalry over shared neighbourhood. Furthermore, Russia perceived the launch of the ENP as an invasion in his “former ownership”. Russia’s shadowy presence became a concomitant invincible obstacle that constantly impeded economic and political development set by the ENP in the region. The ENP policy partner countries’ ambitious wish about transformation to western orbit, was a political alarm for Russia (MacFarlane and Menon, 2014), that later become reason of great political insurgence in the contested neighbourhood, especially in Ukraine and Georgia, which still lasts.

Two divergent model of EU-Russia action can be distinguished while discussing their approach towards Eastern Partnership countries. EU and Russia drastically differ in their action as policy makers, especially their perception about sovereignty differs greatly, as one of the most important can be distinguished: “coercive and punitive measures of control and surveillance (“power over lives and deaths”) (Makarychev, 2014); this assumption crystallizes that Russia does not acknowledge “common interests” in common neighbourhood” proposed by the European Union. Moreover, this offer was considered by Russian empire as the “political slap in the eyes”. The appropriate reaction perceived by its hegemonic nature was to oppose EU’s normative power in the EaP neighbourhood in two dimensions, in addition to “soft power”, its divergent expressions of hard power, sheds the light of attitude towards the EaP countries, namely, in order to gain the lost influence in post –soviet countries, its coercive and punitive actions diverse from country to country, in particular, trade sanctions –embargos from various products, restriction over exported energy resources, and the major factor –Eurasian Union as an attempt of regeneration of old dissolved USSR, to return its ex-members to old soviet orbit under the protectorate of “Sovereign Russian Empire”. The second major reason under this attitude is trade relationship. In the process of Europeanization economic development is one of the main priority areas of the EU- EaP cooperation which means that transformation of these countries to the western orbit will unconditionally cause the loss of trade partners for Russia, in particular, especially, it refers to Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova (Radchuk,

2011). Russia –Georgia war in 2008, is another confirmation against the EU launch external policy instrument of the ENP, in the aim of proposing “common interest” in “common neighbourhood” which gained to this ambitious plan an ambiguity in successful development. Consequently, in Georgian breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, in addition to conflict escalation, Russia every day violates territorial integrity and sovereignty of the republic of Georgia with creeping occupation, continues “delivering presents” to Georgian citizens with Russian passports. Russia-Georgia war was followed by the Ukraine gas crisis in 2009 caused over price dispute, in fact, it can be characterized as the next political message from Russia sent to the European Union, as the Ukraine is the main transit country for Russian gas through Europe.

Vilnius eastern partnership summit that was held in November 2013, hoping to welcome four EaP member countries Georgia, Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine, to sign the Association Agreements and Deep and Comprehensive Trade Agreements, surprisingly the *finalité* of the summit have been decided in “Russian set scenario”. Consequently, a new partnership that aimed “*a new perspective to citizens in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine; ...Ultimately Europe and the Eastern partners can only flourish as an integrated continent without dividing lines*” got the most negative impact on Russian government, already bored with the European “normative power”, and enduringly intervening in its sphere of influence and stimulating eastern partner countries to go ahead in the partnership building process. Accordingly, Only the EU-Republic of Moldova and EU-Georgia Association Agreements has been initialled, including the DCFTAs. Russia managed to prevent Armenia from signing the Association Agreement, which in early September joined the Eurasian union instead. Pressure on Moldova was more strictly outlined in two approaches, firstly, Russia put an embargo on Moldovan wine (T.J., 2013) and second, simultaneously sent a clear-cut message to its government that Moldova would wait freezing in winter (Haukkala, 2015), as it greatly depended on Russian gas. These economic sanctions can be supposed a joke comparing to Ukrainian president proposal made on the Vilnius 2013 Summit (Delcoure and Wolczuk, 2013), on tripartite trade relationship agreement between EU-Russia and Ukraine.

In conclusion, based on aforementioned arguments, and prominent scholars’ assumptions, it can be concluded that Russian influence in the aim of discourage the EaP implementation is of high prominence, and no one can predict when the Russia shall exert its great power to constitute its influence in the wider world.

4. Energy security: key point of EU-Russia interests' intersection in EaP countries

Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye state “asymmetric interdependence can be a source of power” where “there is no guarantee that military means will be more effective than economic one to achieve a given purpose” (Keohane and Nye, 2001, pp.13-16). Russia is the major supplier for the European Union as well as its EaP partner countries, namely, Ukraine, Moldova, and Armenia. Consequently, its military and economic pressure through energy security relations severely affects the EU and its partner countries. EU-Russia strategic partnership could not deter Russia to violate asymmetric interdependence and bargain with its power resource, energy. Energy in 2014 (Ukraine –Russia gas crisis, 2009), made the EU vulnerable twofold strategically and economically, solely Russia’s share for 2013 of energy export in the EU about 34 % of total imports of crude oil and about 49 % of total imports of natural gas in gaseous state (EUROSTAT, 2014), dependence rate varies from country to country according to their energy assumption. On the contrary, analysing the statistics of the Russian export of petroleum oils in overall is 70.5%, while the share of the EU in the total estimated exports of Russia for natural gas in gaseous state is 70.9 %. Through the statistical analysis it is vivid that over one third of Russia’s exports of coal and peat are also bound for the EU which is great revenue share of Russia’s economy (EUROSTAT, 2014).

Energy consumption substitutes that the EU is the largest market for Russian energy, that finally identifies the interdependence of both actors, as Russia’s high sensitivity makes it to use its resources for gaining power, in terms of controlling his dependant (Casier, 2011). On the other hand, the European Union set the main objective to mitigate Russian energy dependence via diversification of energy sources on imports alongside to rest four issues, basically concentrated in new energy document that highlights the EU energy strategy, which combines diversifying sources of imports, increasing domestic production, facilitating an integrated energy market, improving energy efficiency, and promoting renewable (European Commission, 2014, p.17).

According to assessment of the international Energy Agency the European union’s energy consumption will increase by 2030 by 81%, that’s why third countries’ integration into European energy market is on the EU’s agenda, including signing of different agreements, to reduce its energy dependence bypassing Russia via diverse pipelines (Kohen, 2009, pp.91-109).

Energy security is singled out as the issue of great significance implemented in different legal documents of the ENP-EaP, in particular, after Russia-Ukraine Gas crisis it was high time for the EU to reduce Russia’s high prominence as Energy supplier for the EU. Energy security was defined as the main priority area of the EaP, which provides that: ‘the Eastern Partnership aims to strengthen energy security through cooperation with regard to long-term stable and secure energy supply and

transit, including through better regulation, energy efficiency and more use of renewable energy sources.” In this respect, energy flagship initiative occupies significant place which envisages accomplishing of three main objectives: to facilitate the trade of gas and electricity between the EU and the six Eastern European partner countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine), to improve energy efficiency and to expand the use of renewable energy sources. The EaP which was perceived as “empty project” from Russia, energy security defined the cleavage amid EU-Russia more sharply evident.

Nevertheless, Eastern partnership arose different statements, EU leaders admitted energy security as “indispensable”, Mirek Topolanek, made a hopeful statement in 2009: “I believe that it is indispensable to fill this framework with concrete projects, e.g. in the fields of energy or economy, as soon as possible” (Topolánek, 2009).

The Eastern partnership summit, which was followed by crucial Southern Corridor Summit, particularly emphasized significance of “diversifying EU’s energy sources and energy routes...” “The context of this Summit is very clear. Our strategic priority in the EU is to enhance energy security in particular by diversifying EU’s energy sources and energy routes... The Eastern Partnership is indeed a historic; I use the word historic, summit” (European Commission, Barroso, 2009). In the light of EU-Russia energy interdependence this was final step that irritated bear, Lavrov declared “The Eastern Partnership is an EU attempt to expand its "sphere of influence" in the quest for hydrocarbons, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said, in Moscow's first major broadside against the new policy” (Pop, 2009).

Indeed, while discussing energy security issue as the key factor of contradiction of EU –Russia interest, and “sphere of influence”, it should be noted that from the EaP perspective “diversifying EU’s energy sources and energy routes” comprise more crucial factors for this issue, like transit countries of the EaP, such as Moldova, Ukraine, in the south, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, the later can be concluded as an alternative major energy supplier in the context of the EaP. However, in every second hopeful point in successful implementation of the EaP, Russia’ shadowy presence hampers this process, while discussing the diverse energy projects that should prospectively alter EU’s greater dependence on Russia, it always manages to disrupt plans, the very example is Russia-Georgian war, during this war, Russia seized Baku–Supsa pipeline in 2008, the line that from Azerbaijan delivers oil to western market through Georgia’s Black sea port of Supsa. It is a message to both EaP countries of Georgia and Azerbaijan, which on the other hand has Nagorno-Karaback conflict, and finally, Russia implicates serious leverages not only through these countries, affecting their economy, seizing territories of Georgia, but also cutting the gas to Ukraine , secessionist conflicts in Moldova, frightening also with cutting off energy supply, obviously indicates the EU on its political tool,

energy security, that has led EU-Russia interdependence from mutual dependence to acute confrontation.

To conclude, disrupting the construction of alternative pipeline routes that would reduce EU dependence on Russia, for whom it's the most profitable huge market, alternative routes: Caspian, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, and Baku-Supsa pipelines, as well as the rest, Russia impedes the EU's endeavour to diversify energy security via diverse energy routes.

Conclusions

In spite of great endeavours of the European Union, the ENP could not be acknowledged as comprehensive policy instrument, regardless the commitments ensured, and contributions proposed to the ENP countries. Indeed, it worth to note that European Union paid a great tribute in economic integration of partner countries via financial assistance, indeed, less attention has paid to the security issue, as "stable neighbourhood" became the field of battle, the establishment of the ENP has become the root of political instability in many partner countries due to external actors, discouraging countries' transformation to the European Union.

While analysing Path from ENP to EaP, the latter can be concluded as the enhanced replica of its predecessor. Association agreements and DCFTA propose more concrete steps towards the economic integration and political stability, outlining significant four platforms, based on democracy, human rights, and rule of law. DCFTA, on the other hand, it proposes access to internal market that will gradually allow the partner countries rapprochement to the European community market. From this argument the EU with closer cooperation and active involvement of partner countries should finalize this overarching goal to avoid full disappointment from the EaP. Aforementioned discussion elucidates a wide range of discrepancies, laid down beneath the policy initiative, external incentives are not sufficient to promote successful implementation of the EaP, namely, conditionality did not satisfied credibility (Schimelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005 pp.10-17), as half of the countries remained out of the partnership. Paradoxically, interdependence and power of (Keohane and Nye 2001, 13-16; Haukalla, 2013) Russia still remains influential external actor over these countries, intentionally proposing its offers, offering low energy prices, and manipulating with its is unpredictable great power to constitute his influence over post-soviet space.

It should be emphasized that since ENP to EaP energy security is the great concern, one of the main priority area that as the research shows is the main point of intersection of the EU-Russia interests, from interdependence the mutual cooperation has been transformed into conflict, in particular in contested neighbourhood, which apparently excludes the idea of sharing a power balance

of those two important actors in the international arena, while discussing the divergent models of their approach, as international actors (Makarychev, 2014).

The research concludes that the EU should promote partner countries to be more politically stabilized, and ensure to enforce the existing situation, to overcome the obstacles, to reinforce security of transit routes, for further diversification of energy supply sources, that would economically reinforce the transit countries and at the same time reduce its dependence on Russian energy supply sources.

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