

# EUROPEAN DIPLOMACY WORKSHOP

## EU FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS

*27 March – 1 April 2017*

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### EU POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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#### **I. MIGRATION AND REFUGEE CRISES**

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Migration is an international phenomenon and contentious concept. Although people have been moving because of environmental, political, economic, and cultural motivations since the beginning of the human history; particularly recently, migration fuels traditional fears over national and societal security in the EU member states. The massive politicization fueled the arguments that immigrants have the potential to threaten the national security (through increasing crime and disorder), societal security (through challenging the white-Christian values), and economic security (through taking jobs and social funds from the native-born). As it can be observed, migration has not been considered as a solution of an aging population and stagnating economy, but far more portrayed as a destabilizing challenge to the cultural heritage, social system and welfare.

Despite the crucial distinction between migrant and refugee, while migrants are subjects to the receiving country's immigration laws and the refugees are processed under the 1951 Refugee Convention and entitled to basic rights under international law, the “extra-ordinary people movement towards Europe in 2015” was imprecisely called as “European Migrant Crisis” or “European Refugee Crisis”. Here the word “crisis” became a common ground as it indicates a difficult or dangerous situation that needs serious attention. As a response to Migrant Crisis, EU presented a document named “A European Agenda on Migration” in which a four-pillar approach; addressing the root causes of irregular and forced displacement in third countries, border management, a strong common asylum policy and a new policy on legal migration was adopted. Here, we want to introduce ten new policy recommendations to the EU, to deal with this migration question.

**1. Increase the number of Rapid Reaction Emergency Pool Guards in the Frontex European Border and Coast Guard Agency.** Until June 2016, only 412 out of 1,412 national border guards in the framework of the emergency pool have actually been deployed by Member States. This number is insufficient in order to ensure that the European Border and Coast Guard is able to execute its mandate effectively. Even the proposed number of 1500 Guards in the emergency response pool does not address the current realistic needs of Member States to protect external borders. Currently, contributions made to the reserve pool are dependent on voluntary contributions. Member States, however, are not showing sufficient willingness; the actual allocated number is way below the required number and is unevenly spread across Europe. Compulsory contributions would overcome this issue and ensure adequate protection of the external borders of the EU and the reduction of number of lives lost at sea. The binding obligation for Member States to contribute to the emergency pool through implementing a ratio based on population – for every 200,000 inhabitants of a Member State should assign *at least* 1 Border guard to the emergency pool within 6 months' time.

**2. Allow Frontex European Border and Coast Guard Agency to launch join search and rescue operations independently.** The protection of the EU's external borders and the rescuing of individuals trying to enter the Schengen area cannot be the sole responsibility of bordering Member States, but rather needs to be shared among all members of the Union. Currently, the European Border and Coast Guard does not possess the power to launch operations on its own and is, hence, not adequately equipped to conduct missions effectively and provide help in the case of an emergency. Currently if border Member States are unwilling to respond to an urgent and unforeseen situation the Commission must propose, after consulting the Agency, to the Council that they authorize a mission. This is a lengthy procedure that does not allow immediate response. Thus, in order to guarantee the protection of individuals on the move it is indispensable to strengthen the European Border and Coast Guard and enable it to execute search and rescue missions without seeking the Council's approval every time. We need to clearly define the mandate of Frontex and EBCG to enable them to promptly respond to any situation and thereby reduce the cost of human lives and bring stability to the external border of the Union, even in case if the border Member State is unwilling or capable to execute such duty. In case the operation is launched without the

MS's specific request, the MS need to have the ability to hold the Agency accountable. In order to ensure such accountability, increased check mechanisms need to be put in place. We propose 1) bi-annual reports to Council and Parliament; 2) ex-post review to the Council, within 1 month, in case the operation is carried out without the permission of the MS.

**3. Build an Ad Hoc Committee, designed to deal with the resettlement of refugees that are already in the European Union and in the countries of entry (i.e. the Mediterranean, Balkans, and Turkey).** This Committee would work in a joint cooperation with the European Asylum Support Office, the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) (a pan-European alliance of 90 NGOs protecting and advancing the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons), and the Refugee Councils of Member States (i.e. Danish and Norwegian Refugee Council). Their aim is to promote fair and humane European refugee resettlement programs, asylum policies and practices, in accordance with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Recently, the EU Migration Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos has stated that Member States have until Fall of 2017 to take in 160,000 mostly "Syrian Refugees" who are currently stranded/stuck in an overburdened system in countries like Greece, Turkey, Hungary, and Italy. This number should be used as a benchmark for the quota of resettlement on an annual basis by the EU Member States.

**4. The European Asylum Support Office and the Directorate-General on Migration and Home Affairs should implement a special "task-force" within its existing structures, that will specifically deal with the vetting of refugees and migrants coming into the European Union and countries of first-entry.** The vetting process would include in-depth refugee interviews, home country reference checks and biometric screening. Those who pass background checks, would be referred for resettlement based on criteria designed to determine the most vulnerable cases. This group may include survivors of torture, victims of abuse, sexual violence, and human trafficking, targets of political persecution, the medically needy, families with multiple children, unaccompanied minors, the elderly/senior citizens, and a female head of household. Tangible long-term efforts in the areas of Migration and Refugee Policy need to be made by all Member States (i.e. including those with opt-outs) in order to alleviate the pressures on the main countries of arrival. With regards to the vetting process, this

will mean that National and Local Leaders of Member States have to take responsibility and refrain from nationalistic and anti-migration rhetoric and action. The EU Migration and Asylum Policy should be built on a common agenda and not on unilateral action contrary to European values.

**5. The creation of EU outposts providing legal entry channels to the EU and a creation of common rules for granting asylum and more importantly for not granting one.** In the long term, asylum applications would be completed from Turkey or other possible locations. As proposed by the Commission, there is a pressing need to harmonize the current disparate Asylum Procedures across Member States (see the reform presented by the Commission in July 2016). The creation of common rules for granting asylum would ensure that individual states cannot refuse asylum on questionable grounds. There should be a full unification of asylum rules and procedures among Member States. Treating asylum claims from outside of the EU would limit illegal migration incentives, secondary migratory movements, and human trafficking. Incentives like visa free entry for nationals of the ‘host’ countries could be proposed in exchange for deeper cooperation in the creation of the outposts and vetting of refugees. The opportunity for refugees to apply for asylum outside the EU and before they take the dangerous journey through, which they fuel the smuggling market, would shorten the time they spend in Turkey and also help with the redistribution of refugees across Europe.

**6. Introducing measures that ensure that refugees stay in the country they were allocated to.** Refugees are “REEMIGRATING” (double migration) from countries of the like Latvia, Lithuania, etc. mostly to countries like Germany, Sweden, etc. This double migration is caused by the search for better economic opportunities or a more developed welfare state. This causes uneven distribution of migrants in the EU. Measures aiming to stop refugees from migrating within the EU to countries where they have better social support or economic opportunities - which results in overburdening some Member States with disproportionate number of migrants - or migration within the country - which could lead to the creation of ghettos - should be implemented. Such measures could be a common EU law that unifies the potential benefits each migrant can get from the Member State (calculated basing on each country's PPP when it comes to financial support). Common EU law that the refugees have to stay in the assigned country for a specific period of time and are not allowed to reemigrate due to economic factors.

Mandatory language classes for migrants - mandatory for a specific period of time (this both ensures that the person will most probably be less prone to reemigrate, as well as, helps with social inclusion, assimilation, and finding a job).

**7. Set up a system determining the number of refugee applications available in every member state.** Concerning the refugee quota, the calculation would be done according to a mandatory distribution key using objective and quantifiable criteria (40% of the size of the population, 40% of the GDP, 10% of the average number of past asylum applications, 10% of the unemployment rate). It applies to nationalities of applicants with an EU-wide average recognition rate of 75% or higher. The proposed distribution key is based on: a) the size of the population (40% weighting); b) the total GDP (40% weighting); c) a corrective factor based on the average number of asylum applications per 1 million inhabitants over the previous five years (10% weighting with a 30% cap of the population and GDP effect on the key to avoid disproportionate impact); d) a corrective factor based on the unemployment rate (10% weighting with a 30% cap of the population and GDP effect on the key to avoid disproportionate effect). The key is based on objective, quantifiable and verifiable criteria and data, with appropriate weighting factors. The factors are straightforward and the information on which they are based is provided by the Member States and Associated States themselves to Eurostat.

**8. The EC's Department for International Cooperation and Development (EuropeAid), the Department for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Committee on Development (DEVE) in the EP--should use current funds and goals in a constructive way for the long-term impact in the regions where migrants and refugees are coming from.** The European Union should mandate on an annual basis, a predetermined amount of Humanitarian/Development Aid that each of the Member States will have to contribute to, with the aim of assisting neighboring countries near conflict zones (i.e. assimilating refugees in their communities and help those in Camps establish a means of employment/basic living standards). Regarding this issue, the European Union should use as a benchmark the UN Global and Millennium Development Goals. The EU is ranked among the most transparent Aid Donors in the 21st Century. The EU gives funding to NGO's which ensures that those who know the countries best and are the practical experts in each field, put the EU money to good use.

**9. In partnership with the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) and its Pan-European Alliance of 90 NGOs, as well as, National Governments of the Member States; the EU needs to provide a system that assesses the "Best Interests" of unaccompanied refugee or migrant children/minors and that aims at setting specific "rules" to protecting their fundamental human rights.** A "Best Interest Assessment" needs to be put in place, in order to identify children/minors in need of immediate protection and to find solutions for those children who are in need of one. For example, evaluate the needs of vulnerable refugee children and ensure immediate protection needs are addressed through referrals to local, governmental, and NGO service providers. All measures of protection, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, police, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the "Best Interests" of the refugee/migrant child should bear the utmost importance. With relation to refugee and migrant children/minors, all actions taken by the EU and its Member States must be guided by human rights standards in particular, the principles of protection and respect for children's rights as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Refugees and asylum seekers are first and foremost, human beings and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

**10. Proactive policies to stop Emerging Conflicts.** The conflicts may escalate in short time and turn into violent ones which further pave the way to the displacement of people in large numbers. Therefore, in order to prevent violent conflicts and wars, EU should pay considerable attention to the improvement of early warning systems and should be ready for the worst-case scenarios. These bad, worse and worst case scenarios would raise the awareness and preparedness to these unexpected developments. Conflict Prevention and peace building need to be object of a wide range of policies and initiatives with the aim to avoid the violent escalation of a dispute, resulting with massive migration flows. In other words, the aim should be indicating and eradicating the causes of mass migration following civil wars and violent conflicts, by control all efforts of conflict prevention and peace building.

## **II. EASTERN PARTNERSHIP**

*Ermal Ndini, Saša Čvrljak, Rick Otten*

Since its inception in 2009, the Eastern Partnership (EaP) has produced ambitions, fears, instability and hope among the EU and its eastern neighbours: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. In the spirit of the Treaty of Lisbon, the EU has special relationships with neighboring countries. These relationships with the Eastern Partnership countries (EaP) are based on democratic values and are characterized by cooperation in the fields of economics, good governance and civil society. The current state of the Union has its challenges due to external and internal crises linked to migration, terrorism and Brexit. Geopolitically, China is entering the scene to influence the economic and political course of the countries in the region by expanding the One Road, One Belt initiative.

However, positive developments related to the EaP are becoming manifest: Georgia and Moldova have an Association Agreement with the EU, the one with Ukraine will most likely take full effect in 2017 after ratification by the Netherlands. However, Armenia and Belarus have chosen to opt for the Eurasian Economic Union with Russia and will therefore, under current circumstances, not be able to reach an Association Agreement with the EU. Finally, Azerbaijan has chosen to develop and execute multi-vectoral foreign policy and is not likely to become closely aligned to the EU.

In light of the upcoming Eastern Partnership Summit in Brussels in November 2017, this paper has formulated specific recommendations that an adjusted Eastern Partnership policy should take into consideration. These recommendations have been elaborated with particular regard to the different realities, ambitions and orientations of the countries at hand, but do nonetheless focus on country-specific elements.

### **1. Supporting SMEs in the EaP countries**

Entrepreneurship has been an immense source of economic growth, social innovation and empowerment in the EaP countries. The EU has to promote entrepreneurship as an engine of sustainable, diversified and vibrant economies in the EaP countries by assisting in improving the domestic business environment and regulatory frameworks, facilitating access to finance and innovation for SMEs, stimulating public-private dialogue and acquisition of relevant entrepreneurship skills as well as helping internationalizing SMEs. The EU should encourage the development of the local

business, support organizations and support growth of the SMEs eco-system by establishing forums for policy dialogue, exchange of information and experiences between the EU Member States, EU institutions, International Financial Institutions (IFI) and the EaP countries. Particular focus should be put on young entrepreneurs and start-ups by providing training courses, business expert exchange programs, mentoring programs, and possibilities for joint ventures. Additionally, due to the DCFTA requirements, there is a need to foster sharing of best practices between the EaP countries regarding the alignment with the EU legislation, rules and standards as for instance in the area of food security.

## **2. Supporting better transport links between the EU and the EaP countries**

Development of the transportation infrastructure plays an indispensable role in harnessing economic potential of the EaP countries and in facilitating cultural and social connectivity, both within the EaP and *vis-à-vis* the EU. The EU should follow the Riga Declaration's ambition in developing cross-sectoral cooperation in all transport areas (road, railway, and maritime transport), taking into account environmental, and socio-economic concerns. The EU should particularly focus on extending the Transeuropean Networks (TEN-T) core networks in the EaP region, continuing the Common Aviation Area Agreements and support EaP countries in their governance of transport and logistics systems. Large-scale infrastructure projects need significant financial investments, so the EU should develop appropriate financial mechanisms by using for example EU money as a leverage to mobilize private investments like as in the case of European Fund for Strategic Investment (Juncker's Plan) in order to alleviate existing gaps and accelerate transport connectivity.

## **3. Enhancing the security of energy supply in EaP countries**

The EU should not allow to be drawn into geopolitical competition with Russia but should instead support ambitions for mutual gas and electricity interconnectivity among the EaP countries themselves and in their relation to the EU. Greater regional energy cooperation reduces potential energy shocks, integrates national economies more successfully into the global chains of production, yielding benefits for the consumers and

businesses. The EU needs to continue supporting implementation of the Energy Community that should lead to the greater efficiency and transparency of energy markets of EaP countries due to regulatory convergence with the EU. The EU welcomes plans for gas interconnection between Moldova and Romania, and endorses possible establishment of electricity interconnection between Georgia and Armenia as well as supports further implementation of key priority projects in EaP countries.

#### **4. Boosting energy efficiency and related economic innovation**

The EU as a global transformative power could support energy transition of EaP countries by advocating for a greater energy efficiency and use of renewable energy. The EU can offer valuable technical expertise (e.g. twinning projects) and know-how to EaP countries in building institutions, administrative capacities (e.g. environmental data management and reporting) in reducing the amount of greenhouse gas emissions, and building sustainable and evidence-based policy making. The EU should continue providing financial instruments in this area as well. The EaP countries should, along with the assistance of the EU and IFIs, use this energy transition as a window of opportunity to create smart, sustainable and inclusive growth through spurring economic innovation and creating employment opportunities in the areas such as public transportation, new technologies and urban development.

#### **5. Environmental governance and climate action**

The EU should underpin efforts of EaP countries in regulatory approximation to the EU in the areas of sustainable development, environmental governance and climate action. The EU's aim is to support EaP countries in mainstreaming of environmental policies and in decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation in line with the principles of green economy. That means endorsing implementation of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) by devising and implementing public policies, instilling principles of eco-innovation and resource efficiency (eg. waste reduction and recycling) and effectively promoting circular economy. These measures should increase socio-economic resilience and contribute to higher agricultural and industrial productivity. Finally, the EU should vigorously support building of administrative capacities and capabilities of EaP countries in enhancing water

management (EU Water Framework Directive - trans trans-boundary river basins management) and combating air pollution, that should mitigate the impacts of climate change and enhance overall societal resilience.

## **6. Empowering research communities and higher education institutions**

Research community plays crucial role in the knowledge triangle of research, education and innovation where it develops new knowledge and leads to the commercialization of research discoveries, anchoring the development of knowledge-based economy. The EU needs to assist EaP countries in their inclusion into Horizon 2020 and other EU funding programs but also underpin research institutions in upgrading of their competitiveness and functioning in line with the European Research Area (ERA) standards. The EU needs to support development of research infrastructure (eg. broadband internet networks, better access to scientific bases, and introduction of research managers), support greater employment and career prospects of researchers, endorse “brain gain” policy and greater role of scientific diaspora in building up of domestic research capabilities. Additionally, the EU needs to uphold engagement of research and higher education institutions in the innovation cycle through links with the SMEs and industries and by creating clusters.

## **7. Revising EU's strategic communication about the EaP towards the EU and EaP countries**

The referendum on the Ukrainian EU Association Agreement in the Netherlands in April 2016 has shown concerning misunderstanding of the EU's internal and external policies functioning, including the EaP. The referendum has used fear as a political commodity and also outplayed existing ways of communicating benefits of the EU. Therefore it is of crucial importance to reassess strategic communication about the EaP *vis-a-vis* EU citizens as well as towards EaP countries. The rekindled EU's blueprint of communicating EaP towards the EU's citizens should take the form of continuous and coherent strategy, honestly addressing citizens' fears, while showing tangible advantages and benefits of the EaP policy for the EU itself. EU's communication in the EaP countries

should take the form of “*decentralized communication*” by including and empowering variety of stakeholders (business organizations, academia, NGOs). EU should invest through its entities (EC, EU Delegations) in building capacities of key stakeholders (faculties, media houses, expert journalism organizations) in their better informing and reporting about the EU. EU should include the Russian language on the websites of all EU Delegations in EaP countries.

## **8. Empowering societies more than governments**

The EU should strengthen the two-level approach - empowering civil society by not neglecting the role of governments. Instead, the business community, religious leaders, NGO's, social partners should be actively involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of programs under the EaP policy. Efforts towards this inclusive approach have been made since the establishment of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (CSF) in 2009, but the involvement of non-state actors in the policy-making process remains still weak. The institutionalization of the Partnership by means of consultation, supervision and monitoring reflects the importance of need to establish a platform of policy input and exchange of best practices. In this regard, the active role of the civil society as a corrective to state politics should be encouraged by the EU. In addition, EU needs long-term investments, irrespective of fast moving daily politics. From a financial perspective, the EU should consider direct funding mechanisms for non-governmental organizations in countries such as Azerbaijan and Belarus. However, smaller NGO's from EaP countries that have a real impact on society should be provided with a fairer funding structure.

## **9. Strengthening the security dimension of the Eastern Partnership**

Create necessary fora to enter into a pragmatic dialogue with Russia when it comes to mutual geopolitical and security interests by taking into account the individual aspirations and ambitions of EaP countries. As a result, a more secure environment will attract more foreign investments. This can be achieved through the establishment of investor's conferences. However, it is of utmost importance that the EU closely cooperates with the US to maintain an environment of trust among EaP countries and strengthen its own strategic and operational abilities of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. The

EU should not take the full implementation of the Minsk Agreement as prerequisite of engaging in a dialogue with Russia. However, the EU should strive for alternative, more realistic agreements by not compromising on basic principles of international law. Despite the widely praised engagement of Germany during the Ukrainian crisis, a coordinated response among member states would strengthen the EU's negotiating position overall.

## **10. Strengthening governance and the rule of law**

In the area of judiciary, the EU has to promote better governance through anti-corruption initiatives, administrative reforms and facilitated access to public services by taking into account opposition from political elites. To meet this challenge, the EU should provide incentives for EaP countries to implement best practices learned from the most advanced EaP countries in the area of judicial reform. The creation of a periodic system for an inclusive follow-up regarding the implementation of policy recommendations to the national governments presented by the EU will help to encourage deeper reforms. Establishing expert groups for the assessment of the enforcement of national legislation in accordance to European standards.

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### **III. WESTERN BALKANS**

*Bohdan Kostiuk, Alena Permyakova, Monika Vavrikova*

The global crisis, unknown policy of the selected U.S. president Donald Trump, refugee crisis and the Western Balkan route, potential threat of Russia attempting to destabilize the region and some autocratically minded leaders in the region – these are some of the problems and challenges that the EU and six Western Balkan countries are currently facing. The WB6 are all in different stages of their integration with the European Union. Montenegro is being a frontrunner in terms of its EU accession talks.

The EU was involved in the region and its policies aimed to promote peace, stability and economic development in the Western Balkans. However, over the past years, the state of democracy and freedom in these countries has been backsliding or stagnating. Endless reports and recommendations on reforms from the EU did not deliver the promised progress towards democracy and higher living standards.

The EU should continue supporting the Western Balkan countries on their paths to EU accession.

### **1. Public Administration Reforms**

An efficient state administration is a precondition for becoming an EU member state. The civil service needs to be reformed both at central and local levels through modernization of its institutions, improvement of civil servants' performance and the alignment of processes in order to meet the needs and demands of citizens and businesses community. Professional training of civil servants should be continued. Political democratization and decentralization should continue taking place in order to encourage changes in the political and administrative system. The changes towards democratic, participative culture should be rather gradual. The main objective of the reform is to make efficient, professional and service-oriented public administration to serve the citizens of the Western Balkan countries.

### **2. Foster democratization process and human rights protection**

In all six countries the democratic institutions, in particular the parliament, have never been strong enough to develop their independence and strength opposing to the ruling elites. The EU officials should enforce the development of the independent state institutions, open Chapters 23 and 24 for all WB6 as soon as possible, as well as ensure participation of civil society on the political scene. This step is crucial to weaken the power of the national governments to decide on both reforms and EU integration through a set of clientelistic networks. It would increase the influence of civil society on policy-making process.

### **3. To vary Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)**

The IPA should be varied in order to promote European integration and meeting of the accession criteria. The European Parliament, European Commission together with the beneficiaries should propose a list of priority projects and institutions to be funded. IPA mechanisms should be aimed at:

- Providing an expertise, technical support and maintaining independence of credible regulation agencies, civil society organizations (i.e. Regional School of Public Administration in Montenegro) and anti-corruption bodies.
- Investing in education, research, skills and innovation. Firstly, stimulating the return of young scientists and students after studying abroad (i.e. successful Croatian government NEWFELPRO fellowship program aimed at preventing brain drain). Secondly, strengthening the ties with the Western Balkans countries diaspora.
- Focusing on economic projects. That implies investments in regional infrastructure initiatives (railways, highways and renewable energy), as noted in the 2015 Western Balkans Connectivity Agenda.
- Enhancing the training of public officials at the regional and local level.

#### **4. More transparent negotiation process**

In a society where most people are informed about the process, there will be less ignorance and xenophobia. The youth will feel motivated and will believe in democratization and Europeanization. Several documents should be adopted in order to make the negotiation process more transparent at the level of political elite and the society as a whole: a Joint Statement on the Beginning of Negotiations, Declaration on the Fundamental Principles of Negotiations on country's Full Membership, Statement on Joint Actions in the Process of Negotiation on Membership of the European Union, Decision on Establishing the National Committee, etc. The negotiations should entail a high degree of trust from citizens in state institutions. Citizens should feel fully informed about the EU and the negotiation process.

#### **5. Make the annual progress reports more clear**

Current progress reports delivered by the Western Balkan countries are hardly read or understood. Due to these vague descriptions of the reports on both sides, the ruling elites are free to manipulate perceptions of achieved results in communication with other stakeholders and the general public. The negotiations on the EU accession process should be open not only to the EU and authorities of the region, but also to the other actors. The main goal is to deliver a comprehensive and transparent objective analysis of the annual progress reports of the Western Balkan countries in order to remove misunderstandings

in the negotiations between the EU and the Balkans.

## **6. Use “Croatia example” more effectively**

Croatia’s accession demonstrates the vitality of the EU’s enlargement policy and confirms to other Western Balkan countries that the consistent implementation of reforms is the correct path to joining the EU. This example should be brought to the highest ministerial, local and social level. The process can be facilitated by the creation of a joint Croatia-non EU Member States platform for exchanging experiences, common expertise and expert groups.

## **7. Remove bilateral disputes from the accession agenda**

The EU should aim to keep the bilateral disputes out the accession negotiations between the EU member states and the candidate countries. It can use its position to facilitate dialogue and resolving conflicts with diplomatic measures.

## **8. Promote regional cooperation in the Western Balkans involving the EU**

The EU should be directly involved in dialogue addressing the disputes between the WB6 and in finding the common dialogue on the current border issues. The main purpose of support for the regional cooperation is to resolve outstanding bilateral disputes and ensure the stability of the region.

## **9. Empower civil society in the WB6**

Active civil society can contribute to accelerate pre-accession process. Active CSOs can make sufficient contributions through their lobbying, advocacy and oversight activities in every sector. It is necessary to increase society’s understanding of the policies and reforms that are taking place. That includes: training, information campaigns (especially social media), financial support, cooperation and joint projects. The CSOs should support the democratic political culture and allow citizens to participate in democratic decision-making processes in an informed way.

## **10. Convince the EU citizens to support further enlargement**

Lobbying and communication with EU citizens at the EU and Member States level in order to make the Western Balkans integration process part of the EU Agenda. This process should start with an honest analysis of the reasons for enlargement fatigue among European citizens:

- Strong demand for import in the new MS after enlargement 2004 has even helped to safeguard jobs in the older EU countries.
- The latest demographic trends in the advanced EU economies inevitably lead to an increased demand for the import of labor in the near future.

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## **IV. EU – RUSSIA RELATIONS**

*Samuel Amofa Asante, Karine Khojayan, Jan Faltys*

Both Russia and the EU play a significant role in the international affairs arena. While EU-Russia relations had been tense for a long time, in 2013 they took a rapid turn for the worse, after Ukraine decided to sign an association agreement with the EU. This happened on the 21<sup>st</sup> March of 2014. Subsequently, Moscow responded with a series of attacks, hybrid warfare strategies and an invasion of “little green men” on its former ally in spring 2014. The EU and other Western countries have imposed sanctions against Russia and Moscow has retaliated with counter-sanctions. Russia has also engaged in waging an aggressive and increasingly effective information war against the EU and its unity.

The latest holdup came in October 2016 after the Western countries condemned Russia for taking part in the brutal bombing of Syria’s Aleppo. In March 2016, EU foreign ministers agreed with the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, on five guiding principles for EU-Russia relations: full implementation of the Minsk agreements; closer ties with Russia's former Soviet neighbors; strengthening EU resilience to Russian threats; selective engagement with Russia on certain issues such as counter-terrorism; and support for people-to-people contacts. We have decided to look deeper into some of these broad guiding principles and come up with 10 policy recommendations for the area of mutual cooperation, security,

economy, and education for European leaders for the upcoming years to demonstrate resilience and promote European values. They are as follows:

**1. The European Union should Focus on Global Trade and a gradual shift from a Russian Dependent market.**

The EU should strengthen its trade relations with its allies in the west like Canada and United States, whose markets combined together will make a much more bigger and profitable market than that of Russia alone. Aside the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the Union should also consider the initiation of fair trade deals with developing countries in the African and Asian market - this is because, in the span of twenty five-years, Africa and Asia will have one of the largest market demographics due to the hike in population growth in these areas. The increment of the African and Asian population signifies that there will be more mouth to feed and many hands to work. Thereby creating a good avenue for deeper EU trade relations and expansion of industrialization across the African continent.

**2. The European Union should diversify the sources of Energy to enable sustainability of supply and usage.**

In relations to the efforts of finding alternative supply of energy and fuel, the EU is currently doing a good work in the creation of multiple renewable energy sources for operations of factories and daily human usage. And it will be prudent for member states of the Union to rally behind the implementation of “Europe 2020” goals on climate/energy target. This method goes a long way to protect the environment from further deterioration. But in dire circumstances that there arises the need for the use of fossil fuel, the EU should consider deeper investment into the busting Oil and Gas industry in Africa. As of 2015, the proven oil reserve in barrels in Ghana’s oil and Gas industry is 660 million barrels, is young and promises of great profit for investors.

**3. The European Union should consider a balance in its relation with Russia through Cultural Diplomacy.**

Despite the imposition of sanctions by the EU on Russia in regards to its annexation of Ukraine's Crimea, there should be room for Cultural Diplomacy between EU and Russian citizens. Through this process, the citizens in Russia will get the opportunity to explore and understand the European ideology and this will also help counter false claims by their governments against the EU. The Union should also consider using the cultural exchange program as a means of engaging participants on the relevance of Democracy in our current dispensation and beyond.

**4. The European Union should not abandon the region, covering Eastern Partnership countries and Ukraine and continue to support democratic processes in the mentioned states.**

EU should support democratic reforms in the countries of the region and more focus on the needs of population rather than political elites, by presenting them alternatives solutions of traditional issues, e.g. electoral reforms, enhancing good governance, democratic values, etc. The European Union should also enhance its presence in those countries of the region, which are still regarded as a “zone of Russian influence”. The experience of recent decades has come to prove that the societies of these countries are open for reforms, as they stand very close to European values.

**5. Russia and the European Union should develop further cooperation in the field of science and innovation.**

According to European Commission decision on “Enhancing and Focusing EU International Cooperation in Research and Innovation” (Brussels: European Commission, 2012), EU regards international cooperation in research and innovation as an instrument of soft power and a mechanism for improving relations with key countries and regions. In this regard both the European Union and Russia have solid bases for enhancing further cooperation in the field of science and research. The EU should use this tool in relations with Russian Federation, as undoubtedly it can promote lessening of existing political and societal tensions.

**6. The EU member states ought to invest in enhancing their defence capabilities**

Years of relative peace have lulled the EU, unlike other countries, into a false sense of security. This improper perception has led to a poor state of armed forces in most of the EU countries. It is their imperative to redress this current state of things and improve their defence spending. The majority of EU countries are also NATO countries, so they will fulfill their 2% pledge and improve the defence of Europe at the same time. Also, higher investments into the European Defence Agency would declare its importance and improve European defence capabilities.

**7. The EU and Russia should jointly develop mechanisms for effective cooperation in the field of fight against terrorism, particularly ISIS.**

As mentioned by German Chancellor Angela Merkel during the annual Munich Security Conference: “The joint fight against Islamic terrorism is one area where we have the same interests and we can work together with Russia”. Some 1,5 years before, in September 2015 from the high tribune of United Nations General Assembly president Putin called international community for collaboration and coalition to fight ISIS. Fight against ISIS has become global problem and both the EU Member States and Russia separately undertake certain steps in this direction. Activity of ISIS is banned in Russia and Russian troops are operating in Syria with the motto of fight against Islamic terrorism. After the set of attacks in Paris, France also joined this initiative in Syria. The problem has a global extent and for finding effective solution to it, all sides have to demonstrate consolidation of synergies in this field, which will serve for the benefit of the whole international community.

**8. The member states should establish “Centres Against Terrorism and Hybrid Threats”**

The Czech Republic established such a center in the beginning of 2017 with the aim of identifying threats from political radicalization and terrorism to foreign disinformation campaigns targeting the public. The initiative follows warnings from the country’s counter-intelligence service that Russia is actively targeting Czech public opinion over NATO, the European Union and other issues through cyber-warfare, propaganda, puppet

groups and support for populist and extremist groups.

### **9. The EU should set up a budget for the EEAS East Stratcom Task Force**

The Task Force was set up in 2015 to address Russia's ongoing disinformation campaigns and it has three main objectives:

- Effective communication and promotion of the EU policies towards the Eastern Neighbourhood
- Strengthening the overall media environment in the Eastern Neighbourhood and in the EU Member States, including support for media freedom and strengthening independent media
- Improved the EU capacity to forecast, address and respond to disinformation activities by external actors

As of now, it is an underfunded and under-staffed task force. Yet, it was able to unveil over 2500 fake stories and is followed by almost 25 000 people. Indeed, there is a substantive potential to counter Russian disinformation campaign.

### **10. The EU should follow Finnish example and invest in education**

This measure is a rather long-term solution but a high-quality education has proved to be the most important factor in countering Russian disinformation campaign. As we can see on the example of Finland which continuously ranks among countries with the best education in the world, critical thinking and the ability to think contextually provide the best deterrence against Russian attempts to sow disunity in European ranks.

In conclusion, Russia is unrelenting in flexing its muscles as a strong nation and it is poised in using every means possible to achieve its aim of gaining higher economic and political power to counter the efforts of the EU and its Western partners. It is in this light that it will be of great interest for EU to raise the standard and strengthen its strategy in relating to Russia. Although Russia is a threat to the Union and the stability across Europe, it can also be an unconventional ally in certain areas of interest to the European Union.



## EUROPEAN DIPLOMACY WORKSHOP

### EU FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS

*27 March – 1 April 2017*

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The European Diplomacy Workshop is organized in cooperation with **PZU SA** and **Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in Poland**.



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