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LATVIJAS INTERESES EIROPAS SAVIENĪBĀ

iEspēja



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Redaktora sleja

Sākot veidot žurnālu “Latvijas intereses Eiropas Savienībā”, uzklusīgām speciālistu un interesentu domas par to, kādiem tematiem būtu pievēršama uzmanība, kuri nav pietiekami apzināti un kuriem būtu nozīme Latvijas integrācijas kontekstā. Viens no aicinājumiem bija veidot izdevumu, kas būtu veltīts demokrātijas deficītam, kura pamatā ir ES politiku un lēmumu atsvešinātība no Eiropas pilsoņiem. Eiropas Savienības arhitekta Žana Monē citāts “Eiropa bieži tiek būvēta bez eiropiešiem” bieži nāk prātā, domājot par ES un tās attiecībām ar saviem iedzīvotājiem. ES institūciju ietekme uz iedzīvotāju ikdienas dzīvi arvien pieaug. Turpretī iedzīvotāju interese un līdzdalība, piemēram, Eiropas Parlamenta vēlēšanās arvien sarūk. Šo paradoksu dēvē par ES komunikatīvo un demokrātijas deficītu.

Kamēr politikas zinātne, cita starpā, runā par ES demokrātiskajiem mehānismiem un sabiedrības līdzdalību tajos, komunikācijas zinātne galveno uzmanību pievērš plašsaziņas līdzekļu lomai Eiropas integrācijas procesā un eiropiešu informētībai par ES notikumiem. Tomēr abas zinātnes pēc būtības raugās uz vienu un to pašu problēmu, proti, plaisu, kas pastāv starp ES institūcijām un divdesmit astoņu dalībvalstu pilsoņiem. Uz šo problēmu norāda vairāki žurnālā publicēto rakstu autori — Līga Spūle, Filips Lastovskis, Sofija Lehelere, Artjoms Konohovs un Žaneta Vegnere. Nākamā gada maijā notiks Eiropas Parlamenta vēlēšanas. Ceram, ka izdevumā apkopotie raksti sekmēs diskusiju par Eiropas Savienības demokrātiskā un komunikatīvā deficīta problēmām, piedāvājot vielu pārdomām un iespējamiem risinājumiem Latvijas kontekstā.

Sadaļā, kas veltīta prezidentūras aktualitātēm, apkopoti Armēnijas, Azerbaidžānas, Gruzijas, Moldovas un Ukrainas politiķu un ekspertu viedokļi par tuvojošos ES Austrumu partnerības (AP) samitu, kas norisināsies Lietuvas prezidentūras ES Padomē ietvaros. Lai varētu spriest par šīs politikas veiksmēm un neveiksmēm, nepietiek ar oficiālu novērtējumu uzrakstīšanu Briseles iestāžu kabinetos. Svarīgs ir AP valstu skatījums uz paveikto ES un

šo valstu attiecībās. Arī Latvija ir izteikusi apņēmību savas prezidentūras laikā sarīkot līdzīgu tikšanos. Tādēļ ceram, ka atspoguļotie viedokļi palīdzēs sagatavoties prezidentūrai ES Padomē un sniegt ieguldījumu AP politikas uzlabošanai.

Prezidentūras aktualitāšu sadaļa tapusi sadarbībā ar Latvijas vēstniecībām Armēnijā, Azerbaidžānā, Baltkrievijā, Gruzijā, Moldovā un Ukrainā.

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I

EIROPAS SAVIENĪBAS INSTITŪCIJAS

**Eiropas Parlamenta loma demokrātijas
deficīta mazināšanā Eiropas Savienībā****Līga Spūle,**

Latvijas Universitātes Politikas zinātnes maģistre

Eiropas Savienība (ES) kopš tās dibināšanas ir būvēta uz demokrātijas principiem. Pirmkārt, lai kļūtu par ES dalībvalsti, valstij ir jāatbilst Kopenhāgenas kritērijiem, kur viens no pamatnosacījumiem ir demokrātijas veiksmīga funkcionēšana valstī. Otrkārt, ES dalībvalstis izveidojušas noteiktu institucionālo modeli tā, lai dalībvalstis varētu deleģēt daļu no to suverenitātes un lai lēmumi tiktu pieņemti demokrātiski Eiropas līmenī. Lisabonas līguma 8.a pants nosaka, ka Savienības darbības pamatā ir pārstāvniecības demokrātija un “*pilsoņi savienības līmenī ir tieši pārstāvēti Eiropas Parlamentā*”.¹ Pilsoņu interešu pārstāvniecība un īpaši parlamentārā pārstāvniecība ir kļuvušas par centrālo komponenti mūsdienu demokrātijas izpratnē visā pasaulē.² Gluži tāpat kā nacionālie parlamenti ir demokrātijas simbols valstī, tā Eiropas Parlaments (EP) ir ES demokrātijas simbols. Jāuzsver, ka EP ir vienīgā institūcija ES, kas kopš 1979. gada tiek ievēlēta tiešās vēlēšanās, tādēļ tieši parlaments ieņem centrālo lomu diskusijās par demokrātijas deficītu savienībā.³ Raksta

¹ Lisabonas līgums. 8a pants. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:306:SOM:L V:HTML> (ES Oficiālā vēstneša mājaslapa; aplūkota 21.06.2013.).

² Cotta M., Best H. *Democratic Representation in Europe: Diversity, Change, and Convergence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 3.; Zielonka J. The Quality of Democracy after Joining the European Union. *East European Politics and Societies*. Vol. 21, no. 1, 2007, p. 168.

³ Lasan N. How far can the European Parliament correct the European Union's democratic deficit? *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*. 2008, pp. 18–26.

mērķis ir analizēt EP lomu demokrātijas deficīta mazināšanā ES. Lai to izdarītu, raksts sadalīts trīs daļās. Pirmajā daļā atspoguļotas diskusijas par demokrātijas deficītu ES un analizētas atšķirīgas pieejas, kā raudzīties uz demokrātijas deficītu Savienībā. Tā kā EP ir vienīgā tieši ievēlētā institūcija ES, raksta otrajā daļā analizēti ES mēģinājumi risināt demokrātijas deficīta problemātiku, uzmanību pievēršot tieši EP un tā pilnvaru pieaugumam. Raksta trešajā daļā analizētas izmaiņas, ko nesīs Lisabonas līgums.

Atslēgvārdi: demokrātijas deficīts, Eiropas Parlaments, Eiropas Savienība, Lisabonas līgums, pārstāvniecības demokrātija.

The European Union (EU) since its foundation is built on democratic principles. First, to become a member of the EU, a country must meet the Copenhagen criteria, which is a basic requirement of successful functioning of democracy in the country. Secondly, the EU Member States have adopted specific institutional model so they could delegate some of their sovereignty and decisions could be made democratically at European level. Lisbon Treaty, Article 8 states that the Union is founded on representative democracy and “citizens are directly represented at Union level in the European Parliament” [1] Representation of citizens' interests, and in particular parliamentary representation have become a central component of modern democracy in the world.[2] Just as the national parliaments are the symbol of democracy in the country, the European Parliament (EP) is the symbol of democracy in the EU. It should be emphasized that the EP is the only institution in the EU which since in 1979 has been elected in direct elections, thus the parliament holds a central role in the debate on the democratic deficit in the EU. [3] This article aims to analyze the role of the EP in reducing the democratic deficit in the EU. To do this, the article is divided into three parts. The first part reflects the debate about the democratic deficit in the EU and analyzes different approaches to look at the democratic deficit in the EU. Since Parliament is the only directly elected institution in the EU, in the second part of the article analyzes the EU's attempts to address the democratic deficit problem emphasizing the role of EP and increase in its powers. The third part of the article analyzes the changes brought by the Lisbon Treaty.

Keywords: democratic deficit, European Parliament, European Union, Lisbon Treaty, representative democracy.

Demokrātijas deficīts ir viena no plaši apspriestām tēmām ES teorētiķu un politiķu vidē. Visvairāk tiek diskutēts par to, ka ES kompetenču skaits arvien pieaug, savukārt Savienības iedzīvotāju apmierinātība ar ES darbību, kā arī uzticēšanās ES institūcijām arvien samazinās. Taču demokrātijas deficītam ES ir vairāki aspekti. Pirmkārt, tā ir politiskās kontroles pāreja no parlamentārās sistēmas uz izpildvaru ES līmenī, samazinot pilsoņu iespējas ietekmēt pieņemtos lēmumus. Otrkārt, lēmumiem trūkst caurskatāmības. Treškārt, vēlētāji neuzskata, ka to viedoklim ir nozīme ES, un līdz ar to samazinās demokrātiskā līdzdalība.⁴ Eurobarometra aptaujas rāda, ka iedzīvotāju uzticēšanās ES kopumā ir samazinājusies. 2012. gadā ES neuzticējās 57% iedzīvotāju, bet uzticējās vien 33%.⁵

Lai atspoguļotu plašās debates par demokrātijas deficītu ES, turpmāk rakstā tiks analizētas četras pieejas, no kurām katra redz atšķirīgas problēmas demokrātijas funkcionēšanā. Tradicionālā pieeja un daudzlīmeņu pārvaldības pieeja saskata zīmīgas demokrātijas problēmas ES, savukārt ekonomiskās kopienas pieeja un starpvaldību pieeja uzsver, ka ES jau šobrīd ir pietiekami demokrātiska. Jāatzīmē arī, ka pat tās pieejas, kas piekrīt demokrātijas deficīta esamībai ES, saskata atšķirīgus deficīta rašanās cēloņus. Tradicionāla pieeja uzsver, ka deficīta pamatā ir *output-democracy* jeb pieņemto lēmumu atbilstība ES iedzīvotāju vēlmēm, bet daudzlīmeņu pārvaldības pieeja uzsver, ka deficīta pamatā ir tieši *input-democracy* jeb Eiropas vēlēšanu neesamība (partijas nepiedāvā atšķirīgas dienaskārtības un prioritātes Eiropas līmenī, un tas izraisa vēlētāju atsvešinātību no ES). Katra no pieejām, kā raudzīties uz demokrātijas deficītu ES, tiks analizēta turpmākajā rakstā.

Demokrātijas deficīts Eiropas Savienībā

Veidojot ES institūcijas, to darbībā tika nostiprinātas rietumvalstu demokrātiskās vērtības un tradīcijas. Kā viena no tām bija asamblejas un vēlāk EP veidošana. Diskusijas par demokrātijas kvalitāti ES aizsākās jau pēc pirmās paplašināšanās, kad 1973. gadā Savienībai pievienojās Lielbritānija,

⁴ Follesdal A. *Democracy and the European Union: Challenge*. 1997. http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1731942 (Sociālo zinātņu pētniecības tīkla mājaslapa; aplūkota 21.03.2001.).

⁵ Standard Eurobarometer 78. Fieldwork: November 2012. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb78/eb78_en.htm (Eiropas Komisijas mājaslapa; aplūkota 29.07.2013.).

Dānija un Īrija. Lai stiprinātu leģitimitāti, tika ierosināts rīkot tiešas parlamenta vēlēšanas.^{6,7} Taču arī pēc vēlēšanām leģitimitātes problēma neizzuda un arvien vairāk teorētiķu tai sāka pievērst uzmanību.⁸

ES gadījumā grūti noteikt ideāla tipa demokrātijas standartus, jo tie ilgstoši ir veidojušies noteiktu valstu ietvaros. Lai varētu apgalvot, ka ES pastāv demokrātijas deficīts, svarīgi ir izprast, kas tiek saprasts ar demokrātiju ES līmenī. Demokrātijas jēdzienam ir daudz skaidrojumu, un tie svārstās no minimāliem priekšnosacījumiem, kas raksturo demokrātiju (vēlēšanas)⁹, līdz plašiem un izvērstiem aspektiem, bez kuriem demokrātija nav pilnvērtīga (sociālā vienlīdzība, brīvības, kontrole pār lēmumu pieņemēju u.c.¹⁰). ES kontekstā bieži vien tiek izmantota minimālā demokrātijas definīcija.¹¹ R. Dāls (*R. Dahl*) demokrātiju definē kā procedūru un institūciju kopumu, kas radīts, lai politiskās varas turētāji būtu atbildīgi elektorātam.¹² Demokrātiju nereti vērtē pēc tā, cik liela ietekme ir tautai, un tās kvalitāti arī var mērit pēc tā, cik atsaucīgas ievēlētās institūcijas ir pret iedzīvotāju vēlmēm.¹³ ES kontekstā tieši šis demokrātijas funkcionēšanas aspekts rada vislielākās bažas. Veiktie pētījumi rāda, ka vairākums Rietumeiropas iedzīvotāju uzskata, ka ES nepārstāv viņu intereses.¹⁴

Apskatot katru no ES institūcijām atsevišķi, var novērot, ka uzticības līmenis ES institūcijām pēdējo piecu gadu laikā ir pakāpeniski samazinājies. 2007. gadā EP uzticējās 56% iedzīvotāju, EK uzticējās 53%, Eiropas Centrālajai Bankai (ECB) — 52% un ES Padomei — 47%, savukārt 2012. gadā šie rādītāji bija samazinājušies (EP 44%, EK 40% un ECB 49%, Padomei

⁶ Corpadean A.G. *The Lisbon Treaty: A Sinuous Ratification. CES Working Paper*. 2011, pp. 35–36.

⁷ *Building parliament: 50 Years of European Parliament History*. European University Institute. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2009, pp. 33–59.

⁸ Milev M. 'A Democratic Deficit' in the European Union? <http://www.geopolitis.net/EUROPE%20EN%20FORMATION/Democratic%20Deficit%20in%20the%20European%20Union.pdf> (Domnicas "Geopolitis" mājaslapa; aplūkota 12.01.2012.).

⁹ Przeworski A. *Democracy and the Market*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 10–29.

¹⁰ Campbell D. *The basic concept of the Democracy Ranking of the Quality of Democracy*. Vienna: Democracy Ranking, 2008, pp. 18–30.

¹¹ Jolly M. *The European Union and The People*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 33.

¹² Burstein P. Why Estimates of the Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy are Too High: Empirical and Theoretical Implications. *Social Forces*. Vol. 84, no. 4, 2006, p. 273.

¹³ Turpat.

¹⁴ Etzioni A. Closing the Community Deficit in the EU. *CEPS Policy brief*. No. 169, 2008.

36%).¹⁵ Gandrīz puse ES iedzīvotāju (45%) nav apmierināti ar to, kā ES funkcionē demokrātija, un tieši 2012. gadā neapmierināto iedzīvotāju īpatsvars pārsniedza apmierināto iedzīvotāju īpatsvaru. Jāatzīmē gan, ka pēdējo piecu gadu laikā ES valstis un to iedzīvotāji piedzīvojuši smagu ekonomisko un eirozonas krīzi, kas būtiski ietekmējusi iedzīvotāju labklājības līmeni un iedzīvotāju attieksmi pret ES.¹⁶

Uz demokrātijas deficīta problēmu ES var raudzīties vismaz no četriem skatu punktiem. No pirmā skatu punkta raugoties, **tradicionālā pieeja** demokrātijas deficīta pamatā uzsver politiskās kontroles pāreju no demokrātiskas parlamentārās sistēmas uz valdību nacionālajā līmenī un tālāk uz Eiropas līmeņa pārvaldi, kas arī ir centrēta uz izpildvaru, līdz ar to pilsoņiem tiek mazinātas iespējas ietekmēt pieņemtos lēmumus. Pie izpildvaras Eiropas līmenī tiek pieskaitīta gan EK, gan ES Padome, kas neatskaitās nacionālo parlamentu priekšā.¹⁷ Līdz ar to, no šī skatu punkta raugoties, lēmumu pieņēmējiem trūkst saiknes ar vēlētājiem. Iedzīvotājiem nav iespēju ietekmēt pieņemto lēmumu iznākumu. Kā risinājums šai problēmai tiek piedāvāts palielināt EP lomu un atbildības jomas.¹⁸

Šajā perspektīvā EP lomas palielināšanās kompensētu nacionālo parlamentu kompetenču samazinājumu. Jāatzīmē gan, ka EP pilnvaras konstanti ir palielinājušās, taču tas nav palielinājis iedzīvotāju interesi par EP. Kopš pirmajām vēlēšanām iedzīvotāju līdzdalība EP vēlēšanās ir samazinājusies par 18,9% (no 61,9% 1979. gadā līdz 43% 2009. gadā)¹⁹, savukārt uzticēšanās EP pēdējo piecu gadu laikā samazinājusies par 12%.²⁰

Taču, kā jau minēts, pētnieku vidū nav vienprātības par demokrātijas deficīta problemātiku un, piemēram, starpvaldību pieejas atbalstītāji šo tradicionālo skatījumu kritizē. Tiek uzsvērts, ka demokrātijas deficīts ir mīts,

¹⁵ Standard Eurobarometer 78. Autumn 2012. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb78/eb78_publ_en.pdf (Eiropas Komisijas mājaslapa; aplūkota 12.01.2012.).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Follesdal A. *Democracy and the European Union: Challenge*. 1997. http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1731942 (Sociālo zinātņu pētniecības tīkla mājaslapa; aplūkota 21.03.2001.).

¹⁸ Karp J. A., Bowler S. To Know It Is To Love It? Satisfaction With Democracy in European Union. *Comparative Political Studies*. Vol. 36, no. 3, 2003, p. 272.

¹⁹ About Parliament. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/000cdcd9d4/Turn-out-%281979-2009%29.html> (Eiropas Parlamenta mājaslapa; aplūkota 12.01.2012.).

²⁰ Standard Eurobarometer 78. Autumn 2012. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb78/eb78_publ_en.pdf (Eiropas Komisijas mājaslapa; aplūkota 12.01.2012.).

kas radies neziņas dēļ, un tikai aptuveni 10–20% likumu nāk no Briseles. Turklāt saikne ar vēlētajiem joprojām ir cieša, jo katrs, kas iesaistīts lēmumu pieņemšanas procesos, ir saistīts ar vēlētām institūcijām (Eiropadome, ES Padome, EP, EK, ministri, nacionālo parlamentu deputāti).²¹

Otrs skatu punkts, no kura aplūkot un vērtēt demokrātijas deficītu ES, ir **ekonomiskās kopienas pieeja**, kuras ietvaros tiek uzsvērts, ka svarīgi ir nodefinēt standartus, pēc kuriem mērīt demokrātiju ES līmenī. ES vispirms ir ekonomiska kopiena un pilda valsts regulatora (angļu val. — *regulatory state*) funkcijas kā valdības ceturtais atzars, kam ir līdzīgas iezīmes ar citām īpašām aģentūrām (balstās uz statūtiem, tām ir neatkarīga administratīvā pārvalde un ekspertīze). ES mēģina risināt tirgus nepilnības, veidojot tā sauktās *Pareto-efficient* rīcībpolitikas (tādas, kas kopumā daļai iedzīvotāju nes labumu, vienlaikus nevienam nekaitējot)²², nevis pārdalot resursus tā, ka vieniem iegūstot, citiem jāzaudē. Eiropas valstu valdības ir deleģējušas daļu regulējošo funkciju ES (tādās jomās kā vienota tirgus izveide, produktu standarti, veselības un drošības noteikumi u.c.), lai izolētu šīs rīcībpolitikas no nacionālo mažoritāro valdību kompetences. Šīs pieejas ietvaros tiek uzskatīts, ka ES līmenī lēmumu pieņemšanai nav jābūt demokrātiskai, jo, ja šie lēmumi tiktu pieņemti mažoritārās institūcijās (nacionālās valdībās), tad lēmumi pārstātu būt *Pareto-efficient*, tie būtu vairākuma interesēs, minoritātes padarot par zaudētājiem un ilgtermiņā padarot par zaudētājiem arī vairākumu sabiedrības. Ja ES dominētu EP, tas novestu pie šo lēmumu pieņemšanas politizācijas, kā rezultātā politikas būtu orientētas uz vieniem uzvarētājiem un citiem zaudētājiem. Iepriekšminētie argumenti gan ir diskutabli, jo lielākā daļa rīcībpolitiku jau pašreiz ES norāda uz ieguvējiem un zaudētājiem (lielākas lauksaimniecības subsīdijas, kohēzijas fondi u.c.).²³

Trešo skatupunktu uz demokrātijas deficīta problēmu piedāvā **starpvaldību pieeja**. Starpvaldību skolas piekritēji uzskata, ka visa vara ES ir dalībvalstu rokās. Tās ne tikai ir pārstāvētas ES Padomē, bet arī izraugās komisārus un ievēl EP deputātus. Dalībvalstis pašas modulē, kādu ES vēlas redzēt nākotnē. E. Moravčiks (*A. Moravcsik*) paūž vienu no radikālākajiem

²¹ Moravcsik A. The Myth of Europe's Democratic Deficit. *Intereconomics*. November-December 2008, pp. 332–335.

²² Majone G. Europe's "Democratic Deficit": The Question of Standards. *European Law Journal*. Vol. 4, no. 1, 1998, pp. 7–9.

²³ Hix S., Follesdal A. Why there is a Democratic Deficit in the EU: A Response to Majone and Moravcsik. *Journal of Common Market Studies*. Vol. 44, no. 3, 2006.

skatījumiem uz demokrātijas deficīta problēmām ES. Viņš uzsver, ka ES nav valsts un ES atbildības sfēras ir tās, kuras ietver mazāku politisko līdzdalību nekā tās, kas palikušas nacionālo valstu pārziņā un patērē vairāk valsts resursu (nodokļi, aizsardzība, izglītība, veselības aprūpe u.c.). Lai arī tradicionālās pieejas ietvaros kā problēma tika minēta izpildvaras neatskaitītāšanās likumdevējam, starpvaldību pieejas ietvaros šis arguments tiek kritizēts, uzsverot, ka EP vara ar katru sasaukumu ir arvien palielinājusies lēmumu pieņemšanas procesā, aizstājot EK likumdošanas procesos.²⁴ ES politikas veidošanas process ir tikpat atklāts un pieejams pilsoniskajai sabiedrībai kā jebkurā citā valstī. EK ir spiesta ņemt vērā sabiedrības viedokli un EP un nacionālās valdības veic ciešu lēmumu pārraudzību.²⁵ Starpvaldību pieejas ietvaros, līdzīgi kā ekonomiskās kopienas pieejas ietvaros, tiek uzsvērts, ka ES kā sistēma strādā labi un ES nav nozīmīgu problēmu ar demokrātijas deficītu, turklāt ES nemaz nevajadzētu būt vairāk demokrātiskai, kā tā jau ir pašreiz.

Ceturto pieeju, kā analizēt demokrātijas deficītu ES, piedāvā **daudzlīmeņu pārvaldības** skola. Šīs pieejas ietvaros demokrātijas deficītu saista ar *input democracy* (EP vēlēšanām, partijām), kamēr lielākoties citi autori fokusējas uz *output-democracy* (lēmumu pieņemšanu, tās rezultātiem)²⁶. Tiek uzsvērts, ka ir jānošķir demokrātiskas lēmumu pieņemšanas procedūras no demokrātiskiem lēmumiem, jo, lai arī lēmumi var sakrist ar sabiedrības interesēm, tie var tikt pieņemti nedemokrātiskā vidē un otrādi — demokrātiskā procesā pieņemti lēmumi var būt pretrunā iedzīvotāju vēlmēm un interesēm. Demokrātijas deficīts var rasties abos gadījumos. Tieši *input* puse atšķir demokrātiju no “apgaismota despotisma”.²⁷ Šīs pieejas ietvaros lielākā uzmanība tiek pievērsta EP vēlēšanām, argumentējot, ka tajās nenotiek cīņa starp partijām, kas piedāvātu risinājumus Eiropas līmeņa jautājumiem, tā vietā partijas koncentrējas uz nacionāliem jautājumiem.²⁸ Vēlētājiem nav

²⁴ Milev M. A. “Democratic Deficit” in the European Union? [http://www.geopolitis.net/ EUROPE%20EN%20FORMATION/Democratic%20Deficit%20in%20the%20European%20 Union.pdf](http://www.geopolitis.net/EUROPE%20EN%20FORMATION/Democratic%20Deficit%20in%20the%20European%20Union.pdf) (Domnicas “Geopolitis” mājaslapa; aplūkota 12.01.2012.).

²⁵ Turpat.

²⁶ Crombez C. The Democratic Deficit in European Union: Much Ado about Nothing? *European Union Politics*. Vol. 4, no. 1, 2003, p. 103.

²⁷ Hix S. Democracy, Parties and Elections. In: *The Political System of the European Union*. Ed. S. Hix. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, pp. 175–207.

²⁸ Ibid; Katz R. S. Models of Democracy: Elite Attitudes and the Democratic Deficit in the European Union. *European Union Politics*. Vol. 1, no. 1, 2001, pp. 54–57.

iespējas izvēlēties starp konkurējošiem kandidātiem ES izpildvaras struktūrām vai starp dažādām piedāvātajām Eiropas rīcībpolitikām, vai starp dažādām ES dienaskārtībām. Tas izraisa divējādas sekas — pirmkārt, vēlētājiem ir vienaldzīgi tas, kura politiskā grupa EP būs vairākumā, jo vēlēšanu laikā sāncensība ir tikai starp partiju līderiem un tā ir vienīgā redzamā sāncensības puse, līdz ar to Eiropas jautājumi kļūst otršķirīgi; otrkārt, tas, ka nav konkurences, piedāvājot rīcībpolitikas, padara EP statisku un nemainīgu, jo zūd inovāciju iespējas un mazinās iespējamība, ka tiks rasti jauni risinājumi ilgtermiņa ekonomiskām problēmām. S. Hiks uzskata, ka to varētu mainīt, ja sacensība par līderību notiktu ES līmenī.²⁹ Jāmin gan, ka tieši šogad EK pieņēmusi ieteikumu, kas paredz, ka politiskajām partijām jāizvirza EK prezidenta amata kandidāti jau laikus, lai iedzīvotāji būtu labāk informēti par aktuālajiem jautājumiem ES politikā pirms nākamā gada EP vēlēšanām.³⁰

Demokrātijas deficīts un Eiropas Parlaments

Demokrātijā tradicionālā izpratnē ir tautas vara un paredz saikni starp iedzīvotājiem un lēmumu pieņēmējiem, tādēļ turpmākajā rakstā tiks analizēta tieši EP loma demokrātijas deficīta kontekstā ES. EP ir vienīgā ES institūcija, kas ir tieši vēlēta un kas ir guvusi leģitimitāti no iedzīvotāju puses. Neviena cita ES institūcija tik mērķtiecīgi neveido saikni un dialogu ar iedzīvotājiem. EP uzsver, ka tai interesē iedzīvotāju viedoklis.³¹ Jāuzsver, ka demokrātijas deficīta problemātika neslēpjas vien ES institucionālajā ietvarā, jo problemātiku rada paša EP darbība. EP atrodas tālu no vēlētājiem. EP vēlēšanās neizpaužas “tradicionālā” sāncensība par vietu parlamentā, jo vēlētāji tajās vēl kā *second-order elections*, kā arī nav skaidrs, ko deputāti pārstāv EP — savus vēlētājus, valsts iedzīvotājus, nacionālo partiju, Eiropas partiju grupu vai visas Eiropas iedzīvotājus.³²

²⁹ Hix S., Marsh M. Understanding European Parliament Elections: Punishment of Protest? Paper prepared for presentation at the Conference on the 2004 European Elections. CEU Budapest. 21–22 May 2005.

³⁰ Eiropas Parlamenta vēlēšanas 2014. gadā: Komisija iesaka politiskajām partijām izvirzīt Komisijas priekšsēdētāja amata kandidātu. Paziņojums preseī. 12.03.2013. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-215_lv.htm (Eiropas Savienības oficiālā mājaslapa; aplūkota 12.08.2013.).

³¹ *Building parliament: 50 Years of European Parliament History*. European University Institute. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2009, pp. 109–110.

³² Hausemer P. Participation and Political Competition in Committee Report Allocation: Under What Conditions Do MEPs Represent Their Constituents? *European Union Politics*. Vol. 7, no. 4, 2006, p. 506.

EP tiek uzskatīts par forumu nacionālo interešu aizstāvībai, kurā deputāti par saviem lēmumiem nav atbildīgi savas partijas, bet gan savu vēlētāju (savas valsts iedzīvotāju) priekšā. Tomēr EP deputāti uzrāda augstus lojalitātes rezultātus gan savai Eiropas partiju grupai, gan nacionālajai grupai, un šī lojalitāte ietekmē deputātu atsaucību iedzīvotāju interesēm.³³ Pētījums, kas tika veikts par sestā sasaukuma EP deputātu balsojumiem, parāda, ka, pieņemot lēmumus, 52% aptaujāto deputātu balsošanā paļaujas uz savas Eiropas partiju grupas vadītāja rekomendācijām, 30,8% deputātu uzticas kolēģiem no savas valsts jeb savai nacionālajai grupai, kas darbojas EP.³⁴ Neskatoties uz to, 2006. gadā publicētā EP deputātu aptauja³⁵ liecina, ka, izdarot izvēli starp to, cik nozīmīgi deputātam ir pārstāvēt kādas grupas intereses, 63% deputātu uzskata, ka galvenokārt tiem jāpārstāv sava reģiona iedzīvotāji, 57% deputātu uzskata, ka tiem galvenokārt jāpārstāv savas valsts iedzīvotāji, 48% uzskata, ka tiem jāpārstāv tie cilvēki, kas balsojuši par deputāta partiju, 39% uzskata, ka tiem jāpārstāv sava nacionālā partija, 36% uzskata, ka tiem jāpārstāv sava Eiropas partiju grupa, savukārt tikai 31% uzskata, ka tiem galvenokārt jāpārstāv visi Eiropas iedzīvotāji kopumā.³⁶ Lisabonas līgums gan nosaka, ka EP deputāti pārstāv visus ES pilsoņus, ne tikai savas valsts pilsoņus.³⁷

Viens no demokrātijas raksturojošiem parametriem ir demokrātiskā atsaucība, kas var tikt definēta kā valdības vai deputātu pieņemto lēmumu atbilstība elektorāta vēlmēm. Tiek uzskatīts, ka, jo biežāk pieņemtie lēmumi atbilst pilsoņu vēlmēm, jo labāk demokrātija funkcionē.³⁸ Lai mērītu šo lēmumu un rīcībpolitiku atbilstību iedzīvotāju vēlmēm, nereti tiek izmantotas sabiedriskās aptaujas. Gan pētnieku, gan sabiedrības vidū pastāv uzskats, ka demokrātiskās institūcijas un procedūras darbojas labi, ja sabiedrības viedoklim ir nozīme, veidojot rīcībpolitikas un pieņemot lēmumus. Savukārt, ja sabiedrības viedoklis netiek ņemts vērā, tas norāda uz demokrātijas

³³ Last Vote of Parliament. <http://www.votewatch.eu> ("VoteWatch Europe" mājaslapa; aplūkota 01.08.2013.).

³⁴ Farrell D. M., Hix S., Johnson M., Scully R. A Survey of MEPs in the 2004-09 European Parliament. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, 2006, p. 10.

³⁵ Aptaujāta aptuveni viena trešā daļa deputātu.

³⁶ Farrell D. M., Scully R. *Representing Europe's Citizens? Electoral Institutions and the Failure of Parliamentary Representation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 104–105.

³⁷ Turpat, p.106.

³⁸ Powell Jr. G. B. The Chain of Responsiveness. *Journal of Democracy*. Vol. 15, no. 4, 2004, p. 91.

problēmām.³⁹ Turklāt tiek uzskatīts, ka, jo biežāk pieņemtie lēmumi atbilst iedzīvotāju vēlmēm, jo labāk demokrātija darbojas. Interesanti, ka arī 2010. gadā tika veikts pētījums, kura ietvaros vairāki autori meklēja kopsakarības starp ES pieņemtajiem lēmumiem un sabiedrības nostāju. Pētījumā tika analizētas sabiedriskās aptaujas par 11 dažādām politikas jomām, un tās tika salīdzinātas ar ES publicēto direktīvu un regulu skaitu katrā no jomām. Arī šis pētījuma atklāja, ka atsaucība iedzīvotāju interesēm nav bieži novērojama un tā nav noturīga.⁴⁰ Līdz ar to var secināt, ka pārmetumi ES institūcijām par iedzīvotāju nostājas neņemšanu vērā ir pamatoti.

Demokrātijas deficīta mazināšanai ES ir tikuši meklēti arī praktiski risinājumi. Piemēram, J. Hābermāss (*J. Habermas*) arvien uzsvēris konstitūcijas nepieciešamību. Lai arī ar katru gadu ES palielinās likumu skaits, kas ietekmē Eiropas iedzīvotājus, pilsoņi joprojām ir skeptiski par savām iespējām ietekmēt ES lēmumu pieņemšanu. Konstitūcijas pieņemšana paredzētu, ka pilsoņi piešķirtu pilnvaras likumiem ES līmenī, kas pašiem jāievēro, veidojot Eiropas līmeņa solidaritāti un vienotību.⁴¹ Bez Eiropas vēlētajiem (*European demos*)⁴² Savienībā nevar pastāvēt demokrātija. Šajā gadījumā, risinot deficīta problēmu, izšķiroša ir Eiropas pilsoniskās identitātes veidošana.⁴³ Šī ideja gan ir tikusi plaši kritizēta, uzsverot, ka konstitūcijas veidošanai nav nozīmes, jo ES atbildības jomas neinteresē sabiedrību. Pat ja palielinātos pilsoņu iespējas līdzdarboties, tas nenozīmē, ka līdzdalība automātiski palielinātos.⁴⁴ Tas arī nenovestu pie informētākas sabiedrības un vairāk debatēm par ES jautājumiem, un visbeidzot konstitūcija neradītu kopēju identitāti, jo identitātes Eiropā veidojušās uz nacionāliem pamatiem un tās nevar mākslīgi konstruēt.⁴⁵

³⁹ Burstein P. Why Estimates of the Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy are Too High: Empirical and Theoretical Implications. *Social Forces*. Vol. 84, no. 4, 2006, p. 273.

⁴⁰ Arnold C., Franklin M., Wlezien C. The Impact of Public Opinion on European Union Legislative Decision-Making. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association. 2010, p. 6.

⁴¹ Bowman J. Challenging Habermas' response to the European Union democratic deficit. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*. Vol. 33, no. 6, 2007, p. 736.

⁴² Jolly M. *The European Union and The People*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 70.

⁴³ Chrysochoou D. Europe's Contested Democracy. In: *European Union Politics*. Eds. M. Cini & N. Boragan. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010 pp. 377–389.

⁴⁴ Moravcsik A. What Can We Learn from the Collapse of the European Constitutional Project? 2006. <http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/PVS04.pdf> (Prinstonas Universitātes mājaslapa; aplūkota 22.03.2011.).

⁴⁵ Etzioni A. Closing the Community Deficit in the EU. *CEPS Policy brief*. No. 169, 2008.

Jāpiemin gan, ka ES tika mēģināts radīt vienotu konstitūciju ar Līgumu par Konstitūciju Eiropai, kas aizstātu esošos ES līgumus un noteiktu ES tālāko darbību, taču līgumu neatbalstīja dalībvalstis. Gan Francijas, gan Nīderlandes vēlētāji referendumos noraidīja līguma ratifikāciju. Pēc tam tika radīts Lisabonas līgums, kura mērķis bija aizstāt Konstitūcijas līgumu. Lisabonas līgumā tika ietverta lielākā daļa no Konstitūcijas līgumā paredzētajām politiskajām un institucionālajām reformām, taču tās formulētas un uzrādītas atšķirīgi.⁴⁶ Jāmin, ka viens no Lisabonas līguma virsmērķiem bija mazināt demokrātijas deficītu un pietuvināt Eiropas institūcijas iedzīvotājiem, nosakot lielākas iespējas valstu nacionālajiem parlamentiem ietekmēt lēmumu pieņemšanu Savienībā, kā arī piešķirot Eiropas pilsoņiem iespējas ierosināt EK izstrādāt priekšlikumu kādā no ES kompetences jomām.

EP vairākkārt nācis klajā ar rezolūcijām, kurās uzsvērtā nepieciešamība risināt demokrātijas deficītu ES. Rezolūcijās tiek uzsvērts tas, ka nepārredzamās procedūras un EK politika ir izraisījušas iedzīvotāju neuzticību Savienībai. EP arvien centies iegūt lielākas pilnvaras, kas parādās arī pieņemtajās rezolūcijās. Tajās tiek uzsvērtā nepieciešamība pēc lielākām EP un nacionālo parlamentu iespējām ietekmēt ES politiku.⁴⁷

Mēģinājumi cīnīties pret demokrātijas deficītu ES – Lisabonas līgums

Lisabonas līgums nāca klajā ar jaunām pilnvarām EP saistībā ar EK, ES Padomi. Pirms Lisabonas līguma ES Padome izvirzīja EK priekšsēdētāju un EP apstiprināja vai noraidīja izvirzīto kandidātu. Lisabonas līgums papildinājis jau Nicas līgumā (2003) ietvertās EP iespējas apstiprināt izvirzīto EK priekšsēdētāju, paredzot, ka Padome piedāvā EP EK priekšsēdētāja kandidātu, pamatojoties tieši uz EP vēlēšanu rezultātiem, un tad EP ievēl

⁴⁶ Lisabonas līgums. http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/lisbon_treaty/ai0033_lv.htm (ES tiesību aktu kopsavilkumu portāls; aplūkots 23.03.2012.).

⁴⁷ Eiropas Parlamenta rezolūcijas par Komisijas ievēlšanu. B7-0088/2010. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+MOTION+B7-2010-0088+0+DOC+XML+V0//LV>; Eiropas Parlamenta rezolūcija par Eiropas demokrātijas nostiprināšanu turpmākajā Ekonomikas un monetārajā savienībā. B7-0271/2013. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+MOTION+B7-2013-0271+0+DOC+XML+V0//LV> (Eiropas Parlamenta mājaslapas; aplūkots 13.08.2013.).

izvirzīto kandidātu.⁴⁸ Lisabonas līgums arī paredz, ka, pirms slēgt starptautiskus nolīgumus (jomās, kas attiecas uz parastās likumdošanas procedūrām), nepieciešams iegūt EP piekrišanu.⁴⁹ Kritiķi gan norāda, ka EP kompetenču pieaugums varētu bremsēt kopējo lēmumu pieņemšanas efektivitāti, padarot to laikietilpīgāku. Arī sāncensība ES institūciju starpā tikai palielinās, un tas var novest pie pārlietu lielas savstarpējas “muskuļu rādīšanas”, aizmirstot par lietas būtību.⁵⁰ EP kā vienīgajai tieši vēlētajai institūcijai ES arvien tiek piešķirti jauni instrumenti, lai pilsoņi tiktu labāk sadzirdēti un pārstāvēti, kā arī lai palielinātos ES atbildīgums pilsoņu priekšā.

Šodien EP ir izveidojušās tiešas attiecības ar Padomi (caur likumdošanas procesu un budžeta pieņemšanu). Padomes priekšsēdētājs apmeklē ikmēneša EP plenārsēdes, lai atbildētu uz jautājumiem, kas tiek uzdoti Padomei. EP tiek iesniegti arī prezidentūras mērķi un darba programma, bet jau pēc prezidentūras tiek sniegts ziņojums par paveikto. Parlamentam arī tiek ziņots par Padomes sanāksmju rezultātiem.⁵¹ Konsultāciju procedūru arvien vairāk nomaina koplēmumu procedūra. EP un Ministru Padome ir savstarpēji cieši saistīti gan budžeta jautājumos, gan likumdošanas jautājumos.⁵²

Demokrātijas deficīta kontekstā ir nozīmīgi pārstāvniecības demokrātijas principi. Lisabonas līgums palielina EP pilnvaras budžeta, likumdošanas un starptautisko nolīgumu jomā, kā arī komisijas nominēšanas un apstiprināšanas jomā.⁵³ No likumdošanas perspektīvas raugoties, EP ieguvis līdzīgas pozīcijas kā Padome, jo vairākās jomās ir ieviestas koplēmumu procedūras un tādējādi EP tiek iesaistīts tiesību aktu pieņemšanā (brīvības, drošības, tieslietu, lauksaimniecības, zvejniecības, tirdzniecības un citās jomās). Kritiķi šajā aspektā gan norāda, ka, neskatoties uz arvien pieaugošo EP ietekmi dažādās likumdošanas jomās, joprojām pastāv aptuveni 100 jomas, kurās

⁴⁸ Emmanouilidis J. A., Stratulat C. Implementing Lisbon: narrowing the EU's 'democratic deficit'? March 2010. http://www.epc.eu/pub_details.php?cat_id=3&pub_id=520 (Eiropas Politikas centra mājaslapa; aplūkota 23.03.2012.).

⁴⁹ Demokrātiskāka un pārredzamāka Eiropa. http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/glance/democracy/index_lv.htm (Eiropas Savienības Oficiālā mājaslapa; aplūkota 13.08.2013.).

⁵⁰ Emmanouilidis J. A., Stratulat C. Implementing Lisbon: narrowing the EU's 'democratic deficit'? March 2010. http://www.epc.eu/pub_details.php?cat_id=3&pub_id=520 (Eiropas Politikas centra mājaslapa; aplūkota 23.03.2012.).

⁵¹ *Building parliament: 50 Years of European Parliament History*. European University Institute. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2009, pp. 136, 137, 139–141.

⁵² Turpat, pp. 136, 137, 154, 160, 204, 208–209.

⁵³ Demokrātiskāka un pārredzamāka Eiropa. http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/glance/democracy/index_lv.htm (Eiropas Savienības Oficiālā mājaslapa; aplūkota 13.08.2013.).

gala lēmumu pieņem Padome.⁵⁴ Budžeta jomā Lisabonas līgums piešķir EP vienādu pozīciju kā Padomei, apstiprinot visus ikgadējos izdevumus (gan neobligātos, gan obligātos), tā atjaunojot līdzsvaru starp Padomi un EP. Parlamentam arī tiek piešķirtas pilnvaras grozīt pamatlīgumus saskaņā ar noteiktajām procedūrām. Iepriekšējais līgums paredzēja budžeta dalījumu divās daļās (obligātajā un neobligātajā). Budžeta obligāto daļu veidoja izdevumi, kas minēti pamatlīgumos, un par šo sadaļu galavārds piederēja Padomei, un tikai par budžeta neobligāto sadaļu galavārds piederēja EP, nosakot, ka EP nevarēja ierosināt ES pamatlīgumu grozījumus.⁵⁵ Lai arī kopumā EP ietekme pār kopējo ikgadējo budžetu arvien palielinās, tomēr tieši Padome ir tā, kas veido daudzgadējo budžeta ietvaru, nosakot ES ilgtermiņa prioritātes.⁵⁶ Jāatzīmē gan, ka, veidojot ES daudzgadēju budžetu 2014.–2020. gadam, EP parādīja savu stingro nostāju, apstiprinot budžetu tikai pēc tam, kad tajā tika iekļautas svarīgākās EP prasības.⁵⁷

Pārstāvniecības demokrātija pēc Lisabonas līguma paredz arī lielāku dalībvalstu nacionālo parlamentu lomu, iesaistoties ES politiku formulēšanā. Nacionālajiem parlamentiem tiek dotas iespējas apturēt jebkuru likumdošanas priekšlikumu, kas neatbilst subsidiaritātes principiem, ieviešot tā saukto “dzelteno kartiņu” un “oranžo kartiņu” mehānismu. Subsidiaritātes princips nosaka to, ka ES rikojas tikai tad, kad dalībvalstis centrālā, reģionālā un vietējā līmenī nespēj pietiekami labi īstenot nepieciešamās darbības mērķu sasniegšanai.⁵⁸ Taču diemžēl jāatzīst, ka “dzeltenās un oranžās kartītes” procedūras iedarbināšana ir komplicēta un reti izmantojama prakse nacionālajiem parlamentiem.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Emmanouilidis J. A., Stratulat C. Implementing Lisbon: narrowing the EU's 'democratic deficit'? March 2010. http://www.epc.eu/pub_details.php?cat_id=3&pub_id=520 (Eiropas Politikas centra mājaslapa; aplūkota 23.03.2012.).

⁵⁵ ES institucionālā struktūra un izmaiņas ES institūcijās saskaņā ar Lisabonas līguma noteikumiem. <http://www.mfa.gov.lv/lv/Arpolitika/eu/akti/ligums/Institucionalas-izmainas/> (Latvijas Republikas Ārlietu ministrijas mājaslapa; aplūkota 13.08.2013.).

⁵⁶ Emmanouilidis J. A., Stratulat C. Implementing Lisbon: narrowing the EU's 'democratic deficit'? March 2010. http://www.epc.eu/pub_details.php?cat_id=3&pub_id=520 (Eiropas Politikas centra mājaslapa; aplūkota 23.03.2012.).

⁵⁷ Eiropas Parlaments atbalsta vienošanos par 2014.–2020. gada budžetu. 03.07.2013. <http://www.europarl.lv/view/lv/press-release/jaunumi-2013/jaunumi-2013-July/press-release-2013-July-7.html> (Eiropas Parlamenta mājaslapa; aplūkota 13.08.2013.).

⁵⁸ Lieģis I., Ostrovskis Ģ. Lisabonas līgums: iespējas un izaicinājumi nacionālajiem parlamentiem. *Latvijas intereses Eiropas Savienībā*. Nr. 1., 2011, 11. lpp.

⁵⁹ Turpat, 13–14. lpp.

Mūsdienās tikai pārstāvniecības demokrātija vairāk nerosina iedzīvotāju uzticēšanos.⁶⁰ ES ir jānodrošina efektīvāks un visaptverošs dialogs ar visām ES institūcijām un jāatbalsta arīdžan horizontālais dialogs Eiropas pilsoniskajā sabiedrībā. Lisabonas līgums mēģina veidot uzskatu, ka katrai iedzīvotāju balsij ir nozīme gan vēlēšanās, gan ikdienā, piešķirot pilsoņiem jaunas līdzdalības iespējas.⁶¹

Lisabonas līgums ir centies panākt uz pilsoņiem orientētu Savienību. Lai arī jau iepriekš pilsoņiem bija iespēja iegūt informāciju par Savienības politikām un iesaistīties ES procesos, tomēr Lisabonas līgums ieviesis pilsoņu iniciatīvas, kas paredz, ka ES pilsoņiem (vismaz vienam miljonam pilsoņu, kas pārstāv ievērojamu dalībvalstu skaitu) ir iespējas iesniegt prasības ES Tiesā, kā arī ierosināt ES tiesību aktus EK. Tas stiprinātu ES iedzīvotāju saites ar ES un veidotu nosacītu Eiropas “demosu”. Šīs iniciatīvas iecerētas, lai Eiropas pilsoņi varētu panākt sev svarīgu jautājumu iekļaušanu EK dienaskārtībā.⁶² Kā kritika jāmin fakts, ka viens miljons pilsoņu veido tikai aptuveni 0,2%⁶³ ES iedzīvotāju, un tas var novest pie mazākuma interešu dominēšanas. Tādējādi tiktu pavērtas iespējas labi organizētām interešu grupām realizēt savas iniciatīvas. Jāpiemin arī, ka iniciatīvu iesniegšanas procedūra ir gana sarežģīta, un tas varētu mazināt iedzīvotāju vēlmi iniciatīvas iesniegt.⁶⁴

Secinājumi

Jau kopienas dibināšanas pirmsākumos demokrātija ir bijusi viens no ES pamatprincipiem. Tajā darbojas demokrātiskas valstis un ES aktīvi izplata cilvēktiesības un demokrātiju pasaulē. Analizējot demokrātisko atsaucību, jāsecina, ka demokrātijas kvalitāte ir zema. Esot vienīgajai tieši vēlētajai institūcijai Savienībā, EP tiek piešķirti arvien jauni instrumenti, lai tas spētu

⁶⁰ Gobiņš A., Potjomkina D. Sabiedrības līdzdalība Lisabonas līgumā: neizmantotās iespējas? *Latvijas intereses Eiropas Savienībā*. Nr. 2., 2011, 30.–31. lpp.

⁶¹ Turpat.

⁶² Turpat, 35.–37. lpp.

⁶³ Pēc Eurostat datiem 2012. gada 1. janvārī ES bija 506 820 764 iedzīvotāju. Avots: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/main_tables (ES Statistikas pārvaldes mājaslapa; aplūkota 01.08.2013).

⁶⁴ Hierlemann D., Wohlfarth A. A Revolution in Disguise: The European Citizens' Initiative. *Spotlight Europe*. August 2010.

veiksmīgāk pārstāvēt pilsoņu intereses, kā arī lai palielinātos ES atbildīgums pilsoņu priekšā,⁶⁵ taču EP gadījumā vēlēšanas nekalpo par veiksmīgu instrumentu atsaucības stimulēšanai ES līmenī, jo lielākoties iedzīvotāji EP vēlēšanās cenšas palielināt nacionālā parlamenta vadošo partiju atsaucību, tās sodot par kļūdām nacionālajā politikā.

Lisabonas līgums ir centies padarīt ES demokrātiskāku un pārredzamāku. ES tiek īstenoti trīs demokrātijas principi. Pirmkārt, vienlīdzības demokrātijā paredz, ka iestādēm vienlīdzīgi jāizturas pret visiem ES pilsoņiem. Otrkārt, pārstāvniecības demokrātijā, kas paredz, ka nacionālajiem parlamentiem ir lielākas iesaistīšanās iespējas lēmumu pieņemšanas procesā un, gluži kā iepriekšējie ES līgumi, arī Lisabonas līgums paredz arvien plašākas EP pilnvaras. Treškārt, līdzdalības demokrātijā paredz uzlabojumus iedzīvotāju un institūciju sadarbībā, ieviešot pilsoņu iniciatīvas. Lai arī katrs no uzlabojumiem demokrātijas stiprināšanai ES ir uzskatāms par pozitīvu soli, tomēr, kritiski tos aplūkojot, kļūst redzamas arī uzlabojumu nepilnības.

Jau nākamgad ES norisināsies nākamās parlamenta vēlēšanas. Pēdējo piecu gadu laikā ES piedzīvojusi zīmīgas ekonomiskās problēmas, kā rezultātā iedzīvotāji kļuvuši skeptiskāki pret ES un tās realizētajām politikām. Viens no ES izaicinājumiem joprojām ir palielināt iedzīvotāju uzticēšanos Savienībai, kā arī palielināt pilsoņu līdzdalību EP vēlēšanās. Diskusijas par EK prezidenta kandidātiem jau aizsākušās un viens no šo diskusiju mērķiem ir arī iedzīvotāju informēšana par ES aktuālajiem jautājumiem. Veidojot savas politiskās kampaņas EP vēlēšanām, partijām tiek ieteikts kampaņās arī informēt savus vēlētājus par to, kuru EK prezidenta kandidātu partija atbalsta.⁶⁶ Tas vēlēšanas padarītu jau pārnacionālas. Attīstot pārnacionālo vēlēšanu ideju, kā nākamais solis un risinājums iedzīvotāju intereses palielināšanai par ES politiku nereti minēta iespēja veidot Eiropas līmeņa politiskās partijas, kas sacenstos EP vēlēšanās, piedāvājot atšķirīgas dienaskārtības un skatījumus uz ES šīsdienas un nākotnes izaicinājumiem. Tas zīmīgi mainītu pirmsvēlēšanu debates nacionālajā līmenī, kuras šobrīd lielākoties koncentrējas uz nacionālajiem jautājumiem, ES līmeņa jautājumus atstājot ēnā.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Powell Jr. G. B. The Chain of Responsiveness. *Journal of Democracy*. Vol. 15, no. 4, 2004, p. 92.

⁶⁶ Europeanisation of the 2014 EP elections. Library Briefing. Library of the European Parliament. 27 June 2013.

⁶⁷ Sprūds A. *Eiropa — nebeidzamais stāsts*. 2012. <http://www.lvportals.lv/viedokli.php?id=251701> (LV portāls; aplūkots 01.08.2013.).

Eiropas Komisijas cīņa par demokrātijas deficīta mazināšanu: “Euronews” subsidēšanas piemērs

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Šajā rakstā tiek pētīta iedzīvotāju informētība par ES aktualitātēm mijiedarbībā ar demokrātijas deficītu, un kā piemērs ilustrācijai izvēlēts pan-eiropais televīzijas kanāls “Euronews”. Tas ir medijs, kura rašanos sekmēja Persijas līča karš, kā arī Eiropas Parlamenta (EP) vēlēšanu aktivitātes zemie rezultāti.

Raksta mērķis ir analizēt, kā no Eiropas Komisijas (EK) pozīcijām “Euronews” tiek izmantots par līdzekli demokrātijas deficīta mazināšanai.

Atslēgvārdi: audiovizuālā platforma, demokrātijas deficīts, Eiropas Savienība, “Euronews”, leģitimitāte, mediji.

EU citizens' awareness of current events in the EU and its interaction with the democratic deficit is the focus of this article, and the example chosen to illustrate this subject is the pan-European TV channel “Euronews”. It is a medium which was created on the back off the Gulf War and low participation levels in European Parliament (EP) elections.

The aim of this article is to analyze how the European Commission uses “Euronews” as a tool to lessen the democratic deficit.

Keywords: audiovisual platform, democratic deficit, European Union, “Euronews”, legitimacy, media.

Pan-eiropēiskais TV kanāls “Euronews”

Šobrīd 1993. gadā dibinātais Lionā bāzētais “Euronews”¹ kanāls ir medijs ar vislielāko skatītāju auditoriju, kas ES dalībvalstīs vēsta starptautiskās ziņas un pārraida kultūras programmas no pan-eiropēiskā² skatupunkta.³ EK publiskajos resursos minēts, ka “Euronews” ticis izveidots, lai Eiropas iedzīvotājiem sniegtu informāciju par ES diskursa tematiem, un pašlaik tas ir vienīgais TV kanāls, kas lielāko daļu raidlaika velta Eiropas līmeņa, nevis tikai dalībvalstu ziņām. EK uzskata, ka, lai medijs iegūtu tādu pašu ietekmi un reputāciju kā citi starptautiskie ziņu kanāli (CNN, BBC), ir jāatbalsta tā attīstība un modernizācija. Šis arguments ir pamatojums tam, kāpēc EK nodrošina ilggadēju finanšu atbalstu “Euronews”⁴.

Savukārt normatīvu pamatojumu EK cerībām par “Euronews” kā efektīvu komunikācijas rīku ES publiskajā sfērā sniedz fakts, ka televīzijas kanāls ir skatītākais starptautisko ziņu kanāls Eiropas un Tuvo Austrumu reģionā. Pēc paša kanāla aplēsēm, katru dienu Eiropā vidēji to skata aptuveni 5–10 miljoni cilvēku⁵. Tā auditorija starptautisko ziņu kanālu konkurencē ir divas reizes lielāka nekā tuvāko sekotāju — CNN un “BBC World” — auditorija kopā ņemot.

Tāpat par kanāla reprezentatīvātī⁶ plašajā mediju piedāvājuma klāstā varētu liecināt tā profila parametri — tas ir pieejams 13 dažādās valodās, 155 valstīs, 350 miljoniem mājsaimniecību pasaulē un specifiski 170 miljoniem mājsaimniecību Eiropā.⁷

¹ Pan-eiropēiskā medija akciju turētāji ir Eiropas un Ziemeļāfrikas publiskās raidorganizācijas — CYBC (Kipra), ERT (Grieķija), France Televisions (Francija), RAI (Itālija), RTBF (Beļģija), RTP (Portugāle), YLE (Somija), ERTU (Ēģipte), VGTRK (Krievija), TRT (Turcija), ČT (Čehija), PBS (Malta), SNRT (Maroka), RTVSLO (Slovēnija), RTE (Īrija), NTU (Ukraina), SRG – SSR (Šveice), TVR (Rumānija), SVT – MTG (Zviedrija), ERTT (Tunisija), ENTV (Alžīrija).

² Turpmāk rakstā pan-eiropēiskās identitātes jēdziens tiek lietots izpratnē, kas simbolizē simbolisku tuvību un pašidentifikāciju ar Eiropu. Pats termins “pan” nereti politikas un kognitīvajās zinātnēs lietots kā pretstats nacionālisma jēdzienam.

³ McCormick J. *Europeanism*. London: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 12.

⁴ Informējot par Eiropu. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/document/files/reaching_out_lv.pdf (Eiropas Komisijas mājaslapa; aplūkota 05.12.2013.).

⁵ Euronews. 2012. http://www.euronews.com/media/the-station/mediapackpress_EN.pdf (“Euronews” mājaslapa; aplūkota 15.05.2013.).

⁶ Tādējādi EK var pamatot “Euronews” finansēšanu.

⁷ Euronews. 2012. http://www.euronews.com/media/the-station/mediapackpress_EN.pdf (“Euronews” mājaslapa; aplūkota 15.05.2013.).

Aptuveni 25% finansējuma TV kanāls gūst no EK — ar mērķi sniegt ziņas no eiropiešu perspektīvas. Viena trešdaļa finansējuma tiek iegūta no reklāmas, bet viena trešdaļa no sabiedriskajiem medijiem, kam “Euronews” pieder.⁸

Kanāla izveides iemesli: EP vēlēšanas un Persijas līča karš

Pēc 1984. gadā notikušajām EP vēlēšanām, kurās nobalsojušo procents samazinājās no 63% uz 61%, sekoja EK pasūtītais Adonino ziņojums⁹ “Par cilvēkiem, kas ir tuvāki Eiropai”. Šajā ziņojumā ir rodama saknes “Euro-news” izveidei. Ziņojumā starp dažādām pilsoniskām aktivitātēm, kurām teorētiski vajadzētu eiropiešiem likt vairāk mīlēt Eiropu, minēts, ka pan-eiropiska kanāla izveide, tāda kanāla, kas ir patiesi eiropiešs, uzlabotu “ES Kopienas tēlu cilvēku acīs”. Eiropu vēlējās padarīt tuvāku iedzīvotājiem un uzlabot tās tēlu. Šāda nepieciešamība saglabājās kā aktuāls dienas kārtības punkts arī pēc pirmajām EP vēlēšanām, jo pēc 1984. gada vēlēšanu aktivitāte konsekventi uzrādīja arvien zemākus rādītājus.¹⁰

Otrkārt, kanāla izveidošanai būtisks bija starptautiskās politikas fons. Persijas līča kara (1990. g./1991. g.) laikā vienīgā satelīttelevīzija, kas nodrošināja 24 stundu translācijas no ASV operācijām Kuveitā, bija CNN. Televīzijas visā pasaulē bija spiestas pirkt translācijas tiesības no CNN un raidīt tādus sižetus, kādus sagatavoja šis ASV televīzijas kanāls.¹¹ Tā kā tas bija globāli nozīmīgs notikums, kas interesēja plaša mēroga auditoriju, Rietumu pasaulē ignorēt notiekošo īsti nebija iespējams. Pēc Persijas līča kara Eiropas sabiedriskās televīzijas saprata, ka arī Eiropai ir vajadzīgs starptautisks ziņu

⁸ EU propaganda: or how news is supposed to go on the euro-payroll but stay ‘independent’. 05.09.2011. <http://synonblog.dailymail.co.uk/2011/09/eu-propaganda-or-how-news-is-supposed-to-go-on-the-euro-payroll-but-stay-independent.html> (Portāls “Mail Online”; aplūkots 20.05.2013.).

⁹ The “Adonnino Report”. Report to the European Council by the ad hoc committee “On a People’s Europe”. A 10.04 COM 85, SN/2536/3/85. <http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/resources/historicaldocument.faces/en/4659/html.bookmark> (Eiropas Ombuda mājaslapa; aplūkots 20.05.2013.).

¹⁰ Vēlēšanu aktivitāte iepriekšējās EP vēlēšanās: 1979. gadā — 63%, 1984. gadā — 61%, 1989. gadā — 58,5%, 1994. gadā — 56,8%, 1999. gadā — 49,4%, 2004. gadā — 45,5%, 2009. gadā — 43%.

¹¹ Baisne O., Marchetti D. Producing “European” News Case of the Pan-European News Channel Euronews. *Working Paper Series*. University of Delhi. 2010. http://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/docs/00/66/58/16/PDF/Producing_European_News.pdf (Arhīva HAL-SHS mājaslapa; aplūkots 20.05.2013.).

kanāls, kas raidītu ziņas no eiropiska skatupunkta. Eiropas sabiedriskās televīzijas to ne tikai saprata un apjauta teorētiski, veidojot dažādus stratēģiskus un perspektīvas plānus, bet gan 1993. gadā realizēja ideju praktiskajā dzīvē.

Sabiedrisko televīziju plāns izveidot pan-eiropisku mediju sakrita ar eiokrātu vēlmi (piem., Adonino ziņojums) vairāk informēt eiropiešus par Eiropas ideju. Tā izveidojās labvēlīgs fons “Euronews” kanāla radīšanai. Kanāla izveidei iebilda briti, kas lobēja BBC intereses, savukārt atbalstīja francūži, kas vēlējās mediju, kurš nebalstās uz anglosakšu pasaules uztveres. Kanāla izveidē piedalījās nacionālās raidsabiedrības no Francijas, Itālijas, Kipras, Ēģiptes, Grieķijas, Beļģijas, Portugāles, Spānijas, Monako un Somijas. Pret iniciatīvu līdz ar Lielbritāniju tolaik nostājās eiroskeptiskā Zviedrija.

“Stratēģija veiksmei” — translācija 13 dažādās valodās

Dati liecina, ka 81% eiropiešu izvēlas skatīties televīziju savā nacionālajā valodā. Tas ir iemesls, kāpēc “Euronews” pakāpeniski paplašina raidīšanas valodu klāstu — šobrīd tās ir 13.¹² Šīs 13 dažādās valodas nodrošina, ka kanāla saturu spēj saprast aptuveni 3,5 miljardi pasaules iedzīvotāju. “Euronews” plānos ir arī stratēģiska valodu klāsta paplašināšana.¹³ Ideja par plašāku valodu klāstu paredz izveidot lielākajai daļai eiropiešu lingvistiski saprotamu pan-eiropiska medija saturu un formātu, kā arī stiprināt pan-eiropisko komunikāciju globālā līmenī.

EK argumentācija “Euronews” finansēšanai: Eiropas publiskās sfēras attīstība

Mērķus un ieceres, kas EK saistās ar “Euronews” televīzijas kanālu, atklāj lēmumi par finansējuma piešķiršanu ES komunikācijas nozarei.¹⁴ Galvenais mērķis, kas parādās politikas dokumentos — Eiropas publiskās sfēras

¹² Šīs valodas ir arābu, angļu, franču, vācu, itāļu, persiešu, portugāļu, krievu, spāņu, turku, ungāru, grieķu, ukraiņu, un plānota tiek arī serbu valodas pievienošana 2013. gada nogalē.

¹³ Euronews. 2012. http://www.euronews.com/media/the-station/mediapackpress_EN.pdf (“Euronews” mājaslapa; aplūkota 15.05.2013.).

¹⁴ Commission decision concerning the adoption of the amended work programme in the field of Communication, serving as a financing decision. 8.5.2013. Brussels. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/contracts-and-grants/annual_work_programme/index_en.htm (Eiropas Komisijas mājaslapa; aplūkota 20.05.2013.).

attīstība¹⁵. Tas pats par sevi pēc, piemēram, Jirgena Hābermāsa teorētiskā publiskās sfēras koncepta,¹⁶ šķiet apsvaicams solis, kurā varas aktors palīdz izvērst komunikatīvo telpu, kurā diskutēt par varas īstenotāju darbu, tostarp ļauj to kritizēt. Kopš 2011. gada EK ar “Euronews” ir noslēgusi līgumus par konkrētu televīzijas programmu izveidi, kurā strikti atrunāts, cik ilgs ir programmas laiks un kādas tēmas tiek atspoguļotas pārraidēs. Programmas tiek pozicionētas kā informatīvās pārraides.

Būtisks pierādījums, kas norāda, ka EK cenšas paaugstināt institūcijas demokrātijas leģitimitāti, izmantojot “Euronews” kanālu, ir atrodams EK norādītajā politikas dokumentu¹⁷ finansēšanas prioritāšu sarakstā. Tajā minēts, ka, attīstot un paplašinot informācijas vidi, kas vēsta par ES aktualitātēm, cerēts palielināt vēlētāju skaitu 2009. un 2014. gada EP vēlēšanās.

Kritiku šādam sadarbības modelim pauž eiroskeptiķi, kas, piemēram, zviedru politikas domnīcas “Timbro” gadījumā izteikuši viedokli, ka tā vis nav varas aktora labā griba paplašināt komunikatīvo telpu, bet gan apzināti īstenota propaganda, kurā “eiropiešiem, kuri nevēlas Eiropu, to tomēr cenšas uzspiest”.¹⁸

Intervētie “Euronews” žurnālisti¹⁹ šādu kritiku noraida, vilkdami paralēles ar valsti un sabiedrisko televīziju, kurā iedzīvotāji ar saviem nodokļiem to uztur. Kritiķi pret šādu salīdzinājumu ir negatīvi noskaņoti. Zviedru politologs Jans Johansons norāda, ka “ES nav valsts vai tāda federācija, kuras iedzīvotājiem būtu atbildība nodrošināt vienotas publiskās telpas mediju”²⁰.

¹⁵ EK finansējuma piešķiršanas lēmumos noteikts, ka par attiecīgo finansējuma piešķiršanu un programmu realizāciju ir atbildīgs EK Komunikācijas ģenerāldirektorāts.

¹⁶ Habermas J. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1989.

¹⁷ Commission decision concerning the adoption of the amended work programme in the field of Communication, serving as a financing decision. 8.5.2013. Brussels. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/contracts-and-grants/annual_work_programme/index_en.htm (Eiropas Komisijas mājaslapa; aplūkota 20.05.2013).

¹⁸ Thomasson P., Kataja H. *The European Union's burden: information and communication to a reluctant people*. Stockholm: Timbro think thank research, 2011. <http://www.timbro.se/bokhandel/pdf/9175667256.pdf> (“Timbro” domnīcas mājaslapa; aplūkota 12.02.2013.).

¹⁹ Lastovskis F. Eiropas Savienība un mediji kā demokrātijas leģitimitātes iegūšanas instruments: Euronews piemērs. Maģistra darbs. Rīga: LU SZF Politikas zinātnes studijas nodaļa, 2013.

²⁰ Turpat.

Analizējot politikas dokumentus,²¹ kļūst redzami arī vairāki citi mērķi, ko EK vēlētos sasniegt, finansējot “Euronews”. Kā galvenais mērķis ir noteikts “iedzīvotāju un EK savstarpējā tuvināšana”. Kāds cits no mērķiem, uz kā pamata balstīta “Euronews” finansēšana, ir “EK komunikācijas instrumentu kapacitātes celšana”. Iepriekš minētais mērķis atkārtoti norāda, ka EK uztver “Euronews” kanālu kā instrumentu savas darbības nodrošināšanai un mērķu izpildei. Ar šādu argumentāciju²² pēdējos sešos gados²³ piešķirtie naudas līdzekļi konsekventi pieauguši:

Gads, kurā finansējums piešķirts	miljoni, eiro
2008	10,75
2009	10,9
2010	11
2011	11,6
2012	18,6
2013	18

Finansējums pakāpeniski pieaudzis, un tikai pēdējā, 2013. finanšu gadā, nedaudz sarucis. Izmaksas veido galvenokārt “Euronews” bāzes finansējums, “Euronews” digitālās platformas restrukturizācija un pilnveide, arābu “Euronews” stacijas finansēšana.

Politikas dokumentos arī atklājas, kāds ir EK gaidītais rezultāts no televīzijas kanāla subsidēšanas. EK sagaida, ka “Euronews” finansēšana 1) būtiski palielina ES aktualitāšu atspoguļošanu Eiropas medijos; 2) “Euronews” pasniedz informāciju atraktīvā, pievilcīgā formātā, tādējādi piesaistot lielāko auditoriju un tuvinot ES pilsoņus ar ES un EK; 3) “Euronews” digitālās platformas attīstība nodrošinās televīzijas kanāla pieejamību globāli plašākā mērogā, kā arī palielinās auditorijas lielumu ES.

²¹ Commission decision concerning the adoption of the amended work programme in the field of Communication, serving as a financing decision. 8.5.2013. Brussels. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/contracts-and-grants/annual_work_programme/index_en.htm (Eiropas Komisijas mājaslapa; aplūkota 20.05.2013).

²² Turpat/

²³ Termiņš, kurā publiski pieejami EK lēmumi par finansējuma piešķiršanu.

“Euronews žurnālisti”: EK dienas kārtību mums nediktē

“Euronews” žurnālistu interpretācijas par televīzijas kanāla un EK mijiedarbību intervijās atklāj, ka žurnālisti apzinās, ka EK redz “Euronews” kā savas leģitimitātes paaugstināšanas līdzekli. Taču tas, pēc žurnālistu domām, nenozīmē, ka šis attiecības neveselīgi ietekmētu medija darbību. Attiecības tiek skatītas kā abpusēji izdevīgas — EK sadarbojas ar mediju, kurš analītiski vēsta par aktuālāko ES, savukārt “Euronews” iegūst prioritāru statusu, vēstot par aktuālāko ES, jo tas piekļūst lielākam informācijas apjomam, savukārt, piemēram, CNN un BBC šis process ir sarežģītāks. Viņuprāt, tas ir sava veida sabiedriskais līgums starp diviem demokrātiskiem ES aktoriem.

Visi intervētie “Euronews” žurnālisti²⁴ apliecina, ka savā žurnālista karjerā nav saņēmuši vai devuši norādes, kā vajadzētu veidot informāciju par EK, pamatojoties uz EK sniegto finansējumu. Žurnālisti arī norāda, ka šķērslis šādam scenārijam, ka “Euronews” kalpotu kā EK brīvpieejas medijs, ir ne tikai viņu žurnālistikas principi, bet arī virkne ar normatīvajiem dokumentiem, kuri nosaka “Euronews” redakcionālo neatkarību.

“Man galvenais un vienīgais motivācijas avots ir žurnālistikas esence, tā ir vēlme eiropiešiem pastāstīt par būtiskāko, kas notiek Eiropā. Mana motivācija nav integrēt ES vai kas tāds, jā, tas var būt blakusefekts, bet tā nav mana primārā atbildība. Un vēl, es gribētu, lai Tu šo pievienotu savai intervijai. Es strādāju “Euronews” kopš 2003. gada. Un es varu likt roku uz savas sirds, ka neviens nekad man nav teicis, par ko man kā vajadzētu ziņot. Man nekad nav izteikti mājieni, kā gala sīžetam televīzijā vajadzētu izskatīties. Un tas pavisam nav slikti. Kad es strādāju BBC, darba vide bija pavisam citādāka,” 2013. gada maijā sacīja Sīmus Kērnajs, Lielbritānijas pilsonis un Francijas Lionas “Euronews” nodaļas starptautisko ziņu žurnālists.

Savukārt, komentējot ES demokrātijas leģitimitātes problemātiku, Sīmus Kērnaja kolēģis Lionas nodaļā Marks Deiviss intervijā sacīja, *“Tas (“Euronews”) noteikti ir instruments EK demokrātijas leģitimitātes iegūšanai. Taču pirms pārraidēm tiek ziņots, ka programma tapusi sadarbībā ar EK. Kad runa ir par ziņu gatavošanu, EK tur nespēlē nekādu lomu.”*

Ieguvumus no sadarbības ar EK komentēja “Euronews” Briseles nodaļas žurnāliste Marta Vivas Hamoro — *“Taisnība, ka mēs tērējam daudz laika,*

²⁴ Anna Blaskēza Diaza (Madrīdes birojs), Marks Deiviss (Lionas birojs), Pjērs Asemats (Lionas birojs), Sīmus Kērnajs (Lionas birojs), Marta Vivas Hamoro (Briseles birojs).

lai nosegtu ziņas no ES institūcijām, jo viņi finansē dažas mūsu programmas. Taču tas arī nozīmē, ka mums ir pieeja resursiem, kuriem parasti mums pieeja būtu ļoti lēna.”

Skeptiskāks ir zviedru politologs Jans Johansons (*Organization for European Interstate Cooperation (OEIC)*), kurš kritizē EK finansējuma piešķiršanu “Euronews”. *“Uzskatu, ka BBC un CNN šobrīd ir vairāk definējami kā pan-eiropieiski mediji. Esmu skeptisks pret “Euronews”, uzskatu to par propagandas kanālu, galvenokārt tā to izmanto EK. Teiksim tā, tu nekad rokā, kura tevi baro.”*

Savukārt Latvijas Radio korespondente Briselē Ina Strazdiņa ir kritiski noskaņota par “Euronews” iespējām ietekmēt ES iedzīvotāju ieinteresētību tematos, kas saistīti ar ES aktualitātēm, un iespējām paaugstināt EK varas legitimitāti. *“Šeit jautājums, cik lielu auditoriju šis medijs var sasniegt. Jo šķiet, ka tie cilvēki, kas patērē pan-eiropieiskos medijus, jau ir zinoši šajā laukā, viņiem jau šie procesi interesē.”*

Noslēgums

EK izmanto televīzijas kanālu “Euronews” kā demokrātijas legitimitātes paaugstināšanas līdzekli, un šī institūcija to neslēpj, sadarbības iemeslus atklājot politikas dokumentos. Mērķis finansējuma izsniegšanai ir potenciālā iespēja tuvināt publiskajā telpā ES iedzīvotājus un EK. Kā viens no mērķiem, uz kā pamata balstīta “Euronews” finansēšana, ir arī EK komunikāciju instrumentu kapacitātes celšana, kas tiešā mērā — praktiski un burtiski — norāda, ka EK normatīvi uztver “Euronews” kanālu kā savas darbības instrumentu.

EK un “Euronews” mijiedarbība ir divpusēja, nevis tikai EK koordinēta, un tas atrunāts sava veida divpusējā nerakstītā sabiedriskā līgumā, apliecina vairāki intervētie “Euronews” darbinieki. Žurnālisti norāda, ka šķērslis scenārijam, kurā “Euronews” kalpotu kā EK “brīvpieejas” medijs, kura saturu EK varētu regulēt, ir ne tikai viņu žurnālistikas principi, bet arī virkne ar normatīviem dokumentiem, kuri nosaka un aizsargā “Euronews” redakcionālo neatkarību. Būtisku nākotnes izpētes lauku paver Latvijas Radio korespondentes Strazdiņas teiktais. Viņa norāda uz “Euronews” šauru patērētāju loku, kuri jau ir izglītoti ES tematos. Tādējādi EK centieni, subsidējot “Euronews”, palielināt savu demokrātijas legitimitāti, par kuras problemātiku

liecina, piemēram, EP vēlēšanu vēlētāju aktivitātes zemie rezultāti, ir pat teorētiski grūti raksturojami kā efektīvi, jo nesasniedz vēlamo auditoriju.

EK centieni izmantot “Euronews” kā demokrātijas deficīta mazināšanas instrumentu ES līmeņa politikas veidotājiem sniedz vērtīgu mācību. EK gadījumā institūcija ir izvēlējusies mediju, kura auditorija nesakrīt ar to, kuru vēlētos sasniegt pati Komisija — vienkāršos eiropiešus, demokrātijas esenci — sabiedrības vidusslāni. Tas norāda uz kļūdām, kā politikas pārvaldības aktors konstruē pilsoņa profilu, tādējādi vēlreiz iezīmējot, ka starp ES pilsoni un ES institūcijām aizvien pastāv dziļa plaisa.

“Euronews” un EK interakcija sniedz labu piemēru arī Latvijai. Ir skaidrs, ka Latvijai, pildot ES prezidējošās valsts lomu 2015. gadā, viens no galvenajiem mērķiem būs uzticēto darbu padarīt kvalitatīvi, tostarp publiskajā sfērā. Lai gan Latvijas vārds krietni biežāk skanēs “Euronews”, Latvija varētu parādīt piemēru, ka informēšana par aktuālo ES nenotiek tikai elites medijos un jau zinošu ierēdņu un biznesa vides semināros. Uzdevums nav vienkāršs, taču, efektīvi izmantojot sociālos tīklus, valsts sabiedriskos medijus, kā arī pilsētās un lauku reģionos organizējot atraktīvas un vienkāršas informēšanas kampaņas, rezultāts varētu būt labāks, nekā ES līmeņa iecerētais, izmantojot “Euronews”.

II

EIROPAS SAVIENĪBAS POLITIKAS

Reporting for Europe: how Brussels Correspondents Shape the EU Communication Deficit

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This article explores the role of Brussels correspondents within the EU communication deficit debate. It posits that correspondents from newer Member States are at risk of not being able to report European politics adequately, due to, for example, a lack of interest from editors at home, as well as economic reasons. The article also presents results from previous research, showing how Brussels journalists describe their role within the European political communication process.

Keywords: Brussels journalism, EU communication deficit, journalistic role conceptions.

Šajā rakstā tiek apskatīta Briseles korespondentu loma Eiropas Savienības komunikatīvā deficīta debašu ietvaros. Tas parāda, ka korespondenti no jaunākām dalībvalstīm tiek pakļauti riskam nespēt adekvāti ziņot par Eiropas politiku viņu plašsaziņas līdzekļu redaktoru zemas ieinteresētības vai ekonomisko apsvērumu dēļ. Rakstā tiek arī piedāvāti iepriekšējo pētījumu rezultāti, kas parāda, kā Briseles korespondenti redz savu lomu Eiropas politiskās komunikācijas procesā.

Atslēgvārdi: Briseles žurnālistika, ES komunikatīvais deficīts, žurnālistu lomas uztvere.

The media are crucial in bringing the European idea to the EU's most remote corners. As such, they stand at the centre of the EU's communication deficit debate. When considering this important role, one must look to one group of media actors, or journalists, in particular: *Brussels correspondents*. However, within the Brussels press corps, it is predominantly correspondents from “newer”, post-communist Member States, such as Latvia, who are more likely to experience obstacles in bringing Europe “back home”.¹

Most of us have few opportunities of experiencing European politics first-hand. We must therefore rely on the media to gain information and journalists reporting on Europe, especially those working in “Europe's capital” Brussels, are crucial in this process. In literature they have been called the principal agents of Europeanization², whose work and life between complex European politics, editorial deadlines and the EU institutions is characteristic of how the media influence the EU integration process. This has sparked the interest of communication scholars, and recent research has shown that the work situation of journalists informs the media content they produce.³

During the last ten years or so, the enlargement of the EU has brought in thirteen new Member States. These new members are special in many respects. Many of them have experienced a sudden shift from communist media control to a democratic media system.⁴ This triggers the question about how journalists from these countries, which include Latvia, feel and report about the European Union. What role do Brussels correspondents from new Member States play in bringing “Europe” to Riga, Warsaw, or Sofia, and can an EU communication deficit be found within their reporting?

¹ This article relies on Lecheler (2008), Lecheler (2009) and Lecheler & Hinrichsen (2010) in which Brussels journalism is discussed.

² Gerhards J. Westeuropäische Integration und die Schwierigkeiten der Entstehung einer europäischen Öffentlichkeit. *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*. No. 22, H.2, 1992, pp. 96–110.

³ See: Weischenberg S. *Journalistik. Theorie und Praxis aktueller Medienkommunikation. Band 1: Mediensysteme, Medienethik, Medieninstitutionen*. Aufladen, 1992.; Gleissner M., de Vreese C. H. News about the EU Constitution. Journalistic challenges and media portrayal of the European Union Constitution. *Journalism*. Vol. 6, no. 2, 2005, pp. 221–242.

⁴ Gross P. Between Reality and Dream: Eastern European Media Transition, Transformation, Consolidation, and Integration. *East European Politics and Societies*. Vol. 18, no. 1, 2004, pp. 110–131.

Studying Brussels journalists from “newer” Member States

The Brussels press corps is a close-knit group of correspondents, characterised by very diverse journalistic traditions, languages and journalistic skills.⁵ Brussels journalists are not “traditional” foreign correspondents, as they do not report about “foreign affairs”, but national issues — from an international location.⁶ Many EU citizens are not particularly interested in these European issues, which thwarts the work of Brussels journalists.⁷

One can instantly think of a number of points that could make journalists of “newer” EU Member States different from their colleagues from “older” Member States. After the breakdown of communism, the media markets in many of these countries exploded, and a completely new generation of journalists entered the profession.⁸ Today, the media in these Member States are comparable to western media in their diversity, with a variety of TV-stations, newspapers and magazines available. However, post-1989 media systems have not yet concluded the transition. Differences can be found in the perception of what journalism represents within a democratic society.⁹ Are journalists, for instance, “objective observers”, or must they “take sides”? How close should a journalist be to politicians, lobbyists or businessmen? Also, some professional norms and guidelines, as well as legal protection of journalists and journalistic freedom, are not fully established yet, and there is uncertainty regarding formal journalism training.

Based on these ideas, I have examined a number of Brussels journalists from post-communist EU Member States¹⁰ by means of qualitative, semi-structured interviews. My findings, in combination with existing literature,

⁵ Baisnée O. Can Political journalism exist at the EU level? In: *Political journalism*. Eds. R. Kuhn & E. Neveu. London: Routledge, 2002, pp. 108–127.

⁶ Lecheler S. EU membership and the press: An analysis of the Brussels correspondents from the new member states. *Journalism*. Vol. 9, no. 4, 2008, pp. 443–464.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Gross P. Between Reality and Dream: Eastern European Media Transition, Transformation, Consolidation, and Integration. *East European Politics and Societies*. Vol. 18, no. 1, 2004, pp. 110–131.

⁹ Coman M. Media Bourgeoisie and Media Proletariat in Post-Communist Romania. *Journalism Studies*. Vol. 5, no. 1, 2004, pp. 45–58.

¹⁰ See: Lecheler S. EU membership and the press: An analysis of the Brussels correspondents from the new member states. *Journalism*. Vol. 9, no. 4, 2008, pp. 443–464.; Lecheler S. Bringing “Europe” home: Brussels-based journalists from the new EU member states. *Idee*. Vol. 30, no. 6, 2009, pp. 12–16.; and Lecheler S., Hinrichsen M. C. Role conceptions of Brussels correspondents from new member states. *Javnost*. Vol. 17, 2010, pp. 73–86.

show a number of aspects of Brussels journalism that are of interest to citizens and policymakers, as well as other observers of public life in Latvia and abroad.

Colleagues: high levels of competition

My research has shown that on a personal level, journalists from “new” EU Member States are in close contact with journalists from “older” Member States. However, experience plays a role, and the longer a journalist lives in Brussels, the more he or she associates with colleagues of other nationalities. However, “on the job”, newer Member State correspondents can experience certain difficulties when working with journalists from other, mostly western, EU countries. A Latvian radio journalist told me that she “could not share the same experience with journalists from Germany and England, [as] our journalism tradition is quite new. It changed completely after the Soviet times”. This also resonated with a Hungarian journalist working for a national newspaper, who stated that “the English, the French or the Dutch colleagues or newspapers get the information before [we] have access to it”. A Czech journalist added: “The Financial Times has 8 people in Brussels and I am alone. Do the maths!”

The EU institutions: insufficient access?

A correspondent’s relationship with official sources is perhaps one of the most important aspects of journalistic work. Fortunately, most correspondents interviewed found that they have relatively easy access to information coming from EU institutions. However, they still found themselves at a disadvantage due to “a status of insignificance within the European media market”. This means that journalists from the newer Member States sometimes felt overlooked in comparison to their colleagues from Member States such as Germany or Great Britain. This does not seem to be a problem only for small countries such as Latvia: a Polish correspondent, working for one of the major newspapers in Poland, told me about a distinct hierarchy within the Brussels press-corps, and that in Brussels “some animals” were “more equal than others”. He had observed that the press corps hierarchy consisted of three “leagues”: a group of “heavy weights” from *Reuters*, *Financial Times*, and *BBC*, as well as other major German, French and British publications — all of which are clearly preferred by EU staff when it comes to access to

exclusive information. These “big animals” were followed by a group composed of other journalists representing major national newspapers, which enjoyed less, but still adequate attention. Lastly, he said, there was a “forgotten league” of local media, smaller publications (sometimes from small states) and freelancers.

Journalists interviewed thus felt a certain resentment stemming from a perception of unfair treatment at the hands of the EU institutions in general, and communication officials of the European Commission in particular. Interestingly, the newspaper *Financial Times* (*FT*) emerged as a common example against which many journalists directed their frustration. For instance, a Czech journalist reported on an apparently well-known “joke”, which claims that “the FT computers are connected directly to the EU Commission”. It has to be noted that by merely conducting interviews with journalists I cannot supply information as to the accuracy of such favouritism, but the findings show that journalists shared a common experience of discrimination, based on the relative size and importance of their home media market.

Home offices: not enough interest & economic constraints

I also examined the relationship of post-communist Brussels journalists with their home offices and chief editors. Journalists working for public broadcasting companies and political newspapers were generally happy with the airtime and print space allocated to them. However, this was not the case for privately-owned audio-visual media. Some journalists remarked that the general knowledge on EU issues at their home offices was low, and paired with little effort to learn more. A Polish TV correspondent recounted the following story, when she proposed an interview with an EU Commissioner: “[S]ome guy from my TV station says: ‘OK, but who is this person? I don’t know him. Nobody knows him.’ And I say: ‘This is important. How are people supposed to understand if they don’t see the people?’”

Home audiences: characterized by “EU fatigue”?

Journalists from new Member States often express the impression that their audiences at home are both uninterested and uninformed about the EU. Most journalists interviewed agreed that the disinterest must stem from an inability to understand how events in Brussels could directly affect their

lives. While this might have changed during the last years due to the European economic crisis, one factor remains: because journalists believe their audiences are not interested in their coverage, they often write each piece as if they were explaining concepts for the first time. For instance, a Latvian correspondent felt that, because “European questions are the last ones people want to hear today” it was her responsibility to “tell them as simply and interestingly as possible” what the EU was about.

Role conceptions: true Europeans?

Some argue that post-communist journalists, such as those from many newer EU Member States, have not yet evolved a fixed set of professional roles, norms and values.¹¹ My study shows that Brussels correspondents from post-communist, newer Member States find that explicative, objective and rapid information-gathering are the most important ingredients of journalism in Brussels. It is not clear if this opinion represents the development of a professional norm, but it closely coincides with findings by other authors¹² on the journalistic type of the ‘explaining ombudsman’ in Brussels: as a consequence of a highly-complex subject matter and declining public support at home, journalists see it as their highest goal to *explain* the EU and make the EU decision-making process in Brussels better understood. Other forms of reporting such as investigative or critical reporting are not as popular, which might be connected to the fact that new Member State correspondents feel at a disadvantage in the news-gathering process compared to their colleagues from other big (and powerful) publications.¹³

Conclusion: reporting Europe

Brussels journalists play a vital role in the EU communication deficit debate, because they are situated at the pivotal point of European Politics: Brussels. No communication effort on the side of the EU can be successful without these journalists acting as its principal agents.

¹¹ Coman M. Media Bourgeoisie and Media Proletariat in Post-Communist Romania. *Journalism Studies*. Vol. 5, no. 1, 2004, pp. 45–58.

¹² Drehkopf K. *Das journalistische Selbstverständnis deutscher EU-Korrespondenten*. Thesis (M. A.) Munich University, 2006.

¹³ Lecheler S. EU membership and the press: An analysis of the Brussels correspondents from the new member states. *Journalism*. Vol. 9, no. 4, 2008, pp. 443–464.

When one considers correspondents from the new Member States, such as Latvia, who come from a different media tradition than those of western Europe, a number of questions arise about how Brussels correspondents see their role in communicating European integration to their audiences at home. My studies show that the work situation and professional network of newer Member State correspondents in Brussels may have a detrimental effect on their reporting on European issues. In Brussels, the importance of smaller and also poorer Member States is reduced, which leaves journalists at a disadvantage when researching their stories. Moreover, little interest in EU affairs at home may put limitations on news reporting, which might lead journalists to stress national angles over European ones.¹⁴ Brussels correspondents from the new Member States also display a certain level of cynicism regarding their audiences' interest in EU news. Lastly, I find that the complex subject matter of EU affairs and press work leads journalists to adopt an explicative, but also rather uncritical view towards EU news reporting. In conclusion, common perspectives are eschewed in favour of national interests, and international and transnational dialogue is hindered by uncritical reporting — a fact that might aid the EU communication deficit.

Nevertheless, this evidence must be interpreted in the light of a number of developments: the economic crisis has reduced the Brussels press corps, which probably increases the pressure on those who remain.¹⁵ Several eastern European countries thus have too few correspondents in Brussels – Latvia being one of them.¹⁶ The shrinking Brussels press corps can also be attributed to technological changes, such as an increased focus on EU communication through online channels, which may be at the root of the argument that journalists do not have to be in Brussels to get the latest information on European politics. This, however, stands in conflict with the idea that investigative journalism must be able to observe and report within the sphere of “backstage politics” made in the cafés and corridors, thereby keeping political actors in check. Such in-depth reporting can only be accomplished on site.

¹⁴ Konohovs A., Lecheler S. 2012. Latvian journalism and the European Union: A Brussels and Riga perspective. *Media Transformations*. Vol. 8, pp. 152–177.

¹⁵ Journalists deserting Brussels: The incredible shrinking EU press corps. *The Economist*. 15 May 2010. http://www.economist.com/blogs/charlemagne/2010/03/journalists_deserting_brussels (The Economist home page; visited 18.08.2013.).

¹⁶ Konohovs A., Lecheler S. 2012. Latvian journalism and the European Union: A Brussels and Riga perspective. *Media Transformations*. Vol. 8, pp. 152–177.

Latvijas žurnālisti un Eiropas Savienības ziņas

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Šajā rakstā tiek iztirzāta žurnālistu un plašsaziņas līdzekļu loma Eiropas Savienības komunikatīvā deficīta kontekstā. Tiek analizēts, kā un kādēļ žurnālisti Latvijā un Eiropā kopumā izvēlas atspoguļot vai, tieši pretēji, ignorēt kādu notikumu Eiropas Savienībā, kā arī to, kādas sekas tas potenciāli atstāj uz iedzīvotāju atbalstu kopīgajam Eiropas projektam. Īpaša uzmanība tiek pievērsta faktam, ka no Latvijas Briselē pašreiz ir pastāvīgi akreditēts tikai viens žurnālists, un tam, kādu iespaidu tas atstāj uz Eiropas Savienības notikumu atspoguļošanu Latvijā.

Atslēgvārdi: Brisele, Eiropas Savienība, komunikācija, plašsaziņas līdzekļi, ziņas, žurnālisti.

This article deals with the role of journalists and media within the context of the European Union communication deficit. Author offers an analysis of journalistic practices and routines both in Latvia and Europe as a whole that tends to determine EU coverage in the national media. Article also touches upon possible consequences of such coverage for the further EU integration. Special attention is devoted to the fact that at the moment Latvia has just one permanent Brussels correspondent, and the impact it has on EU coverage in Latvia.

Keywords: Brussels, communication, European Union, journalists, media, news.

Ievads

Kopš 2008. gada vidus, kad Latvijā sākās ekonomiskā krīze, Briselē pastāvīgi strādā tikai viena žurnāliste no Latvijas — Latvijas Radio korespondente Ina Strazdiņa. Viņa regulāri veido ziņu materiālus ne tikai Latvijas Radio raidījumiem, bet arī Latvijas Televīzijas ziņām, kā arī raksta “Latvijas Avīzei”. Tādēļ diezgan droši var teikt, ka vienam cilvēkam jau aptuveni piecus gadus ir visnotaļ liela ietekme uz to, ko par notikumiem Eiropas Savienībā uzzina Latvijas iedzīvotāji. Jo, kā liecina iepriekšējie pētījumi un socioloģiskās aptaujas, tieši dalībvalstu nacionālie un reģionālie plašsaziņas līdzekļi ir primārais iedzīvotāju informācijas avots par notikumiem Eiropas Savienības institūcijās.¹

Šis raksts galvenokārt ir balstīts uz pētījumu, kas tika veikts 2011. gada sākumā un publicēts 2012. gadā.² Pētījuma ietvaros tika aptaujāti deviņi Latvijas žurnālisti gan Rīgā, gan Briselē, kuri atbild par Eiropas Savienības notikumu atspoguļošanu viņu pārstāvētajā plašsaziņas līdzeklī vai arī nosaka tā redakcionālo politiku. Pētījuma mērķis bija saprast ne tikai to, kādus Eiropas Savienības notikumus Latvijas plašsaziņas līdzekļi atspoguļo, bet arī kāpēc žurnālisti izvēlas pievērsties vai nepievērsties kādam notikumam. Tieši žurnālisti un redaktori ir tie, kas ikdienā izvērtē, vai konkrētais notikums ir pietiekami būtisks un interesants viņu auditorijai. Eiropas Savienības kontekstā ir iespējams teikt, ka žurnālisti ir kā tilts starp kopīgo Eiropas projektu un eiropiešiem.³

Lai gan plašsaziņas līdzekļi ir nozīmīgākais iedzīvotāju informācijas avots par notikumiem Eiropas Savienībā, daudzi pētījumi ir parādījuši, ka mediji bieži ignorē notikumus Briselē, Strasbūrā vai Luksemburgā.⁴ Bet, ja

¹ European Commission Standard Eurobarometer 74: Information on European political matters. Directorate-General Communication. Brussels, 2011.

² Konohovs A., Lecheler S. Latvian Journalism and the European Union: A Brussels and Riga perspective. *Media Transformations*. Vol. 8, 2012, pp. 152–177.

³ Lecheler S. EU Membership and the Press: An Analysis of the Brussels Correspondents from the New Member States. *Journalism*. Vol. 9, 2008, pp. 443–464.

⁴ Sk.: Adam S. Domestic Adaptations of Europe: A Comparative Study of the Debates on EU Enlargement and a Common Constitution in the German and French Quality Press. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*. Vol. 19, no. 4, 2007, pp. 409–433.; de Vreese C. H., Banducci S. A., Semetko H. A. and Boomgaarden H. G. The News Coverage of the 2004 European Parliamentary Election Campaign in 25 Countries. *European Union Politics*. Vol. 7, 2006, pp. 477–503.

Eiropas Savienības notikumi tiek atspoguļoti, tad tie tiek izgaismoti negatīvi⁵ vai skatīti caur pašmāju leņķi,⁶ koncentrējoties tikai uz konkrētā notikuma nozīmi savā dalībvalstī. Tas var kļūt par iemeslu zemi līdzdalībai Eiropas Parlamenta vēlēšanās vai samazināt kopīgo iedzīvotāju atbalstu Eiropas Savienībai.⁷ Līdz ar to veidojas priekšnosacījumi ES demokrātijas deficītam, jo eiroparlamentāriešu apgalvojums, ka viņi pārstāv visas Eiropas intereses, nebūs patiess, ja par viņiem nobalsojusi vien neliela pilsoņu daļa.

Turpmāk sniegšu nelielu ieskatu dažādos pēdējo gadu pētījumos par Eiropas Savienības notikumu atspoguļošanu plašsaziņas līdzekļos Eiropā un tā ietekmi uz eiropiešiem, kā arī piedāvāšu Latvijas situācijas analīzi.

Plašsaziņas līdzekļi un Eiropas Savienība

Vairākkārtēji pētījumi dažādās Eiropas valstīs ir pierādījuši, ka Eiropas Savienības notikumi tiek gaužām maz atspoguļoti dalībvalstu plašsaziņas līdzekļos.⁸ Savukārt tad, kad šie notikumi tiek atspoguļoti, tas notiek caur lokālo prizmu. Tādējādi var teikt, ka tas, kā Eiropā tiek runāts par ES notikumiem, neatbilst ES pašreizējai ietekmei un tās pieņemto lēmumu ekonomiskajam, politiskajam un sociālajam nozīmīgumam.

Lielākā daļa pētnieku piekrīt, ka Eiropas Savienības notikumu atspoguļošanu dalībvalstu plašsaziņas līdzekļos raksturo vairākas problēmas. Tomēr īpašu uzmanību būtu jāpievērš diviem jau iepriekš nedaudz iezīmētiem aspektiem, kas raksturīgi ES ziņām, proti 1) ES notikumiem trūkst “ziņu vērtības” vai redzamības ikdienas informācijas plūsmā, 2) žurnālistiem piemīt tendence pasniegt ES jaunumus caur lokālo prizmu.

⁵ Sk.: Gleissner M. and de Vreese C. H. News about the EU Constitution: Journalistic Challenges and Media Portrayal of the European Union Constitution. *Journalism*. Vol. 6, 2005, pp. 221–242.; Peter J. and de Vreese C. H. In Search of Europe: A Cross-National Comparative Study of the European Union in National Television News. *The Harvard International Journal of Press / Politics*. Vol. 9, 2004, pp. 3–24.

⁶ Sk.: Bourdon J. Unhappy Engineers of the European Soul: The EBU and the Woes of Pan-European Television. *International Communication Gazette*. Vol. 69, 2007, pp. 263–280.

⁷ Sk.: de Vreese C. H., Banducci S. A., Semetko H. A. and Boomgaarden H. G. The News Coverage of the 2004 European Parliamentary Election Campaign in 25 Countries. *European Union Politics*. Vol. 7, 2006, pp. 477–503.

⁸ Sk.: Brüggemann M. and Kleinen-von Königslöw K. Let's Talk about Europe: Why Europeanization Shows a Different Face in Different Newspapers. *European Journal of Communication*. Vol. 24, no. 1, 2009, pp. 27–48.

Tas, ka par Eiropas Savienības lēmumiem gan elektroniskajos, gan drukātajos medijos tiek runāts pavisam maz, ir raksturīgi ne tikai Latvijai. Pētījumi liecina, ka publikāciju un sižetu skaits par Eiropu būtiski pieaug tikai nozīmīgu notikumu laikā, piemēram, Eiropas Parlamenta vēlēšanās vai brīžos, kad Briselē notiek dalībvalstu vadītāju samiti.⁹ Atsevišķi autori uzskata, ka televīzijas nepievērš uzmanību ES ziņām, jo ES institūcijām trūkst “sejas” vai līdera, kurš būtu pietiekami atpazīstams un spētu piesaistīt skatītāju uzmanību.¹⁰ Līdz ar to var rasties iespaids, ka lēmumus Eiropā pieņem jebkurš cits, bet tikai ne ES politiķi.

Kurš tad komentē ES notikumus, ja tas vispār tiek darīts? Visbiežāk tie ir vietējie politiķi. Par samitos un sanāksmēs lemto parasti runā plašsaziņas līdzekļa pārstāvētās dalībvalsts valdības vadītājs vai kāds no ministriem. Arī Eiropas Komisijas un Eiropas Parlamenta lēmumu ietekmi uz konkrēto dalībvalsti visbiežāk skaidro vietējie politiķi un ierēdņi. No žurnālista viedokļa šāda prakse ir saprotama, jo, piemēram, attālums ir nozīmīgs ziņu atlases kritērijs. Turklāt radio un televīzija bieži dod priekšroku tām amatpersonām un ekspertiem, kuri spēj izteikties valodā, kurā raida konkrētās dalībvalsts plašsaziņas līdzeklis (Latvijas gadījumā latviešu vai krievu). Tomēr šāda plašsaziņas līdzekļu prakse, pēc vairāku autoru domām, var kaitēt kopīgās Eiropas publiskās telpas izveidei.¹¹

Lai gan pastāv dažādi viedokļi par to, kādai būtu jābūt Eiropas publiskajai telpai, vairāki autori sliecas piekrist, ka tai būtu jāpiedāvā zināms kopējs izejas punkts vai leņķis, no kura raudzīties uz notikumiem Eiropā un par tiem diskutēt. Tas ļautu eiropiešiem diskutēt par kopīgajām problēmām no kopīgā skatu punkta un diskusiju platformas. Šāda pieeja nenozīmē, ka žurnālistam būtu jāatsakās no savas valsts pieminēšanas, tomēr līdztekus tam ir jābūt arī informācijai par to, kā uz vienu vai otru problēmu raugās citās ES dalībvalstīs. Pastāv arī uzskats, ka Eiropas publiskās telpas izveidi sekmētu

⁹ Sk.: Peter J. and de Vreese C. H. In Search of Europe: A Cross-National Comparative Study of the European Union in National Television News. *The Harvard International Journal of Press / Politics*. Vol. 9, 2004, pp. 3–24.

¹⁰ Bourdon J. Unhappy Engineers of the European Soul: The EBU and the Woes of Pan-European Television. *International Communication Gazette*. Vol. 69, 2007, pp. 263–280.; Lecheler S. EU Membership and the Press: An Analysis of the Brussels Correspondents from the New Member States. *Journalism*. Vol. 9, 2008, pp. 443–464.

¹¹ Bourdon J. Unhappy Engineers of the European Soul: The EBU and the Woes of Pan-European Television. *International Communication Gazette*. Vol. 69, 2007, pp. 263–280.

tas, ka par ES lēmumiem izteiktos Eiropas līmeņa politiķi (piem., Eiropas Parlamenta deputāti vai ES komisāri), nevis nacionālā līmeņa politiķi. Bet, ja notikumi tiek lokalizēti jeb pasniegti caur vietējo prizmu, parasti notiek pretējais.

Žurnālisti un Eiropas Savienība

Žurnālisti, kuri regulāri atspoguļo ES notikumus, bieži nonāk dilemmas priekšā. No vienas puses viņi apzinās, ka ir nepieciešams informēt sabiedrību par ES lēmumiem un problēmām. Bet, no otras puses, viņi saprot, ka sabiedrības interese par ES jautājumiem ir ļoti maza. Turklāt ES lēmumi bieži vien ir sarežģīti un tos katru reizi ir detalizēti jāskaidro, pieņemot, ka auditorijai ir diezgan mazas priekšzināšanas. Savukārt plašiem skaidrojumiem nereti trūkst ētera laika vai vietas drukātajos izdevumos, jo redaktori parasti negrib atvēlēt daudz laika vai vietas sabiedrību maz interesējošiem jautājumiem. Tādēļ žurnālisti kļūst par sava veida ķīlniekiem starp Eiropas un vietējo dienas kārtību. Tāpat ir arī jāņem vērā, ka žurnālistu darbu spēcīgi ietekmē vietējās žurnālistikas tradīcijas.

Starp visiem žurnālistiem, kuri atspoguļo ES notikumus, Briselē strādājošie žurnālisti spēlē īpašu lomu. To nosaka viņu ģeogrāfiskais tuvums gan ES lēmumu pieņēmējiem, gan arī citu valstu žurnālistiem, kuri interesējas par līdzīgiem tematiem. Daži autori Briseles korespondentus raksturo kā “pionierus”, kuru radītie materiāli var veidot aizmetņus kopīgajam Eiropas skatu punktam.¹² Savukārt citi viņus dēvē par savas dalībvalsts “cietumniekiem”, jo Briseles korespondentiem ir jāvadās pēc savas valsts žurnālistikas tradīcijām, t.i., jāstāsta par to, kas tradicionāli šķiet interesanti viņu dalībvalsts auditorijai, nevis ir svarīgi Briselē.¹³

Apzinoties, ka dalībvalstīs lielākoties pastāv maza izpratne par ES politiku un tās nozīmi, Briselē strādājošie žurnālisti nereti kļūst par atturīgiem Eiropas vēstnešiem. Tādēļ pašmāju redaktori viņiem mēdz pārnest objektivitātes trūkumu. Savukārt Briseles amatpersonas — izteikt nepelnītu kritiku

¹² Statham P. Making Europe News: How Journalists View their Role and Media Performance. *Journalism*. Vol. 9, 2008, pp. 398–422.

¹³ Heikkilä H. and Kunelius R. Ambivalent Ambassadors and Realistic Reporters: The Calling of Cosmopolitanism and the Seduction of the Secular in EU Journalism. *Journalism*. Vol. 9, 2008, pp. 377–397.

viņu darbam. Tomēr pārsvarā Briseles korespondenti tiek uzskatīti par savas jomas ekspertiem. Līdz ar to viņiem tiek dota diezgan liela brīvība tematu izvēlē.

Latvijas žurnālisti un ES tematikas atspoguļošana

2011. gada sākumā veiktā pētījuma dati liecina, ka arī Latvijas žurnālistikā ES notikumu atspoguļošanu ietekmē daudzi no iepriekš minētajiem faktoriem. Būtiskākie no tiem ir maza sabiedrības interese par notikumiem Briselē, tematikas sarežģītība un arī ierobežotie finanšu resursi, kas vairumam plašsaziņas līdzekļu neļauj uzturēt pastāvīgu korespondentu Briselē.

Kā jau tika norādīts šī raksta sākumā, kopš 2008. gada vidus Briselē pastāvīgi strādā tikai viena Latvijas žurnāliste — Latvijas Radio korespondente Ina Strazdiņa. Lai gan jāsaka, ka salīdzinājumā ar citām valstīm, no Latvijas Briselē nekad pastāvīgi nav strādājis liels žurnālistu skaits. Starp dienas laikrakstiem tikai “Dienai” ir bijis Briseles korespondents. Nedz “Latvijas Avīzei”, nedz “Neatkarīgajai Rīta Avīzei”, nedz kādam no krievisku valodā iznākošajiem izdevumiem pastāvīga korespondenta Briselē nav bijis. Arī starp TV kanāliem tikai Latvijas Televīzijai savulaik bija pastāvīgs žurnālists Briselē. Salīdzinājumam — no Ungārijas Briselē 2007. gadā strādāja 11 žurnālisti, savukārt no Čehijas — septiņi.¹⁴ Lai gan šie dati attiecas uz pirmskrīzes posmu un jaunākie skaitļi liecina, ka pastāvīgi akreditēto žurnālistu skaits Briselē sarūk, tomēr var secināt, ka Latvijai arī pirms krīzes nav bijusi iespēja plaši un detalizēti runāt par ES politiku, ziņojot no pirmavota.

Pašreizējā situācija, kad no Latvijas Briselē strādā tikai viena žurnāliste, ļauj izdarīt vairākus secinājumus. Pastāv veselīgas konkurences trūkums, jo dažādu valstu žurnālisti, kuri strādā Briselē, nerada viens otram konkurenci. Tāpat, viena cilvēka izvēle par labu vienam vai otram tematam ļoti lielā mērā ietekmē to, kādi ES notikumi un kā tiek atspoguļoti vairākos Latvijas medijos (Latvijas Radio, Latvijas Televīzija, “Latvijas Avīze” un pastarpināti arī citos plašsaziņas līdzekļos). Intervijās vairāki žurnālisti un redaktori ir atzinuši, ka respektē Briseles korespondentes pieredzi un zināšanas par ES notikumiem, un līdz ar to gandrīz pilnībā paļaujas uz viņas piedāvāto tematu izvēli. Tomēr

¹⁴ Raeymaeckers K., Cosijn L. and Deprez A. Reporting the European Union. *Journalism Practice*. Vol. 1, no. 1, 2007, pp. 102–119.

teikt, ka viena cilvēka izvēle pilnībā nosaka ES dienaskārtības atspoguļošanu, būtu pārspilēti.

Tāpat ir jāatzīst, ka viena cilvēka spējas veidot ziņu materiālus ir ierobežotas. Tādēļ mazinās iespēja piedāvāt daudzveidīgus un saistošus ziņu, analītiskos un aprakstošos materiālus par Eiropu. Šī ir būtiska problēma arī citās dalībvalstīs, jo plašsaziņas līdzekļi bieži vien koncentrējas tikai uz ES dienas kārtību, palaižot garām iespēju veidot interesantus materiālus par Eiropu.

Ikdienā par notikumiem Briselē bieži tiek stāstīts arī no Rīgas. Pārsvārā to dara žurnālisti, kuri specializējas ārzemju ziņās. Tieši šajā ziņu raidījuma sadaļā vai avīzes lappusēs Eiropas Savienības notikumi arī parasti tiek iekļauti. Svarīgi ir apzināties, ka ārzemju ziņu sadaļā ar Briselē pieņemtajiem lēmumiem konkurē gan dažādas pasaules dabas katastrofas, gan bads Āfrikā, gan kari, gan politiskie notikumi tādās lielvalstīs kā Amerikas Savienotās Valstis, Krievija vai Ķīna.

Te savu lomu spēlē ES tematikas sarežģītība. Vairāki žurnālisti ir atzinuši, ka ES notikumos ir nepieciešams pamatīgi iedziļināties, pirms par tiem ir iespējams stāstīt. Turklāt gadās arī pielaist kādu kļūdu, jo ir grūti pārziņāt visas detaļas, ja ir jāinteresējas par tik plašu tematu loku. Tāpat dažiem žurnālistiem šķiet, ka lēmumi tiek pieņemti ļoti tālu un stāsies spēkā tikai pēc ilgāka laika, līdz ar to par tiem pašreiz nebūtu vērts runāt. Tādēļ žurnālisti atzīst, ka mēdz izvēlēties vieglākās pretestības ceļu, proti, stāstīt nevis par ES notikumiem, bet kādu citu tematu. Viens no intervētajiem ir minējis, ka parasti izvairās no diviem tematiem: Tuvo Austrumu miera procesa un Eiropas Savienības lēmumiem, jo abi ir vienlīdz sarežģīti.

Pēdējo gadu finanšu krīzes laikā daudzi ES lēmumi skāra bankas, palīdzības programmas, stabilitātes mehānismu un fiskālo politiku. Aptaujātie žurnālisti atzīst, ka elektroniskajos plašsaziņas līdzekļos ir ļoti grūti izstāstīt par šādiem diezgan abstraktiem un tehniskiem lēmumiem. Gan radio, gan televīzijā stāstam ir jābūt skaidram no paša sākuma, jo auditorijai nav iespējams atgriezties un pārlasīt vēlreiz, kā to var darīt avīzē vai žurnālā. Tomēr arī avīzes ne pārāk vēlas skaidrot šādus sarežģītus, tehniskus lēmumus, jo tie nepalielina avīžu tirāžu.

Ne mazāk būtisks ir arī fakts, ka ES lēmumu pieņēmēji bieži runā sarežģītā valodā, kas ir pilna ar specifiskiem, plašākai auditorijai nesaprotamiem jēdzieniem. Vēl pirms dažiem gadiem daudz tika runāts par "sešpaku" jeb sešiem likumiem, kam bija paredzēts nodrošināt Eiropas Savienības finanšu

stabilitāti. Direktīvas, regulas, horizontālie jautājumi, tiešmaksājumi, vadlinijas, kohēzijas politika un septiņu gadu plānošanas periods. Tie ir tikai daži no ES ikdienas termiņiem, kas nebūt nav skaidri vidējam auditorijas pārstāvim.

Vairums pētījuma laikā intervēto žurnālistu uzsvēra, ka ES ziņu lokalizācija viņiem šķiet ārkārtīgi svarīga. Viņuprāt, tas ir viens no retajiem veidiem, kā uzrunāt auditoriju un, iespējams, aizsākt kādu diskusiju sabiedrībā. Nevienam no aptaujātajiem žurnālistiem neuzskatīja, ka tādējādi varētu tikt apdraudēta Eiropas integrācija.

Visbeidzot ir jāpiemin ES tematu redzamība plašsaziņas līdzekļos. Pētījumi liecina, ka ziņas no Briseles reti nonāk avīžu pirmajās lapaspusēs vai ziņu izlaidumu sākumā. Daļēji tas ir skaidrojams ar jau pieminēto attālumu un ES lēmumu sarežģītību, kā arī tiešās ietekmes trūkumu. Tomēr vairāki žurnālisti ir norādījuši, ka arī viņu redaktori vienkārši mēdz būt neieinteresēti ES tematos vai vēlas redzēt tikai standarta stāstus par finansējumu lauksaimniekiem u.tml. Arī salīdzinoši ekskluzīvas intervijas ar augstām ES amatpersonām reti nokļūst uz avīzes vāka vai labākajā raidlaikā, jo redaktori šos materiālus neuzskata par pietiekami nozīmīgiem.

Secinājumi

Noslēgumā jāsecina, ka faktori, kas nosaka ES tematikas atspoguļošanu Latvijas plašsaziņas līdzekļos, būtiski neatšķiras no tiem, kas ietekmē ar ES jaunumiem saistīto materiālu parādīšanos Rietumeiropas plašsaziņas līdzekļos. Latvijas žurnālisti, tāpat kā daudzi viņu kolēģi no citu valstu nacionālajiem plašsaziņas līdzekļiem, uzskata, ka ES tematika ir svarīga, bet sarežģīta un bieži vien arī "sausā". Tādēļ par to ir grūti runāt.

Lai stāstītu par ES tematiem, ir nepieciešamas priekšzināšanas, kuru reizēm trūkst. Tāpat arī redaktori un producenti bieži dod priekšroku ar ES nesaistītiem tematiem vai arī standarta stāstiem par Briseles finansiālo atbalstu Latvijai.

Fakts, ka Briselē jau vairākus gadus strādā tikai viena pastāvīgi akreditēta korespondente, mazina informācijas dažādību par Eiropas notikumiem. Šī iemesla dēļ maz ziņojumi tiek veidoti no pirmavota. Žurnālistiem pārsvarā ir jāpaļaujas uz institūciju sniegto informāciju un preses relizēm. Neesot uz vietas, notikumu epicentrā, samazinās arī žurnālistu spēja izšķirt,

kuri ES lēmumi ir patiešām nozīmīgi un kuri nav. Tādēļ tuvākajos gados, stiprinot atbalstu sabiedriskajiem plašsaziņas līdzekļiem, būtu jādomā arī par šo aspektu.

Sevišķi būtiski ir nodrošināt ES notikumu neatkarīgu un objektīvu atspoguļošanu Latvijas prezidentūras laikā ES Padomē. Prezidentūru var uzskatīt par vienu no nozīmīgākajiem Latvijas ārpolitiskajiem notikumiem kopš pievienošanās Eiropas Savienībai. Tās sagatavošanai tiek veltīti ievērojami resursi. Tādēļ ir svarīgi, ka arī plašsaziņas līdzekļiem ir pieejama objektīva informācija un nodrošināti pienācīgi darba apstākļi un atbalsts prezidentūras pasākumu atspoguļošanai. Turklāt organizatoriem būtu stingri jāievēro žurnālistu redakcionālās neatkarības princips, kas ir fundamentāls pamats tam, lai auditorija ticētu sniegtās informācijas objektivitātei.

Tomēr jāapzinās, ka lielāks skaits publikāciju un sižetu plašsaziņas līdzekļos nespēs atrisināt visas ES komunikācijas problēmas. Kaut gan mediji ir nozīmīgākais iedzīvotāju informācijas avots par ES, lai mazinātu komunikatīvo deficītu, ir jāmainās arī ES institūcijām. Prezidentūras laikā Latvijai šajā ziņā būs iespēja parādīt piemēru.

III

INTERVIJA

Sēžam vienā laivā

Ina Strazdiņa

Intervija ar Eiropas Parlamenta runasvīra padomnieci Žanetu Vegneri

Eiropas Savienība aizvada vienu no savas vēstures sarežģītākajiem posmiem — finanšu, ekonomikas un arī vērtību krīzi. Eiropas Parlaments gatavojas nākamā gada vēlēšanām, kas atkal vēstīs, vai starp Briseli un vienkāršo Eiropas iedzīvotāju plaša sarūk vai aug augumā. Latvija gatavojas Eiropas Savienības prezidentūrai 2015. gada pirmajā pusē. Šie visi ir procesi un notikumi, kuros būtisku lomu spēlē un spēlēs gan mediji, gan komunikācijas eksperti. Sabiedrības noskaņojums ir kā barometrs Eiropas mieram un vētrām.

Par to, kā Eiropa runā ar cilvēkiem un vai to sadzird, Briselē sarunājos ar Eiropas Parlamenta runasvīra padomnieci Žanetu Vegneri.

Šis varbūt ir diezgan plašs jautājums, taču vai varat nosaukt, ar kādiem būtiskākajiem komunikācijas izaicinājumiem Eiropas Savienībai šobrīd ir jāstāpās?

Viens no izaicinājumiem noteikti ir pastāvošais sociālekonomiskais konteksts Eiropā. Latvijā, Grieķijā, Spānijā, Īrijā, Itālijā, Kiprā un citās valstīs iedzīvotāju zemapziņā Eiropas Savienība tiek asociēta ar starptautisko aizdevumu un ar aizdevēju izvirzītajām prasībām. Tas rada ārkārtīgi daudz negatīvu emociju, īpaši Eiropas dienvidos. Radies arī pamatots jautājums par to, kāpēc pāris cilvēki aiz slēgtām durvīm drīkst izlemt valstu likteņus.

Emocijas, kā zināms, ir daudz spēcīgāks dzinulis nekā racionāli argumenti un fakti, un to iespaidā esošais ES pārvaldes modelis pakāpeniski zaudē legitimitāti Eiropas tautu acīs.

Lai Eiropas projekts dzīvotu, pirmkārt politiķiem, bet arī komunikatoriem ir jāstrādā pie cilvēku uzticības atgūšanas. Otrs izaicinājums, kas tiešā veidā saistīts ar uzticības kredītu, ir spēja piedāvāt Eiropas Savienības nākotnes vīziju.

Arguments, ka Eiropas Savienība pastāv, lai nodrošinātu labdabīgas attiecības starp valstīm un mieru mūsu kontinentā, viens vairs nestrādā. Tas neapšaubāmi uzrunā vecāka gadagājuma cilvēkus, kas personīgi piedzīvojuši kara šausmas, izvešanas, koncentrācijas nometnes, kritušos un nonāvētos. Jauniešiem miers ir tikpat pašsaprotama lieta kā siltais ūdens krānā. Bieži dzirdamas sūdzības par to, ka Eiropas Savienība izmaksā dārgi, īpaši neto maksātājvalstīm. ES budžets 2012. gadā bija 129,9 miljardi eiro. Hārvarda universitātes profesori aprēķinājuši, ka Irākas un Afganistānas konflikti ASV izmaksās no 3 līdz 4,5 triljoniem eiro, ieskaitot ievainoto kareivju ārstēšanu un pensijas, kā arī kompensācijas kritušo ģimenēm.¹ Francijas militārās operācijas Mali trīs ar pusi mēnešos valsts budžetam izmaksāja 200 miljonus eiro.² Tie ir kaili fakti un ar tiem var operēt. Bet vai tie spēs pārliecināt? Cilvēkiem nepieciešama vīzija, ideja, par ko iedegties. Iespējams, šādu vīziju jeb izdzīvošanas stratēģiju tuvākās desmitgades laikā piegādās “ārējais ienaidnieks” — Ķīna, Indija, Brazīlija, Arābijas pussalas valstis — skarbas ekonomiskās konkurences izteiksmē.

Jebkurā gadījumā vēlos uzsvērt to, ka, lai komunikācija vainagotos panākumiem un būtu ilgtspējīga, vispirms ir nepieciešams saturisks un laiktietīgs politiskais piedāvājums. Citādi var sanākt tā, ka “tukša muca tālu skan”, bet cilvēki ir gurdy, viņi sadzird, ka muca ir tukša, caura, veca.

Vai joprojām ir aktuāli teikt, ka starp Briseli un vienkāršo iedzīvotāju, lai kur viņš arī būtu — Jelgavā, Telšos, Ščecinā, Tulūzā vai Lēvenē, pastāv dziļa izpratnes plaisa?

Uzskatu, ka plaisa nepārprotami ir samazinājusies, ja mēs runājam par to, kā cilvēki izprot, ka lēmumi, kas pieņemti ES līmenī, tiešā veidā attiecas

¹ Bilmes L. J. The Financial Legacy of Iraq and Afghanistan: How Wartime Spending Decisions Will Constrain Future National Security Budgets. HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series RWP13-006, March 2013.

² Francijas Aizsardzības ministrijas dati laika posmam no 2013. gada 11. janvāra līdz 25. aprīlim.

uz viņiem. Krīzes pozitīvais aspekts ir tas, ka Hamburgas iedzīvotājs ir sapratis, ka ir sasaistīts ar iedzīvotājiem Krētas salā, tāpat kā Zviedrijas vecīši nojauta, ka Latvija, grimstot akacī, paraus līdzīgu pensiju shēmas un *ha det bra*³. Liels nopelns šeit ir medijiem, jo, piemēram, Briselē akreditētie žurnālisti jau divus gadus nepārtraukti un līdz nelabumam apraksta vienu krīzi pēc otras, vienas aizdevuma sarunas pēc otrām. Nostiprinās pārliecība, ka visi sēžam vienā laivā, kā tas gribot negribot arī ir, jo bankas taču investējušas no vienas valsts otrā, krustām šķērsām. Paradoksāli, bet gala rezultātā pamazām veidojas Eiropas apziņas telpa, lai arī šobrīd tā ir tāda kā Eiropas nelaimīgo brālība. Par vienotas publiskās telpas trūkumu ES komunikatori sūdzas jau gadiem un, lūk, te redzami pirmie aizmetņi.

Kādas, Jūsprāt, līdz šim ir bijušas lielākās ES komunikācijas kļūdas un arī veiksmes?

Informācija, kas nāk no Eiropas iestādēm, ir tehniska un sadrumstalota. Piemēram, Eiropas Parlaments nobalsojis par to, lai patērētājs, iepērkoties internetā, varētu nosūtīt atpakaļ nopirkto preci bez papildu samaksas. Tas, protams, ir teicami, bet atklājas, ka lasītājs nemaz nezina, kas tas Eiroparlaments ir par zvēru. Nevaram cerēt, ka katrs Eiropas iedzīvotājs zinās nosaukt atšķirības starp ES iestādēm, bet es konstatēju, ka savos 60 pastāvēšanas gados Eiroparlaments kā institūcija nav stāstījis savu individuālo stāstu, nav centies iekarot vietu cilvēku prātā, kas ir zīmola veidošanas pamatā. No vienas puses, šī situācija skaidrojama ar to, ka Eiropas Parlamenta komunikatori koncentrējas tikai uz neitrālas, objektīvas un uz faktiem balstītas informācijas sniegšanu medijiem, kuri paši izlēma, kā šo informāciju apstrādāt. Tas bija veids, kā izvairīties no informācijas politizācijas, bet, protams, šodien jāstrādā citādāk — kombinējot dažādas komunikācijas tehnikas un rīkus, jānodarbojas ar alternatīvo mārketingu, jāmeklē veidi, kā iesaistīt cilvēkus.

Uzskatu, ka aktīvāk jāpievēršas leģendu un mītu apkarošanai. Eiromīti ir kā pasakas, kas iesēžas kolektīvajā apziņā, un pastāv risks, ka tie tiks pārmantoti no paaudzes paaudzē. Par šo man bija interesanta saruna ar Sanitu Jembergu, kas man vienmēr bijusi autoritāte gan savā žurnālistes dzīvē, gan tagad, vadot Eiropas Komisijas preses nodaļu. Sanita ir padziļināti un caur psiholoģijas prizmu pētījusi Latvijas iedzīvotāju attieksmi pret Eiropas

³ Uz redzēšanos — tulkojums no zviedru valodas.

Savienību un atkārtoti uzdūrusies trīs spēcīgiem mītiem, kas ietekmē un pat nosaka Latvijas iedzīvotāju attieksmi pret Eiropu. Tie ir — Eiropas Savienība iznīcināja Latvijas cukura un cukurbiešu industriju; Eiropas Savienība iznīcināja mūsu rūpniecību un Eiropa izsūc mūsu dzīvo spēku — latvietis tiek izdzīts emigrācijā. Paņemiet šo mītu kokteili, sajauciet to ar zemu pašapziņu, ar neticību ne sev, ne citam, nekam un skatieties, kas tur kopā sanāk. Komunikatoriem te ir arams lauks. Šajā gadījumā es iestātos par provokatīvām metodēm, vajag to augoni uzšķērst.

Runājot par veiksmes stāstiem, tā noteikti ir Eiropas Parlamenta klātbūtne sociālajos tīklos. Izmantojām brīdi, kad visi sajūsminājās par Baraka Obamas pirmo prezidentālo kampaņu, lai atvērtu profilus Facebook, Myspace, Flickr un Twitter. Šobrīd plānots, ka līdz gada beigām Parlamenta fanu skaits Facebook sasnies 1 miljonu. Statistika liecina, ka tikai 5% no faniem atrodas Beļģijā. Tātad mūsu komandai ir izdevies izlauzties no Briseles burbuļa. Mēs lietojam Facebook, lai piedāvātu sarunas ar deputātiem, un citus interaktīvus rīkus, pēc kuriem ir liels pieprasījums. Portālā Twitter strādājam gan ar kontiem visās oficiālajās ES valodās, gan ar tematiskajiem kontiem, kuri vairāk interesē žurnālistus, piemēram, EP preses dienesta konts vai Twitter profils, kas ekskluzīvi ziņo par Ārlietu komitejas aktivitātēm. Šobrīd Eiroparlamenta kontu sekotāju skaits sniedzas pāri 160 000. Bet svarīgāks par sekotāju skaitu ir “tviterspēks”, kas sevi pierādījis, piemēram, krīzes komunikācijas apstākļos, lai nocirstu saknē nepatīcas baumas vai labotu neprecīzus skaitļus.

Jāsaprot, ka dzīvojam laikā, kad cilvēki vairs nevēlas saņemt norādījumus un gudrības no augšas. Viņi vēlas iesaistīties diskusijā, apspriest, piekrist, nepiekrist, pieprasīt. Viņi paši var būt informācijas radītāji, informācijas nesēji un galu galā arī politikas veidotāji. Sociālajiem medijiem ir liela loma divpusējas komunikācijas saiknes, sarunas veidošanā. Starp citu, vairākums Latvijas deputātu veiksmīgi izmanto sociālos tīklus. Bet būs jāiet tālāk. Tuvākajos gados iestādēm nāksies piekopt atvērto datu politiku, t.i., nodot savā rīcībā esošo publisko informāciju tādā formātā, kas ļautu ātru tās apstrādi un interpretāciju. Tas nozīmē, ka cilvēki varēs, ja gribēs, paši ražot informāciju, balstoties uz pieejamajiem datiem. Viņi izvēlēsies vēstījumus un griezumus, kādā datus interpretēt. Elitēm būs jāturpina samierināties ar zināmu kontroles zudumu. Uzvarēs tie, kas eksperimentēs pirmie. Piemēram, Eiroparlamenta deputāts Aleksandro Alvaro no Vācijas jau ir radījis rīku, ar kura palīdzību viņa līdzpilsoņi var piedalīties likumu grozījumu redakcijā.

Nākamajā gadā notiks Eiropas Parlamenta vēlēšanas. Tas būs viens no notikumiem, kas atkal izgaismos iedzīvotāju un ES attiecības. Vai iespējams, ka šoreiz notiek lūzums, un tendence aizvien pasīvāk doties pie balsošanas urnām mainās?

Jā, Eiropas Parlamenta vēlēšanas notiks no 22. līdz 25. maijam. Ne Latvijā, kur 2009. gadā Eiroparlaments tika vēlēts kopā ar pašvaldībām, bet vidējā eiropiešu līdzdalība varētu pieaugt. Eksperti prognozē protesta balsojumu, kā rezultātā nākamais Eiroparlaments varētu izskatīties raibāks — daļa balsu no centra partijām aizies labējiem un kreisajiem radikāļiem. Latvijā būs interesanti analizēt “eiro ieviešanas efektu” politiskajās kampaņās, jo šis notikums sniedz lielisku iespēju nākt ar spilgtiem populistiskiem saukļiem. Šobrīd divām lielākajām Eiroparlamenta frakcijām — Eiropas Tautas partijas grupai un Sociālistu un demokrātu progresīvās alianses grupai — ir stabils vairākums, tātad milzīga ietekme uz galīgo balsojumu rezultātu. Iespējams, ka nākamajā sasaukumā tas tā vairs nebūs, balsu vairākums būs jāstīķē kopā no balsojuma uz balsojumu.

Kas varētu kļūt par cilvēku dzinuli piedalīties?

Bez protesta balsojuma galvenais dzinulis noteikti ir politiskais piedāvājums un politiķi. Vēlos uzsvērt, ka cilvēki galvenokārt balso tāpēc, ka viņus pārliecina viens vai otrs politiskais spēks, Latvijā — personālijas. Varu citēt Slovērijas gadījumu, kur 2009. gadā bija viszemākā līdzdalība Eiropā — tikai 19,6% no balsstiesīgajiem piedalījās vēlēšanās, bet 82% no iedzīvotājiem teicās esam labi informēti par vēlēšanām. Šī zemā līdzdalība tika prognozēta, un mēs vēl mēnesi pirms vēlēšanām investējām naudu radioreklāmās, jo pastāvēja bažas, ka slovēki nav pietiekami informēti par vēlēšanu norisi. Taču pētījumi parādīja, ka cilvēki nebalsoja tāpēc, ka viņus neuzrunāja kandidātu saraksti, kuri bija pilni ar mazpazīstamiem politiķiem. Arī Eiropas līmenī šī tendence apstiprinājās — vairākums nebalsoja teica, ka neuzticēšanās politiķiem vai politikai kopumā bija galvenais iemesls, kāpēc viņi nepiedalījās vēlēšanās.⁴ Ir arī cilvēki, kas nepiedalās vēlēšanās, jo neredz tajā personīgu labumu vai spēju ko ietekmēt.

Es pārstāvu Eiropas Parlamenta institucionālo komunikāciju, mēs šobrīd strādājam pie informācijas kampaņas. Viens no mērķiem ir izgaismot

⁴ Post-electoral survey 2009. Report. Fieldwork: June – July 2009. Special Eurobarometer 320/Wave 71.3. TNS opinion & social.

šo saikni starp Parlamenta lēmumiem un cilvēku ikdienu, atbildot uz jautājumu — kāpēc būtu vērts balsot? Precizēšu, ka Eiroparlamenta informatīvā kampaņa ir politiski neitrāla, jo neaģitē balsot par vienu vai otru partiju vai kandidātu.

Vai jau vairākus gadus ilgstošā finanšu un ekonomikas krīze Eiropā un fakts, ka mediji par to tik daudz runā, sabiedrību no ES attālina vai, gluži pretēji — pietuvina, jo līdz ar šīm likstām Brisele kļūst, lai arī negatīvu notikumu ēnā, tomēr personiskāk svarīgāka, piemēram, Grieķijai, Spānijai, savulaik, iespējams, arī Latvijai?

Pietuvina un atgrūž. Pietuvina, jo ES lēmumi šķiet saistoši, bet arī atgrūž, jo dominē sliktās ziņas, lai arī ne visas uz mums tieši attiecas. Es runātu par “hoheja komandas fenomenu”. Viegli degt par komandu, kas stabili cīnās. Bet kādas sajūtas jūs pārņem, ja komanda zaudē spēli pēc spēles un visas avīzes un portāli pilni ar informāciju, ka tas spēlētājs ir neveiksmnieks, tas — neprašā, bet trešā maiņa vispār nevar paslidot? Cik ilgi ticēsiet uzvarai? Komandai jāsaņemama un jāšāk atkal uzvarēt, lai jūs un sponsori no tās pavisam nenovērstos.

Nepārprotiet, es nesaku, ka dalība Eiropas Savienībā ir tikai laba lieta. Kā jebkurai valstu sadarbības formai tai piemīt savi plusi un mīnusi, svarīgi ir tas, vai mēs uz to raugāties kā iespēju vai kā apgrūtinājumu. Kā teica Hamlets: “Nekas nav pats par sevi ne labs, ne slikts, bet mūsu atziņa dara to tādu.”

Kādēļ Latvijas sabiedrība joprojām, vismaz pēc aptauju datiem, ir visai eiroskeptiska?

Šajā sakarā iesaku izlasīt Ivara Ījaba rakstu “Asinis pa degunu,” kas publicēts jūlija “Rīgas Laikā” un pieejams portālā “Delfi”. Raksts kopumā apskata eiro ieviešanu un cita starpā Latvijas iedzīvotāju zemo atbalstu eiro ieviešanai. Tur ir interesanta tēze par to, ka Latvijā par galveno politiskās līdzdalības formu ir kļuvusi činkstēšana un, iespējams, ka izteikti negatīvie vērtējumi dažādās aptaujās rodas subjektīvas intervijas rezultātā, kad cilvēks ir atradis kādu, šajā gadījumā intervētāju, kam izsūdzēt savu sūro likteni, paraudāt uz pleca, jo tas taču neko nemaksā un, kā Ījabs raksta, no tā neizriet nekādi pienākumi rīkoties.

Aptaujām jāpieiet ar lielu pietāti. Esam lieli eiroskeptiķi, bet pavasara Eurobarometrs rāda, ka mēs vairāk nekā vidējais eiropietis uzticamies ES iestādēm

(35% pret 31%), kas ir divreiz vairāk nekā Saeimai (15%), un ka vairākums no aptaujātajiem Latvijas iedzīvotājiem sevi izjūt kā ES pilsoņus (56%).

Dažkārt neapzināmiem mūsu laimi dzīvot brīvā kontinentā, brīvā valstī. Nesen lasīju lekciju trim parlamentāriešiem no Birmas. Viņi, protams, bija valdošā režīma pārstāvji, bet viņu pusvārdos un ķermeņa valodā sajutu strāvojam tās pašas brīvības alkas, kuras mēs izjutām astoņdesmito gadu beigās. Kāda ir brīvības cena?

Tuvojas Latvijas prezidentūra ES. Kādas iespējas tā paver Latvijai komunikācijā ar ES un ar Latvijas iedzīvotājiem par ES?

Atkārtotā daudzkārt dzirdēto — prezidentūra ir unikāla iespēja pozicionēt Latviju pasaulē, veidot mūsu valsts tēlu, mūsu diplomātu reputāciju un stāju. Atcerēsimies, ka tas ir laiks, kad Latvija runās gan Eiropas Ministru padomes, gan visas Eiropas Savienības vārdā, ja būs, piemēram, jāiesaistās starptautisku konfliktu risināšanā. Mēs būsime starptautisko mediju uzmanības centrā. Briselē vien ir akreditēti apmēram 1000 žurnālisti. Prezidentūra ir arī pašapziņas treniņš pusotra gada garumā, ieskaitot sagatavošanās posmu. Esam maza tauta, skaitliski sarūkam, un tas nozīmē, ka nevaram atļauties kompleksiem pilnu mikronācijas domāšanu. Jādomā plaši un stabili, jāsāk ar “varam.”

Ne jau ar lozungiem pārliecināsim cilvēkus, ka prezidentūra ir valstiski laba lieta. Jārod veidi, kā iesaistīt Latvijas iedzīvotājus prezidentūras veidošanā, lai tā kļūst par viņu un nevis balto apkaklīšu prezidentūru. Vajadzīgas inovatīvas idejas. Piemēram, izveidojam digitālo diplomātu programmu, kuras ietvaros jebkurš jauniešs varētu kļūt par Latvijas prezidentūras digitālo diplomātu, veicinot mūsu valsts un prezidentūras atpazīstamību sociālajos tīklos, diskusiju forumos utt. Sākotnēji vajadzētu izdomāt trīs četrus konkrētus uzdevumus, kas digitālajam diplomātam būtu jāizpilda, bet vēlāk ar *crowdsourcing* palīdzību programmas dalībnieki paši varētu iesūtīt idejas jauniem uzdevumiem. Galvenā balva labākajam e-diplomātam — gadu ilgs darba līgums jebkurā Latvijas vēstniecībā pasaulē pēc paša izvēles. Domāju, ka ar šādu, salīdzinoši lētu balvu varētu mobilizēt pāris tūkstošus un sacelt pamatīgu troksni internetā. Tas, protams, ir idejas kauls, ko jāapaudzē ar gaļu. Prezidentūras veidotājiem ir noveicies, jo tās komunikācijas politiku vada Linda Jākobsone, kas ir domājoša un talantīga profesionāle.

Organizatoriem jādomā arī par to, kā Rīga elpo. Ja pie katras oficiālās vizītes, un tādu būs desmitiem, tiks nobloķēta satiksme pār tiltiem, tad pastāv risks, ka rīdzinieki šo pasākumu visai drīz ienīdīs.

Ar ko Latvija sešos prezidentūras mēnešos varētu censties ieiet vēsturē?

Ieiet vēsturē ir ambiciozs mērķis! To var, ja ir vēsturiska vienošanās, politisks “izrāviens”, kas tiek panākts, Latvijas diplomātiem vadot sarunas.

Jāsaprot, ka vislielākā loma reputācijas veidošanā ir parādītajam darbam un veidam, kādā tas tiek darīts, cik zinoši ir mūsu cilvēki, cik spilgti ir mūsu politiskie līderi un to runas. Vajadzētu censties profesionāli nostrādāt, koncentrēties uz būtiskāko, atmet ārīšķības un lieko, likt uzsvaru uz saturu. Darbā ar medijiem, piemēram, nepieciešams izveidot tādu darba plūsmas un lēmumu pieņemšanas sistēmu, kas ļautu ātru, precīzu un labi koordinētu informācijas piegādi žurnālistiem. Tas atstās atvērtas, pieejamas un efektīvas prezidentūras iespaidu. Šajā ziņā augstu vērtēju pēdējo Dānijas prezidentūru, uz šo ideālu mēs varētu tiekties.

Protams, no valsts tēla viedokļa varētu turpināt attīstīt Latvijas krīzes pārvarēšanas stāstu, īpaši gadījumā, ja mūsu ekonomika turpina augt. Noteikti jāizspēlē Latvijas kā kultūras valsts kārts, piedāvājot pasaules līmeņa programmu. Šeit jau ir pamatīgas sadarbības iestrādes ar “Rīga 2014”. Nevajadzētu pārcensties, lai nesanāk kā Polijai, kas šķiedās ar naudu un piedāvāja tik daudz pasākumu, ka tie sāka konkurēt paši savā starpā.

Briseles diplomātu aprindās pastāv ticējums, ka prezidentūrai nekad nevar pietiekami sagatavoties. Kad tā pienākot, jānodarbojas ar nebeidzamu krīzes vadību. Tāpēc svarīgi, lai komunikācijas stratēģi sēž pie viena galda ar politisko vadību, jo, kā jau teicu, mūsdienās grūti pateikt, kur beidzas politika un kur sākas komunikācija, bet informācijas aprites ātrums arvien palielinās.

IV

PREZIDENTŪRAS AKTUALITĀTES

**Georgia's European Integration Agenda
for the Vilnius Summit and Beyond****Tamar Beruchashvili,**

Deputy Foreign Minister of Georgia

After almost three years of negotiations Georgia and the European Union (EU) have the possibility to lay the foundations of an enhanced relationship based on the most advanced Association Agreement, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). Since the 2012 Parliamentary Elections, which resulted in the first democratic transfer of power in Georgia, the new Government headed by the PM B. Ivanishvili has declared its firm commitment to European and Euro-Atlantic integration priorities and has made a special effort to strengthen democratic institutions, the rule of law, an independent judiciary and the protection of human rights, as well as increasing the role of civil society. European integration remains the strategic long-term priority of Georgia's foreign policy and is largely determined by the choice of the Georgian people.¹ This article presents a brief overview of recent developments focusing on the main objectives, opportunities and expectations of future EU–Georgia cooperation.

Keywords: Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), Eastern partnership Vilnius Summit, The EU-Georgia Association Agreement, EU–Georgia visa dialogue, European integration.

¹ According to the recent Survey conducted by the Caucasus Research Resource Center, 76 % of Georgians support European Integration policy.

Pēc gandrīz trīs gadus ilgām pārrunām starp Gruziju un Eiropas Savienību (ES) ir izveidojušās labas attiecības, balstoties uz Asociācijas līgumu, tajā skaitā Padziļinātās un visaptverošās brīvās tirdzniecības zonas (*DCFTA*) līgumu. Kopš 2012. gada parlamenta vēlēšanām, kuru rezultātā pirmo reizi demokrātiskā ceļā tika nodota vara Gruzijā, jaunā valdība premjerministra B. Ivanišvili vadībā ir deklarējusi integrāciju Eiropā un Eiroatlantiskajā telpā kā prioritāti un ir uzsākusi aktivitātes, lai spēcīnātu demokrātiskās institūcijas, likuma varu, neatkarīgu tieslietu sistēmu veidošanos un cilvēktiesību aizsardzību, kā arī pilsoniskā sabiedrības lomas palielināšanos. Integrācija Eiropā saglabājas kā Gruzijas ārpolitikas ilgtermiņa stratēģiskā prioritāte un atspoguļo arī pašu gruzīnu viedokli [1]. Raksts sniedz kodo-līgu pārskatu par ES-Gruzijas sadarbības attīstību, raksturojot galvenos mērķus, iespējas un gaidas.

Atslēgvārdi: Austrumu partnerības Viļņas Galotņu tikšanās, ES–Gruzijas Asociācijas līgums, ES–Gruzijas vīzu dialogs, integrācijas Eiropā, Padziļinātās un visaptverošās brīvās tirdzniecības zonas (*DCFTA*) līgums.

Background

Georgia and the EU first established contractual relations in 1996 through a partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) which came into force in 1999. The PCA created the legal and institutional framework for bilateral discussions between the EU and Georgia, set the principal common objectives, and established a relevant framework for political dialogue in a number of policy areas. Following the launch of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), the EU-Georgia ENP action Plan (ENP AP) was approved in 2006 for five years, laying out concrete objectives and actions over a wide-ranging spectrum of cooperation areas and contributed to significantly advancing Georgian legislation, norms and standards converging towards those of the EU.

Georgia's European Integration policy is based on a step-by-step approach. Since the launch of the Eastern Partnership (Eap) in 2009, the Government has been strongly committed to fully exploiting the wide range of new opportunities, which extend beyond the ENP and aim to achieve the highest possible degree of integration with the EU, based on joint ownership, mutual accountability and differentiation.

The Eastern Partnership places Georgia in the new regional context of the EU Neighborhood, apart from the traditional South Caucasus and the Black Sea regions. A new framework of cooperation became exceptionally important after the August 2008 Russian military aggression. In fact, it was the Russian invasion that prompted the EU to demonstrate a more determined commitment to the Eastern partnership initiative.²

The Government of Georgia entered the process of negotiating the EU–Georgia Association Agreement (AA) after the EU Council adopted a Negotiating Directive on the 10th of May 2010. The negotiations were officially launched on July 15, 2010, in Batumi. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs leads the negotiations on behalf of the Georgian Government and is responsible for the overall coordination of the process.

Last year was marked by new dynamism in EU-Georgia relations. In particular: negotiations on the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, as an integral part of the Association Agreement, have progressed well; an Agreement on Mutual Recognition and Protection of Agriculture Products came into force; the Visa Dialogue was launched and the EC expert mission positively assessed Georgia's readiness to start implementation of the Visa Liberalization Action Plan; Georgia continued effective implementation of the ENP AP and started implementation of the Eap bilateral and multi-lateral Roadmaps; the Local Platform of Cooperation within the EU's Mobility Partnership Framework was launched; Georgia applied for full membership of the European Energy Community; there were advances towards concluding a Framework Agreement on Georgia's contribution to EU-led crisis management operations; in addition internal procedures were finalized in terms of signing the Protocol on participation in EU programmes; The mandate of the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) was extended until September 14, 2013; Georgia was granted an additional allocation of 22 million Euros under the Eastern Partnership Integration and Cooperation Programme based on the "more for more" approach. Apart from the bilateral track, Georgia was actively involved in the multilateral dimension of the Eap, including hosting various events. The EU's support on conflict

² Extraordinary European Council, Brussels 1st September 2008. Presidency Conclusions. Council of the European Union.12594/2/08.Brussels, 06.10.2008. http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/102545.pdf (Council of the European Union website; accessed on 10.09.2013.).

issues through the work of the EUMM remains the essential guarantee of security on the ground as the only international mission currently operating in Georgia.³

Opportunities

Developments after the October 2012 elections brought new dynamism to EU–Georgia relations, leading to the successful finalization of negotiations on the Association Agreement, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), on July 22, 2013.

What does the Association Agreement with the European Union mean to Georgia? In general, the EU–Georgia Association Agreement is seen as a *Master plan for the Europeanization of Georgia*. It brings the political and economic relations between the EU and Georgia to a new level qualitatively and will make the Europeanization of the Country irreversible. While opening new opportunities for political association and economic integration, it includes a commitment on the Georgian side to introduce European norms and standards, both in the economy and in the field of democracy, human rights, the judiciary and the rule of law, thus contributing to further strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring freedom and security. The DCFTA provides prospects for new openings for Georgian goods and services to the largest internal market in the world. Economic integration will mean the introduction of even higher standards, competitiveness and an opportunity for economic growth as well as the introduction of reforms in trade-related spheres, especially in the technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary issues, intellectual property rights and competition.⁴

There is general agreement among experts that the deep and comprehensive approach to trade is a very ambitious and complex issue. Economists estimate that Georgian preparations for a DCFTA would involve “heavy costs in the short run, for both public administrations and the private sector, of achieving full compliance” with EU economic rules and standards.⁵

³ Georgia’s Progress Report on Implementation of the ENP Action’s Plan 2012. State Minister’s office on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration. March, 2013.

⁴ Maniokas K. Concept of the DCFTA and its implication for Georgia. *Georgian European Policy and Legal Advice Centre paper*. Tbilisi, 2009.

⁵ Case/Global Insight, Economic Feasibility, General Economic Impact and Implications of a Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and Georgia. Final Report. May 2008.

Even so, a feasibility study on the possible impact of a DCFTA in Georgia concludes that the country would considerably benefit from this agreement in the long-term. Furthermore, the comprehensive set of reforms resulting from the DCFTA along with more wide-ranging measures could lead to a rebranding of Georgia as a favorable investment location.⁶

At the same time it is well understood that the AA agreement is not just about economy and trade. Above all, this Agreement is about values that we share. Common European values: human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights are at the core of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement and offer solid foundations for our current and future relations.

As well as the above, the perspective of a Visa Free travel regime with the EU, being one of the most important aspects of the Eap, carries special importance for Georgia, particularly in light of Russian passportization of the occupied regions. In general, as far as mobility is concerned, if the *Schengen scheme* fosters a sense of unity within the bloc, the feeling outside it is one of painful exclusion. Yet for many Georgian citizens the EU's "Schengen Wall" divides the continent without regard to the motives, intentions, or dreams of those outside the bloc. Progress on mobility is one of the most important issues for ordinary citizens in the EU integration process. It is also obvious that real integration is impossible without close people-to-people contacts. To advance on this front, Georgia has demonstrated a good track record of implementation of the visa facilitation and readmission agreements as well as related reforms. Georgia is successfully implementing the readmission reform (on average, over 90% of readmission applications have been approved since the Agreement came into force in March 2011). As a result the EU-Georgia visa dialogue was officially opened in June 2012 and Commissioner Malmström formally handed over the Visa Liberalization Action Plan (VLAP) to the Georgian government in February 2013. The VLAP focuses on 4 areas: Document Security, Irregular immigration including readmission, Public Order and Security, External Relations and Fundamental Rights. The inter-ministerial Task force under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is currently actively involved in the

⁶ Gogolashvili K. Convergence of the regulatory framework — Important challenge for trade and investment. Georgian European Policy and Legal Advice Centre. Tbilisi, 2008.

implementation of concrete requirements in order to finalize the first, legislative phase of the VLAP in time for the EaP Vilnius Summit, and is preparing a solid basis for moving to the second, operational stage.

At the same time, we will only be able to achieve the objectives of the enhanced Partnership if security is well ensured. Since the August 2008 Russia-Georgia War and the occupation of 20% of our territories, the EU has played the key role in promoting security and stability in Georgia. It has done so by supporting and implementing an effective non-recognition policy towards the occupied regions of Georgia, maintaining the EU Monitoring Mission, reinvigorating participation in the Geneva International Discussions and contributing to confidence building between the war-divided communities. The deteriorating security situation across the occupation line in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali, including the intensified installation of barbed wire fences and continuous provocative incidents, reveals the importance of maintaining the EUMM on the ground and ensuring full implementation of its mandate throughout Georgia.

For its part, Georgia is striving to be a contributor to international security. In parallel with NATO operations, the Government has expressed its readiness to participate in EU-led crisis management operations under the CSDP and is committed to increasing political and security policy convergence with the EU. Since 2007, Georgia has fallen in behind the majority of the EU's CFSP Declarations and statements.⁷

There is general agreement that civil society is one of the key elements of the Eastern partnership. Thus the Government is committed to further deepening and broadening dialogue on European integration with all the stakeholders. In this respect, special attention is being paid to enhanced participation of the National Platform of the EaP Civil Society Forum in the implementing of Georgia's European integration priorities by making use of its expertise and networks. Based on this cooperation the Government recently adopted the "European Integration Communication and Information Strategy for 2014–2017", aimed at raising public awareness of the EU in general, and EU–Georgia cooperation priorities in particular.

⁷ Implementation of the European Neighborhood Policy in 2012: Progress Report Georgia. The HR of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and EC. Brussels, 20.3.2013.

Expectations

Cooperation in the field of security is of vital importance for the majority of the Eastern European partner countries due to the unresolved conflicts on the ground. Yet, regrettably, this issue is still only modestly reflected in the Eastern Partnership policy. At the same time the EU and the Eastern European partners share vital interests in building up a common space of stability and peace. Following the 2004 enlargement, the idea of creating a secure neighborhood was one of the major goals of the ENP. Therefore the Eap, as the Eastern dimension of the ENP, must strengthen further in this direction.

Alongside a political commitment, ensuring sufficient financial resources for the success of the Eap is vital. While the new assistance instrument is being developed — the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI) for 2014–2020 — there are high expectations that the EU's support will be well policy-driven, better targeted, in particular focused on supporting investment related reforms and on strengthening the domestic institutions needed to take advantage of the EU's offer on single market access, as well as further strengthening the effectiveness of the institutions guaranteeing democracy and rule of law. At the same time, the commitment made by Georgia regarding legal and regulatory convergence with the EU, envisaged by the DCFTA, needs to be coupled with extensive assistance and relevant political incentives signaling that future reforms will steer the partner countries close to orbit of the EU.

The new Government of Georgia is committed to ensuring the sustainability, irreversibility and continuity of reforms. Particular attention is paid to DCFTA related sectors, such as food safety, anti-monopoly and competition services, as well as amendments to the labour code based on the ILO requirements. Hence the EU's assistance is expected to match up to Georgia's commitments, based on the "more for more" principle. In this context new funding (60 million Euros) for the modernization of agriculture, as well as for the building up of the institutions responsible for the implementation of the AA and DCFTA through the Comprehensive Institution Building Programme, has proved to be of timely support.

Apart from the above issues, the Eastern partnership should have a more visible "human face" to ensure more opportunities for the citizens of the EU and Georgia to interact in order to learn more about each others' societies

and better understand each others' way of life. This is particularly important for a modern Georgia that has to be rediscovered as a European country with an old history and culture which shares the same values and objectives. Educational, cultural, youth and research civil society exchanges, and business-to-business contacts could play an important role in that direction.

The Vilnius Summit and beyond

The forthcoming Summit in Vilnius marks an important turning point in the development of the Eastern Partnership. It has great potential to make the Europeanization of the region irreversible and ensure that the Eap can be the real "game changer".⁸

Georgia has made substantial progress in the major priorities of the Eastern Partnership Roadmap and our efforts are focused on concrete deliverables for the Vilnius Summit.

- Firstly, we aim to initial the Association Agreement, including the DCFTA;
- The other important direction is Visa Liberalization. Our objective is to achieve maximum progress towards the finalization of the legislative phase of the Visa Liberalization Action.
- We are committed to addressing other priorities also defined by the Roadmap, including the elaboration of the comprehensive Association Agenda, the conclusion and signing of the Framework Agreement on Georgia's contribution to EU-led crisis management operations and the Protocol on participation in the EU programmes.
- Cooperation in priority sectors should be further enhanced between the EU and Eastern European Partners, making full use of their geographic location, transit, tourism and economic potential.
- Energy Security cooperation needs to be promoted through long term stable and secure energy supply and transit, including the full scale development of the Southern Energy Corridor. In this regard, Georgia is ready to start negotiations on full membership of the European Energy Community.

⁸ Füle S. 10th International Conference "Georgia's European Way: EU's Eastern European Partners — Towards the Vilnius Summit". Batumi, Georgia.13 July 2013.

- Peaceful conflict resolution and the EU's strong role in this process should be given appropriate attention, by using the relevant instruments provided by the Lisbon Treaty.

The Vilnius Summit will also be an occasion to look ahead and define the agenda for the coming years. In this respect it is expected to further develop the Eap as a genuine partnership based on both differentiation and inclusiveness. Primarily, it means bringing new quality to our relations and making the prospect of European integration a reality by opening European perspectives for the able and willing countries of the Eastern partnership, as stipulated in Article 49 of the EU Treaty. This would send a strong message domestically and internationally and accelerate reforms in all directions.

We are looking forward to signing the Association Agreement before the expiration of the term of the current European Commission and to starting up its provisional application at the earliest possible time. Implementation of the Association Agreement, including the DCFTA, will open new opportunities contributing to the welfare of the state and its citizens. "Only signing agreements will create a legal reality and lock the states into the binding trade agreements with the EU."⁹ Furthermore, effective implementation of the DCFTA will prepare the ground for deeper economic integration, aimed towards the establishment of the EU – Eastern Partnership Economic Area.

Visa-free travel with respective Eastern European partner countries, based on the successful implementation of the VLAPs, should be one of the highlights of the next Riga Summit. The visa-free regime is crucial to promote people-to-people contacts and enhanced mobility for students, scientists and businesses.

We believe that the Eap, as an innovative policy based on the principles of joint ownership, mutual accountability and differentiation, has great potential to deliver on partners' expectations.

However, recent pressure exerted by Russia on the countries of the Eap as the Vilnius summit approaches sends an alarming signal. These countries have full sovereign rights and freedoms to built relations of their choice in

⁹ Popescu N. Keeping the Eastern partnership on track. European Institute for Security Studies. September 2013.

accordance with Helsinki Final Act. As Mr. Saryusz-Wolski notes “the EU has a responsibility to defend its Eastern partners from Russia’s unacceptable actions aimed at deterring them from association with the EU.”¹⁰

For our part, the Georgian Government is strongly determined to deliver on all of its European integration commitments.

Conclusion

The new generation Association Agreement between the EU–Georgia will ensure Georgia’s political association and economic integration with the EU and will send a strong message internationally and domestically as well as further promote democratic and economic development. The successful launch of the Association Agreement, including the DCFTA, will confirm Georgia’s commitment to European integration and the irreversibility of this process.

In this context, the Eastern Partnership Vilnius Summit, as well as being the “Delivery Summit”, should become a turning point for the most ambitious, willing and capable partner countries, including Georgia.

As modern European history proves, the perspective of EU membership is the most powerful tool to transform countries and regions. “But today we are far from that goal” (Commissioner S. Fule). We hope that the Vilnius summit in November 2013 will take another step towards this objective. This development would give new impetus to the EU–Georgia relations and become a necessary catalyst for public support for the deep and sustainable reforms that the Georgian government needs undertake in this process.

¹⁰ Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, member of European Parliament.

Moldova and the European Union: from Cooperation to Integration

Victoria Bucătaru,

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The relations between Moldova and the European Union (EU) have developed following an upward trend over the last three years. Since the Alliance for European Integration came into power, the main vector of Moldova's foreign policy has become European integration and the deepening of relations with the EU, both bilaterally and multilaterally, through regional initiatives, particularly the Eastern Partnership. The Moldovan Government's "European Integration: Freedom, Democracy, Welfare" Activity Programme for the years 2011–2014¹ expressly stipulates the creation of a high level of welfare for the citizens of the Moldova as a primary goal, as well as the implementation of other significant changes in society, which, in their totality, would accelerate the integration of the country into the EU.

Keywords: Association Agreement, DCFTA, European Union, Progress Reports, Republic of Moldova, Visa Dialogue.

Attiecības starp Moldovu un Eiropas Savienību (ES) pēdējo trīs gadu laikā ir attīstījušās ar augšupejošu virzību. Kopš Alianse Eiropas integrācijai ir nākusi pie varas, par Moldovas ārpolitikas galveno vektoru ir kļuvusi integrācija Eiropā un attiecību padziļināšana ar ES gan vienpusēji, gan daudzpusēji ar reģionālo iniciatīvu palīdzību, jo sevišķi Austrumu partnerību. Moldovas valdības darbības programma "Integrācija Eiropā: brīvība, demokrātija, labklājība" 2011–2014[1] kā primāro mērķi izvirza

¹ European Integration: Freedom, Democracy, Welfare. Activity Program of the Moldovan Government for the years 2011–2014. <http://www.gov.md/doc.php?l=en&id=3729&idc=445> (the Government of the Republic of Moldova's official website; accessed on 10.09.2013.).

labklājības nodrošināšanu Moldovas pilsoņiem, kā arī būtisku pārmaiņu īstenošanu sabiedrībā, kas paātrinātu valsts integrāciju ES.

Atslēgvārdi: Asociācijas līgums, DCFTA, ES, Moldovas Republika, progresa ziņojumi, vīzu dialogi.

General Context

The political dialogue between the Republic of Moldova and the EU has moved to a higher stage now that negotiations on the Association Agreement, a document that replaces the previous Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, have started. The Association Agreement is the most important element of the legal framework for the Republic of Moldova — EU dialogue set up by the Eastern Partnership. Moldova's progress has been periodically assessed through the speeches held by European officials and by adopting various resolutions, among which is the Resolution on the Negotiations of the Association Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and the EU of September 15, 2011, passed by the European Parliament. The importance of the Resolution lies in the fact that the European MPs make direct reference to Article 49 of the EU Treaty in the context of the EU's commitment towards the Republic of Moldova and recommend to the Council, the Commission and the European External Action Service that they apply in their relations with the Republic of Moldova the “more for more” principle and the differentiation principle based on individual merits and the achievements the Republic of Moldova has recorded over the last years. All the chapters of the Association Agreement have now been closed: Political Dialogue and Reforms; Cooperation in the Foreign Policy and Security areas; Justice, Freedom and Security; People to People Cooperation; Economic and Sector Cooperation.

The dialogue on setting up the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) between the Republic of Moldova and the EU was started as part of the Association Agreement with the EU. The Agreement on the creation of the DCFTA involves the gradual liberalization of the trade in goods and services, reducing customs duties, non-tariff and technical barriers, the abolition of the quantitative restrictions and harmonization of the legislation of the Republic of Moldova with that of the EU. Unlike the current trade system, which is a unilateral system granted by the EU for a limited period of time, the Free Trade Agreement is a multilateral agreement

concluded for an unlimited period, providing for much higher export benefits and long-term predictability for the business sector. An important element in the negotiations on the creation of the DCFTA is the presence of representatives of the authorities from the Transnistrian region as observers. As a result of the negotiations that have been held up until now it has been possible to complete the legal texts and the annexes of the Agreement, which provide considerations for reviewing about 10 thousand tariff positions for goods and services. The overall aim of Moldova was to fit all the products of our country's Nomenclature of Goods into the Agreement provisions.

A key priority of the Moldovan Government concerning both domestic and foreign policy is the dialogue with the EU on visa liberalization. The authorities of the Republic of Moldova have set as a goal to complete the Action Plan on Visa Liberalization (VLAP) with the EU by 2013, which is important not only because it would offer to the Moldovan citizens the possibility of travelling without visas, but also because the plan provides for a series of reforms in the justice, internal affairs and human rights fields. So far, the Republic of Moldova has completely undertaken all legislative measures of the first phase of the VLAP with the EU and officially started the second phase of the Visa Dialogue that is related to the more practical components and the implementation of the legislation.

The boosting of the sectorial dialogue and cooperation with the EU has contributed to a considerable increase of EU support provided to strengthen democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and the promotion of economic reforms and an improvement in the population's living conditions. The European Union provides support to the Republic of Moldova through such tools as: the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, Eastern Partnership, Transnational cooperation programs (Romania – Ukraine – Republic of Moldova Joint Operational Programme 2007–2013; “Black Sea 2007–2013” Joint Operational Programme; Transnational Cooperation Programme South East Europe) and others. The assistance provided to the Republic of Moldova by the EU has increased substantially over the years and amounted to about 70 million Euros, while in 2013 it is to amount to 100 million Euros annually.²

² EU – Moldova relations: basic facts. Delegation of the European Union to Moldova ES Delegăcija Moldova. http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/eu_moldova/index_en.htm (European Union External Action website; accessed on 10.09.2013.).

Considering the progress registered by the Republic of Moldova in its dialogue with the EU, both parties hope that the Association Agreement is going to be initialled at the next Summit of the Eastern Partnership that will take place in Vilnius in November 2013.

The Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)

On January 12, 2010, the Republic of Moldova and the EU started in Chisinau negotiations on the Association Agreement, a document that replaces the previous Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (entered into force in July 1998) and opens a new stage in cooperation relations, particularly by strengthening the political dialogue and deepening the sectorial cooperation. However, the Association Agreement does not expressly provide any formula which would give the Republic of Moldova perspectives for European integration and provide the status of a candidate state.

Currently, the negotiations of the Association Agreement with the EU have been finalized. All the chapters of the Association Agreement have been closed after 12 rounds of negotiations: Political Dialogue and Reforms; Cooperation in the Foreign Policy and Security areas; Justice, Freedom and Security; People to People Cooperation; Economic and Sector Cooperation.

The negotiations to create a DCFTA represent a part of the Association Agreement. The Free Trade Agreement is a multilateral agreement concluded for an unlimited period, providing for much higher export benefits and long-term predictability for the business sector. It also involves a number of benefits such as: reducing customs duties, non-tariff and technical barriers, abolition of the quantitative restrictions and harmonization of the legislation of the Republic of Moldova with that of the EU. The setting up of a DCFTA with the EU is a priority for the Republic of Moldova because once the commitments are fulfilled nationally the DCFTA will not only attract foreign investors to the Republic of Moldova, but will contribute to launching domestic producers on the Community market. According to the study conducted by the EU, the Moldova–EU DCFTA will boost Moldovan exports by 16%, while the GDP of the country will increase by 5.6%.³

³ Acordul de Liber Schimb RM-UE va impulsiona exporturile moldovenesti cu 16% iar PIB-ul va spori cu 5,6%. 14.09.2012. <http://www.mec.gov.md/comunicate/acordul-de-liber-schimb-rm-ue-va-impulsiona-exporturile-moldovenesti-cu-16-iar-pib-ul-va-spori-cu-5-6/> (the Republic of Moldova's Ministry of Economy website; accessed 10.09.2013.).

The launching of the Negotiations on DCFTA was conditioned by certain key recommendations of the European Commission on specific areas. Thus, the Action Plan on the elimination of non-tariff trade barriers was developed, while the legal framework was to be adjusted by the end of 2013; the Food Security Strategy was adopted in coordination with the European Commission and includes an operational implementation program to be carried out by 2015. The Commission also submitted a number of recommendations related to the legislative framework in fields of competition, trade services and provisions that help remove the technical barriers to trade. The negotiations on the creation of the DCFTA have now been finalized.

Representatives of the Transnistrian authorities could also have participated in the negotiations on the creation of the DCFTA as observers. Although representatives of the Transnistrian region have been invited to negotiations, they were not always present at the negotiating table. Thus, after the third round of negotiations of the DCFTA, the EU chief negotiator, Luc Devigne said that: "At present, the Republic of Moldova, including the Transnistrian region, benefits from the unilateral preferential treatment on the part of the EU called ATP. If the Transnistrian authorities do not make the necessary adjustments of its regulatory framework to the provisions of the DCFTA, the economic agents of the left bank of the Nistru River will remain outside the agreement. The EU will apply in their case a duty of 10% for textile products and 17% for other products"⁴.

Progress has also been recorded as regards the Republic of Moldova – EU political dialogue in the field of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The Framework Agreement on the Republic of Moldova's participation in the EU Missions of Crisis Management under the CSDP is a new area of cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and the EU. Setting up a framework for the participation of Moldova in the EU's CSDP is a priority included in the Activity Program of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, "European Integration: Freedom, Democracy, Welfare" for 2011–2014, according to the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova and a commitment to the Association Agreement between the EU and the Republic of Moldova. Moldova has concluded negotiations on the Framework Agreement, pending the completion of the EU internal legal procedures

⁴ Ibid.

necessary for signing the document. At the same time, the Republic of Moldova is considering participating in the EU Mission to strengthen regional maritime capacities in the Horn of Africa region EUCAP NESTOR.

Republic of Moldova – European Union dialogue on visa liberalization

On January 24, 2011, the Commissioner for Home Affairs, Cecilia Malmström, presented in Chisinau an Action Plan on visa liberalization (VLAP), a document that was approved by the EU member states on December 16, 2010. The Action Plan on visa liberalization marks a new stage in the dialogue between the Republic of Moldova and the EU on Justice and Home Affairs, in particular on visa liberalization for Moldovan citizens who want to travel to the EU.

As a result of the discussions and reports submitted by the Republic of Moldova, as well as of the existing practice, the European Commission put forward the Terms of Reference of the Dialogue on visas. These Terms of Reference were formally approved at the meeting of the Republic of Moldova – EU Cooperation Council on June 15, 2010, in Luxembourg, where the Republic of Moldova – EU Dialogue on visas was also launched.⁵

The Terms of Reference of the Dialogue include the following 4 thematic blocks:

- Block 1: Document security, including the biometric passports,
- Block 2: Illegal migration, including the readmission;
- Block 3: Public order and safety;
- Block 4: Foreign relations.

The Action Plan on visa liberalization consists of two phases: the first phase concerns the harmonization of legislation and initiation of reforms, while the second phase relates directly to the implementation of the legal framework. So far, as regards the Republic of Moldova – EU dialogue on visa liberalization the implementation of the Phase I benchmarks of the Republic of Moldova – EU Action Plan on visa liberalization was completed, according to the Third Progress Report of the European Commission. Therefore

⁵ Caras E. Dialogul RM-UE privind liberalizarea regimului de vize. 08.02.2011. http://www.conventia.md/data/files/12_raport_ecaras.pdf (National Convention on the EU in Moldova website; accessed 10.09.2013.).

42 laws were passed, among which the most sensitive ones proved to be the Law on Equal Opportunities and the Reform of the Anti-Corruption Centre. Also, after the implementation of phase I on visa liberalization, the following accomplishments may be listed⁶:

- The Republic Moldova issues only biometric passports,
- The system to protect personal data is secured in accordance with the European standards allowing the use of electronic signatures,
- A new law on protecting personal data according to European standards was passed. This represented one of the key conditions that concerned the start of the negotiations on the Operational Cooperation Agreement with EUROPOL and the Cooperation Agreement with EUROJUST,
- All border checkpoints have been provided with equipment that can verify biometric documents,
- An Action Plan to Implement the Integrated Border Management Strategy 2011–2013, which would comply with the Schengen Catalogue's provisions, has been developed. It has been approved and is being carried out with EUBAM support,
- A new body, the Border Police, has been created as part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova,
- A Strategy and an Action Plan on Migration and Asylum have been drafted,
- The Republic of Moldova has signed readmission protocols with countries such as: Austria, Estonia, Hungary, Germania, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Malta and Denmark,
- A centre for the temporary accommodation of aliens has been built,
- The reform of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the reform of the Ministry of Justice have been initiated,
- The Republic of Moldova is a signatory to a significant raft of the international conventions and instruments of the United Nations and the Council of Europe on fighting terrorism,
- The Republic of Moldova has undertaken all reasonable steps to ensure and facilitate the freedom of movement of Moldovan citizens and all aliens or stateless persons, including the amendment of the legal framework for the procedure to register aliens and stateless

⁶ Information provided by representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Republic of Moldova.

persons, effective access to identity documents for all citizens of the Republic of Moldova, improving the procedure for receiving and reviewing applications for citizenship,

- The Republic of Moldova has adopted a National Action Plan on Human Rights for the years 2011–2014; it has approved the Action Plan on Roma minority assistance for the years 2011–2015, intensified cooperation with civil society and international organizations to guarantee minority rights and increase ethnic tolerance,
- The Law on Equal Opportunities and the Law on the Reform of the Anti-Corruption Centre have been passed.

In this context and based on the results of the Preliminary Assessment of the possible impact of further visa liberalization between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union on migration and security, submitted by the European Commission in August, the Moldovan Government started the implementation of the second phase of the Visa Dialogue. The Preliminary Assessment of the possible impact of further visa liberalization between the Republic Moldova and the EU on migration and security is, overall, a positive document, which confirms the fact that following possible visa liberalization with the EU for Moldovan citizens, the situation regarding migration and security will not change significantly and could even improve in some chapters.

The second phase of the Visa Dialogue consists in the implementation of the legislative and institutional framework, evaluation of the functioning of the institutions and the level of inter-agency coordination. In June 2013 the European Commission presented the Fourth Report on the implementation by the Republic of Moldova of the Action Plan on Visa Liberalization prepared on the basis of the comprehensive evaluation missions of February – March 2013.⁷ According to the above mentioned report, the Republic of Moldova has made very good progress in the effective and sustainable implementation of the second phase benchmarks of the VLAP; thus, each Block of the VLAP still has to meet some requirements.

⁷ Fourth Report on the implementation by the Republic of Moldova of the Action Plan on Visa Liberalization. Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. COM (2013) 459 final. Brussels, 21.06.2013. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/international-affairs/general/docs/4th_report_on_progress_on_kosovo_visa_liberalisation_en.pdf (European Commission website; accessed 10.09.2013.).

An important step has also been taken concerning the amended Agreement on visa regime facilitation. The Parliament will review during this autumn's first plenary sessions the ratification package of the Agreement to amend the Agreement on visa regime facilitation. According to the introduced amendments, the EU Member States will expand the facilities for the Moldovan citizens to obtain visas, especially in terms of visa application procedures, broadening the categories of people eligible for tax exemptions, simplifying visa procedures with multiple entries for a period of one year and five years, accordingly, for certain categories of citizens including representatives of civil society, businessmen, students and researchers.

In the spirit of advanced relations between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union, it was decided to abolish the visa regime for the holders of work permits. This decision aims at further facilitating the dialogue of the Moldovan authorities with those of the EU Member States and also represents an important step towards achieving the goal of visa liberalization for the citizens of the Republic of Moldova.

European Union support for Moldova's Reforms

The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument covers a wide range of areas taking into account the wider cooperation of the EU with the partner countries based on the Eastern Partnership policy and future contractual statements. The National Indicative Programme for the years 2011–2013⁸ sets out three primary priorities according to which EU financial and technical assistance is granted. They are the following: good governance, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms (includes facilitating the negotiation and implementation of the new EU–Moldova Agreement), social and human development, trade and sustainable development (includes facilitating the negotiation and implementation of DCFTA, regional and local development, energy area).

According to the National Indicative Programme for the years 2011–2013, the Republic of Moldova will receive 273.14 million Euros from the

⁸ National Indicative Programme for the years 2011–2013. Republic of Moldova. European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. European Commission External Relations Directorate Directorate-General. http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/2011_enp_nip_moldova_en.pdf (European Commission website; accessed 10.09.2013.).

European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. This amount includes 41.16 million Euros allocated through the Eastern Partnership Comprehensive Institution Building Programme, a programme that aims at strengthening the capacities of fundamental institutions that are directly involved in the negotiation and implementation of the future EU – Republic of Moldova Association Agreement. In addition, 6.98 million were reserved for the Cohesion Policy.

The Eastern Partnership is one of the key instruments through which the EU provides assistance to the Republic of Moldova (bilateral, multilateral dimension, emblematic initiatives). Under the umbrella of the Eastern Partnership, the EU and its partners intend to strengthen the bilateral and multilateral dimensions, thus facilitating the development of common positions and initiatives. The main goal of the Eastern Partnership is to create conditions to accelerate the political association and economic integration between the EU and the partner states in Eastern Europe. Issues related to the transition to a democratic market economy by supporting the reform processes are addressed within the Eastern Partnership. The dialogue is conducted using four thematic platforms: democracy, good governance and stability, economic integration and convergence with EU sectorial policies; energy security; interpersonal contacts. Thus, among the results obtained by the Republic of Moldova by using the framework of the Eastern Partnership on the bilateral dimension (in addition to those listed above) we can mention the following:

- ***Implementation of the Republic of Moldova – EU Mobility Partnership***, implementation of projects and initiatives in the field of document security, migration policies and fighting illegal migration contributes directly to the implementation of the requirements set by the EU in the context of visa liberalization for Moldova. The development of the extended migration profile and the assessment initiative of the Mobility Partnership as a tool of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility are considered pilot practices that will reproduce those of other countries that are already implementing Mobility Partnerships.
- ***The Accession of the Republic of Moldova to the European Energy Community*** (May 2010), which implies, in particular, the fact that the Republic of Moldova undertook the commitments stipulated in the Energy Package II and III (the implementation term of the Energy

Packages was extended until 2020). In 2011, the Republic of Moldova held the Presidency of the European Energy Community.

- **Regional development**, in addition to the Memorandum of Understanding, a joint declaration related to the dialogue on regional policy was signed. Recently, the European Commission introduced a new instrument, namely pilot Regional development programmes intended to finance short-term programmes that will contribute to strengthening the social, economic and territorial cohesion of the partner states in Eastern Europe, thus contributing to economic integration and convergence with the EU. The European Commission has allocated 2 million Euros to the Republic of Moldova for 2012 and 5,000,000 Euros for 2013.

The settlement of the Transnistrian conflict also represents one of the main priorities of the EU policy towards the Republic of Moldova considering the observer status of the European Union in the 5 +2 format. 15% of the amount allocated under the National Indicative Programme for the years 2011–2013 is designed to support the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, namely, confidence-building measures (CBMS). It is important to note that the funds are allocated to the actions undertaken in implementing sectorial priorities of confidence-building measures, especially for including the Transnistrian region in these actions. Budgetary support for the Transnistrian region is possible, but it may be associated with budget support operations as confidence-building measures, while fully respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova.

Conclusions

- Although the Republic of Moldova has recorded considerable progress in comparison with other members of the Eastern Partnership, it is necessary to strengthen the commitments at the national level to the Republic of Moldova's route to European integration. Also, a key element is the more effective coordination of the cooperation between the institutions concerned in the process of implementing the reforms and between governmental and non-governmental institutions.
- Communication represents a defining instrument that would guide the society during the period of convergence with European policies.

An effective communication policy would facilitate the understanding of the reform processes and the legal framework and would contribute to the better implementation and adaptation to new standards of living, but also to the use of the possibilities offered by the specialized European programmes.

- Initialling the Association Agreement and DCFTA by the next Summit of the Eastern Partnership that is to be held in November 2013 in Vilnius should be a priority. The Republic of Moldova also has to fulfil its commitments made upon accession to the European Energy Community to connect the country to the European energy security system.
- Efforts should be made to continue the dialogue and activities to strengthen the confidence-building measures between the two sides.
- In order to have fully consolidated reforms in Moldovan society, stable political will is clearly needed. Although reforms are sensitive for the large public, the Moldovan authorities should grant continue support regardless their political dissent. Taking into account the existence of a Coalition Government, political consensus is crucial.
- Although the support of the European partners is an important element in promoting Republic of Moldova's path towards Europe and to create a positive image of the country within the European Community, it must be taken into account that the European integration is a continuous reform process domestically, it is not only a vector of foreign policy, but most of all, a vector of domestic state policy. Strict compliance with the commitments to its European partners and honest dialogue are the basic principles that should define and guide the partnership with the EU. Only under these conditions could the Republic of Moldova fully benefit from the "more for more" principle, as well as continued EU support, internally and externally.

The Wide Closed Doors or Why Ukraine is not Ready for “More for More” on the Way to the Association Agreement

Sergii Glebov¹

It has been widely accepted that Ukraine is considered to be the EU's leading eastern partner within the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). Various aspects of current EU-Ukraine bilateral relations have been studied within the context of the ENP. This article examines the routes of the ENP as a response to the new international environment, and analyzes it as a further institutional step for the EU in developing its geopolitical “ambitions” in Europe and towards Ukraine after the 2004 enlargement. The article argues that if Ukraine fails to sign the Association Agreement (AA) with the EU during the forthcoming Eastern Partnership (EaP) Summit in Vilnius in November 2013, the future effectiveness of the ENP may become doubtful for Ukraine. In the meantime, the EU will not become a global player if it cannot integrate Ukraine by means of “institutional responses” such as the ENP, including the EaP. Any further discourse on EU-Ukraine relations will continue to be determined by geopolitical factors, rather than institutional on the basis of common values.

Key-words: Association Agreement, Eastern Partnership, European Neighborhood Policy, European Union, Ukraine.

Tas ir vispārzināms fakts, ka Ukraina tiek uzskatīta par Eiropas Savienības vadošo austrumu partneri Eiropas kaimiņattiecību politikas (EKP) ietvaros.

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Dažādi pašreizējo ES un Ukrainas divpusējo attiecību aspekti ir tikuši pētīti EKP kontekstā. Rakstā analizēta EKP attīstība kā atbilde uz jauno starptautisko vidi, kā ES institucionālais solis savu ģeopolitisko “ambīciju” Eiropā sasniegšanā un tuvināšanās Ukrainai pēc 2004. gada paplašināšanās. Rakstā tiek argumentēts, ka, ja Ukraina neparakstīs Asociācijas līgumu ar ES nākamajā Austrumu partnerības galotņu tikšanās laikā Viļņā 2013. gada novembrī, tad EKP efektivitāte Ukrainai ir apšaubāma. Tikmēr ES nekļūš par globālo spēlētāju, jo nespēj integrēt Ukrainu ar tādiem “institucionāliem instrumentiem” kā EKP, t.sk. Austrumu partnerību. Attiecīgi ES un Ukrainas attiecību diskurss saglabāsies ģeopolitisko interešu noteikts, nevis balstīsies uz institucionālo pamatu ar kopējām vērtībām.

Atslēgvārdi: Asociācijas līgums, Austrumu partnerība, Eiropas kaimiņattiecību politika, Eiropas Savienība, Ukraina.

Introduction

Since 1867, when Prince Otto Eduard Leopold von Bismarck, Duke of Lauenburg pronounced his famous phrase, “politics is the art of the possible,” his successors — Euro bureaucrats, especially those who are burdened with thoughts about the future of Europe within the EU — follow this “rule” quite strictly. As is known, the original phrase, “*Die Politik ist die Lehre vom Möglichen*” (“politics is a science of the possible”) was said during an interview with Friedrich Meyer von Waldeck for the German-language Russian newspaper *St. Petersburgische Zeitung* on 11 August 1867.² Ironically, in the beginning of the 21st century, this concept also touches upon the former Russian Empire provinces, which, at least officially, in 2013 still demonstrate their aspirations to become part of the European Union in the future, including Ukraine, which has been independent since 1991.

The article focuses on examining the general idea of the ENP as the EU’s “art of the possible” on the current stage of relations with Ukraine. The general idea of the article is based on the assumption that both EU and Ukraine have to take as much as possible from the ENP in order to move forward and make the next stage of bilateral relations as fruitful as possible, in order to save time and resources on the way towards a “forced”

² Bismarck O., Poschinger H. Fürst Bismarck: neue tischgespräche und interviews. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1895–99, vol.1, p. 248.

Europeanization of Ukraine, whether the AA is signed or not in just a few months, although not signing the AA will definitely complicate the fulfillment of such an ambition and weaken the ENP at least towards Ukraine. Meanwhile, it is argued that the ENP with the so-called “homework” for Ukraine, also known as the “tefan Füle list”, with a set of various requirements from the EU to use the principle “more for more” effectively, is the policy which complements Ukraine’s strategic course towards European integration, and has been proposed for Ukraine as “the wide *open door*” into Europe.

The structure of the article has not been designed to give a complex analysis of the ENP towards Ukraine in general, but to outline the basic features of the ENP as the “geopolitical ambition” of the EU on the way to becoming a global player in a globalized world within a multi-polar international system still under construction. The second section of the article argues that the ENP is the only possible strategy towards Ukraine at the moment, which is quite promising by itself, and its effectiveness will only be doubled if the AA is signed. The third section points out how Ukraine — not to be here discussed “why” — is destined to become a part of “political Europe”, while the not very “comfortable” rules of the political and economic life in Europe make Europeanized political elites in Ukraine puzzled by future outcomes for their policies and businesses from signing the AA, including a lack of readiness to take as much as possible from the EU’s “more for more” principle, because of the state of “not being willing” to deepen and widen democratic reforms in Ukraine, as well as being cautious vis-à-vis the “Russian” factor. At the same time, it is argued that even without a clear EU membership perspective, European integration of Ukraine should be perceived as much more than just an institutional process of interconnection — without its successes neither Ukraine nor the EU will be able to fulfill their agendas on regional and even global levels. The final statements are to be found in the conclusion section.

The EU as a global player without geopolitical ambitions: the dilemma of institutional responses

Today, the EU-28 (where we can find four G8 members and two out of five permanent UN Security Council members) is the largest integrative community in the world with more than a half-century history, led by

European “veterans” of the Cold War from “Western Europe.” Also, because countries from “Eastern Europe” clearly expressed their wish to be *Euro-integrated*, and placed this goal at the top of their national interests, demonstrating sincere and strong political will, from the very beginning of the post-bipolar era the EU was destined to play a super-active role in the process of political and economic transformation within the so-called “geographical” Europe, which began to exist in a brand new international environment without the Iron Curtain. With the collapse of the bipolar-world the EU finally had a historic opportunity to bring to life well-known *Euro-idealistic* (sometimes historically pragmatic and even offensive to some extent) ideas, which could seemingly be easily combined and “prepared” in one post-bipolar geopolitical “skewer”, composing a “Europe of a hundred flags” as “the United States of Europe” from “the Atlantic to the Urals”... Even without institutional purpose to create such a “Europe” within the EU itself, it soon became evident that geopolitical intentions to create a “geographical” Europe, united ideologically not under someone’s “nuclear” umbrella, but under a universal umbrella of “democracy,” were broken by the different interests of different states.

Critics of normativism may say that principles and norms are nothing when we still find at least three centers of power in a “geographical” Europe — the EU, Russian Federation and the US — whose political existentialism has been dominated by power and economic pragmatism as opposed to democratic norms and principles, which are sacrificed. Even though, because the Russian Federation strongly associates itself with Europe (judging by its Foreign Policy Concept for 2013, where paragraph 56 states that Russia considers itself “an integral, organic part of European civilization”³), but does not claim to be an exclusively European country, tending towards the Eurasian center of power, and historically, the USA, with its powerful NATO tool is not exclusively a European actor, the role of the EU, as the only ultimately European actor, has been sealed by a special integrative responsibility for the future of Europe in a globalizing world. Nevertheless, the intention to spread and share universal democratic

³ Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации. Утверждена Президентом Российской Федерации В.В.Путиным 12 февраля 2013 г. 303-18-02-20. http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/6D84DDEDEDBF7DA644257B160051BF7F (Krievijas Federācijas Ārlietu ministrijas mājas lapa; aplūkota 12.08.2013.).

principles, also known as “European values,” could become a good platform for the leading powers to start to compete with each other on one “democratic” platform, as opposed to feuding (at least the hypothesis debated by democratic peace theories that “democracies do not go to war with each other” is destined to be exploited for some time). For the whole of Europe, in turn, it could also be a good start in making the region safer and more stable, not just for the states themselves, but for the sake of individuals and societies for many years to come.

In any case, this situation forced Europe as a geopolitical body to adapt itself to the new model of political behavior, which could be entitled the “differentiation of responses” — primarily, institutional responses towards new economic risks and political challenges and not only in Europe, but in the rest of the world. Whether the EU wanted it or not, it found itself at the heart of the process of constructing a multi-polar world as one of its leaders. In this respect, the EU has to become a global player in order to fulfill this mission successfully. At the same time, it is not by accident that the question, “are Europeans ready for global tasks?” still dominates within the European community.⁴ Here we may raise another question: if Europeans are ready, does the EU have geopolitical ambitions and, if so, what are their limits? To the author’s mind, to *Europeanize* Ukraine, even against its will, and institutionally bring it closer to the EU, if not integrate it as a full member soon, is a global task for the EU. In this respect, the case of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) could be a partial answer to such questions and the main challenge on its Eastern European dimension.

ENP as a “different response” for Ukraine

Some European countries from the former “World socialist system” (the last one being Croatia, but hopefully not the least), which faced a lack of democracy before, used their chance successfully to become a part of the united European political system and succeeded on the path of European integration within an enlarged European Union. Strategically, the EU had proposed the option of EU membership under the Copenhagen criteria

⁴ Global NATO, The Riga Summit and European Security. Are Europeans Ready for Global Tasks? The Cicero Foundation Seminar. Paris, 16–17 November 2006.

to unite Europeans within its three pillars, and some Central and Eastern European countries did enter the next wave of the EU eastward enlargement. To some extent geopolitical, but more *geo-value* and *geo-economic* EU ambitions to be developed in a safe environment were satisfied, though admitting Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia as full members was a challenging task, taking into account the Russian factor and the post-Soviet heritage of these countries. However, the task became less complicated after these countries were admitted as members of NATO. The same scheme could almost be applied to Romania and Bulgaria, where both the EU and NATO made their geopolitical choice in a situation where the clearness of the Copenhagen criteria entered into a shadow of geopolitical consensus still within the EU-15. Moreover, it was the EU, not NATO that constituted the new borders in Central and Eastern Europe during the process of enlargement of May 1, 2004, and closed the borders between the new EU members and the new EU neighbors, including Ukraine. Thus, the EU did have and did realize its geopolitical ambitions as the “art of the possible” in those cases where it was in line with its internal reasons of a different nature. This thesis may also be true in cases where EU interests for further enlargement matched with the interests of its strategic allies — the USA and NATO — even when it led to a sharp discourse on “Old Europe” and “New Europe” among them.

For those who claimed EU membership (Ukraine has officially been proclaiming its intention and strategic goal to obtain membership of the EU for the last 15 years), but were not ready for forced Europeanization, the EU had to prepare an alternative strategy and a different *response* in order to keep them around. The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) became one of the first alternative strategic tools for developing international ties with other European countries — so-called “ENP Eastern Partners” — without strong general determination on whether they pursue European aspirations or not, even because it was proposed and covers not only the EU’s European neighbors, but also non-European ones, with no clear integration perspective. It has objectively and subjectively happened, that Ukraine, which is still officially following the strategy of European integration, appeared in the ENP basket in 2004.

Both the EU and Ukraine could find their common profits in this basket, taking into account that the ENP was not just an empty declaration,

but has been supported by the double mechanism of bilateral neighboring — the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) alongside another multilateral framework designed in 2008–2009 specifically for the ENP Eastern Partners — the Eastern Partnership (EaP). The ENPI envelope for Ukraine stood for EUR 494 million, with an additional allocation of EUR 28.6 million through the Governance Facility in 2007–2010. Additionally, in 2008–2010, the Neighborhood Investment Facility committed EUR 22 million to five projects in Ukraine, mainly in the energy sector, and Ukraine also partially benefited from EUR 42 million in regional projects approved for the ENP East region. The new National Indicative Program (NIP) 2011–2013 for Ukraine was adopted in March 2010 and has a budget of EUR 470.1 million. The program is geared towards supporting the achievement of key policy objectives as outlined in the EU–Ukraine Association Agenda and pursues 3 priorities: (1) — good governance and the rule of law; (2) — facilitation of the entry into force of the EU–Ukraine Association Agreement (including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)) and (3) — sustainable development.⁵ The NIP 2011–2013 includes a specific appropriation to finance new actions under the Eastern Partnership, notably a Comprehensive Institution Building program (CIB) (a minimum of EUR 43.4 million) and Cohesion Policy (a minimum of EUR 30.8 million). The CIB Framework Document was signed in October 2010 and sets out four priority areas for support: one is ‘horizontal’ (the steering and implementation process for the AA and DCFTA) and three are ‘vertical’ (sanitary and phyto-sanitary regulations, state aid control and migration). The quite impressive institutional and financial assistance for reforms in Ukraine on the part of the EU proved Ukraine is a good neighbor for the EU and vice versa, although, going ahead, it was not, of course, ENP money for nothing from the side of the EU, but for the internal Europeanization of Ukraine, which Ukraine, if not already failed to achieve, definitely hampered.

At the same time, if the effectiveness of the ENPI for Ukraine is evaluated, some statistics and specific research papers must be taken into account. For example, if the effectiveness of the ENPI is to be taken into consideration,

⁵ ENP Country Progress Report 2012 — Ukraine. Europa Press release. March 2013. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-257_en.htm (Eiropas Savienības Oficiālā mājas lapa; aplūkota 12.08.2013.).

with a budget of EUR 12 million aimed at increasing the role of communities in the process of problem-solving in common with local authorities, more than 1200 micro-projects were realized by mid-2011.⁶ The priority areas for these projects were micro energy savings (710 projects, 58.87% of the total), health (254 projects, 21%) and water supply (197 projects, 14.84%).⁷ As a result, during the period of 2007–2011, the activities of local communities were significantly increased, with more than 1,000 non-governmental organizations established in different towns all over Ukraine. Thus, not only were specific problems of particular settlements in Ukraine addressed within the framework of these projects, but civil society capabilities were demonstrated in real life. In practice, the European model of cooperation was worked out and the local community as a form of self-organization targeted itself and local authorities with the necessary agenda and work to be achieved together in bilateral cooperation.⁸ Another good example of the effective development of the ENP is the Cross-border Cooperation Program (CBC). The ENPI CBC Poland/Belarus/Ukraine, ENPI CBC Hungary/Slovakia/Ukraine/Romania, ENPI CBC Romania/Moldova/Ukraine and The Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Program 2007–2013 continue to broaden cooperation in the border zone areas of the countries involved. The CBC offers a wide range of opportunities to the potential beneficiaries through four priorities — economic and social development, enhancement of environmental qualities, increase of border efficiency and support for people to people cooperation.

It has to be underlined that EU–Ukraine connections through the ENP have been just a supplementary instrument for facilitating bilateral relations. The EU-Ukraine Partnership and Cooperation Agreement entered into force in 1998, when Ukraine officially determined its national strategy for development, although, paradoxically, 15 years later, it is still resolving its

⁶ ENP Country Progress Report 2012 — Ukraine. Europa Press release. March 2013. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-257_en.htm (Eiropas Savienības Oficiālā mājas lapa; aplūkota 12.08.2013.).

⁷ Горюнова Е. Европейская политика соседства и программы поддержки гражданского общества в Украине. <http://gisap.ru/node/441> (Starptautiskā zinātniski analītiskā projekta māja lapa; aplūkota 12.08.2013.).

⁸ Горюнова Е. Европейская политика соседства и программы поддержки гражданского общества в Украине. <http://gisap.ru/node/441> (Starptautiskā zinātniski analītiskā projekta māja lapa; aplūkota 12.08.2013.).

geopolitical dilemma with an ambivalent foreign policy between the EU and the Russian Federation with its Customs Union and future Eurasian Economic Union. The EU–Ukraine Action Plan was approved in 2005 and negotiations started for a far-reaching Association Agreement in 2007. Visa facilitation and readmission agreements entered into force in 2008 and visa dialogue opened with a visa-free regime as a long-term objective. A great deal was done on the way to the negotiation of a DCFTA with the EU in 2008 when Ukraine joined the WTO.

At the same time, if for the EU the ENP became the best solution for its strategy towards “problematic” contra agents outside the EU, for some of them, in turn, the ENP as the EU’s strategy towards them drew a serious reaction from the very beginning and in the early stages of the ENP. For example, as is known, Russia has refused to be part of the ENP and is not on the list of 16 ENP recipients. As Michael Emerson and his colleagues explained in 2007 in their “European Neighborhood Policy Two Years on: Time indeed for an ‘ENP Plus’”, “Russia’s reticence on ENP has its roots in Russia’s view of itself as a self-sufficient second pole of influence and attraction in Europe. Thus, in Russia’s perception, it is not the “EU’s neighbor”, but rather the EU and Russia are each other’s neighbors”⁹.

The ENP idea has also been criticized in Ukraine, not by opponents, but radical proponents of the strategic course towards the European Union, who wanted “more” than just the rank of the EU’s neighbor for Ukraine. Considered to be the EU’s leading partner in the Eastern neighborhood from the very beginning (also because of the plume from the “Orange revolution”), Ukraine failed to obtain a clear perspective of EU membership. For instance, criticizing the passivity of the EU towards Ukraine, one of the most active and well-known Ukrainian politicians with a clear European agenda, former Minister for Foreign Affairs Borys Tarasyuk, noted in March 2007 that the ENP, proposed to Ukraine, was “incorrect by definition”, as the European neighborhood policy can be considered a policy that deals with the countries neighboring with Europe.¹⁰ Thus, if we accept such an

⁹ Emerson M., Noutcheva G., Popescu N. European Neighbourhood Policy Two Years on: Time indeed for an ‘ENP Plus’. *CEPS Policy Brief*. No. 126, March 2007.

¹⁰ Тарасюк: ЕС предложил Украине политику, неправильную по определению. 6 March 2007. <http://www.korrespondent.net/main/181780> (Ziņu portāls “koresspondent.net”; aplūkots 12.08.2013.).

approach, it looks as though the EU by means of the ENP has “sort of” excluded Ukraine from Europe. From the institutional point of view it could be so, though the EU all the same proposed to Ukraine and the other 15 countries institutional instruments of cooperation, in which financial content is a key feature of institutionalism. Indeed, Ukraine by definition is a part of geographical Europe, and Ukraine’s homecoming to the “political Europe” should be associated with its return to “European values” first, while membership itself could be a logical outcome of internal democratic reforms at a later stage. At the same time, there was also the suspicion that the ENP was the maximum the EU could give to Ukraine instead of a clear membership perspective, which, in its turn, perverted the main institutional meaning of the process of European integration. The European Parliament resolution on Ukraine of November 24, 2010 dispelled these fears and clearly stressed in paragraphs 1 and 2 that Ukraine has “a European perspective with strong historical, cultural and economic links to the EU” and under EU treaty rules, “may apply for membership of the EU like any European state that adheres to the principles of freedom, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law”¹¹.

Thus, the “minimum” as a starting point for Ukraine was given, and it was the right time for Ukraine to use the EU’s principle “more for more” — “the key aspect of the renewed Neighborhood Policy” — by taking advantage of ENP privileges, namely the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI). This principle “provides for a much higher level of differentiation among partners, in line with their commitment to the jointly agreed values and objectives, and notably to the partnership with EU focused on democracy and shared prosperity” in which “financial incentives for the most ambitious reformers are an important aspect of the new approach”. It was clearly stated in the EU that “as a policy-driven instrument, the future European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI) should reflect this key principle, especially for programming and allocating support to partners”¹².

¹¹ Joint Motion for a Resolution. 2010/2934(RSP), 24 November 2010. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+MOTION+P7-RC-2010-0650+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> (Eiropas Parlamenta mājas lapa; aplūkota 12.08.2013.).

¹² Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council Establishing a European Neighborhood Instrument. European Commission. Brussels, 7 March 2011, COM(2011) 839 final, 2011/0405 (COD).

Ukraine as the “European neighbor”: waiting for “more” for “less”

Has Ukraine taken advantage of the ENP since 2010–2011 to claim “more for more” within the ENI? The answer is more no, than yes. Even though “the EU and Ukraine initialed the text of the Association Agreement and its “Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area” in March 2012, and “Ukraine stepped up its efforts to implement the priorities of the Association Agenda,” “much remains to be done by Ukraine, for example the fight against conflict of interest and corruption in the judiciary and the stabilization and consolidation of its public institutions, so as to enable it to benefit fully from the Association Agreement’s potential”¹³. The conclusion from ENP holders was clear: “In 2012 Ukraine did not address most of the key recommendations contained in last year’s ENP progress report”¹⁴. At the same time, taking into account various geopolitical reasons, trade and other economic interests, the general strategic importance of Ukraine for the EU and the EU for Ukraine in the sphere of justice and security, both sides hampered, but did not yet refuse to cross their bilateral Rubicon — to sign the Association Agreement (AA). The criteria are also known: “The Council Conclusions of 10 December 2012 reaffirmed the EU’s commitment to signing the Association Agreement, including the DCFTA, as soon as Ukraine demonstrates determined action and tangible progress in three areas — actions to remedy the shortcomings noted in the October 2012 parliamentary elections; progress in addressing the issue of selective justice and preventing its recurrence; and action to implement the reforms set out in the jointly agreed Association Agenda, possibly by the time of the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius in November 2013... At the 16th EU–Ukraine Summit which took place on 25 February 2013 in Brussels, Ukraine confirmed its determination to comply with those areas/elements specified by the Conclusions to that end”¹⁵.

¹³ ENP Country Progress Report 2012 – Ukraine. Europa Press release. March 2013. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-257_en.htm (Eiropas Savienības Oficiālā mājas lapa; aplūkots 12.08.2013.).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in Ukraine Progress in 2012 and recommendations for action. Joint Staff Working Document. European Commission. Brussels, 20 March 2013, SWD(2013) 84 final. http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/docs/2013_enp_pack/2013_report_report_ukraine_en.pdf (Eiropas Komisijas mājas lapa; aplūkots 12.08.2013.).

As we see, a lot was already said about the AA perspective in the context of the ENP, because the connection with the ENP and EaP is direct. The so-called “EU–Ukraine AA” deadline for bilateral relations, which is actually much closer than November 2013, because the political decision in the EU on whether to sign it or not will already be taken by the end of September 2013, is also a check-point for ENP and EaP effectiveness. For example, my colleague, the Director of the Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association, Alexander Duleba (Bratislava) already noted in May 2013 that some EU member states are ready to recognize the inadequacy of the European Neighborhood Policy towards the east and radically rethink its priorities and approaches in the event that during the EaP Summit in Vilnius on 28–29 November positive results are not achieved.¹⁶ He believes that a pragmatically skeptical position towards the prospects of the development of the European Neighborhood Policy initiative of “Eastern Partnership” is currently forming within the European Union. As we may guess, the forthcoming Summit in Lithuania is doomed to failure if the AA between the EU and Ukraine is not signed, not even taking into account the rest of the Summit’s agenda. As Alexander Duleba also noted, it is Ukraine which may save the Eastern Partnership.

Indeed, the most powerful instrument which could bring Brussels and Kiev closer together institutionally is the EU’s further enlargement eastwards. Ukraine has never been the subject of any enlargement strategy adopted in the EU and a further wave of enlargement after the case of Croatia is also under considerable debate, because the EU is now not in a good position to be both “deepened” and “widened”. Meanwhile, the author believes that Ukraine still has a great chance for pursuing its European strategy to prove that European integration is the most effective way to defend its national interests in the short and long-term perspective. Eventually, the need to do the “homework” from the EU on the way to signing the AA in Vilnius in November 2013 is still vital for Ukraine even without direct connection to the EU. This will remain vital despite the good or bad political and economic shape the EU has been facing today, because what the EU requires from Ukraine, first of all, is a top priority for Ukraine itself. All this may

¹⁶ Лавренюк А. “Восточное партнерство” может спасти только Украина — словацкий эксперт. 7 мая 2013 года. http://www.ukrinform.ua/rus/news/vostochnoe_partnerstvo_moget_spasti_tolko_ukraina_slovatskiy_ekspert_1517435 (Ziņu portāls „ukrinform”; aplūkots 12.08.2013.).

be achieved by means of taking active part in the processes of European integration and by proving why the EU must be interested in integrating Ukraine. The concept of “integration of Ukraine within the EU” must be accepted as much broader than just obtaining full EU membership, taking into account that not only politically, but also technically (bureaucratically), Ukraine will not be able to join the EU within the next 10–15 years. At the same time, this understanding does not weaken Ukraine’s European choice, because European integration for Ukraine is seen as a process for full-scale political and economic transformation to democracy and a market economy, and the perspective of joining the EU as a full member is only a means for pushing this transformation successfully.

Thus, the main interest of Ukraine to integrate with the EU must be associated with the interest to revive the political will of the Ukrainian post-communist political elite to become a modern (in some spheres post-modern), integral and consolidated community that shares European values, respects human rights, rule of law and a market economy, and guarantees its citizens individual and collective security and economic prosperity on the basis of social justice. To achieve such a desirable model of the state system will be possible only when Ukraine will not only perceive the EU as a lighthouse for its internal and external policies, but also be ready to treat the EU with its ENP and EaP as an undisputed contributor, assistant and facilitator for Ukrainian reforms. This assistantship must be accompanied by permanent monitoring and constant consultations between Kiev and Brussels on the path usually taken by all potential candidates to the official status of candidate-state, within a standardized action plan process. Such intensive tutelage must not be treated as direct interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine from the side of the EU, but as a logical participation in pan-European affairs and “acknowledged interference” of Ukraine in the process of European integration and Europeanization. Otherwise, the ENP must be treated differently, neither in Europe, nor in Ukraine.

In any case, the key question that has arisen: is it possible to be a global power without clear geopolitical ambitions towards countries such as Ukraine? The answer is probably “yes”, taking into consideration that the EU may play a leading role in Europe without the necessity for the immediate integration of European countries like Ukraine into the organization, especially when European integration as a process is much broader than

just EU membership and includes instruments like the ENP and EaP. In this respect, the EU still has a lot of potential and capacity to stretch stability and democracy across Europe, and not only for Ukraine and other EU neighbors, but also for Russia. Strategically, this means that the success of any EU strategy aimed at the external environment may not lead to revolutionary changes in Europe, though revolutionary tasks must be included in the European agenda. This does not necessarily mean the one on how to take Ukraine away from Russia, but how to incorporate both EU partners into a common European and even Euro-Atlantic space of collective security and prosperity.

Conclusion

Thus, the ENP, accompanied by the EaP, is the current maximum from the “art of the possible” in relations with Ukraine that the EU is able to propose at this stage of bilateral relations. The ENP may be treated as a complimentary, indirect institutional “response” to Ukraine’s European aspirations, though different from the direct institutional tool aimed at negotiation on accession. At the same time, by using the mechanisms of the ENP and EaP, this EU foreign policy tool may turn into the wand of the “art of *the impossible*” if Ukraine takes its chance to use “more” institutional benefits from the EU for “more” internal reforms by signing the AA in November 2013. Taking into account not only quantity, but also quality regarding what needs to be done before the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius by November 2013, both Ukraine and the EU should be ready to do what already now seems to be impossible just a few months before the European Rubicon. On the one hand, time is pressing, but on the other, there is some time left. If Ukraine fails to do its best and the AA does not become a signed reality, the future effectiveness of the ENP, including the EaP, may be seen as doubtful for Ukraine in a situation where the Russian Federation, with its Customs Union, is certainly ready to effectively play its “art of the possible” vis-a-vis Ukraine at any time.

The EU will not become a global player until Europe integrates Ukraine by means of the ENP and EaP, and further discourse on EU–Ukraine relations will remain geopolitical rather than institutional on the basis of common values. At the same time, it is Ukraine that has to prove that the

EU is a global player by making the EU sign the AA, and not because of geopolitics, but because the EU is a global normative power and its enlargement is a tribute to a natural expansion based on values, and the main interest is not just to enlarge the organization, but the European space of freedom and equality. The general success of the ENP is strongly dependent on achieving this goal, also vis-à-vis the Russian Federation's integrative strategy towards Ukraine.

Thus, the main recommendation for both Ukrainian authorities and the European Commission on the eve of the EaP 2013 Summit in Vilnius, is to do everything possible for signing the AA and to open a "new life" for the EaP, probably taking such a step in advance, in accordance with a newly negotiated "road map" on the way to the fulfillment of all the necessary obligations, while further national ratifications and implementation processes are in progress. Ukraine will have additional time under strict obligations to do what needs to be done before the fall of 2013, and the EU will have the chance to proclaim the 2007–2013 ENP as a great success. In doing so, both the EU and Ukraine have to take into consideration and lean on the public support of European integration in Ukraine. One of the last surveys carried out by the Ukrainian Office of the International Research Agency IFAK Institut for the Deutsche Welle in June 2013, showed that 56 percent of Ukrainian citizens support the idea of signing the AA with the EU, while 59 percent of Ukrainians believe that the country should join the European Union in the near future.¹⁷

¹⁷ Results of Monitoring Research "DW-TREND" Ukraine. June 2013. IFAK Institute. http://www.ifak.com.ua/upload/image/DW_UA_06.2013.pdf (IFAK institute mājas lapa; aplūkota 12.08.2013.).

Armenia on the Way to the Vilnius Summit

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Citizens living in Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus have the right and the opportunity to build, in their countries, democratic political systems that are dominated by the principles of the rule of law and the separation of powers in which monopolies are excluded from the political and economic fields, human rights are respected, and the media is free. The ambition of the citizens of these six countries is to build democratic states. These countries used to and still continue to receive their biggest support from the European Union (EU). It is planned that the new EU program, the Eastern Partnership (EaP) and the Association Agreement (AA), will be signed during the Vilnius Summit. It presents an invaluable support to developing these countries into legal and democratic states, where the principle of the rule of law predominates and human rights are respected. An alternative to convergence and integration with the EU is the EaP member countries taking part in the integration process in the post Soviet territory dominated by Russia. Historical experience has shown that where Russia dominates corruption flourishes, laws do not function and human rights are violated. This article analyzes the situation of a number of issues related to the EaP and the AA, and it also provides recommendations for the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Keywords: Association Agreement, Eastern Partnership, European Commission, European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, European Union, European Neighbourhood Policy, Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Vilnius Summit.

Ukrainas, Moldovas, Gruzijas, Armēnijas, Azerbaidžānas un Baltkrievijas pilsoņiem ir tiesības un iespēja attīstīt savās valstīs demokrātiskas politiskās sistēmas, kas balstās uz likuma varu, un nodrošināt varas dalīšanu, kas paredz monopolu izskaušanu politikas un ekonomikas jomās, cilvēktiesību ievērošanu un brīvus masu plašsaziņas līdzekļus. Šo sešu valstu pilsoņu ambīcija ir attīstīt demokrātiskus režīmus. Šīs valstis ir saņēmušas un joprojām saņem lielāko Eiropas Savienības (ES) atbalstu. ES jauno programmu, kas ietver Austrumu partnerību (AP) un Asociācijas līgumu (AL), ir paredzēts parakstīt Viļņas galotņu tikšanās laikā. Tā reprezentē nenovērtējamu atbalstu šo valstu attīstībai par tiesiskām un demokrātiskām valstīm, kurās dominē likuma varas principi un tiek ievērotas cilvēktiesības. Alternatīva konverģencei un integrācijai ES ir Austrumu partnerības valstu integrācijas procesi postpadomju teritorijā, kurā dominē Krievija. Vēsturiskā pieredze liecina, ka vietās, kur dominē Krievija, plaukst korupcija, nedarbojas likumi un tiek pārkāptas cilvēktiesības. Rakstā tiek analizēti vairāki AP un AL politiku aspekti, kā arī sniegtas rekomendācijas Latvijas prezidentūrai Eiropas Savienībā.

Atslēgvārdi: Asociācijas līgums, Austrumu partnerība, Eiropas instruments demokrātijas un cilvēktiesību veicināšanai, Eiropas kaimiņpolitika, Eiropas Komisija, ES, Latvijas prezidentūra Eiropas Savienībā, Viļņas galotņu tikšanās.

Armenia and the EU

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Armenia retained strong ties with Russia, while at the same time attempting to find areas of political, economic and social cooperation with the EU. Relationships between the EU and Armenia are governed through the framework of the EU–Armenia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement signed in 1996 and implemented in 1999. The European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument was launched alongside the continued enlargement of the EU, and was joined by Armenia in 2004. In concrete terms, the Armenian government finally adopted the ENPI on 14 November 2006. A National Indicative Program (NIP) was also adopted by Armenia, covering the period from 2007 to 2010 with a total sum of 98.4 million Euros allocated. Along with the ENPI national program, Armenia has benefited from the ENPI regional and interregional programs and from other thematic programs such as the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

With this background to the current socio-political situation in Armenia, we can begin to look at how various instruments such as the ENPI and the EIDHR are being implemented. The ENPI in Armenia is now focused on three major areas: support for democratic structures and good governance, support for regulatory reform and capacity building, and support for attempts to reduce poverty. The ENPI addresses a limited number of priorities that are relevant for Armenia but also have a regional impact on the Caucasus as a whole. Examples of implementation capacity visible in ENPI projects for Armenia can be provided. For example, a set of five thematic programs will be available under the new set of instruments, including food security, migration and asylum, investing in people, local actors in development, and the environment and the sustainable management of resources, including energy.

Since 2009 the EU has launched a new program of cooperation with the 6 countries of the Post-Soviet territory in the framework of Eastern Partnership directed at Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus. The Program does not offer membership to these 6 countries, but aims at closer ties with EU and signing the AA (the agenda of negotiations includes political dialogue, human rights, institutional reforms, the economy, the judiciary and migration). Moreover, there are plans to sign the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area Agreement and Visa facilitation and Readmission Agreements in the framework of the EaP. Here, the level of cooperation is defined in terms of how close these countries want to be to the EU and is based on the “more for more” principle. The EaP is based on another important principle: the Program works in specific areas only after determining the progress made by the partner countries (i.e. the EaP doesn't give anything up front).

Armenia has worked quite actively on the issues related with Visa Facilitation Agreement and Readmission, and thus the EU signed the Visa Facilitation Agreement with Armenia in December, 2012, and the Readmission Agreement in April, 2013. The facilitation of visa regimes does not mean liberalization, of course, but it does offer more possibilities: it facilitates the processes, and reduces the price and waiting times for issuing visas. Moreover, certain categories of citizens, such as students, scientists, journalists, pensioners, sportspeople and representatives of Armenia's civil sector will be able to obtain visas with no fee. At present, negotiations between the EU

and Armenia over the AA, including the DCFTA, have practically been concluded. It should be noted that the very fact of Armenia's participation in the EaP has led to the activation of civil society, the settlement of dialogue between civil institutes and Armenia's government, an improvement of the atmosphere in the sphere of human rights and greater freedom in the political field.

Armenia's active work with the EU over the past 3 years has led to a significant improvement in the functioning of a number of government agencies, including the issuing and changing of passports, the introduction of biometric passports, personal data protection, the fight against corruption, etc.

Analysis of the situation

A series of factors will play a vital role for the Latvian Presidency of the EU. As is known, Latvia will take up the role of the EU Presidency from January to June 2015. In a situation like this, the actions of the Latvian Government will to some extent depend on these factors as well as on the situation present at the beginning of 2015, at the time of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Let us list some of these factors that need to be taken into account in the preparation of the Latvian Presidency.

1. Will the Association Agreements between the EU and Armenia be either signed or initialed by the time of the 2013 Vilnius Summit of the Eastern Partnership?

In today's situation (mid September, 2013) there is a very great possibility that the initialing of the AA by the EU with Moldova and Georgia will take place. Moreover, the EU and the European Commission do not have serious obstacles for larger integration with these countries since for the last two-three years there has been obvious progress in these countries in the field of election procedures (thus, governments have changed after the elections in Moldova and Georgia), and there have been improvements in governance and administration. Of course many problems still exist in Moldova and Georgia in the fields of human rights and the principle of the rule of law; however, even here the situation is not that hopeless. In the case of Ukraine the situation is a bit different. On the one hand, today Ukraine is ready not only to initial but also to sign the AA with the EU

(which is certainly good), but on the other hand the Ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko's imprisonment is seriously affecting EU relations with Ukraine as it means that famous Ukraine opposition figures are being prosecuted. Unfortunately, the fact that Yulia Tymoshenko is in prison could hinder the AA being signed by the EU (as is known, the EU has always condemned selective justice, which often takes place in former Soviet Union countries).

In the case of Armenia, the preparation of the AA was extremely active, so the EU and Armenia were planning to initial the AA closer to the Vilnius Summit.

However, after a working visit by the President of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, to Moscow on September 3, the Armenian and Russian Presidents declared that Armenia is planning to enter the Customs Union (the Customs Union includes Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus). This was a real shock for many people both in Armenia and Europe as only a month ago the Armenian authorities were speaking of their readiness to initial the AA and of there being little interest in joining the Customs Union, with which Armenia does not have land border. At the same time, this declaration put Armenia's participation in the EaP at risk.

As is known, Russia is offering the countries in the post-Soviet territory the possibility of entering the Customs Union, which is why active debates have recently been going on in Armenian political and civil circles about the idea of the creation of a Eurasian Union and the practicability of joining it. The strangest thing here is that the main ideologists of this idea haven't provided the parameters of the Eurasian Union. So even today, it is unclear whether this Union will be based on any system of values or if it will be oriented towards a coincidence of interests of the Union's member states.

It is also not known if there are plans to establish supranational bodies in the framework of the Eurasian Union (that would mean a transfer of a part of the member states' sovereignty to institutions of the Union). Apart from that will the Eurasian Union consist of already existing organizations such as CIS, CSTO, EurAsEC and the Customs Union or will it be a completely new structure built from scratch? Who can be a potential member of Eurasian Union? Only a country from post-Soviet territory or other countries as well? For example, can North Korea or Afghanistan be a member of the Union? Certainly, in such conditions, where there are no answers to

these questions, it is difficult to imagine how Armenia can benefit from this Union, and moreover there is no sense in comparing it with the EU, which has proved its effectiveness and viability.

Armenia, much as any other small country, needs to get closer or integrate only with such international organizations that lean on a system of values. Only the system of values (which all the members of the Union will follow, for example the system of democratic values in the EU) can protect small countries from momentary interests of regional and global actors.

2. How tough will Russia's position be towards the countries that are potential "signatories" of the Association Agreement?

As time has shown, with the approach of the date of the Vilnius Summit of the EaP, which will be held at the end of November 2013, the pressure Russia is exerting on the signatories of the AA with the EU is growing day by day.

In the case of Ukraine, the situation has already reached the level of sanctions. In the middle of August 2013, Russia's customs imposed an almost complete ban on the import of Ukrainian goods to Russia. It is obvious that this step is directed to the disruption of signing the AA with the EU. The adviser to Russia's President, Sergey Glazyev, directly announced: "If Ukraine signs the Association Agreement with the EU, Russia will make the customs administration tougher. The current problems are just preparations for the change of the administration."¹ Moreover, in the context of cooperation with the EU, Ukraine has utmost importance for Russia both from the geographical and practical points of view. Indeed, the majority of Russian energy resource and merchandise transit goes to Europe via Ukraine and, apart from that, it is a country with a 50 million Euro trading market. That is why Russia is placing more serious pressure on Ukraine in comparison to Armenia and Moldova.

Of course, small countries are also affected: at the beginning of September, 2013, Russian authorities banned the import of Moldavian wines to Russia and the pressure on Armenia was so great that the latter changed its policies, sharply refusing to initial the AA (as has been mentioned ear-

¹ Kremlin Aide Warns Kiev Not to Sign EU Pact. 03.09.2013. <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/kremlin-aide-warns-kiev-not-to-sign-eu-pact/485443.html> ("TheMoscowTimes" website; accessed on 10.09.2013.).

lier). It is important to note here, that on 12 September, 2013, the European parliament adopted a resolution which expressed its concern about the fact that pressure is rising on partner countries with the approach of the EaP Vilnius Summit. The European Parliament's members think that Russia must give up imposing pressure, as happened with the recent trade sanctions against Ukraine and Moldova or threats against Armenia to dissuade them from signing or initialing the Agreements during the Vilnius Summit.

Such a Russian reaction is not surprising in light of the policy pursued by President Vladimir Putin during the past few years towards the countries born in the Post Soviet Union territory. Russia considers these countries as the zone for its "vital interests" (it disregards their sovereignty), that is why Russia is strongly against any kind of integration (or rapprochement) of EaP countries with either the EU or NATO. By the way, one of the reasons for such a negative attitude to the possible signing of the AA of Ukraine with the EU is that Ukraine, as compared to, for instance, Armenia, raises the question of its membership of the EU.

Russia is moreover not interested in the opinion of the citizens of the EaP countries. In the interview given by the Prime Minister of Russia, D. Medvedyev, that took place in August 2013 for the Georgian TV station Rustavi-2, he reiterated his country's rejection of Georgia's desire to join NATO. He suggested that instead Georgia might want to enter the alternative Eurasian Union that is headed by Russia. In addition he added that "Russia is a large country with a huge nuclear arsenal, we cannot ignore a state which is a member of another political-military alliance."² However, despite Russia's overt pressure, as the development of the situation shows, Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia have not changed their priorities and are planning to either sign or initial the AA with the EU.

In this situation, the EU might be more flexible and it will find an acceptable solution (perhaps, a temporary solution) to Yulia Tymoshenko's problem with the Kiev government, after which the AA will be signed with Ukraine.

² NATO Membership Would Strain Georgia's Ties with Russia — Medvedev. 07.08.2013. <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20130807/182614986.html> (RIA Novosti news portal portals; accessed on 10.10.2013.).

3. In 2014 the EU presidency will move to Greece and Italy, and both countries have little interest in the EaP Program.

It is very likely that during the EU presidency of Greece and Italy, the attention paid to the EaP will be much smaller than in the current Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. We also do not think that the government of Greece and Italy will include the AA in the list of their priorities for the EU presidency. That is why one should not expect much progress in the EaP in 2014. In 2015 the Latvian Government will inherit a situation very similar to that we will have right after the Vilnius Summit at the end of 2013. In this situation much will depend on who will “be in time” to sign the AA with the EU at the Vilnius Summit. If Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Armenia either sign or initial the AA (or some of it) the tasks of the Latvian Presidency will be concentrated on the implementation of the AA with these countries. That is to say, during its Presidency Latvia and the signatory countries of the AA might focus their attention on how these member countries of the EaP are fulfilling their responsibilities within the framework of the AA. New impulses and initiatives will be necessary for the completion of the negotiations for the preparation of the AA with those countries the EU does not manage to sign it by the Vilnius Summit, but this will happen during the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union anyway. These Agreements will need to be signed during the Latvian Presidency.

Today, in fact, Armenia falls into the category of the countries that won't manage to sign the AA with the EU (more concretely, the Armenian authorities have not dared to sign the AA due to Russian pressure). It is difficult to predict what will happen next, but we can assume that as the Customs Union is not a functioning structure, in a year Armenia will have to return to cooperating with the EU in the framework of the EaP. For now it is difficult to say whether it will be a continuation of the preparation to sign the AA. However, there is no doubt that Armenia will return to active cooperation with EU, as we are well informed about how the structures created by Russia in the Post-Soviet territory function. Hence, with the approach of the Latvian Presidency of the EU, Armenia might come up with new initiatives in terms of cooperating with the EU. It could be a return to the AA and completion of the document under new conditions; it could

also be a new format of EU and Armenian cooperation. It is important that during the Latvian Presidency of the EU there is a positive reaction to the initiative from Yerevan.

Recommendations for the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

1. Presentation of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union should be held in all the six EaP countries. The presentations should be implemented by the Embassies of Latvia jointly with the famous analytical centers of these countries with the aim of ensuring maximum involvement and public awareness of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus based on the priorities of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. During the presentation, special emphasis should be placed on Latvia's position towards the EaP and the AA, including the establishment of a free trade area and the facilitation of visa regimes. The Latvian ambassadors in all the EaP countries, the Special Envoy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia on the issues of the EaP and Latvian experts who deal with the problems of the Post Soviet area should all take part in the presentation. Our center, the Analytical Centre on Globalization and Regional Cooperation (ACGRC), has the experience of presenting in Armenia the presidency of the European countries in the EU and OSCE and we know how useful it can be for the civil society of our countries. Moreover, diplomats accredited in Baku, Yerevan, Tbilisi, Chisinau, Kiev and Minsk, the authorities of the EaP countries and representatives of civil society (independent NGOs, experts, academics, youth organizations, students and journalists) should all be invited to the presentation.
2. Monitoring should be held for the implementation of the AA in those countries of the EaP that by the time of Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union (that is to say by January 2015) will have signed or initialed the AA. As mentioned above, it is likely that Moldova, Georgia and Armenia will initial whereas Ukraine will sign the Agreement with the EU even before the Vilnius Summit that will be held at the end of November 2013. Therefore by January 2015, the monitoring of the implementation of the AA (including

the creation of a free trade zone and the facilitation of visas) will be very important. This monitoring can be based on the experience of the NGOs and think-tanks of those EaP countries that have already done such kind of work before the Vilnius Summit. The situation as regards human rights and democracy in the signatory countries of the AA with the EU is very important; hence the monitoring should also include these questions.

3. A three-day forum with the participation of intellectuals, famous experts and scientists from the EaP countries should be held in March–April 2015 in Riga. 15–20 participants could be invited from each EaP country; they can be people who have an influence in the civil society of their countries and who have contributed to the development of democracy and freedom in the Post Soviet territory. The President of Latvia (or Presidents of the Baltic States) as well as the Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs could make a speech at the Forum. The main purpose of this Forum is the exchange of information and the opinions of intellectuals and experts of EaP countries on the situation in their countries, the mobilization of democratically-minded people from EaP countries around the main ideas related to European values and the AA as well as information on Latvia's priorities during its Presidency of the EU.
4. Armenia and Azerbaijan should be included in the program of the Development Cooperation Policy of Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a permanent basis.

While Considering European Integration a Priority Course, Azerbaijan will not Rush its Participation in the Eastern Partnership Programme

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Having participated in various European Union programmes (TACIS, TRACECA, ENP, Eastern Partnership, etc.) for many years, Azerbaijan has become an important partner of the EU in the realm of energy security. As far as the Eastern Partnership programme is concerned, the Azerbaijani government has finalized the last round of talks on a visa facilitation regime with the EU, and made progress in a number of other areas of cooperation. However, Baku hasn't tried to accelerate the course of negotiations in order to hastily conclude the Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area Agreement (DCFTA), which will envisage the liberalization of trade and allow for an easier mutual access to the markets of the EU Member States and those participating in the EU's Eastern Partnership. The reasons for such a stand have been elaborated in the following article, which also seeks to validate the perspective of European integration as the only possible choice for Azerbaijan.

Keywords: Association Agreement, Azerbaijan, Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) Agreement, Eastern Partnership, European Union, Visa Dialogue.

Jau ilgu gadu piedaloties vairākās Eiropas Savienības programmās (*TACIS*, *TRACECA*, *ENP*, Austrumu partnerība un citās), Azerbaidžāna ir kļuvusi par nozīmīgu ES partneri enerģētikas jomā. Austrumu partnerības programmas ietvaros Azerbaidžānas valdība ir noslēgusi pēdējo sarunu

raundu par vīzas režīma atvieglošanu ar ES un ir panākts progress citās sadarbības jomās. Tomēr Baku necenšas paātrināt sarunu gaitu, lai tiktu pēc iespējas ātrāk noslēgts Asociācijas līgums un Padziļinātās un visaptverošās brīvās tirdzniecības zonas (DCFTA) līgums, paredzot tirgus liberalizāciju un atvieglojot ES dalībvalstu un ES Austrumu partnerības valstu tirgu pieejamību. Šajā rakstā tiks meklēti iemesli šai pasivitātei, kā arī tiek argumentēts, kāpēc integrācija Eiropā ir vienīgā perspektīva Azerbaidžānai.

Atslēgvārdi: Asociācijas līgums, Austrumu partnerība, Azerbaidžāna, Eiropas Savienība, Padziļinātās un visaptverošās brīvās tirdzniecības zonas (DCFTA) līgums, vīzu dialogs.

Azerbaijan is the largest state located in the South Caucasus. Approximately 60 per cent of the population, over 70 per cent of the GDP, over 80 per cent of foreign trade turnover and 90 per cent of the monetary and financial assets of the region come to the share of the country. Amongst the EU's Eastern Partnership Member States, Azerbaijan has overtaken Moldova, Georgia and Armenia, as well as industrially advanced Belarus, thus becoming the second country to Ukraine in terms of population and scale of economy. Its large oil and gas reserves, as well as favourable geographic location for the establishment of communications along both East-West and North-South corridors make Azerbaijan a key partner for the EU.

In 1996 Baku and Brussels laid the groundwork for mutual relations, when an agreement on partnership and cooperation (PCA) was signed, and Azerbaijan joined the European Neighbourhood Policy. An Action Plan was signed within this policy in 2006, the Eastern Partnership Initiative that Azerbaijan joined, and cooperation agreements in the field of energy, laid appropriate grounds for the development of bilateral and multilateral relations with the EU. Initially, when the independent Azerbaijani statehood underwent the most difficult period of its formation, these relations were mainly limited to the provision by the EU of large scale humanitarian aid, and technical and financial assistance for implementing necessary economic, social and public administration reforms in the country. Nevertheless, current relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union have reached a new level of development and have been expressed in intense political dialogue, large-scale trade turnover and implementation of major energy, transport and industrial projects.

At the meeting of the Azerbaijan State Commission on European Integration, Shahin Mustafayev, the Minister for Economic Development and Chairman of the Commission, noted that the European Union is the major trade partner of Azerbaijan. The 2012 trade turnover between Azerbaijan and the EU amounted to over 41.0 per cent of the country's total foreign trade turnover, while it was 43.7 per cent in the first six months of 2013. In the past decade, the total volume of investments made by EU Member States in the economy of Azerbaijan, including investments in the oil and gas sector, amounted to 51.0 and 36.5 per cent accordingly of the overall foreign investments allocated to the country. Azerbaijan has signed agreements on the elimination of double taxation with twenty EU Member States and on bilateral promotion and protection with seventeen states. It has also established intergovernmental commissions with thirteen countries.¹

Azerbaijan is the key partner of the EU in implementing a large and long-term strategic TRACECA transport corridor project, the headquarters of which has been located namely in Baku. Whereas Azerbaijan received a certain amount of foreign financial support at the initial stage of the project's implementation, at the later stage, the country started predominantly utilizing its own financial means to continue the building of the modern Caspian Sea trade port and container terminal in Alat. It has undertaken new construction activities and is upgrading existing sections of the railway network to link Azerbaijan with Georgia and Turkey via the Baku–Tbilisi–Kars route. Upon completion of the construction works in 2014, the corridor will provide an uninterrupted railway transportation service from China all the way to Europe.

In cooperation with the leading western energy companies, Azerbaijan has implemented a large scale oil pipeline project, Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan, with a capacity of 1.2 million barrels p/d. At present, the country has embarked on the construction of strategic gas pipelines TANAP (Trans-Anatolian Project) and TAP (Trans-Adriatic Project), which will make Caspian gas available to European consumers. Thus, Azerbaijan has significantly contributed to the diversification of supply sources of energy to European consumers, thereby strengthening their energy security.

¹ Состоялось заседание Госкомиссии Азербайджана по евроинтеграции. 24.08.2013. <http://www.trend.az/capital/business/2182290.html> ("Trend" ziņu portāls; aplūkots 25.08.2013.).

Azerbaijan has plans to become an important supplier of chemical products to the world markets. Construction of a large plant for producing methanol, highly demanded by the European market, has already been completed at a new industrial site nearby Baku. The Azerbaijan State Oil Company (SOCAR) has purchased a majority interest in the large Turkish petrochemical Petkim holding — expected refurbishment will require several billion USD worth of investments — to satisfy the Turkish market and ensure export of a broad variety of products over to Europe. At the same time, Azerbaijan has started working on the design of large enterprises that will use gas to produce mineral fertilizers (MF). While planning to meet the demand of the region, Azerbaijan will also export MF over to the world markets, including Europe.

Political dialogue between the European Union and Azerbaijan is underway in a very intensive way and on various levels. President Ilham Aliyev, the Parliament Speaker Oqtay Asadov and a number of Azerbaijani ministers have repeatedly visited Brussels to hold talks with senior EU officials. At the same time, the EU President Herman Van Rompuy, Vice-president and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton, President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso, European Commissioners and other EU officials have visited Azerbaijan on many occasions. It was a notable event that the very first session of the EuroNest Parliamentary Assembly that was held beyond the borders of the EU took place namely in Baku. Unified within the framework of the National Platform, Azerbaijani non-governmental organizations actively participate in the activities of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

The afore-mentioned examples are convincingly indicative of the fact that Azerbaijan is becoming an important partner for the EU. The oncoming high level Vilnius Summit, planned to take place on 28–29 November, 2013, will be an important milestone in the development of relations between the EU and Eastern Partnership Member States. In July, a ministerial conference was held in Brussels, prior to the summit, where Azerbaijan was represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs Elmar Mammadyarov. In his speech, Mr. Mammadyarov highlighted that Baku is interested in developing a dialogue with Brussels based on equality and strategic cooperation. The decision recently made on the Trans-Adriatic (TAR) route is very important for ensuring transportation of Azerbaijani gas to Europe, emphasized Mr. Mammadyarov. This will contribute to the further strengthening of

European energy security and facilitate the development of political and economic relations between Azerbaijan and the EU, said the Minister. The Minister also expressed hope for a successful finalization of the visa facilitation negotiations and signing of the respective agreement at the oncoming summit. In addition, he suggested that efficient steps should be undertaken to ensure the development of interaction between the EU and Azerbaijan in the area of education. At the same time, Mr. Mammadyarov called on the parties to augment efforts within the framework of the Eastern Partnership programme and strive to strengthen gender equality and the role of women in society. The Azerbaijani Minister for Foreign Affairs deemed it necessary to call on the EU representatives to ensure stringent observation of the obligations on supporting Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and sovereignty.²

Azerbaijan does not attempt to make Brussels "carry" the Karabakh settlement burden. Hence, we have the right to expect the European Commission to act in full compliance with international law and its own obligations to make sure the Nagorno-Karabakh region, temporarily occupied by Armenian armed forces, is clearly and unequivocally brought outside the scope of the agreement that is soon to be signed between the EU and Armenia. Allowing ambiguity of definitions or uncertainty regarding this crucial issue would seriously undermine the EU's image in Azerbaijan, thus minimizing the country's interest in cooperation under the Eastern Partnership. It is for this reason that Baku has not attempted to speed up the preparation of the Association Agreement with the European Union, and is awaiting to make its decision following the signing of the document between the EU and Yerevan at the Vilnius Summit. It should be mentioned at this point that the text of this agreement has been scrupulously concealed from the public, namely by the Armenian government.

Azerbaijan's lagging behind Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and even Armenia, to a certain extent, within the EU's Eastern Partnership, mainly pertains to the signature of specific agreements rather than the scope of current cooperation. Baku and Brussels have developed their relations in many areas, primarily including the energy, transport and communications sectors, and these relations are quite unique. The level of bilateral trade and

² Баку призвал ЕС к выполнению обязательств по оказанию поддержки суверенитету и территориальной целостности Азербайджана. 23.07.2013. <http://www.trend.az/capital/business/2173370.html> ("Trend" ziqıu portalı; aplükots 25.08.2013.).

economic relations between Azerbaijan and the EU, including the volume of investments, and financial and monetary transactions, is by far (over ten times) higher than corresponding levels of cooperation with Armenia, Georgia and Moldova. Given these indicators, it would be somewhat inappropriate to hasten negotiations in order to sign the DCFTA with the EU. This is especially true in the light of the fact that such an agreement must precede Azerbaijan's accession to the WTO, which, in its turn, assumes a minimization of customs tariffs and elimination of technical barriers to ensure the free flow of goods and services. It should be noted that 95 per cent of Azerbaijan's export to Europe consists of oil and petroleum products, and will soon also include natural gas. While Azerbaijan's accession to the WTO and signing the DCFTA with the EU would hardly spur the country's efforts to increase the level of non-oil export to Europe, it will compel Azerbaijan to divest its domestic market of protective barriers, necessitating their elimination in vulnerable areas such as agriculture, banking and insurance.

It is worth mentioning that Baku had equally complex negotiations on the issue of a simplified visa regime with EU countries, as such an agreement also envisages readmission commitments that consent to bear the deportation costs for all persons, regardless of their nationality, who are illegally on EU territory, even if they have come from Azerbaijan as a transit country. Unlike Armenia and Georgia, where the transit flow is scanty, Baku is the gateway via which many Iranian, Pakistani and Afghani nationals travel to Europe. Undertaking the financial burden of their deportation would be an expensive endeavour. That is why it was necessary not only to discuss all contentious issues with the Commission, but also to prepare the border agencies of the country to prevent the entry of any unwanted persons to Europe via Azerbaijan. However, an appropriate agreement has been prepared and will be signed at the upcoming November Summit in Vilnius.

The absence of the Association Agreement does not create a legal vacuum in relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union. These relations have already been successfully developing within the past two decades. They are based on the current Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which was signed in 1996 in Luxembourg and entered into force in 1999, and regulated by the protocols signed within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy, as well as the Eastern Partnership, in which Azerbaijan actively participates.

The fact that Georgia, Moldova and Armenia have completed the work on the texts of the Association Agreement with the European Union and DCFTA Agreement, by no means implies that these countries will make a quantum leap in their development and outpace Azerbaijan. According to the most optimistic estimates of local and European experts, upon joining the agreement with the EU, Armenia's economy will grow by about EUR146 million per year, or 2.3% of GDP, exports will probably increase by 15.2%, and imports by 8.2%. Georgia's economic growth is projected to be at 4.3%, or EUR 292 million. As we can see, the amounts mentioned are measured by a couple of hundred million euros, provided that the most optimistic forecasts will find confirmation. Just for comparison, the growth of the Azerbaijani economy, as well as its exports and foreign currency reserves, is measured not in millions, but in multiple billions of euros. In fact, the governments of Moldova, Georgia and Armenia are stepping up the signing of agreements with the EU with only one purpose: to urgently obtain additional financial aid, which Azerbaijan does not particularly need.

Unlike other Member States of the Eastern Partnership, Azerbaijan does not need financial handouts. Its own monetary reserves have exceeded \$ 45 billion and the consolidated budget is measured by an impressive amount of \$ 25 billion. A few dozen million euros allocated by the EU to each country of the South Caucasus will not make much of a difference for Baku, although they certainly wouldn't hurt. In 2013, the European Union and the Government of Azerbaijan signed a financial agreement providing for the allocation of 19.5 million euros to launch the framework programme in support of the development of bilateral relations. A relevant agreement was signed by the European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Stefan Füle, and Minister for Economic Development Shahin Mustafayev, during the Azerbaijani delegation's visit to Brussels.³

It would of course be erroneous to draw conclusions from the above that the value of work on the relevant agreements between Azerbaijan and the European Union is of minor importance. As a delegation member of the EuroNest Parliamentary Assembly, I fully understand the importance and inevitability of our country's European integration. Europe is the main

³ Азербайджан и ЕС подписали финансовое соглашение. 29.08.2013. <http://www.trend.az/capital/business/2184027.html> ("Trend" ziņu portāls; aplūkots 30.08.2013.).

trading partner of Azerbaijan and more than a half of all our trade comes to its share. Europe is the main foreign investor in Azerbaijan and is the source of modern equipment and technology needed to modernize the economy and infrastructure. Modern science, education and business management also come to Azerbaijan from Europe. The model of “Islamic state and society” proposed by Iran and abstract model of a “Eurasian Union” promoted by Russia, completely lose the game to the effective and highly advanced model embodied by the European Union. A certain deliberation and reluctance to recklessly rush the process of European integration does not mean a departure from the Euro-Atlantic course of development.

According to the polls, the choice made by the political leadership of Azerbaijan in favour of such a geopolitical orientation is widely supported by public opinion, and will seemingly be confirmed in the forthcoming autumn summit in Vilnius. After all, the numerous surveys conducted in Azerbaijan convincingly show that of all possible national geopolitical orientation vectors — European, Russian or Islamic projects — the population prefers European integration. Thus, annual monitoring of public opinion held in 2006–2010, via random sampling by the «Pulse-R» sociological service among 1000 respondents in 10 regions of Azerbaijan, showed that over a third of respondents welcome the European option, while the alternative projects (CIS, Islamic) received two or three times less support.⁴ Similar surveys held among the leaders of political parties in the same period also showed the presence of a broad consensus on this issue in favour of European integration.⁵

Relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union have advanced over the past years, but are still far from being perfect. The 2012 Report assessing the progress made in the Eastern Partnership member countries, published on the European Union's website, noted that Azerbaijan still needs to make significant efforts to fulfil its commitments in building a deep and sustainable democracy, including electoral process, protection of rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as independence of the judiciary system.

⁴ Azerbaijan in 2006-2010. Sociological monitoring. Comparative analysis of the data of sociological surveys. Eds. R. Musabayov and R. Shulman. Pulse-R. Baku, 2010, pp. 30, 34.

⁵ Three attempts at European integration. 30 interviews with party leaders in the region. Caucasus Journalists Network. <http://www.caucasusjournalists.net/forumdump.asp?idforumtheme=42> (Kaukázás žurnálistu tikla májas lapa; aplükota 30.08.2013.).

Azerbaijan has completed the development of its second anti-corruption strategy. Citizens have been asked to report cases of corruption to the authorities by means of telephone hotlines. However, corruption remains the major obstacle for the development of entrepreneurship and diversification of the Azerbaijani economy.

Significant progress has been noted in the fight against money laundering and human trafficking. The number of Azerbaijani students and scholars benefiting from various European educational programmes is steadily increasing. It is regrettably noted that negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have slowed down in 2012. No understanding can be observed between Baku and Brussels on the issue of access of the representatives of the EU to the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, occupied by the Armenian armed forces.⁶

Conclusions

The extent and dynamics of cooperation between Azerbaijan and the European Union, the agreements signed and the stated goals all suggest that this relationship will deepen further and, in some areas such as energy and communication, will acquire the nature of strategic partnership. European integration will remain the main course for Azerbaijan's further development. However, due to specific national interests and its regional situation, Baku is not going to push its participation in the Eastern Partnership just to obtain additional financial aid or obtain a few words of praise from European institutions. The Azerbaijani government intends to assign high priority to achieving specific pragmatic goals and targets, which are of mutual interest to both Baku and Brussels.

Political commitment on the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories and support for the settlement of the Karabakh conflict could become a strong incentive to further deepen relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union. This, however, remains to be seen. While the Azerbaijani authorities are often criticized for individual cases of human rights infringements, the EU is comfortable with the fact that, as

⁶ *ENP Country Progress Report for 2012 – Azerbaijan*. A Memo released by the European Commission on 20/03/2013. http://www.enpi-info.eu/maineast.php?id=409&id_type=3&dang_id=471 (ES Kaimiņpolitikas informācijas centra mājas lapa; aplūkota 27.08.2013.).

a result of the Armenian occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent Azerbaijani regions, over 600 000 Azerbaijanis have been unable to return to their homes in their place of permanent residence. The European Union confines itself to public expressions of support for the mediation efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group, and willingness to provide financial assistance for the post-conflict restoration of the war-torn areas.

Baku does not express agreement regarding the visit of EU representatives to Nagorno-Karabakh, as Brussels has yet to answer clearly and satisfactorily under what mandate such a visit is to be carried out, and what positive impact it may have on the conflict settlement. Nor is there an enthusiastic welcome for the proposal to supplement the three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (United States, Russia and France) with an EU representative. An independent EU mediation in the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict would be much more effective, especially if such a mission was undertaken by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton, or, as in the case of the Kosovo mission, by appointing the EU Special Representative former Prime Minister of Finland Ahtisaari, or Tony Blair, who is now in the Middle East.

A greater role should be allocated directly to businesses, as well as educational and cultural structures in the implementation of the Eastern Partnership program.

Belarusian Perspectives on the Eastern Partnership

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Unlike the other Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries, Belarus has not undertaken even minimal steps towards the European Union (EU). Refusing to use the potential of the EaP, Belarus appears on the periphery of the rapprochement process and this engenders significant direct and indirect costs. The country needs urgent reforms which can only be aided by the EU. The alternative of Eurasian integration is a false one and is not capable of replacing EU integration. Yet the Belarusian elites, even whilst understanding that, are not ready to pay the price of democratization for modernization. It creates a dilemma for the EU — to wait or to promote democratic changes in Belarus? In the second case, the EU faces the need to rethink its strategy towards Belarus.

Keywords: Belarus, democratization, Eastern Partnership, EU eastern policy.

Atšķirībā no citām Austrumu partnerības valstīm Baltkrievija neīsteno pat minimālus soļus preti Eiropas Savienībai (ES). Atsakoties izmantot Austrumu partnerības potenciālu, Baltkrievija ir attālinājusies no attiecību atjaunošanas procesa, un tas izraisa tiešas un netiešas izmaksas. Valstij ir nepieciešamas steidzamas reformas, kuras var veikt tikai ar ES palīdzību. Alternatīva integrēties Eirāzijā ir aplama un neaizstāj integrāciju ES. Lai gan Baltkrievijas elite to apzinās, tā nav gatava maksāt demokratizācijas cenu, lai modernizētu sistēmu. Tas ir radījis dilemmu ES — nogaidīt vai veicināt demokrātiskās pārmaiņas Baltkrievijā. Otrajā gadījumā ES būtu jāpārvērtē sava stratēģija attiecībā uz Baltkrieviju.

Atslēgvārdi: Austrumu partnerība, Baltkrievija, demokratizācija, ES Austrumu politika.

Eastern Partnership: at the threshold of the new start

The successful Summit of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) in November will be presented as a triumph of the European Union's "soft power", but is this true? Criticisms of the EaP are being replaced by positive assessments. The political situation makes the success of the Summit inevitable. Even if the Association agreement and DCFTA were to be signed only with Georgia and Moldova, it would demonstrate the success of the EaP policy. Also signing the agreements with Ukraine and Armenia would symbolically define the new geopolitical configuration; that would not be spoiled by the political gap with Azerbaijan and the almost complete withdrawal of Belarus from the EU rapprochement processes. The demonstration of the turn towards the EU of the countries which are considered as within the "traditional zone of Russian interests" alarms the Russian government. Yet Russia's attempts to force Ukraine, Armenia and Moldova to change their integration direction from the European to that of the Eurasian one only demonstrates the lessening of its strategic attractiveness for the countries in this region.

The positive assessments should not mask the real lack of significant transformational progress in all the EaP countries. In no case is it possible to acknowledge the existence of sustainable democratic governance, the rule of law, a free market economy and full guarantees of respect for human rights. The changes which have been taking place over the past four years cannot be considered as consistent and even less as irreversible, even among the leaders of Europeanization process. It is evident for everybody more or less familiar with post-Soviet countries that signing international agreements does not necessarily mean their real implementation in these countries. The Vilnius Summit will not be the accomplishment of a process but a new start: the agreements which will be signed will need to be put into the actual practice of transformation. It will set new challenges for European policy and will necessitate much deeper involvement in the domestic political situation of the partner countries. As for the latter, the new period will demand that they demonstrate real changes, which is much more difficult, but at the same time promises much more support from the EU.

Against this background, the perspective of Belarus in the EaP can be only considered in the conditional tense. While other EaP countries are making progress in their negotiations with the EU about deeper association,

a free trade area, visa liberalization, the establishment of a new level of relations in different sectors (economy, environment, energy, agriculture, etc.), Belarus remains on the periphery of these processes. Over the 4 to 5 years of the EaP being developed nothing has happened in EU–Belarus relations, and Belarus has made no progress. It could be said that Belarus has lost nothing, but that would be a false assessment. Belarus has both incurred important opportunity costs (unseized opportunities of rapprochement with the EU) and has not gained much from integration with Russia.

Direct losses and indirect benefits of cooperation with the EU

The EaP offered to Belarus, as it did to the other Eastern neighbours of the EU, a comprehensive transformation programme. Accepting all the elements of the European model, including political and judicial reforms, enabled EU support for transformation, which was later formulated as the “more for more” principle. Belarus rejected such comprehensiveness, counting on receiving from the EU economic preferences and support for modernization not conditioned by political and judicial reforms. The relations with the EU were considered in the same way as relations with Russia, where a demonstration of geopolitical loyalty is enough to receive funding.¹ The EU, having no will to finance the Belarusian programme of authoritarian modernization, has to limit its relations with Belarus to minimal technical assistance, cross-border cooperation, diplomacy and negotiations. These instruments remain in use even while the EU is implementing restrictive measures against people responsible for human rights violations in Belarus, some businessmen and their businesses with close links to Lukashenka (visa bans and frozen assets).

The low level of political relations is reflected in the amounts of EU assistance: in 2007–2013 Belarus received the lowest amount of financial aid from the EU.

¹ Let us mention that the regular attempts by Russia to require anything more substantial in return for its support (privatization of Belarusian performing assets by Russian capital, recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia etc.) are failing, as are EU attempts to push Belarus towards democratization.

ENPI COUNTRY ALLOCATIONS 2007–2013 (millions €)		
	Amountin 2007–2010	Amountin 2011–2013
Armenia	98,4	157,3
Azerbaijan	92	122,5
Belarus	20	–
Georgia	120,4	180,3
Moldova	209,7	273,1
Ukraine	494	470,1
TOTAL	1034,5	1203,3

Source: Country allocations// EaP Community²

These sums do not appear to be large losses and are incommensurable with Russian indirect subsidies via low rates for gas and oil, which reached up to 15% of GDP (about \$8 bln) in 2012.³ The European money cannot cover the persistent balance of trade deficit in Belarus (it requires about \$ 3 bln per year).⁴ Yet it seems that the low level of political relations does not affect the level of economic relations. The EU is the second largest trade partner for Belarus (28,9% of Belarusian foreign trade in 2012) and the main consumer of Belarusian exports (37,8% of exports in 2012).⁵ However this data does not take into consideration the dynamics of EU investments in EaP countries, access to the European Investment Bank and international financial institutions (EBRR, for example). Furthermore, the normalization of relations with the EU gives access to the wide range of programmes aiming to develop different sectors (7th framework programme for science, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci for education etc). The benefits of participation in such programmes lie not so much in direct financing as in local experts having access to European knowledge, know-how and technologies.

² Country allocations.25.08.2013. <http://www.easternpartnership.org/programmes/country-allocations> (Austrumupartnerībaskopienasmājaslapa; accessed on 10.09.2013.).

³ Belarus Reality Check 2012.19.12.2012. <http://belarusdigest.com/story/belarus-reality-check-2012-12486> (“BelarusDigest” mājaslapa; accessed on 10.09.2013.).

⁴ БЕЛАРУСЬ: МАКРОЭКОНОМІЧЕСКИЙ ПРОГНОЗ, №.1, июнь 2013.<http://www.research.by/webroot/delivery/files/BMF2013r01.pdf> (Pētniecības centra IPM mājas lapā; accessed on 10.09.2013.).

⁵ Belarus. EU bilateraltradeandtradewiththeworld. DG Tradestatistics. 05.07.2013.http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113351.pdf (Eiropas Komisijas mājas lapā; accessed on 09.09.2013.).

Nor was EU financial assistance determinant for the other partner countries when choosing cooperation with the EU. Modest amounts of financial assistance paired with the absence of direct membership perspectives for the EaP countries were the main arguments in criticisms of the EaP initiative. Regarding the latter, the EU has changed its position; the initial “everything but institutions” concept was replaced by the more flexible reference to Article 49 of the Lisbon Treaty opening perspectives of joining the EU.⁶ Yet financial assistance has remained low (€ 1.9 billion for all the six countries in 2010-2013).⁷ The determining factor for rapprochement with the EU were long-term benefits from implementing more advanced European standards in many fields, access to the huge European market, new investment resources and systematic financial assistance for transformation. Furthermore, access to such support can be opened only by signing the Association agreements. In particular, it is stated that the EU will facilitate raising funds from international financial institutions and the European Investment Bank.⁸

Belarus is in the wooden spoon position among the EaP countries in its relations with the EU, and it does not even have the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.⁹ However Belarus is among the leading EaP countries in terms of DGP dynamics and Human Development Index.¹⁰ It creates the appearance of Belarus having little interest in developing its cooperation with the EU; it seems that everything is fine. Yet a deeper look into the situation shows that the situation is more complicated. The Belarusian economy has been suffering persistent problems since 2009, caused by a lack of full scale reforms. It is volatile and is exposed to external shocks; a low level of economic growth and low salaries provoke a drain of a high-profile labour

⁶ Statement by Stefan Fulein at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on January 2012.

⁷ EU cooperation with eastern neighbors in the framework of the Eastern Partnership. http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/regional-cooperation/enpi-east/index_en.htm (Eiropas Komisijas mājas lapa; accessed on 09.09.2013.).

⁸ EIB signs framework agreement with the Republic of Azerbaijan. Press release. European Investment Bank. 29.08.2013. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_BEI-13-128_en.htm (EU official website; accessed on 10.09.2013.).

⁹ European Integration Index 2013 for Eastern Partnership Countries. International Renaissance Foundation. http://www.eap-index.eu/images/Index_2013.pdf (Austrumu partnerības indeksa mājas lapa; accessed on 10.09.2013.).

¹⁰ The EU's eastern neighbours. Library statistical spotlight. Library of European Parliament. 13.03.2013. [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/stspotlight/2013/130482/LDM_STS\(2013\)130482_REV1_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/stspotlight/2013/130482/LDM_STS(2013)130482_REV1_EN.pdf) (European Parliament; accessed on 10.09.2013.).

force. Foreign loans, which are constantly necessary in order to support economic stability and a minimal level of growth, are borrowed both from the East and from the West. Taking advantage of a thaw in relations with the EU in 2009 Belarus sought stabilization assistance from the EU as well. Over three years public debt doubled and reached \$ 34,028 bln in 2012 (62,3% of GDP). In addition to that, the constant growth of trade with the EU set against the absence of a fully-fledged contractual framework creates long-term negative effects and lessens the investment attractiveness of the country, which is already low. All this means that Belarus has an objective need for large-scale modernization; postponing the reforms just deepens the problems. In such a situation Belarus, by rejecting the opportunities of the EaP, at the very least hampers its growth, and at the worst will in the near future will fall into a property trap.

Illusion of a dilemma

An outside observer could have impression that Putin's Eurasian Union and Russian resources are considered in Belarus as a possible replacement for rapprochement with the EU. This is not the case and even among the Belarusian ruling elite there is an understanding that Russia is not capable of completely replacing relations with the EU. The rhetoric of the need for sustainable good relations with both Russia and the EU regularly appears in President Lukashenka's statements. The practice of political and economic relations between Belarus and Russia proves this message. Since 2003 trade and information wars have regularly broken out between the two allies, paradoxically combined with oil and gas subsidies. This paradox is easily explained by the gap between Russia's geopolitical ambitions and its real political power. Russia cannot allow Belarus to break their integration agreements and is obliged to pay for its geopolitical loyalty. At the same time Russia cannot accept Belarus gaining full sustainability and independence, which is why Russia maintains its Western neighbor on a low level of economic development. Oil and gas dependence and Russia's role in Belarusian trade are exploited for that purpose.

Low prices for Russian energy seem beneficial only at first sight. The re-exporting of Russian oil has allowed Belarus to ensure economic growth and low rates for gas to support loss-making industrial enterprises. This has

postponed the need for urgent reforms and the restructuring of business companies. Many years of such subsidies have depreciated the competitiveness of Belarusian goods on foreign markets and have dramatically worsened the structure of exports in which oil refining has replaced technology-intensive goods. In such a situation Russia can easily provoke external shocks for the Belarusian economy by playing with costs for energy. Apart from that Russia, as the second largest consumer of Belarusian exports, can implement artificial barriers for Belarusian goods, thus producing external shocks as well. Yet Russia cannot allow a dramatic worsening of the situation in Belarus both because of the risk of instability and of the threat of a demonstrative change by Belarus in terms of its geopolitical direction, which is not acceptable because of excessive Russia's ambitions.

This structure of relations creates a complex configuration of interdependence in which regular conflicts are both inevitable and necessary. They are provoked on the one hand by Russia's expansionist ambitions and its attempts to conquer the stubborn Belarus (for example, to place Belarusian businesses under Russian control). On the other hand they are provoked by Belarus' attempts to overuse its ostentatious loyalty towards Russia. In the long-term such relations will simply deepen existing problems. Apart from Russia's pragmatic disinterest in Belarus' development, the latter has no real means of promoting the modernization of the former. The Eastern neighbour itself needs deep renewal and there is no alternative to this process but the EU. Russia is obliged to adopt the EU experience by developing the Partnership for Modernisation initiative and by directly adopting elements of European integration in the Eurasian Union.¹¹

Towards formulating new EU policy

After the Vilnius Summit all the EaP countries will be divided into two groups: leaders and outsiders. The leaders will sign or will be about to sign Association Agreements. The EU has the understanding of how to deal with them further since the agreements themselves provide the logic for further development. Regarding the outsiders, notably Belarus and Azerbaijan, there

¹¹ Карлюк М. Евразийская интеграция Беларуси: «Скрытое сближение» с правом ЕС. 05.11.2012. <http://belinstitute.eu/ru/node/301> (Baltkrievu stratēģisko studiju institūta mājas lapa; accessed on 09.09.2013.).

is much less certainty. Disregarding the rational benefits of cooperation with the EU, Belarusian authorities cannot accept the European model because of a principal rejection of the element of democracy. It would be too naïve to count on the Belarusian elites suddenly changing their minds and understanding all the advantages of the EaP. The question is not that nobody in the government understands the benefits of rapprochement with the EU; the issue is that while the government understands these benefits it is not ready to pay the democratization costs for them.

In this situation the EU faces the necessity of finding a new strategy towards Belarus. The whole spectrum of possible EU stratagems lays between two poles: waiting for internal change in Belarus and actively influencing the changes in the country. In the first case the EU policy can remain as it is without any substantial changes: a combination of symbolic sanctions, technical assistance and sectoral dialogues between the European Commission and the Belarusian government, supporting all the civil society initiatives, promotes a longstanding preservation of the situation. The relations are maintained on the minimal level, Belarus is not completely excluded from the system of relations, minimal support for the pro-European forces is provided but the EU refuses to play any active role.

In the second case the EU needs to rely on local actors of change who could lead to internal transformations. The challenge is that the political opposition and civil society have quite diverse approaches as to how to change the situation. To simplify there are three strategies: “color revolution”, “round table” (dialogue between opposition and the state facilitated by the EU) and “nomenclatura dialogue” (cooperation with EU-oriented members within the government).¹² The EU should plunge into the Belarusian situation and adopt a position with one of the Belarusian actors, and in fact play in favour of one of them. Unfortunately the probability that Belarusian democrats could define a common strategy is too small.

The European Dialogue on Modernisation, launched in 2012, is evolving from being the instrument of multi-stakeholder dialogue into an attempt to organize nomenclatura dialogue, betting on the involvement of “open-minded” Belarusian officials. The recommendations of the European

¹² Yahorau A., Shutau A. Mapping civil society of Belarus. *Briefing paper*. Center for European Transformation. 01.06.2012. http://cet.eurombelarus.info/en/news/2012/06/01/mapping_civil_society_of_belarus.html (Eiropastransformācijascentramājaslapa; accessed on 10.09.2013.).

Parliament on EU policy towards Belarus, adopted on September 12, 2013 (called the Paleckis report) are oriented towards the combination of the instruments of nomenclatura and public multi-stakeholder dialogue. The approach recommended by the Parliament includes, amongst others, increasing the role of civil society in EU policy.

From our point of view, the strategy of the European Parliament is promising, but since the recommendations of the EP are not binding, it is difficult to count on other EU institutions significantly changing their approach. Disregarding the recommendations is the worst case scenario. The best scenario which can be expected is a development of the dialogue between the EU institutions on the strategy towards Belarus alongside the participation of Belarusian civil society, represented by its main actors (notably, the National Platform of the EaP Civil Society Forum). The countries heading the Council could promote such a dialogue, but it is difficult to say to what extent it matches their current priorities.



LATVIJAS
POLITOLOGU BIEDRĪBA

LATVIJAS INTERESES EIROPAS SAVIENĪBĀ

