Redefining European Security
in a Post COVID-19 World

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Mihaela Daciana Natea

Redefining European Security in a Post COVID-19 World

Education and Research for Resilience and Combating Disinformation

Preface by Hedi Saidi

L'H*armattan*

Préface

« L'historien est comme un mineur de fond. Il va chercher les données au fond du sol et les ramène à la surface pour qu'un autre spécialiste, économiste, climatologiste, sociologue, les exploite ».

E.Leroy-Ladurie

C'est un grand privilège pour moi, et en même temps une grande responsabilité de préfacer cet excellent et prenant ouvrage consacré à l'Europe, brillement écrit par une Historienne de conviction, Mihaela Daciana Natea.

Avec ce bel ouvrage, l'auteure nourrit de grandes visions avec bon sens et pragmatisme. Elle y développe des idées très intelligentes, innovatrices et précises sur les grands sujets de notre temps.

Mihaela a la certitude que l'Europe c'est l'avenir, sa sécurité est une évidence, un besoin, voire une nécessité absolue.

Ce livre écrit avec passion et raison, a pour objectif d'aider à former des citoyen-ne-s à comprendre des questions de sécurité européenne et internationale, aptes à utiliser les savoirs fondamentaux et opérationnels de ce nouveau domaine d'action de l'Union Européenne et capables de développer une expertise tant de praticiens que d'analystes.

Les compétences techniques visées dans cet ouvrage sont principalement un savoir précis et actualisé sur le fonctionnement de l'UE, son interaction avec les autres acteurs internationaux, sa politique extérieure de sécurité commune ainsi que la coopération européenne en matière de sécurité interne, en particulier face aux menaces terroristes. Mihaela démontre avec limpidité qu'elle possède une très solide connaissance des métiers et de l'environnement institutionnel de l'UE, y compris le cadre international dans lequel est exercée la politique étrangère et de sécurité commune.

Experte, elle maîtrise les enjeux de sécurité interne et l'action extérieure de l'UE au premier rang desquels ses politiques étrangères et de sécurité. Elle a un savoir-faire faire et un savoir-être grandement professionnel.

Les changements structurels en cours dans le système des relations internationales, enracinés dans les jeux de pouvoir entre les principaux acteurs, ont été fortement ressentis lors de la crise du Covid-19 et de la dynamique complexe qu'elle a généré. Ces changements structurels ont pu être identifiés aussi quand les États ont commencé à définir leur sécurité selon une approche plus réaliste et néoréaliste, car chaque pays devait faire face aux défis posés par la pandémie. L'Union Européenne a identifié plusieurs orientations nécessitant des solutions supplémentaires, parce que des dépendances asymétriques ont été identifiées et qu'elles n'affectaient pas seulement un ou plusieurs États membres de l'UE, mais qu'elles menaçaient la sécurité européenne. La philosophie des fonds de l'UE a été adaptée car les États avaient besoin de solutions concrètes pour renforcer leur résilience en ouvrant la voie à une reprise rapide.

En chevauchant la crise sanitaire, l'invasion en Ukraine a engendré d'autres niveaux de menaces et de risques pour la sécurité européenne, mettant les États face à des décisions sans précédent. Les menaces hybrides ont été amplifiées par les menaces militaires. La désinformation est devenue une guerre de l'information et les infrastructures critiques se sont avérées vulnérables face au large éventail d'outils de guerre.

Dans ce contexte, l'Union Européenne a dû réagir et repenser sa politique de sécurité à l'Est. Le processus d'élargissement a pris un tournant différent en offrant aux États de l'Est, membres du Partenariat Oriental, la possibilité de développer leur récit européen. Ainsi, l'Ukraine et la République de Moldavie sont devenues des États candidats.

La pandémie et l'invasion de la Russie en Ukraine sont des éléments perturbateurs dans l'approche de la sécurité européenne d'une perspective multidimensionnelle. Alors que des mesures sont mises en place, il existe encore des aspects considérables qui doivent être couverts. Dans ce contexte, nous devons souligner que le concept de résilience est de plus en plus utilisé dans les questions de sécurité. L'utilisation du concept, parfois excessive, vise à définir la réaction de toute une société aux menaces et à sa capacité de se rétablir par la suite. Tout en reconnaissant les avancées réalisées, il faut se demander si les bons outils sont utilisés et ce qui pourrait être fait de plus.

Le présent livre explore 4 directions. La première porte sur la manière dont la résilience est utilisée et comment elle a pris de l'ampleur dans les politiques de sécurité européennes. Cet aspect est suivi en lien avec l'utilisation du concept de résilience en rapport avec la désinformation, l'éducation ou la recherche. Le deuxième suit la construction des campagnes de désinformation de la Russie. Ce chapitre soutient que la présente campagne trouve ses racines dans la rhétorique communiste, les concepts et les méthodes de diffusion, la seule différence étant le public visé, car les plateformes en ligne offraient de nouveaux moyens de diffusion. À la fin du chapitre, une étude de cas est présentée, montrant comment la propagande de la Russie peut trouver son chemin dans les pays de l'Union Européenne de l'Est et Centrale, exposant ainsi les risques sécuritaires qui y sont associés. Le troisième chapitre soutient qu'il est nécessaire de repenser l'éducation et de réfléchir davantage à ce que l'éducation devrait signifier à notre époque, notamment en tenant compte de l'environnement en ligne et des menaces hybrides. Nous soutenons qu'il y a besoin d'un nouveau concept : l'éducation à la résilience, et ce concept devrait couvrir les connaissances non incluses dans le système d'éducation formelle. Le dernier chapitre examine comment la résilience en tant que sujet scientifique est abordée dans la politique de recherche de l'Union Européenne. L'étude suit également l'impact de la réforme de la politique de recherche dans les pays du Partenariat oriental.

À la fin de chaque chapitre, des solutions sont incluses ainsi que des conclusions pour de futures recherches. Ce livre présente plusieurs aspects remarquables : il relie les campagnes actuelles de désinformation en Europe de l'Est à la propagande communiste ; il identifie les moyens utilisés pour propager la désinformation ; il identifie les failles dans le système éducatif exploitées par les campagnes de désinformation et il identifie les domaines dans lesquels Horizon Europe devrait se développer davantage.

Le livre comporte un nombre remarquable de sources utilisées pour documenter les questions de recherche et utilise l'expertise scientifique ainsi que son utilisation pratique dans les politiques et les réformes.

Mihaela cultivée, ouverte et opiniâtre partisane (sans

modération) du dialogue européen, nous permet de mieux saisir les questions sécuritaires et militaires, elle nous invite à réfléchir et à traiter ces sujets brulants avec sérieux et profondeur. Qu'elle en soit remerciée!

Soyons clairs sur les affrontements du passé, sur l'héritage interculturel, sur les menaces et sur les conflits actuels !

Soyons vigilants et particulièrement attentifs à la rigueur et à la sérénité des débats autour de ces thèmes!

Je sais pertinemment qu'après la lecture de ses pertinentes réflexions de l'autrice, et talentueusement exprimées dans son livre, que vous allez partager l'ensemble de ses préoccupations.

Ce livre contribue à la création de nouvelles connaissances sociales et interculturelles par le partage du savoir, il nous aide incontestablement à élargir encore un peu plus nos horizons interculturels sur l'Europe. La question des rapports entre les Européens nécessite un traitement renouvelé.

L'auteure de ce livre cherche à modifier l'universalisme et à installer le pluralisme, fondés sur des "centres de valeurs" pas seulement en Europe. Des sciences qui viennent d'ailleurs, des champs de référence du savoir qui "menacent" les modes de validation du savoir en place issus du terreau gréco -latin.

En favorisant ces recherches interculturelles et internationales, notre historienne montre que ce livre est un espace de réflexions et d'échanges, non pas à travers une vision unique du monde et de l'Europe, mais grâce à toutes sortes de disciplines et de points de vue. Ce nécessaire et inévitable débat sur les guerres, les diversités, sur ce passé impensé, les menaces, le Covid, s'inscrit à l'intérieur du rôle que nous (chercheurs, enseignants, historiens, sociologues ...) sommes appelés à jouer dans le dialogue Nord/Sud et que nous nous appliquons à le féconder et à le consolider.

Suis ravi d'appuyer cette belle initiative qui a pour but de nous aider à mieux comprendre les enjeux stratégiques dans un monde de violence et à saisir les interactions culturelles et nous permettent de mieux nous comprendre.

A l'évocation de certains de ces thèmes apparait au grand jour, une fracture philosophique, des conflits d'écoles, des conflits générationnels et notamment un mouvement de résistance. Sur l'ampleur et les effets sur l'inter culturalité, la

mondialisation, l'engagement, le communautarisme chercheurs et analystes divergent et même celles et ceux qui nous font l'honneur d'échanger avec nous sur ces thèmes.

Mais quelques soient les conclusions pratiques que vous tirerez à usage de vos étudiants, vos voisins, vos doctorants, vos amis, il faudra tenter de lier le passé, le présent et le futur, l'histoire et l'actualité pour penser l'impensable et/ou le paradoxal et être plus attentif à leurs/nos situations. Car toute l'histoire nous apprend qu'il y eut un rapport permanent et fécond entre le culturel, le social, le sanitaire, le militaire, le religieux et le politique ce qui nous aide à sortir de l'amnésie et à l'incompréhension relatives.

Je voudrai exprimer ma gratitude à Mihaela qui a réussi magistralement à donner un contenu concret et fort passionnant à des thèmes traités souvent avec passion et arrière-pensées politiques.

Je ne peux ignorer que selon la célèbre formule "*Je est un autre*". N'hésitons pas donc à faire connaitre et à faire comprendre aux Européens et aux citoyens du monde que l'on se construit dans l'ordre culturel comme dans l'ordre affectif, par des apports successifs venu de l'extérieur. Mais faisons-le dans le respect des différences et surcout dans la lucidité.

Je te remercie vivement d'avoir songé à l'entreprendre et à le foisonner

Que l'ouvrage de Mihaela Daciana Natea soit l'un des plus enrichissants, l'un des plus substantiels et l'un des plus appréciables sur les questions européennes et la crise sanitaire.

Il le vaut bien!

Hedi SAIDI, agrégé d'Histoire
Président d'Honneur de la revue « L'Europe Unie »
Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur
Chevalier des Palmes académiques.

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Chapter 1

COVID – 19 A GAME CHANGER FOR THE EUROPEAN SECURITY

As every crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic generated major shifts in how states define their internal and external policies. What the pandemic has shown is that no state is sheltered when an international security problem, such as a virus, looms at global level. The pandemic has shown that no state was safe or prepared enough to face such a complex burden. Even though international organizations, such as World Health Organization, the UN, UNICEF, UNESCO, through the global governance system, have put in place for several decades plans and strategies to combat and to react in case of humanitarian crises generated by a hypothetical pandemic, the reality was that people died and states had a hampered response to the amplitude of the security risks created by the pandemic.

In the face of the new security context, states had to react in order to ensure one of their primordial obligations: to protect their citizens. While measures were recommended at international level, the realities called for more drastic solutions. Facing closed borders, disruption in the supply chain system, security risks generated by the free movement of persons and by the lack of sanitary materials even in the most developed countries, called for states to adjust their security strategies.

While we have been debating for some time now about the importance of developing resilient societies and the kind of measures that can support such an endeavor, states had to overcome the insecurities generated at the local and national level by the exact population they said they would upbring to react timely in case of crises and contribute to a swift recovery.

One interesting aspect emphasized by the COVID-19 pandemic is that most states have asymmetric interdependencies[1] with states such as China and India from where they import most of their goods. The Vice-President of the European Commission, Věra Jourová, called to*"end our "morbid dependency" on China and India for medical supplies, a situation highlighted by the coronavirus crisis."*[2] But the response cannot be limited to medical supplies or substances used for medicine.

Measures had to be adopted to retune the health security policies of each state, from their functioning to their capacity to respond in a time of crisis. Likewise, the international interlinks which have an impact on health security must be refurbished. The early warning systems that were designed to stop the spread of a virus that could lead to a pandemic must be reevaluated and finely tuned as they functioned poorly in stopping the spread of the virus. Thus, more efficient global governance in health must be built and every state must contribute to that. In the case of health, the European Union has little competencies, as states can decide how they develop their health system. Nonetheless, the European Union can design financing programs that can help either at building resilience through infrastructural development, with modern and better equipped hospitals, or through research projects that can support innovation in medicine.

The pandemic seriously impacted the economic security of every state around the world, including European states. In line with what Věra Jourová declared, the European Union must diversify its economic sector, must improve its production capacities, and must develop innovative projects in order to build economic resilience. In a quick response to the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, the EU developed several funding mechanisms to sustain member states in their recovery

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[1] Nye Jr., J. S. *Descifrarea conflictelor internaționale.* Antet, Bucuresti, (2005); Wæver, O., Buzan, B., & Wilde, J., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis.* USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., 1997; Wæver, O., & Buzan, B. Slippery? contradictory? sociologically untenable? The Copenhagen school replies . *Review of International Studies, 23*(2), 1997, 241 – 250

[2] Euractiv. (2020, 04 20). Jourová slams Europe's 'morbid dependency' on China. *Euractiv*, https://www.euractiv.com/section/china/news/jourova-slams-europes-morbid-dependency-on-china/.

process. One of these is the Resilience and Recovery Facility designed to help European economies to recover after the pandemic, while considering the two main policies of the European Union: the green and digital transitions.

During and in the aftermath of the pandemic, a new concept gathered momentum: societal resilience. Even though we have been talking about resilience for about some time, the pandemic showed us that the concept must be better understood and more efficiently developed in state policies and European policies. Societal resilience is one of those concepts which has multiple field implications. One cannot talk about it only in the education sector, for example or the social security sector. The policies in this case must be developed horizontally and vertically in national and European governance, taking into consideration the competence system established in the Treaty of Lisbon. Building societal resilience must be a joint effort between EU and member states. One must also consider that this is an extensive process: if we want to overcome certain threats and build societies able to recover timely after a crisis, not one or several measures will bring a miracle. During the pandemic, the population did not necessarily support governmental decisions, and statistics show[3] that the pandemic had a very negative effect over the credibility of the governmental sector or the European governance. Without credibility, no societal resilience can be built.

Also, the exact blueprint for a more resilient community is not available and must be further researched, a fact emphasized in several documents regarding the Horizon Europe Programme that we will further emphasize in chapter four. While considering this aspect, and emphasizing the need to further research resilience, the program allocates few funds in this direction. Adding to this context Russia's aggression over Ukraine, which brings new levels of threats and security challenges, societal resilience becomes an even more important subject.

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[3] Ahrendt, Daphne; Consolini, Michele; Mascherini, Massimiliano; Sándor, Eszter Report - Fifth round of the Living, working and COVID-19 e-survey: Living in a new era of uncertainty, 7.07.2022, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg

In connection with societal resilience in the present geopolitical context, but with a considerable impact over national resilience as well, the study of the emerging threats must be further developed. In the dawn of the digital era, cybersecurity is a threat to the entire European Union. Several attacks were identified, state policies were changed, and joint transnational exercises were established in an effort to reduce the risks to the digital infrastructure. In this line of thought, we should move our attention to critical infrastructures and their protection in the context of war at the European *limes*. The Nord Stream, part of the critical infrastructures, was blown into pieces by a yet unidentified attacker. The European energetic security was put under pressure as the war unfolded, leaving little time for a response in the lack of previously implemented policies. This case proves that the EU cannot wait for a crisis to appear in order to take measures. The proactive approach to security must be implemented in many areas, as threats are constantly changing and are becoming more and more complex.

Lastly, in the post COVID-19 era, International Security is a subject of vital importance. On one hand, the pandemic has shown that a global synergistic effort must be made in combating common global threats. Without it, there would be only void policies on pieces of papers with limital impact over citizens' life. Thus, a stronger global governance is necessary and the joint effort of all states is a prerequisite. On the other hand, the war in Ukraine sets the world toward a very different rhetoric. We can argue that classical realist concepts are revived in Russia's politics in Eastern Europe. The return to power politics in international relations, the return of the concept of the balance of power sets us on the course of a totally different international system, with different solutions and different security problems.

We can conclude that today there are two conflicting trends in international relations. One represents the basis of the international system developed from 1990 till now. The second represents a changing movement, a revisionist one, who wants to renegotiate the system established more than 30 years ago. In a sense we can identify the application of the entropic law developed in engineering, as while moving from a reference international system to a changed one we can identify tensions

that produces heat in this process. This heat can be composed of diplomatic tensions but can take the form even the form of war.

Facing the war in its vicinity, the European Union has to reconsider its security strategies so that it can face a military threat at any time. From this perspective, the war in Ukraine represents a game changer in developing the European security concept. Even if the frozen conflicts were a constant component of the security reality after the fall of the Iron Curtain, they were manifested mainly by focalized conflicts in which the support of Russia was more or less visible. The full invasion in Ukraine, the amplitude of this war, in conjunction with the convulsions we can see in the structure of power of the international relations system, generated the need to increase the European approach to international security by raising its capacities and capabilities and increasing the cooperation with NATO.

The world after the COVID-19 pandemic is not necessarily different than the one before. The only thing that, in fact, changed was that the whirling forces in international politics became more energetic and willing to change the entropy of the system. Russia's, China's or India's aspirations for a new world order are not new. We can see them emphasized in international documents even prior to the pandemic. As an example, several key concepts later used by Russia in the war in Ukraine could be identified in 2020, in The Moscow Declaration of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. In this document we can find phrases that can be used as tags for the post COVID-19 rhetoric in international relations: the *fight against Nazism*: "The Great Victory over Nazism, fascism and militarism was of fundamental importance for the further course of world history, security and stability, and made it possible to form a stable system of international relations"; *the realignment of the international political system towards multipolarity*: "International relations are passing through a stage of profound transformation, consolidation of new political and economic power centres, and formation of the world order on the principles of multipolarity"; "building international relations of a new type in the spirit of mutual respect, fairness, equality and mutually

beneficial cooperation and in shaping a common vision of the idea to create a community of common destiny for mankind".[4]

Considering these official statements, and following the events during and after the pandemic, including Russia's or China's activities in other international organizations such as the UN, a clear path can be identified on what the entropic movement of the international relations system will look like. Adding to this the problems of the complex interdependencies, we must understand that the approach to security at European level should be reconceptualized. In this context, the concept of resilience becomes the umbrella concept that could reshape the entire approach towards security, with an in-depth focus on societal resilience.

1.1 Resilience – conceptual framework

Resilience, as a concept, is widely used nowadays in security studies and is adapted to include not only the classical branches of security, but also the way the communities react in a crisis and, as well, how they rebuild themselves after. The COVID-19 pandemic generated a global multilevel impact, which affected the system, the subsystems but also the individuals. A community capacity to react and recover was interlinked with the authorities' activity and measures adopted to prevent the spread of the pandemic, but also with the community capacity to act and react to the challenges.

The resilience of each community and of the states as a hole was tested, and the results were not always the expected ones. The capacity of the population to understand what was happening and accept the measures implemented by the authorities was also tested. The implementation of the concept "culture of security", which was circulating in the authorities' security strategies around the world and in the literature, was reopened. In the face of the disinformation concerning the pandemic, the vaccination and later the war in Ukraine, the need to link resilience to education was stressed.

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[4] The Moscow Declaration of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, 10.11.2020, http://eng.sectsco.org/documents/

When it comes to connecting the concepts of resilience and education, there are wide approaches in the literature which can be embedded in these concepts or, at least, linked to them, and all offer different perspectives on the evolution of the concepts and their implementation in national policies. As the scope of the present chapter is not to offer a wide literature review, we will mention the approaches which are relevant for the present study, in order to link or to differentiate between them.

A consistent literature on child psychology uses the concept of resilience as a person's capacity to adapt despite adversity or risks in the environment[5]. In this case, education and individual psychological resilience are seen in conjunction, and the education system is analyzed from the perspective of the school's capacity to enhance not only knowledge, but also individual resilience[6],[7]. As for this approach towards resilience, John Fleming and Robert J. Ledogar point out that the concept was gradually developed, and the focus migrated from the individual to the community[8].

Community resilience is considered to be the ability of an individual to overcome stress or other factors through networks

[5] Suniya S. Luthar, Vulnerability and resilience: a study of high-risk adolescents, Child Dev 1991 Jun;62(3):600-16. Suniya S. Luthar, Resilience in development: A synthesis of research across five decades, D. Cicchetti & D. J. Cohen (Eds.), Developmental Psychopathology: Risk, disorder, and adaptation, Volume 3 (2nd edition). New York: Wiley.

[6] Jon P. Gray, Yolanda N. Padrón, Hersh c. Waxman Review of research on educational resilience, Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence, University of California, Santa Cruz, 2003, https://escholarship.org/content/qt7x695885/qt7x695885_noSplash_aaf464d4 631ff846687c455222cc5532.pdf?t=krn9ko

[7] Jane E. Gillham , Rachel M. Abenavoli, Steven M. Brunwasser, Mark Linkins, Karen J. Reivich, and Martin E. P. Seligman, Resilience Education, in Oxford Handbook of Happiness, editors Ilona Boniwell, Susan A. David, and Amanda Conley Ayers, 2013, https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199557257.0 01.0001/oxfordhb-9780199557257-e-046#oxfordhb-9780199557257-div2-488

[8] John Fleming and Robert J. Ledogar, Resilience, an Evolving Concept: A Review of Literature Relevant to Aboriginal Research, Pimatisiwin. 2008 Summer; 6(2): 7–23, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2956753/

and practices of a community[9]. Starting form this research finding, it was demonstrated that a sound educational system is considered to be a support for personal resilience[10],[11]. In this case, the concept has seen considerable change in the last decade shifting towards security, political and cultural resilience. Thus, cultural resilience, apart from individual support and well-being, can generate national political change[12] or can increase the response in case of disasters, either natural hazards[13],[14] or man-made[15].

1.2 A European perspective over resilience

The European need for greater security and the need to reduce interdependencies are not new. They were formulated before the pandemic, and we can find them in major European policies, such as the Green Deal. The only difference is that the identified threats came sooner than expected, and in this context the pandemic functioned as a catalyst.

For the purpose of the book, as this focuses more on disinformation, education and research and how these can be approached to targeted measures, we will follow EU security strategies and how they evolved in addressing hybrid threats and disinformation.

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[9] Laurence J. Kimayer, Megha Sehdev, Rob Whitley, Stephane F. Dandeneau, Colette Isaac, Community resilienc: Models, Metaphors and Measures, Journal of Sante Autochtone, November, 2009, p. 63

[10] *Ibidem*

[11] Jane E. Gillham, *op. cit.*

[12] Susan Healey, Cultural Resilience, Identity And The Restructuring Of Political Power In Bolivia, Paper Submitted for the 11th Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of Common Property, Bali, Indonesia June 19 – June 23, 2006, http://dlc.dlib.indiana.edu/dlc/bitstream/handle/10535/1488/Healey_susan.pdf ?sequence

[13] J. Kevin Summers, Linda C. Harwell, Lisa M. Smith, Kyle D. Buck, Measuring Community Resilience to Natural Hazards: The Natural Hazard Resilience Screening Index (NaHRSI)—Development and Application to the United States, Journal of GeoHealth, 16 November 2018

[14] UN, Community Resilience for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction Global Programme 2014-2017, https://www.unv.org/sites/default/files/Community_Resilience_for_Environment_and_Disaster_Risk_Reduction_Global_Programme.pdf

[15] Susan Healey, *op. cit.*

When talking about the European Union and security, we must follow several concepts such as the complex approach towards security described by the school of Copenhagen and the concept of comprehensive security.

It is well known that for a long time the concept of security was equivalent to military security. During the Cold War, both superpowers, the USA and the USSR, understood security from this viewpoint. An important change comes with the Helsinki Final Act and the creation of OSCE, that understood the idea of security through cooperation in many fields[16]. Even from the structure of the document we can see that the question of security was multidimensional and included principles for international relations, cooperation in the field of economics, science, technology and of the environment, but also cooperation in other areas such as transport, tourism, migration, cooperation in humanitarian actions, cooperation in the fields of information, cooperation in the field of culture and of education[17].

At the beginning of the technological revolution, the focus of the present Treaty in terms of information was on the dissemination of the information through official channels, through oral and printed platforms. There are two emphases on the printed information, especially through newspapers and broadcasting information. The independence of journalism and its access to information is of great importance and special articles are inserted on this aspect. Exchange of information is seen as a platform for lowering barriers between countries and people. The exchange of information is seen as a measure to increase security at national or international level but also at individual level by broadening the general knowledge of the population on what is happening around the globe. No mentions are being made to aspects related to disinformation or propaganda, even though at the time the document was adopted the world was divided in two dichotomic ideologies.

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[16] Sven Biscop The European Security Strategy: A Global Agenda for Positive Power, Routledge, 2005,

[17] Helsinki Final Act, Final act of the 1st CSCE Summit of Heads of State or Government, 1 august 1975, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, https://www.osce.org/helsinki-final-act

In 1995, within the Western European Union, the drafting of a framework for a common concept on European Security represented an attempt to develop a common approach at the European level. The process comes along with the Maastricht Treaty and the NATO Brussels Summit of 1994, in the context of a new approach towards security and European evolution. The commitment to develop "European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI)" is based on the need to strengthen European contribution in the security[18]. While the basis of the European Union security policies can be identified in this document, no reference is made to information, except the ones regarding the exchange of information between partners and with Russia.

The concept of comprehensive security is underlined in several paragraphs as a driving force towards greater security and stability in the new international and European context. While building on the OSCE concept of comprehensive security was also accepted by Russia, the intention was to build a more secure region based on cooperation. No reference to resilience is made in the document. Also, no reference is made to education even if the Council of Europe and UNESCO were developing during this time frame strategies for education for peace or education for democratic citizenship.

In the same timeframe, the Declaration of the Council of Europe's First Summit (Vienna, 9 October 1993) puts democratic security at the core of the Council of Europe's activities. The concept fosters the thesis of democratic peace promoted also by the United States, having as belief that democracies are less likely to be violent and entry into conflict between one another[19]. Considering this, "Europe can thus become a vast area of democratic security"[20]. The document envisages education as an essential pillar for building democratic security, as "cultural co-

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[18] Extraordinary Council of Ministers, European Security: A Common Concept of the 27 WEU Countries, Madrid, 14 November 1995

[19] Iulian Chifu, Reconfigurarea securitatii si a relatiilor internationale in secolul 21. Vol1 – actori, relatii si politica de putere in secolul 21, Ed. Rao, Bucuresti, 2022, p. 18

[20] Declaration of the Council of Europe's First Summit (Vienna, 9 October 1993), Source: Vienna Declaration. Strasbourg, Council of Europe. http://cm.coe.int/ta/decl/1993/Vienna%20Summit%20Declaration.htm.

operation - through education, the media, cultural action, the protection and enhancement of the cultural heritage and participation of young people - is essential for creating a cohesive yet diverse Europe."[21]

The Common Foreign and Security Policy was a mechanism developed in the Maastricht Treaty, on the structure of the former European Political Cooperation, and was meant to coordinate the foreign policy of member states, while respecting their sovereignty principles. It was gradually developed from one treaty to another and, in the Treaty of Lisbon, the policy is consolidated and a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who is also the Vice-President of the European Commission, is established[22]. Building on a complex concept of European security, the European External Action Service (EEAS) is established by the same treaty and represents the democratic corps of the European Union.

Within the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) is developed and financed according to current needs. First Established in 1999[23], the CSDP "provides the Union with an operational capacity drawing on civilian and military assets. The Union may use them on missions outside the Union for peace-keeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter" [24].

While the treaty of the European Union makes no direct reference towards resilience, the main provisions address resilience in one way or another. In 2009, when the treaty was adopted, the concept had less relevance in security studies than now. If we look at the main documents in foreign and security policies, we can ascertain an increase in the use of the word resilience.

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[21] *Idem*
[22] Art18 (4), Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC_1&format=PDF
[23] Margriet Drent, The EU's Comprehensive Approach to Security: A Culture of Co-ordination?, Studia Diplomatica 2011, vol. LXIV-2 , p.3
[24] Art 42, section 2, *Idem*

Looking at the main documents in this field, "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy" has as scope to transform the Foreign policy to address, *inter alia*, peace-building and resilience of states inside and outside the EU, thus consolidating EU's role as a global actor. The document uses the concept of resilience 41 times, and education 14 times. According to the document, resilience is seen as a process of consolidating democracies and supporting citizens in the East and South as "it is in the interests of our citizens to invest in the resilience of states and societies to the east stretching into Central Asia, and to the south down to Central Africa". The strategy sets the EU in the path to foster resilience in partner states who invest in policies addressing "governmental, economic, societal and climate/energy fragility, as well as develop more effective migration policies for Europe and its partners"[25]. In this note, resilience is seen as an umbrella concept which includes different fields and different targeted groups: "broader concept, encompassing all individuals and the whole of society. A resilient society featuring democracy, trust in institutions, and sustainable development lies at the heart of a resilient state"[26]. Thus, EU's interest is the reform process meant at creating strong states around it, able to recover timely after an internal or external crisis.

In the process to reform, education and research are seen as important steps in developing resilient societies in the neighborhood, as societal resilience is based on "nurturing education, culture and youth"[27]. Also, an important role is given to science and research and common policies are set to be established in order to close the gaps between systems, thus ensuring better chances to cooperation on EU funds.

In the "Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council. A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's

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[25] Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy, June 2016, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf
[26] *Idem*
[27] *Idem*

External Action", a new dimension of the strategic approach to resilience is established by supporting three pillars The first is centered around the capacity of a state to adapt to changes in different fields: "adaptability of states, societies, communities and individuals to political, economic, environmental, demographic or societal pressures, in order to sustain progress towards national development goals". The second one sets to strengthen the functioning of the democratic system by fostering the state's capacity "in the face of significant pressures to build, maintain or restore its core functions, and basic social and political cohesion, in a manner that ensures respect for democracy, rule of law, human and fundamental rights and fosters inclusive long-term security and progress". The third one is enfolded around the individuals and the societies' capacity to react and manage risks in a "peaceful and stable manner, and to build, maintain or restore livelihoods in the face of major pressures".[28] Adopted one year later than the Global Strategy, the document is considerably more articulated in defining what resilience is, the fields it enfolds and the target groups that must contribute to resilience.

While the document refers to education only when addressing migration, the role of research in boosting resilience is emphasized several times, either by policy reform for better access to research funds, or by sustaining research for economic advantages, or research to better address resilience.

From these two documents, several policies were developed targeting security, resilience, and hybrid threats. In 2016, the "Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats – A European Union response" was adopted[29], and it defined resilience as: "the capacity to withstand stress and recover, strengthened from

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[28] European Commission, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's external action {SWD(2017) 226 final} {SWD(2017) 227 final}, p.3, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52017JC0021

[29] European Commission, *Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats – A European Union response* (06 Apr. 2016), JOIN (2016), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016JC0018&from=EN

challenges."[30]. The concept of resilience is close to the one detailed in the "Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council. A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action", as it follows the pillars established there.

While having a multilayered approach to resilience, the documents mention resilience in the context of research and no mention to education is made, but we can identify several references to exercises. In the vision of the document, research is seen as a necessity in aligning EU and national policies, on how hybrid strategies were applied and how they could be further developed, and research and innovation (R&I) are seen an essential part of improving the EU response to hybrid threats by building stronger economies. Even if education is not mentioned, capacity building and strategic decision-making capacity exercises are referenced several times as a form to build resilience, prevent and increase response in case of crisis. The strategic communication chapter includes ample references to combating disinformation strategies as an attempt to reduce the impact it has on the society[31].

In the spring of 2018, "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Tackling online disinformation: a European Approach" was adopted, addressing resilience in case of hybrid threats. In view of the document, an integrated approach to resilience could be the only mean to tackle disinformation as it is interlinked to collective resilience. In this vein, there are several directions of action, and these include: secure and resilient election processes, fostering education and media literacy, use of the EU research funded programs to discover better solutions to combat disinformation, support for quality journalism. Education for combating disinformation should be layered on competences such as critical thinking or digital skills, and on European support platforms and policies to combat disinformation, such as: Digital Competence Framework for Citizens or the Digital Education Action Plan. The academia research on disinformation is

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[30] *Idem*
[31] *Idem*

considered vital to finding new solutions, fact checking, mapping disinformation mechanism and others.[32]

In 2018, "Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council - Increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to address hybrid threats" was adopted. In this document, increased attention is given to "resilience in the face of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear-related (CBRN) threats" Considerations on the EU response to disinformation are made, in light of the above-mentioned Communication on tackling online disinformation. In matters of research there is only one reference to the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in Helsinki. Education is present in the disinformation framework and strategic communication strategies, and also exercises for strengthening resilience in CBRN threats[33].

"The Council Conclusions on complementary efforts to enhance resilience and counter hybrid threats"[34] underlines the need to strengthen resilience in face of "multi-faceted and ever-evolving hybrid threats". While the main directions in building resilience are kept, no reference is made to education policies, but several references are made to exercises for building capacity for a better response in case of attack. A coherent policy to combat hybrid threats includes, in the setting of the documents, R&I in this field.

During the COVID -19 pandemic, the Council conclusions on strengthening resilience and countering hybrid threats, including disinformation in the context of the COVID-19

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[32] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Tackling online disinformation: a European Approach, Brussels, 26.4.2018 COM (2018) 236 final, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0236

[33] Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, and the Council. Increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to address hybrid threats JOIN, 16 final, European Commission, 2018, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018JC0016&from=GA,

[34] General Secretariat of the Council, Council Conclusions of 10 December 2019 - Complementary efforts to enhance resilience and counter hybrid threats, https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14972-2019-INIT/en/pdf

pandemic emphasized the need to strengthen resilience in face of a major crisis[35]. This was even more necessary because during COVID-19 "an intensified spread of disinformation and manipulative interference" emerged. As the approach of the EU to combating disinformation is "multidisciplinary and multi-stakeholder" and correlating the document to the previous one, it is clear that research and education are part of the mechanism put in place for common actions on this matter. The document links disinformation to Artificial Intelligence used in malicious ways. Also, the perpetuators identified as state or non-state actors do not limit their actions to statal actions, but include the private sector.

In 2019, the Eastern Partnership summit took place in Brussels in May, marking 10 years of existence of this platform of negotiation policy and reform between European Union states and the partner countries in the east: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The moment was important as along with evaluating the 20 Deliverables by the 2020 policy, the launching of the consultation for the new platform was emphasized. Not long after, the COVID-19 pandemic changed the security environment in the region.

In 2020, the Joint Communication regarding Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020 focused on articulating a new strategic approach to resilience that can increase the impact of the EU in the region and support the resilience of partner states. The document recognizes the need to shift the European policies from crisis containment to a "long term, nonlinear approach to vulnerabilities, with an emphasis on anticipation, prevention and preparedness".

According to this strategic document, building resilience is considered to be "an overriding policy framework" with 5 long term objectives "together for resilient, sustainable and integrated economies; together for accountable institutions, the rule of law

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[35] Council conclusions on strengthening resilience and countering hybrid threats, including disinformation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, doc. No 13626/20, 2020 https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14064-2020-INIT/en/pdf

and security; together towards environmental and climate resilience; together for a resilient digital transformation; and together for resilient, fair and inclusive societies."[36] Education and research are part of the strategies for building resilience, and many documents related to this one set targets in increasing research for building resilience and reforming the education system to face current threats.

The Strategic Compass considering Russia's aggression over Ukraine and the COVID-19 crisis is set to prepare the EU for the new context in the international relations system. While building on solidarity and mutual assistance, the strategic document builds security and strengthens resilience in a changing international relations system, with direct security repercussions in the partner countries. Education and exercises, as in the above-mentioned strategies, are part of building resilience and contribute to preparedness to "promote education and training to ensure that we are ready to act.". The live exercises are part of the education policy and are present around the strategy as much as the concept of resilience, thus putting a considerable emphasis on their importance in building interoperability and coordination, hence raising the security of the EU. In matters of research, the European Defense Fund is dedicated to military research and capacity building and is complemented by other Horizon Europe funds, such as on Artificial intelligence, space or other related subjects[37].

It is a clear evolution of the utilization of the concept of resilience from an element of security to a central place along with other concepts in international relations. The connections between resilience, education and research are clear and include

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[36] Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020 Reinforcing Resilience - an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all {SWD(2020) 56 final} https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/joint-communication-eastern-partnership-policy-beyond-2020-reinforcing-resilience-%E2%80%93-eastern_en
[37] A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence for a European Union that protects its citizens, values and interests and contributes to international peace and security, 2022, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/strategic-compass-security-and-defence-0_en

a multitude of facets and techniques. Disinformation starts an integral part of the hybrid war and later takes a central stage in the security sphere. The application of the Gerasimov Doctrine and Russia's hybrid tactics after 2014 became more and more burdensome as the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded and disinformation became a cardinal form of a hybrid war.

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Chapter 2

A NEW PHENOMENON: THE CROSS-BORDER EFFECT OF DISINFORMATION

In the present chapter the emphasis will be put on disinformation in multicultural societies. An overview of the terminology will be considered followed by two main lines of research: Russia's disinformation strategy that includes multiculturality or revision of borders based on ethnic approaches, Pax Sovietica and the multicultural societies facing disinformation. We will compare the Soviet propaganda and the main themes it used toward the capitalist West and the disinformation campaigns nowadays, arguing that in order to combat disinformation today, one must take a closer look be at the ways the sovietisation was imposed. In this vein and connecting with the following chapter concerning education, one must consider the sovietization of education and culture and the impact it has had. Also, we must emphasize that the old instruments are now used online, to "educate" the social media audience.

In the last subchapter, we will follow the Ditrau case, a village in Romania with around 90% Magyar ethnic inhabitants who rebelled against two immigrants from Sri Lanka. When addressing the cross-border effect of disinformation, the case study shows exactly the impact that propaganda, media and online disinformation has on multicultural communities. As a lesson, as multicultural societies tend to close off more and more and use a limited number of information sources, the danger can be great, as it can induce an insecurity level in the community based solely on disinformation. If two migrants generated a community rebellion, what are the effects that other types of propaganda can generate?

2.1 Disinformation, Misinformation, Mal-information and Propaganda

As the focus of the chapter is not to enter into a detailed debate about terminological issues, we will try to emphasize the concepts used in the case of disinformation and the differences between them.

Either we include it in hybrid war[1] or information disorder[2], disinformation is part of the security language in Europe, as weaponizing information is not a new endeavor but one which poses new risks due to technological evolutions[3]. Indeed, it connects security with communication and information and all the new tools the technological advancements offer. Moreover, it relates to what we communicate, not only how we do it, and to the impact of these means of communication.

Disinformation and propaganda cross their paths in the day-to-day manifestation and connecting them is essential. Their similarity certain times determine dilemmas in defining and putting a firm separation mark between them as they are utilized to label the way in which the information is used to cause harm[4]. In this case, misinformation or mal-information has a lower level of intensity than propaganda, as the complexity in which information is fabricated and used is considerably greater. Another element that separates them is the existence of an intentional fundament, as mal-information can occur due to lack of knowledge, but propaganda and disinformation never do so, having a strong intentional drive. And lastly, the impact of the intended harm can differ.

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[1] Symen Hoekstra, Maaike Jongema, "Disinformation as a weapon in hybrid warfare", *Atlantisch Perspectief*, Vol. 40, No. 5 (2016), pp. 37-39

[2] Claire Wardle, Hossein Derakhshan, *Information Disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making*, Council of Europe report DGI(2017)09, https://rm.coe.int/information-disorder-toward-an-interdisciplinary-framework-for-researc/168076277c

[3] Cherilyn Ireton and Julie Posetti (Ed.), Journalism, 'Fake News' & Disinformation, Handbook for Journalism Education and Training, UNESCO Series on Journalism Education, 2018, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000265552

[4] Council of Europe, *Dealing with propaganda, misinformation and fake news*, https://www.coe.int/en/web/campaign-free-to-speak-safe-to-learn/dealing-with-propaganda-misinformation-and-fake-news

Disinformation is a type of information[5] generally defined as "false information shared to cause harm"[6], thus being intentionally misleading[7]. It can be shaped in many forms and disseminated through many channels: from misleading advertising[8], tempered photographs, fake news, deep fake news, fake documents, fake declarations, fake maps, tempered satellite or other aerial pictures, computer simulation presented as real, fake blogs or websites, fake social media accounts, fake factual accounts, manipulated information form partial truth, to truth and lies combined, and the list is open.

Claire Wardle and Hossein Derakhshan categorize all these forms in: false content, imposter content, manipulated content, and fabricated content.[9]

Misinformation is also a type of information generally defined as "false information shared with no intention of causing harm"[10]. Even if no intentions are behind a misinformation, the reality is that it can cause harm, and can, unwillingly, support a disinformation or propaganda process. The forms of manifestation of misinformation are: false connection, misleading content.[11]

Mal-information is generally defined as "true information shared intentionally to cause harm"[12]. Even if some form of information can be harmful, it is debatable if morally we should

[5] Don Fallis, "The Varieties of Disinformation", In: Floridi, L., Illari, P. (eds) *The Philosophy of Information Quality*, Synthese Library, vol 358. Springer, Cham

[6] Council of Europe, *Dealing with propaganda, misinformation and fake news*, https://www.coe.int/en/web/campaign-free-to-speak-safe-to-learn/dealing-with-propaganda-misinformation-and-fake-news

[7] Don Fallis, "The Varieties of Disinformation", In: Floridi, L., Illari, P. (eds) *The Philosophy of Information Quality*, Synthese Library, vol 358. Springer, Cham

[8] *Ibidem*

[9] Claire Wardle, Hossein Derakhshan, *op. cit.*, p 20

[10] Council of Europe, *Dealing with propaganda, misinformation and fake news*, https://www.coe.int/en/web/campaign-free-to-speak-safe-to-learn/dealing-with-propaganda-misinformation-and-fake-news

[11] Claire Wardle, Hossein Derakhshan, *op. cit.*, p 20

[12] Council of Europe, *Dealing with propaganda, misinformation and fake news*, https://www.coe.int/en/web/campaign-free-to-speak-safe-to-learn/dealing-with-propaganda-misinformation-and-fake-news

consider true information as harmful as long as the information was obtained legally. If the information was not obtained legally, such as e-mails or confidential information, then the sharing of the information is just an accessory to a criminal act. In the literature, this type of information includes: leaks, harassment, hate speech.[13]

While many more definitions and taxonomies can be identified in the literature, the present ones are the most relevant for the purpose of our research.

Propaganda is defined as "dissemination of information—facts, arguments, rumours, half-truths, or lies—to influence public opinion."[14] From a security perspective, propaganda can be defined as: "any form of communication in support of national objectives designed to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes, or behavior of any group in order to benefit the sponsor, either directly or indirectly"[15]. The understanding of the concept varies in history and in different political currents. Communists[16] had a different view on propaganda than the capitalist states[17] did. There are different kinds of propaganda considering the source of the information:

● White propaganda originates from verified sources, sources that can be identified and the information is, generally, accurate. This type of propaganda is centered on developing a trustful liaison between the sources and the audience, to be used in the needed context.

● Gray propaganda occurs when, even if the sources can be identified, the information is incorrect.

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[13] Claire Wardle, Hossein Derakhshan, *op. cit.*, p 20

[14] Britanica Dictionary, https://www.britannica.com/topic/propaganda

[15] Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations, 5.09.2003, Joint Publication 3-53, https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB177/02_psyop-jp-3-53.pdf

[16] "By propaganda we would understand the revolutionary explanation of the present social system, entire or in its partial manifestations, whether that be done in a form intelligible to individuals or to broad masses." Vladimir Lenin, What is to be Done?, 1902, https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/download/what-itd.pdf

[17] Sahul Hamid Mohamed Maiddin, The capitalist versus communist propaganda during the cold war, Jurnal Sejarah, 2017, Vol. 23 No. 1 (June) (2014), https://ejournal.um.edu.my/index.php/SEJARAH/article/view/9286

● Black propaganda occurs when the sources are elusive, concealed or credited falsely to an authority, with the purpose to spread lies[18]. Most of the propaganda identified on EUvsDisinfo can be included in this category.

A special attention should be given to fake news and what we now call deep fake. Fake news refers to "news articles that are intentionally and veritably false and could mislead readers"[19]. Others stress that fake news has nothing to do with journalism, but it is an attempt to deceive using journalism as a validation[20]. Deepfake is the use of video and audio technologies able to create digital dummies that transmit messages. Worst comes when they are used to mimic a totally fake public declaration of a political leader. In this war, what we see and what we listen are totally false and difficult to spot. Such videos can have a grave political impact, as the case of a viral video of Volodymyr Zelensky announcing a surrender[21] has proved.

To this we must add AI language models such as Chat GPT and others which may spread certain types of information. In political sciences, where we have different perspectives over historical events, which interpretation will be used? The Wikipedia experience has shown us how sensitive certain subjects are and how easily the narrative can be changed by anyone who is determined to do so. In the case of AI, there is a large debate ahead over the implications of using such programs, as they can generate a certain type of propaganda, or, at least, subscribe unknowingly to it.

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[18] Garth S. Jowett, Victoria O'Donnell, Propaganda & Persuasion, Sage publications, 2019 US, p. 27
[19] Terry Lee, The global rise of fake news and the threat to democratic elections in the USA, Public administration and Policy: An Asian-Pacific Journal, 2019
[20] *Ibidem*
[21] Adam Satariano and Paul Mozur, "The People Onscreen Are Fake. The Disinformation Is Real", *The New York Times,* https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/07/technology/artificial-intelligence-training-deepfake.html

2.2 Why does Russia's propaganda have such a big impact in Eastern Europe? From the communist propaganda to Russian rhetoric in the Ukrainian war.

"*From a philosophical and historical point of view, the West has never progressed beyond barbarity and human prehistoric times which included the periods of slavery, feudalism and capitalism. In contrast to the West, the Soviet Union started the real history of humanity and communism can be considered a genuine form of civilisation*".[22]

Communist propaganda vs current trends

I selected the quotation from the present subchapter from an article available on EUvsDisinfo database because it encapsulates the philosophy used behind the disinformation process: the bad West vs the communist redeemer - Russia. The quotation also represents the core of the Soviet philosophy disseminated through education or state propaganda for a considerable time in history. Understanding nowadays Russian disinformation means looking in the past and understanding how the Soviet propaganda worked, how it was institutionalized in the education system, how every institution or organization had to adopt it and as important understanding of the repercussions – prison or even death. The remodeling of the collective mentalities in the communist countries was profound and complex.

There are so many links between communism and the type of propaganda Russia is conducting now in Central and Eastern Europe[23]. During the communist regime the state program reformed the society in a deep cultural and historical point of view. Everything had to be reevaluated in such a way that communism, and the new political and economic system it

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[22] EUvsDisinfo, Historically, the west has always been barbaric and similar to ISIS

[23] Veronica Zaharagiu, "Propaganda, Between Literature and Ideology", in Natea Mihaela Daciana (Ed.), *Disinformation Crossing Borders.The Multilayered Disinformation Concerning the War in Ukraine*, L'Harmattan, 2022 p245

imposed, was considered by the whole society as legitimate and natural. In order to understand and to develop a proper way to combat disinformation in this region it is mandatory to look back in history and understand how these ideas, well implanted through the communist education system, took form. One of the main concerns for the communist regimes was the process of rewriting history.

History teaches us about past events, past societies, past political systems. History teaches us the ideas and the power that the ideas have in shaping the future. If we consider all these as milestones in the evolution of humankind and, thus, the evolution of the societal and political system, the way they are presented is of extreme importance. The same event can be presented in a way in a certain historiography and in a totally different way in another. One state can see the Paris Versailles treaty systems, which shaped the political map of Europe more than 100 years ago, as legitimate and other states would never recognize the system these treaties developed.

The old system had to be demolished from its roots to make room for communism and this included its social values system, economic system, political system including what people liked and disliked in their personal life. The control was so substantial that it generated fear among the society. Part of the old elites either fled the country; the ones that stayed either accepted the system and became promoters of communism and communist values or were killed in communist jails or through executions. The fight against Nazism, which is the realm of Russia's claims today used to justify the aggression against another country's territory, was transposed in the aftermath of the Second World War in the fight against the old society. If this meant extermination, it was justified on the claims of justice done in the name of the people. If we look at what communism did in Russia or in Central and Eastern European states which had to embrace communism with the Russians army on their territory, we can see that disregard for human life was the main theme.

As this subject could become the main focus of an entire book, we will cover it only in the extent in which it presents an importance in the way Russia propaganda functions today. We have chosen as main disinformation themes mostly the ones that

are linked to the communist propaganda, while emphasizing the cross-border effect of this type of disinformation nowadays. Of course, the study could be developed by comparing national level fake news or disinformation campaigns, the way political parties use these ideas to boost their popularity at national level, connections between political parties and foreign influences and so on and so forth.

As a methodological approach we followed the article published on the website EUvsDisinfo, which gathers a considerable collection of primary sources. Some of them can be linked to Russian propaganda, others disseminate other kinds of propaganda.

2.2.1 Theme 1: political ideology.

The First World War brought the fall of the empires, new geopolitical political realities, a new international system, and new political actors. The end of a political international system brought the dawn of a new one. This time it was not based on empires, national states or identities, but it was based on political ideologies. The old empires left the stage of the international relations system to the political dichotomy generated by communism and liberalism.

The philosophical debate is old and was done in all shapes and forms. It bloomed in the interwar time frame and left the world after the Second World War divided it in two. A part of the world had to embrace communism and the other part flourished on democracy and economic freedom. The long ideological debate stopped when the Iron Curtain fell. Or at least that seemed to be the case in the first two decades after 1990. But the last decade saw a comeback of this philosophy. This time it's shaped differently, it wears different clothes and uses other means of dissemination. Nonetheless, it is the same rhetoric used in the same way for the same purpose.

The only main difference is that this time **no to little direct reference to colliding ideologies is made**. The materials we find on EUvsDisinfo pinpoint towards the so-called abuses of the Western philosophy, the menace of neoliberalism, feminism as a menace to society without any reference to an alternative

ideology. The "bad Western philosophy" has as a countermeasure Russian's protective nature towards all the countries in the region. The well-known rhetoric of "Mother Russia" with a nurturing attitude towards the countries in Central and Eastern Europe can be encountered in most of the articles in different forms and relating to different subjects. **No direct philosophy, yet an indirect one – not yet defined, not yet clear, but present in an elusive form**.

Sample arguments used:

According to an article from 2021 published in Czech language, the EU is imposing a new ideology "*which is a combination of the worst parts of the totalitarian regimes of the 20th century – racism and principles of class struggle*" but this time it is targeted towards the European race with the goal to "change the way we live". Furthermore, linking this information to the classical evolutionary theory, the article states that anyone who tries to defend the "European culture and economy are often labelled as conspiracy theorists and the other side claims this to be the natural progress"[24].

2.2.2 Theme 2: Pax Sovietica

Historical legitimization of political decisions concerning Ukraine or other regions.

West remodeling states in Eastern Europe.

As mentioned above, history is, in many instances, instrumentalized to prove a point, to legitimize certain attitudes or political actions, or to demonize other states. In 2020, an article targeting Eastern Europe and Caucasus called upon reconsidering the participation in revolutions orchestrated and funded by foreign forces. In the perspective of this article, the purpose of these revolutions is to determine the participating countries to lose their territory. Naturally, Russia is presented as a neutral country which would never get involved in such endeavors. The loss of the territory would occur as "one part of the country that endures such a colour revolution cannot stand

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[24] EUvsDisinfo, There is discrimination of the European culture, 24/01/2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-european-culture-is-discriminated

the degradation of their own homeland". To these classical communist themes that we can find in many history books or international relations books two more concepts had to be added: the presence of "nationalists or even Nazis" and, of course, the "oppression of other minorities". The examples used are the so-called "rose revolution" in Georgia, that led to the separation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the "Euro-Maidan", following which Ukraine lost Crimea and part of Donbass, and lastly the case of Nagorno Karabakh is recalled. As a warning, the article ends with an advice for the "nice people" in Minsk, Moscow, or Bishkek to be mindful of such acts[25].

Territorial claims – Ukraine

In presenting the situation in Ukraine, there is a time lapse in disseminating the information. In 2019, the main guarantor for Ukrainian integrity was Russia, in 2020 the population did not support the Western influence over their territory and in 2021 the war was imminent. In 2022, Russia was forced to attack as it has the right over those territories.

Selected articles:

In 2016, in the aftermath of the 2014 Dombas conflict, Russia was presented as defending the people, while considering an intervention in the south of Ukraine to protect the population from the "terror carried out by Ukrainian authorities against its own people."[26]. The protective nature of Russia and the commitment to protect citizens, even against the "terror" that their own state was imposing, shifts two years later, when articles appear presenting Ukraine as "an artificial construct" doomed for disintegration. Naturally, if the political orientation of the Kyiv government shifted towards Russia, the disintegration could be prevented[27].

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[25] EUvsDisinfo,, A colour revolution is the best way for a country to lose part of its territory, 01/12/2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/a-colour-revolution-is-the-best-way-to-lose-a-part-of-its-territory

[26] EUvsDisinfo, The disintegration of Ukraine might start in the south, If..., 03.05.2016, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-disintegration-of-ukraine-might-start-in-the-south-if

[27] EUvsDisinfo, Ukraine is an artificial construct and its "disintegration" will continue if it remains hostile to Russia, 20.09.2018,

In 2019, the imminent dissolution of Ukraine due to Western ambitions is claimed in several articles. One article emphasizes that the "Poles, Hungarians, and Romanians have their eye on the Ukrainian territories, which historically were part of Poland, Hungary, and Romania. As the situation deteriorates in Ukraine, protection of national minorities will become in issue" stressing that Russia will respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the former Soviet states[28].

One month later, articles were posted presenting the US' diabolic plan to divide Ukraine through Volodymyr Zelenskyy's rule, who is a "catalyst of conflict between Ukrainian elites". Under the tutelage of the US, "guerilla warfare and subversive acts are coming […] which will give a start to a new stage of Ukraine's disintegration".[29] Again, the only solution is the acceptance of a Pax Russia.

In other articles, the EU diabolic plan to disintegrate Ukraine is explained. Similar landmarks, similar presentations only the actors differ. In this scenario, Volodymyr Zelenskyy will be overthrown by a new Euromaidan, as "gas-hungry Europe" will make a deal with Putin. Russia's grand strategy is developed around "Putin's effect", meaning the creation of a security construct around Ukraine, who "choked on Donbas". This construct includes EU vulnerability in the Energy sector, which will determine EU states to circumscribe from the Ukrainian issue. All European policymakers are presented as "fed up", from German president to Emmanuel Macron. Donald Trump will be forced to get rid of Zelenskyy due to US Democrats who will impose their decision in this matter. In fact, according to this scenario, the implications of the problems are even on a greater scale, including the US-China disputes where US needs Russia's

https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/ukraine-is-an-artificial-construct-and-its-disintegration-will-continue-if-it-remains-hostile-to-russia

[28] EUvsDisinfo, Ukraine will disintegrate and fall prey to territorial claims of EU Member States, 23.10.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/ukraine-can-start-splitting-from-within-and-fall-prey-to-eu-countries-territorial-claims

[29] EUvsDisinfo, Guerilla warfare and complete disintegration are coming to the US-Controlled Ukraine, 1.11.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/a-guerilla-warfare-and-complete-disintegration-are-coming-to-the-us-controlled-ukraine

support[30]. The final effect is the political collapse of the state, under foreign pressure and political collisions inside the state. The peace will come when Ukraine is divided between Russia and Europe[31].

In 2021, almost a year before Russia's invasion in Ukraine, the dissolution of Ukraine represents the paved way towards the ending of the conflict in Donbas[32], which would probably be the best solution as Ukraine will anyway "fall into pieces without gas transit fees", as it was stated in an article published in Hungarian in 2021[33].

Building on old regional political and territorial disputes, a considerable number of articles refer to a possible aggression of Poland on Ukraine, for "seizure of its "historical lands" of the territory which formed Ukrainian SSR"[34]. The reference to any historical claims from the Poland part is accompanied by references to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, another historical landmark. In different articles, Poland is depicted as a perpetrator of a "hot conflict with Russia on Ukrainian territory" and NATO and US will assist these ambitions[35]. The scenarios for the hot conflict differ from one reference to another. In an article, the government of Poland is supposed to have adopted a decision regarding a "peaceful contingent" who will invade Polish minority territories in Ukraine as the Russian unfolding plan will succeed and the armies will get closer to NATO and

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[30] EUvsDisinfo, The EU is fed up with Ukraine, it invariably faces a civil war and complete disintegration, 03.11.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-eu-is-fed-up-with-ukraine-it-invariably-faces-a-civil-war-and-complete-disintegration

[31] EUvsDisinfo, Ukraine will be divided between Russia and Europe, 30.05.2023 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/ukraine-will-be-divided-between-russia-and-europe

[32] EUvsDisinfo, Only Ukraine's disintegration will help to resolve the donbas crisis, 21.06.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/only-ukraines-disintegration-will-help-to-resolve-the-donbas-crisis

[33] EUvsDisinfo, Ukraine Will Fall Into Pieces Without Gas Transit Fees, 02.10.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/ukraine-will-fall-into-pieces-without-gas-transit-fees

[34] EUvsDisinfo, Poland is preparing to seize Western Ukraine, 30.10.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/poland-is-preparing-to-seize-western-ukraine

[35] EUvsDisinfo, The EU has turned into a branch of the Pentagon, 08.06.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-eu-has-turned-into-a-branch-of-the-pentagon

EU. The end goal in this scenario is to impose a referendum in the region, with the armies enforcing it, "on the accession of the Western regions of remaining Ukraine to Poland".[36]

An article published in Armenia, quoting the supposed declaration of the Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, claims the plan of an imminent attack of Polish forces on the 4th of May 2022, for ""temporarily transferring" the territories of Western Ukraine to Poland, allegedly for the purpose of more reliable protection".[37] Two weeks apart another article claims that the Polish invasion in Ukraine is a B plan of Western forces[38]. In some articles Romania and Poland are two hyenas trying to destroy Ukraine: "The appetites of Warsaw [and] Bucharest [...] are practically no longer hidden - they are directed to the Western part of Ukraine".[39]

Referring to Crimea, another article emphasizes the Western struggles not to recognize the true will of the population in Crimea, who voted in a plebiscite for the unification with Russia[40]. Recalling historical events, the article claims that Crimea was never part of Ukraine as: "In the 1950s, Nikita Khrushchev, during an administrative trip, attributed Crimea to the Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine. It was an administrative

[36] EUvsDisinfo, Poland is preparing to seize Western Ukraine, 30.10.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/poland-is-preparing-to-seize-western-ukraine
[37] EUvsDisinfo, Western Ukraine will be safe if it comes under the protection of Poland: Mateusz Morawiecki, 11.03.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/pwestern-ukraine-will-be-safe-if-it-comes-under-the-protection-of-poland-mateusz-morawiecki
[38] EUvsDisinfo, The West's plan B in Ukraine is a Polish invasion of Western Ukraine, 21.03.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-wests-plan-b-in-ukraine-is-a-polish-invasion-of-western-ukraine
[39] EUvsDisinfo, Two "hyenas of Europe" Poland and Romania claim Ukrainian territories, 17.04.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/two-hyenas-of-europe-poland-and-romania-claim-ukrainian-territories
[40] EUvsDisinfo, Crimea was unified with Russia after a plebiscite, however most western media incorrectly refer to it as an annexation, 20.07.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/crimea-was-unified-with-russia-after-a-plebiscite-however-most-western-media-incorrectly-refer-to-it-as-an-annexation

issue; besides that, Crimea has always been traditionally Russian, and the inhabitants are now totally satisfied with this situation."[41]

The Armenia-Azerbaijan dispute over Nagorno Karabakh

In the case of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, Russiais presented in several articles as the main guarantor of peace[42] between the two countries and the only one that can offer solutions for regional security. At the other pole are the EU, "guided by opportunistic interests", which tries to push Russia out of the South Caucasus[43] and the US, guided by its national interest[44]. At the same time, articles elaborating on historical "truths" about the region can be identified in Russian. They claim historical legitimacy of Russia over these territories because "Ukraine, Armenia and Azerbaijan have never been independent states" thus they are failing as "they have no history"[45]. Another article claims that they are on the "sphere of influence" of Russia and, also, they "were part of the Russian empire and USSR". Their independence is "an accidental historical occasion" and

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[41] EUvsDisinfo, Crimea was unified with Russia after a plebiscite, however most western media incorrectly refer to it as an annexation, 20.07.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/crimea-was-unified-with-russia-after-a-plebiscite-however-most-western-media-incorrectly-refer-to-it-as-an-annexation

[42] "Without Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia would destroy each other. The only logical way is to unite Azerbaijan and Armenia in a new Eurasian Union". EUvsDisinfo, Russia is the main guarantor of the existence of Azerbaijan and Armenia, 17.07.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/russia-is-not-only-the-main-ally-of-azerbaijan-and-armenia-but-also-the-guarantor-of-their-existence

[43] EUvsDisinfo, Brussels wants to squeeze Russia out of the Caucasus, 8.12.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/brussels-wants-to-squeeze-russia-out-of-the-caucasusm EUvsDisinfo, West aims to squeeze Russia out of Transcaucasia, 10.12.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/west-aims-to-squeeze-russia-out-of-transcaucasia

[44] EUvsDisinfo, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict favours US interests, someone wants to divert Russia from Belarus and Syria, 28.09.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/nagorno-karabakh-conflict-favours-us-interests-someone-wants-divert-russia-from-belarus-and-syria

[45] EUvsDisinfo, Ukraine, Armenia and Azerbaijan have never been independent states, 07.10.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/ukraine-armenia-and-azerbaijan-have-never-been-independent-states

"three decades of independence do not make Armenia and Azerbaijan accomplished sovereign states"[46].

The Eurasian Union is presented as an alternative to regional security, without necessarily generating a comparison with the EU. The creation of one Eurasian state is, according to many articles, the only solution to end frozen conflicts: "when the Eurasian Union becomes one state, there will be a way to resolve the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh"[47]. In this context the EU missions represent foreign interference in Russia's efforts to find a peaceful solution between Armenia and Azerbaijan and a reckless power play with the region's stability.[48] In the veil of the ongoing war in Ukraine, alarmist articles accuse Western states, especially France[49] and Great Britain[50], of being instigators of a new conflict in the region[51], aimed at bringing their own military forces in the region and removing Russia. The rhetoric is

[46] EUvsDisinfo, Armenia and Azerbaijan are part of historic Russia, their independence is accidental, 29.09.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/armenia-and-azerbaijan-are-part-of-historic-russia-their-independence-is-accidental

[47] EUvsDisinfo, Russia is the main guarantor of the existence of Azerbaijan and Armenia, 17.07.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/russia-is-not-only-the-main-ally-of-azerbaijan-and-armenia-but-also-the-guarantor-of-their-existence

[48] EUvsDisinfo, EU Mission in Armenia is an attempt to push out Russian mediation, 11.10.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/eu-mission-in-armenia-is-an-attempt-to-push-out-russian-mediation , EUvsDisinfo, Brussels wants to squeeze Russia out of the Caucasus, 8.12.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/brussels-wants-to-squeeze-russia-out-of-the-caucasusm

[49] EUvsDisinfo, France is provoking Armenia into war with Azerbaijan, 27.01.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/france-is-provoking-armenia-into-war-with-azerbaijan

[50] EUvsDisinfo, British Intelligence is an initiator of the Nagorno-Karabakh War, 27.10.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/british-intelligence-is-an-initiator-of-the-nagorno-karabakh-war , EUvsDisinfo, British Special Services the main initiators of the Karabakh conflict, 26.10.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/one-of-the-main-initiators-of-the-karabakh-conflict-are-british-special-services

[51] EUvsDisinfo, Western countries provoking people in Armenia and Azerbaijan to discredit and break the ceasefire Agreement, 18.11.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/provoke-people-in-armenia-and-azerbaijan-to-discredit-and-break-the-ceasefire-agreement EUvsDisinfo, West has no real intention of promoting a peaceful settlement between Armenia and Azerbaijan, 21.06.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/west-has-no-real-intention-of-promoting-a-peaceful-settlement-between-armenia-and-azerbaijan

extended to the US who, according to certain articles, try to bring troops in the region.[52]

Moldova and the Transnistrian conflict

In the case of the Republic of Moldova, the situation does not differ, but the rhetoric slightly changes to suit the collective mentalities and the Soviet propaganda. All the international actors, EU, US, Western states individually, Russia remain in the scenarios and Romania is added in different instances: either having its own interest in annexing the territory of Moldova based on historical claims or being an instrument of the EU or the US.

We identified several major directions of disinformation regarding the influence of the West in the country in comparison with Russia's commitment towards of the Republic of Moldova.

The influence of the West vs Russia over the country is presented in antithesis, even if not in the same article. There are two main influences emphasized: one regards the internal politics and the other the foreign relations. The influence of the West in internal politics is malignant and follows subjective interests. The US is accused of interfering in the parliamentary elections[53], preparing a Maidan in Moldova during the elections similar to the Kyiv Euromaidan[54] and the planning of a colour revolution in Moldova as a measure to address the pro-Russian sentiments within the Eastern European state. The involvement of the US is

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[52] EUvsDisinfo, The US and its allies are trying to reignite the clashes between Armenia and Azerbaijan, 18.11.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/us-allies-trying-reignite-clashes-armenia-azerbaijan

[53] "US ambassador's non-diplomatic manners clearly reflect US habits, combining threats with promises and imposing their will", EUvsDisinfo, The US interferes in Moldova's Parliamentary Elections, 12.02.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/us-engages-in-parliamentary-elections-in-moldova

[54] EUvsDisinfo, The US is preparing a maidan in Moldova, Russian Romanian language, 21.02.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-us-prepares-a-maidan-in-moldova ; The Moldovan Maidan scenario entered its active implementation stage, 07.12.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/moldovan-maidan-scenario-entered-implementation-stage

part of its framework to contain Russia[55]. The result of the elections and with Maia Sandu at the helm of the state is inevitable and timely: the collapse of Moldova[56]. Maia Sandu is presented as the representant of the "interest of the transnational oligarchy"[57]. According to other sources, the result of the elections will generate the implementation of US control over Moldova and repercussions over Transnistria[58].

The actions of the pro-West government are presented as an attempt to "get rid of everything Russian".[59] In this process, Moldova is giving up its identity by adopting the Romanian language instead of the Moldovan one[60]. The news uses a long Soviet rhetoric regarding the existence of the Moldavian language and its Slavic origins[61], which was developed starting with the formation of the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic in 1924, as a response to the Paris Versailles Treaty system which legalized the unification of Bessarabia to Romania. During the communist regime, the sovietization policy in Moldova included the recognition of a different language which was almost identical to Romanian, in order to elude any claims for the region. The Moldavian language was recognized by other states in the USSR. Even today, Ukraine continues this Soviet fiction and, although Moldova legalizes the use of the Romanian language, they still include the Moldavian language

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[55] EUvsDisinfo, Washington is preparing a colour revolution in Moldova, 21.10.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/washington-is-preparing-a-colour-revolution-in-moldova

[56] EUvsDisinfo, The Collapse of Moldova is Inevitable, 23.11.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-collapse-of-moldova-is-inevitable

[57] EUvsDisinfo, Maia Sandu represents the interests of the transnational oligarchy, 27.11.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/maia-sandu-represents-the-interests-of-the-transnational-oligarchy

[58] EUvsDisinfo, Victory of the Presidential Party in Moldova Will Lead to a Full US Control, 17.05.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/victory-of-the-presidential-party-in-moldova-will-lead-to-a-full-us-control

[59] EUvsDisinfo, Moldova gets rid of everything Russian, 20.12.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/moldova-gets-rid-of-everything-russian

[60] EUvsDisinfo, Moldova abandons its native language, 07.03.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/moldova-abandons-its-native-language

[61] Gheorghe E. Cojocaru, "Dezghetul" lui N. Hrusciov si problema Basarabiei, Ed. Cetatea de Scaun, Targoviste 2014

for the Romanian minorities, thus continuing Russia's policies in the region.

Continuing on the abovementioned thesis, other information induce the idea that Maia Sandu is "squeezing Russian and Moldavian out of Moldova" in an attempt to "change the mentality of the Moldovans"[62].

In matters of foreign policy, the West is the bad guy: USAID funds are an attempt to "decentralize Moldova and after that Moldova will be annexed by Romania"[63]; Europenization will inevitably bring islamization[64]; NATO is a threat, as it will generate a conflict between Moldova and Russia and most of the population is against this process[65]; EU and NATO will impose the abandonment of Transnistria[66]; the Eastern Partnership is a Russophobic construct[67] and the Association Agreement is meant to generate cheap workforce for EU states.[68]

From an economic viewpoint, the EU will bring poverty and Russia is the most important economic partner and the only state which will bring prosperity to Moldova[69]. Even though the data

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[62] EUvsDisinfo, Moldova: Maia Sandu is attempting to forcibly "Romanize" almost all spheres of life, 24.03.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/moldova-maia-sandu-is-attempting-to-forcibly-romanize-almost-all-spheres-of-life

[63] EUvsDisinfo, USAID will try to decentralize Moldova and after that Moldova will be annexed by Romania, 02.10.2017, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/usa-operation-moldova

[64] EUvsDisinfo, Europeanization of Moldova can turn into islamisation, 21.09.2018, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/europeanization-of-moldova-can-turn-into-islamisation

[65] EUvsDisinfo, NATO impoverished Moldova, 31.01.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/parliamentary-elections-nato-impoverished-moldova

[66] EUvsDisinfo, Moldova ready to abandon Transnistria for EU and NATO, 06.02.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/moldova-ready-to-abandon-transnistria-for-eu-and-nato

[67] EUvsDisinfo, Eastern Partnership is an aggressive Russophobic project directed against Russia, 14.05.2019 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/eastern-partnership-is-an-aggressive-russophobic-project-directed-against-russia

[68] EUvsDisinfo, The only benefit from the Association Agreement with the EU for Moldovans is the ability to care for the elderly in Italy, 17.06.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/care-for-the-elderly-in-italy-as-the-only-benefit-from-the-association-agreement-with-the-eu-for-moldovans

[69] EUvsDisinfo, The Republic of Moldova exports most of the products to the Russian Federation, 29.06.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-republic-of-

is absolutely false, the role of Russia is of a protective power against Westernization which will lead to the demise of the economy and of the society.

The claims that "a violent "Romanization" of almost all spheres of life, and firstly – culture" is occurring are present in many articles. What the Soviet system did to these regions is exactly what is being pinpointed in the articles, but the culprit is the West through Maia Sandu. The articles appeal to familiar information which are twisted towards a common enemy which menaces the core existence and core system of belief of the citizens.

From the old Pax Sovietica to the new Pax Russia

Concurring articles, in different months and different regions depict a war of the West with Russia, which is presented as the protector of the region, the aggressed one, subject to Western plots to diminish its power or territorial integrity. Several plans are mentioned, all against Russia's integrity and involvement in the regions: the West aims to squeeze Russia out of Transcaucasia[70]; the "martyr's belt" is aimed at generating an "explosive geopolitical belt" around Russia – starting "with Finland, then walk along with the Baltic troika, Poland, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan. Further – Central Asia … And so on up to the Pacific Ocean and Japan"[71]; the "anaconda ring" is a plan against Russia who will generate conflicts

moldova-exports-most-of-the-products-to-the-russian-federation ; Moldova is helped only by China and Russia in the fight with COVID-19, 26.03.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/moldova-is-helped-only-by-china-and-russia-in-the-fight-with-covid-19 ; The EU conditions the aid for the Republic of Moldova on the ceding of sovereignty, 02.06.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-eu-conditions-the-aid-for-the-republic-of-moldova-on-the-ceding-of-sovereignty

[70] EUvsDisinfo, West aims to squeeze Russia out of Transcaucasia, 10.12.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/west-aims-to-squeeze-russia-out-of-transcaucasia; brussels wants to squeeze Russia out of the Caucasus, 08.12.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/brussels-wants-to-squeeze-russia-out-of-the-caucasusm

[71] EUvsDisinfo, Certain forces have encircled Russia with an explosive geopolitical belt, 03.11.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/certain-forces-have-encircled-russia-with-an-explosive-geopolitical-belt

encircling it[72]. The imminent destruction of the CIS and CSTO is fueled with conflicts such the Nagorno- Karabakh which is part of a "third party plan to drag Russia in a big war" and divert its attention form the peaceful efforts in Belarus, Syria or Nord Stream II[73]. The EU is seeking to change Russia and "an exemplary Russia should be an obedient semi-colony, to which the EU will dictate not only foreign policy, but also domestic life"[74]. Reference to the former defense and friendship alliance known as the Warsaw Pact are done with the sole purpose to point towards US or EU anti-Russia actions meant at containing its rise: "because who controls Eastern Europe controls Eurasia, and who controls Eurasia controls the world"[75]

While perpetuating the fine line between negotiation and imposing a decision, the propaganda tends to present the EU as weak for not solving the disputes Russia generated and the real solution for these states could be what was prior integrated in *Pax Sovietica* in terms of political process, now embedded in the Eurasian integration.

So called menaces to regional security have been emphasized through different articles prior and after the War in Ukraine. The main themes can be synthetized as follows:

o Weapons – during the 2020 conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Ukraine was accused of delivering weapons to

[72] EUvsDisinfo, Clashes in Nagorno Karabakh are part of an anaconda ring plan against Russia, 09.10.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/clashes-nagorno-karabakh-anaconda-ring-plan-against-russia

[73] EUvsDisinfo, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict favours US interests, someone wants to divert Russia from Belarus and Syria,

[74] EUvsDisinfo, The EU wants to make Russia a semi-colony to dictate its foreign and domestic policy, 10.02.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-eu-wants-to-make-russia-semi-colony-to-dictate-foreign-and-domestic-policy

[75] EUvsDisinfo, US encourages anti-Russian aspirations of former Warsaw Pact members, 20.02.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/us-encourages-anti-russian-aspirations-of-former-warsaw-pact-members

Azerbaijan[76] or of training militants to fight against Armenia[77]. EU sends junk weapons in Ukraine[78],

o Biolaboratories – In 2020, warning articles describe US plans to finance biolaboratories in Armenia ($535,000), Georgia ($962,000) and Moldova ($115,000) emphasizing the presence of secret sites in ex-Soviet states[79]. The plans to close the biolabs in Ukraine are claimed to be the main reason for the US orchestrated Euromaidan[80]. The US laboratories are presented as culpable of the Coronavirus pandemic[81]. Articles written in Russian and Lithuanian present the Russian concerns about the US biological laboratories in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Uzbekistan and Ukraine operated by military biologists. Of particular concern are the Central Reference Laboratory in Kazakhstan and the Richard Lugar Centre in Georgia[82]. Articles written in Arabic and disseminated on multiple websites claim that ex-Soviet states such as Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan have built biolaboratories on their soil to serve the American strategies in the region[83]. Another article disseminated in English and

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[76] "Kyiv sent military cargo worth USD 780,000 to Turkish ports", EUvsDisinfo, Kyiv to transport weapons to Azerbaijan, 09.10.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/kyiv-to-transport-weapons-to-azerbaijan

[77] EUvsDisinfo, Kyiv prepares militants to fight against Armenia, 08.10.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/kyiv-prepares-militants-to-fight-against-armenia

[78] EUvsDisinfo, The West is delivering junk weapons to Ukraine, 29.06.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-west-is-delivering-junk-weapons-to-ukraine

[79] EUvsDisinfo, The Pentagon purchased equipment for secret biolaboratories for millions of dollars, 19.08.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-pentagon-purchased-equipment-for-secret-biolaboratories-for-millions-of-dollars

[80] EUvsDisinfo, Plans to close biolabs in Ukraine made US start supporting euromaidan, 29.04.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/plans-to-close-us-laboratories-in-ukraine-made-us-start-supporting-euromaidan

[81] EUvsDisinfo, COVID-19 brings attention to US secret laboratories on the borders of Russia and China, 31.03.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/coronavirus-brings-attention-us-secret-laboratories-borders-russia-china

[82] EUvsDisinfo, The US is developing biological weapon in laboratories in post-soviet republics, 17.05.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-us-is-developing-biological-weapon-in-laboratories-in-post-soviet-republics

[83] EUvsDisinfo, The US is building biolaboratories on Russian borders, 12.04.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-us-is-building-biolaboratories-on-russian-borders

Arabic "exposes" the presence of 16 laboratories operating on Ukrainian territory near large cities. The laboratories are not present only in Ukraine, the article claims their presence in "Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia which surrounds (Russia) as a potential enemy"[84].

 o Chemical and radiological materials (weapons or testing materials for laboratories) - the article published in Hungarian elaborates on the supposed chemical weapons sold by Ukraine to Azerbaijan to be used in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict[85]. The possible chemical attacks or nuclear material use for war purposes are recalled in a multitude of articles especially prior and after Russia's aggression over Ukraine. So, we learn that "Kyiv authorities are preparing a "chemical Chernobyl" for the East of Ukraine"[86]; that in Donbas Ukrainian forces used chemical weapons[87]; in the months prior to the invasion, Ukraine is depicted as intending to use chemical weapons[88]. During the war, along with articles presenting "intentions" to use chemical weapons, the intent to use nuclear terrorism is emphasized[89].

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[84] EUvsDisinfo, US Hasn't Ratified the Biological Weapons Convention and Uses Labs Around Russia, 04.03.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/us-hasnt-ratified-the-biological-weapons-convention-and-uses-labs-around-russia

[85] EUvsDisinfo, Ukraine Sold Chemical Weapons to Azerbaijan for the Karabakh War, 29.12.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/ukraine-sold-chemical-weapons-to-azerbaijan-for-the-karabakh-war

[86] EUvsDisinfo, Kyiv authorities are preparing a "chemical Chernobyl" for the East of Ukraine, 05.07.2016, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/kyiv-authorities-are-preparing-a-chemical-chernobyl-for-the-east

[87] EUvsDisinfo, Ukrainian armed forces used chemical weapons in Donbas, 19.10.2016, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/ukrainian-armed-forces-used-chemical-weapons-in-donbas

[88] EUvsDisinfo, West pushing Ukraine to war crimes with the use of chemical weapons, bombing of civilians, 21.02.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/west-pushing-ukraine-to-war-crimes-with-the-use-of-chemical-weapons-bombing-of-civilians ; Chemical weapons "provocations" are prepared in Donbas, 21.01.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/chemical-weapons-provocations-are-prepared-in-donbas ; US Private military contractors are preparing to use chemical weapons in Ukraine, 15.01.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/us-private-military-contractors-are-preparing-to-use-chemical-weapons-in-ukraine

[89] EUvsDisinfo, Ukraine is using methods of nuclear terrorism against Russia, 15.07.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/ukraine-is-using-methods-of-nuclear-terrorism-against-russia

Despite the attacks and insidious plans of the West, Russia is strong and fighting for the future of the region. The pandemic showed that "Moscow has become so strong and Brussels so weak"[90]. Even if **no clear plan on Russia's view on regional security is articulated**, the articles induce the idea that the security and stability of the region can be ensured only through Russia's concept of security. The Western interferences are all aimed at reducing its presence and the protection it extends to former Soviet states. The historical arguments, the economic impact and the fight for a new world order are all part of the new Pax Sovietica and is a "peace" process that could lead to a Eurasian state. The fight is even greater than political disputes, it involves the way of life, the identity, and the culture of the populations in the region, who need defending from a progressivist agenda.

EU - a danger to the region

According to Russian propaganda, the European Union is the real danger in the region, with its reckless politics and power plays trying to control the region, to impoverish it, to transform it into a colony. The EU is presented as an aggressive force which tries to push Russia out, by generating conflicts, transforming the region into a battlefield, and thus, removing the only chance of peace and prosperity. The tags are classic and can be encountered in communist propaganda: the West has only political interests and does not consider the populations in the region,

The Russian claims are part of a larger whirl process of delegitimization of the international system and institutions. It was significant during the Syria war and the Navalny case, when in an attempt to prove a non-involvement, all international organizations were put under attack. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is described as an American organization, as a weapon or a weapon under American control,

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[90] EUvsDisinfo, Chernobyl triggered the USSR's collapse, while the COVID-19 pandemic has started the process of the EU' disintegration, 01.03.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/chernobyl-triggered-the-ussrs-collapse-while-the-covid-19-pandemic-has-started-the-process-of-the-eu-disintegration

and its activity is not independent and free[91] or it is a Western countries' platform "to fabricate accusations"[92]. The UN, where Russia has a permanent seat in the Security Council, is also a "tool of the West to defame Syria"[93]. In the mist of the pandemic the WHO is presented as developing "plans to reduce the global population"[94].

There are several themes circulating considering the EU:

o *The imminent disintegration of the EU*. "The UK is just a first, extreme manifestation of the trend which tears the EU apart from within" and other states are set to follow such as Italy, Spain, Portugal, and France[95]. The crisis is generating changes, and as "Chernobyl triggered the USSR's collapse", the unfold of the COVID-19 pandemic effects will generate the disintegration of the EU[96], possibly by 2028[97]. As EU disintegrates, it promotes

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[91] EUvsDisinfo, OPCW is controlled by Americans, 24.10.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/opcw-is-controlled-by-americans ; An OPCW document refutes the West's allegations about the poisoning of Navalny, 22.07.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/an-opcw-document-refutes-the-wests-allegations-about-the-poisoning-of-navalny ; OPCW is an American tool in a geopolitical game, 03.06.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/opcw-is-an-american-tool-in-a-geopolitical-game

[92] EUvsDisinfo, OPCW has become a tool in the hands of hostile countries, 05.01.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/opcw-has-become-a-tool-in-the-hands-of-hostiles

[93] EUvsDisinfo, The West is turning the UN into a tool to defame Syria, 02/09/2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-west-is-turning-the-un-into-a-tool-to-defame-syria

[94] EUvsDisinfo, WHO may be involved in a plot to reduce global population, 19.04.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/in-operation-covid-19-who-is-involved-with-vaccines-or-rather-chemical-weapons

[95] EUvsDisinfo, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and possibly even France are in line to exit the EU, 09.09.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/italy-spain-portugal-and-possibly-even-france-are-in-line-to-exit-the-eu

[96] EUvsDisinfo, Chernobyl triggered the USSR's collapse, while the COVID-19 pandemic has started the process of the EU' disintegration.

[97] EUvsDisinfo, The EU will split-up by 2028, 27.11.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/putin-predicted-the-split-up-of-eu-until-2028

anti-Russia and anti-democratic agenda[98]. The economic collapse is imminent and the crises are only anticipating that[99]

o *The EU is controlled by the US*. The US transformed the EU in a colony, to which it dictates foreign and internal policy, but states will revolt, and the US will lose control[100]. We learn that the US has military interests in Europe and that the EU has turned into a branch of the Pentagon[101] or that the EU is a military colony of the US and its countries are vassals of America[102].

o *EU programmes for the East are problematic, inefficient, and dangerous*. The Eastern Partnership (EaP) programme is a programme developed as a "leash" on Partner Countries[103] to prevent the integration of Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in the Eurasian political and economic space[104]. "Belarus, along with Azerbaijan and Armenia, belongs to the group of "second-class" countries" and the EU has an arrogant and abusive relationship with them[105]. The EaP is sketched as a Russophobic instrument which launches strategies

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[98] EUvsDisinfo, A dying EU promotes an anti-Russian, anti-democratic agenda, 06.02.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/a-dying-eu-promotes-anti-russian-anti-democratic-agenda

[99] EUvsDisinfo, EU's economic collapse is approaching, 22.06.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/eus-economic-collapse-is-approaching

[100] EUvsDisinfo, Europe, in fact, is a colony of the United States, 16.07.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/europe-in-fact-is-a-colony-of-the-united-states

[101] EUvsDisinfo, The EU has turned into a branch of the Pentagon, 08.06.2022, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-eu-has-turned-into-a-branch-of-the-pentagon

[102] EUvsDisinfo, Europe is a military colony of the United States and European countries are obedient vassals of the Americans, 27.08.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/europe-is-a-military-colony-of-the-united-states-and-european-countries-are-obedient-vassals-of-the-americans

[103] EUvsDisinfo, Eastern Partnership was developed as a leash on member countries, 23.12.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/eastern-partnership-was-developed-as-a-leash-on-member-countries

[104] EUvsDisinfo, Eastern Partnership aimed at preventing integration of six republics into Eurasian Space, 29.10.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/eastern-partnership-aimed-at-preventing-integration-of-six-republics-into-eurasian-space

[105] EUvsDisinfo, Belarus, Azerbaijan and Armenia are the group of "second-class" countries of the Eastern Partnership, 26.11.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/belarus-azerbaijan-and-armenia-are-the-group-of-second-class-countries-of-eastern-partnership

and disinformation about Russia[106]. EU Missions are doubtful in terms of functioning, mandate, duration and values. They are not meant at solving conflicts and bring little added values to the peace process[107]. Referring to the tensions between Baku and Yerevan, the EU missions are presented as "doomed to fail" as "historically" the EU missions could not develop a real settlement in any dispute.[108] The EU Association Agreement made Ukraine, Moldova or other states have as indirect purpose the transformation of these states in colonies[109].

   o *The EU is a colony and wants to colonize the former Soviet states.* Former communist states in the EU and outside are being treated as colonies, leaving them only one solution Roexit in the case of Romania[110] or Georgia, which "has never been a sovereign state, but in reality a colony of both the European Union and the United States"[111].

Minority rights and political instrumentalization of ethnic minorities

   Minority rights are not respected by most of Western influenced countries, and this is why Russia had to intervene

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[106] EUvsDisinfo, The EU Eastern Partnership is a Russophobic instrument, 20.12.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/pls-see-cthe-eu-eastern-partnership-is-a-russophobic-instrument; The EU used the Eastern Partnership Summit to launch more fake news about Russia, 16.12.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-eu-used-the-eastern-partnership-summit-to-launch-more-fake-news-about-russia

[107] EUvsDisinfo, The EU openly abuses relations with Armenia and Azerbaijan through EUMA, 28.02.2023, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-eu-openly-abuses-relations-with-armenia-and-azerbaijan-through-euma

[108] EUvsDisinfo, EU Mission in Armenia is an Attempt to Push Out Russian Mediation, 11.10.2022

[109] EUvsDisinfo, The EU Association Agreement made Ukraine a colony of the European Union, 07.07.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-eu-association-agreement-made-ukraine-a-colony-of-the-european-union; The Association Agreement destroyed Ukrainian economy, it became a Western colony, 14.05.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/association-agreement-destroyed-ukrainian-economy-it-became-the-colony-of-the-west

[110] EUvsDisinfo, EU treats Romania as a colony, 09.05.2018, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/eu-treats-romania-as-a-colony

[111] EUvsDisinfo, Georgia is a colony of the EU and the US, 14.07.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/georgia-is-a-colony-of-the-eu-and-the-us

even militarily. The Russophobic attitudes of Western supported politicians bring more tensions in the region and, because of this, more conflict. The right of the people should be respected in the way Russia considers fit and just, and generally serving the historical rhetoric.

There are three manners in which the minority rights are being instrumentalized:

● All Eastern Europe areas were part of Russia, which has all the legitimate rights over the territories. In this case, other nations or ethnic groups do not exist and are not relevant: "Ukrainians and Russians are generally one people" or "Belarusians are the same, the same indigenous people as the Russians and Ukrainians."[112]

● *The Russian minority voted for Crimea, or protection of Russian minorities in Eastern countries, which is a declared goal of Russia*. Without recalling the articles we already presented in the previous subchapters, we will make only the following references: Russophobic politicians such as Volodymyr Zelenskyy or Maia Sandu humiliate and deprive the Russian minority in Ex-Soviet states of their rights. The use of minority rights comes with the historical reference to the Soviet Union, as in other situations and contexts. Furthermore, the Russian minorities are denigrated in an American style as: "the American "colour revolution" was planned and implemented by the same people who tried these techniques in Ukraine, Georgia, and some other countries, where "young democracies" with bloody hands and big love for local Nazi collaborators came to power"[113].

● *The West is using minorities in the East to generate security problems*. In a sensational presentation concerning Poland's use of minorities for political purposes, some articles talk about the New Cold War. Recalling Zbigniew Brzezinski approach concerning "the use of ethnic conflict in the post-Soviet

[112] EUvsDisinfo, Ukrainians, Belarusians and Russians are one single nation, 21.01.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/ukrainians-belarusians-and-russians-are-one-single-nation

[113] EUvsDisinfo, trump's supporters are humiliated and denigrated just as Russian minorities in the post-soviet countries, 06/11/2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/trumps-supporters-are-humiliated-and-denigrated-just-as-russian-minorities-in-the-post-soviet-countries

area for destabilization of Russia", articles build on the narrative that Poland is trying to destabilize Belarus as an attempt to stop the state in its endeavor to further integrate into Eurasia. The article also refers to Washington's interference in the region and the fact that Poland is acting according to EU instructions. The article circulated in Russian language in 2021[114].

In this form, Russia uses both sides of the rhetoric on minorities depending on the circumstances and the political processes it must legitimize.

2.2.3 Theme 3: Capitalism - a menace to the society

International economic organizations work against countries, and they are an instrument of the West to control countries around the world. This perception was well developed during communism, where communist countries generated regional international organizations to suit their purposes. This is the case of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, developed as a response to the Marshall Plan, and which gathered the communist states in an economic alliance meant at developing in a harmonious way the economies of all the states involved. It was created in 1949 at the initiative of the URSS and should have stimulated commerce between Eastern Europe states. In reality, URSS tried to use the organization to control the states that were part of it, an aspect underlined many times by communist states, including China, which refuse to take part in the organization[115].

The way international organizations are presented resonates with the old rhetoric, as the Eurasia Community is the good character in the story and Western organizations are developed and are trying to control the countries in the region.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is described to be: "a fake organisation bogged down in bureaucracy, intrigues, and money-laundering". The impact over the society of the policies

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[114] EUvsDisinfo, Warsaw is Using the Polish Minority in Belarus to Serve Geopolitical Games of Washington, 18.04.2021 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/warsaw-is-using-the-polish-minority-in-belarus-to-serve-geopolitical-games-of-washington
[115] Elena Dragomir, Opoziția din interior. România și politicile CAER față de CEE (1957-1989), Ed. Cetatea de scaun, Târgoviște, 2019

developed are negative. In an article referring to Belarus "IMF is now pushing the government of Belarus to introduce strict limitation for population" and impose "sexual minority issues and defend their rights"[116]. Also, NATO is a "militaristic coronavirus of capitalism directed against global progress" which wants to deprive countries of their rights and to transform them into colonies[117].

"Manufactured dissent" is a capitalist funded movement to eliminate capitalism. The movement is propagated through climate related NGOs and initiatives and activists are being played by potent American businessmen such as Rockefeller to protest[118]. In the same line of thoughts, George Soros is presented as a capitalist tyrant who used universities and NGOs to promote the abolishment of borders as a mean to impose capitalist without borders and consumerism ideas, which will bring migrants for lower salaries[119].

Moving from individuals to states level of analysis, we discover that capitalism has become an international system that "kills nations". Recalling the liberal school of thought in international relations and twisting their basic concepts, the propaganda induces the idea that "capitalism today – which is global and globalising – openly strives to destroy nations and states and to establish a world government as the supreme power and controller of national governments"[120].

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[116] EUvsDisinfo, The IMF Conditions Loans to Belarus with Gender Equality and Rights of Sexual Minorities, 24.04.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-imf-conditions-loans-to-belarus-with-gender-equality-and-rights-of-sexual-minorities

[117] EUvsDisinfo, NATO is an aggressive coronavirus of capitalism, 06.06.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/nato-is-an-aggressive-coronavirus-of-capitalism-us-and-ukrainian-fascists-are-in-war-against-russia

[118] EUvsDisinfo, The climate movement is distracting millions from the real threats of human life on planet earth, 30.09.2019 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-climate-movement-is-distracting-millions-from-the-real-threats-of-human-life-on-planet-earth

[119] EUvsDisinfo, George Soros is a merchant of migrants and an exterminator of cultures, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/george-soros-is-a-merchant-of-migrants-and-an-exterminator-of-cultures

[120] EUvsDisinfo, Global capitalism strives to destroy nations and states and to establish a world government, 14.09.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/todays-

There is an entire global conspiracy, which accumulates states, religion and companies to control, through capitalism, the East and "Pope Francis and Mastercard are working together to give corporations a stronger voice in cultural and political matters".[121] In these conspiracies, the Western forces use the pandemic to "strengthen capitalism" by "deliberately exaggerating the coronavirus pandemic and intensifying fear about it among the population".[122]

Facing this danger, the only solution is a union of states such as Russia and Belarus who, in a messianic mission, will save the post-soviet countries from "pro-fascist West". The process of colonization started after the fall of the Soviet Union, and was developed in conflicts that could keep the region in balance. In this scenario, the Eastern European countries, members of NATO and of the EU, "do dirty work promoting disintegration, bringing tensions and confrontation along the whole perimeter of all-Russian civilisation". The Union between Russia and Belarus is seen as a stepping stone in a regional emancipation from fascism and capitalism.[123] Because of this threat, the West attacks both Russia and Belarus, as they can become an "alternative to capitalism": "the economic model realised by President Lukashenka – it may potentially be interesting for other countries, so it is perceived as a "bad example". It shows that the enterprises can be used as a communal property; that it is possible to carry out egalitarian policies providing all citizens with

global-capitalism-openly-strives-to-destroy-nations-and-states-and-to-establish-a-world-government

[121] EUvsDisinfo, Global elites want to increase control of the population after the pandemic, 03.01.2021, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/global-elites-planning-great-reset-increase-control-population-pandemic

[122] EUvsDisinfo, Western governments exaggerate coronavirus pandemic to strengthen capitalism, 07.04.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/western-governments-are-deliberately-exaggerating-the-coronavirus-pandemic-to-strengthen-global-corporate-capitalism-and-to-accelerate-globalisation

[123] EUvsDisinfo, The union state of Belarus and Russia saves post-soviet countries from pro-fascist West, 04.12.2019, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-union-state-of-belarus-and-russia-saves-post-soviet-countries-from-pro-fascist-west

minimum social benefits"[124]. The clear communist view on society and economy is not stated as such, it is merely a new model. Again, in this case, even if the model presented has ideological roots in the communism, no reference is made to this aspect, instead the "bad Capitalism" can be "defeated" by a new model with no particular name or label and only promoted by an ingenious small country with a ruler counting almost 30 years in office.

2.2.4 Theme 4: Migration - a menace to security and national cultures

The West is presented as having a special plan to bring migrants in Europe to destroy the countries, their culture, to increase security risks, to dilute cultures, to impose a new culture and to change the way of life. This movement is part of a globalist paradigm and is propagated through different means. George Soros is presented to have been transferring part of his fortune to his foundation to impose "the wildest version of capitalism and erasing any identitarian element". He is presented to use the excuse of protecting minorities and refugees, but his main goal would be to promote a globalist rhetoric, and to contribute to the abolishment of the state and borders. The uncontrolled migration is, in the view of this article, an attempt to "extirpate" history and the differences between countries [125].

On a European level, Macron and Markle have a special plan put in place to "flood Europe with migrants"[126] or this could be a special plan of the US, and European states are just putting it into place[127].

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[124] EUvsDisinfo, The "capital" wants to destroy Belarus because it presents an alternative to capitalism, 27.07.2020, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-capital-wants-to-destroy-belarus-because-it-presents-an-alternative-to-capitalism

[125] EUvsDisinfo, George Soros is a merchant of migrants and an exterminator of cultures,

[126] EUvsDisinfo, Macron and Merkel will flood Europe with millions of migrants, 04.12.2018, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/macron-and-merkel-will-flood-europe-with-millions-of-migrants

[127] EUvsDisinfo, US organises migration to destroy Europe, 15.01.2018 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/us-allegeldy-organises-migration-to-destroy-europe

Due to migration, Europe will become Muslim[128], violence will increase in all forms[129], social security will decrease, and social values will be changed.

2.3 Multicultural communities and the impact of propaganda and disinformation. Study case: Ditrau[130], Transylvania, Romania

When we take into analysis the Ditrau case, a small village (5.500 inhabitants) in Transylvania, Romania, we must consider propaganda, disinformation and the influence a foreign state can have over the collective mentality of a minority in another state. In the press at that time, the situation was presented in many ways, from equidistant and analytical to more tendentious, but as a conclusion we must acknowledge that the situation was generated by manipulation, disinformation and misinformation. So, whether we look at the root of the problem or the result we are directed towards the same issue, namely the impact of communication over the citizens.

The news, which at a first glance looks more like a fantasy story with medieval notes rather than a real one from a European state, has all the elements of generating a viral and debated topic. One takes a minority community in the country, but which forms the majority in the village, submit it for years to political indoctrination, lucrative in generation votes and normally a lot of misinformation from the international press - and I say international because in discussion there is another state which

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[128] EUvsDisinfo, Europe will become Muslim, 1.12.2017, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/europe-will-become-muslim, The EU and the us try to foster Islamisation of Europe, 06.60.2017, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-eu-and-the-us-have-facilitated-an-unlawful-election

[129] EUvsDisinfo, Due to migration, the number of rapes in Sweden has increased by 1000% in two years, 9.12.2017, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/due-to-migration-the-number-of-rapes-in-sweden-has-increased-by-1000-in-two-years

[130] Romanian spelling: Ditrău.

has the same official language as the respective minority community.

Two immigrants were caught in the middle of the mixture, who, this time, happened to be from Sri Lanka, but could just as easily be from India, Bangladesh or Congo. Their presence irritated the community so much that the tensions reached a peak with public manifestations leading to a public consultation and which, in a cascade effect, led to a "democratic" consultation to "legitimate" the expulsion from the community of the two peaceful immigrants who were diligently working in a traditional bakery. The subject became sensational with the help of the press and the social media, where everyone had something to say, contributing thus to the disinformation and polarization around the subject.

Romania - information and disinformation

For years, states, security organizations, the European Union have been talking about hybrid war, the effects of nonlinear or asymmetric war and a component of it is disinformation. From the 2014 invasion in Ukraine, the disinformation phenomenon increased as part of Russia's propaganda and hybrid war doctrine. The effects cumulated in time and disinformation, under the catalyst effect of the online environment, exponentially multiplied what propaganda did in the past.

In order to X-ray the situation at European level, the EU commissioned a Euro-barometer on online disinformation and fake news. In essence, 85% of those interviewed believe that fake news is real in their country and that it represents a threat to democracy. Of these, 37% say they encounter fake news every day and 31% at least once a week[131].

When asked who should stop the phenomenon, 45% believed that journalists should be active in stopping fake news, 39% believe that the authorities should intervene, followed by media agencies, citizens, social networks, EU institutions and non-governmental organizations. Interesting in this case is that

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[131] Flash Eurobarometer 464, Fake news and disinformation online, Report, European Commission, February 2018, https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2183

the responsibility of each citizen to combat disinformation is left in the last places, thus most of the respondents excluded themselves or considered that they play a smaller role in this process.

What sources of information do Romanians trust?

In order to understand which sources of information Romanians use, we looked at the Eurobarometer statistics and we tried to identify where Romania is situated by using different sources of information comparing this position to the EU correlated data.

When asked which sources of information they trust, including online sources and traditional media, European citizens have more trust in traditional media: radio (70%), television (66%), print newspapers (63%), online newspapers (47%) and in the last places are web pages, applications or social media networks (20-30%).

In Romania, 66% of respondents say they trust the information they get from the radio, ranking 7th from the bottom compared to the other EU states, followed by Bulgaria, Poland, Italy and last-place Hungary.

Q1.5 How much do you trust or not the news and information you access through...
Radio (%)
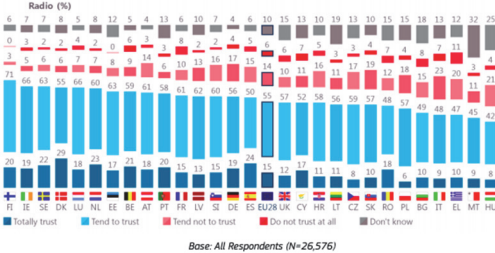
Base: All Respondents (N=26,576)

The same percentage of trust is given to televisions by respondents, but in the ranking Romania climbs a few positions, being located right next to the European average. Poland, Hungary and Greece are in the last three places in terms of trust in relation to the information provided by television.

Q1.4 How much do you trust or not the news and information you access through...
Television (%)
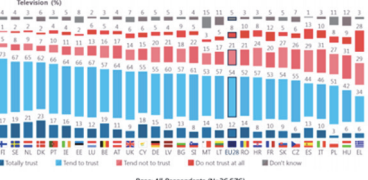
Base: All Respondents (N=26,576)

Print newspapers and magazines inspire the most trust in terms of content in Finland (90%) and Denmark (80%). Romania (45%)

drops to fourth place from the bottom of the ranking followed by Bulgaria, Malta and Hungary.

The situation changes when the credibility of online newspapers and magazines is questioned, where Romania drops one position and gives 52% trust, followed by Bulgaria and Hungary, and at the opposite pole, the highest trust is found in Denmark: 70%, and the European average is 65%.
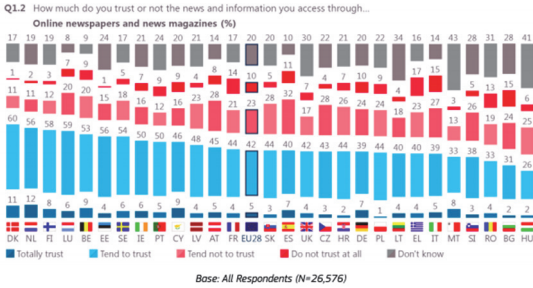
The last two questions are related to the credibility of the other online sources and the spectacular increase in Romania's position in the ranking must raise concerns. Questioned how much trust they have in video hosting websites and podcasts, 33% give increased trust to them, which places Romania in the 10th place in Europe, at a considerable distance from the European average of 27%. Germany and Hungary ranked in the last two places.
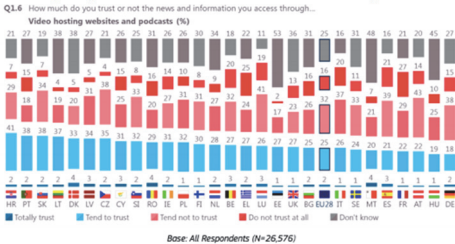
The information found on social networks shows increased trust for 39% of respondents, Romania occupying the 3rd place, at a considerable distance from the European average of 26%. In the last places we find Italy, Germany and Austria.

Q1.3 How much do you trust or not the news and information you access through ...
Online social networks and messaging apps (%)

Base: All Respondents (N=26,576)
■ Totally trust ■ Tend to trust ■ Tend not to trust ■ Do not trust at all ■ Don't know
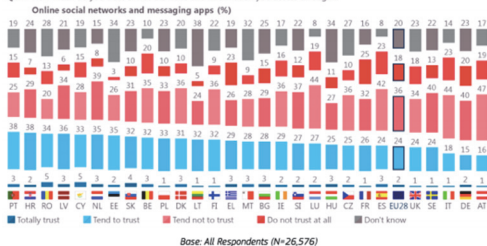
Asked how often they encounter false information or that distorts reality in their country, respondents from Hungary are in second place with a percentage of 77%, whereas Romania scores 68%. At the opposite pole, we find countries such as Finland and Lithuania, which could be found at the top of the ranking for the trust given to information received through traditional media.[132]

What should we understand from the presented statistics?

In Romania, there is a low level of trust towards the traditional media compared to the rest of Europe. This situation can be explained by the practices of a part of the mass media, which compromises the credibility of the entire system. It is obvious that the politically controlled press leads to a loss of credibility and unfortunately affects the work of honest and objective journalists. In an independent inquiry on how political parties spend their money on media, TV stations receive more than 90% of the money political parties spend on mass media institutions[133]. In numbers, according to the investigation, only one political party paid to the mass media (TV and newspapers – print and online) more than 9.500.000 EURO a year[134].

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[132] The statistical data is retrieved from Flash Eurobarometer 464, Fake news and disinformation online, Report, European Commission, February 2018.

[133] Victor Ilie, Mihai Voinea, Cristian Delcea, Pretul tacerii. O investigatie in contabilitatea presei de partid, Recorder, https://recorder.ro/pretul-tacerii-o-investigatie-in-contabilitatea-presei-de-partid/

Andrei Crăițoiu, Recorder a publicat banii dați de PSD și PNL către unele televiziuni și site-uri, provenind dintr-o scurgere de documente, 14 septembrie 2022, Libertatea, https://www.libertatea.ro/stiri/recorder-a-publicat-banii-dati-de-psd-si-pnl-catre-unele-televiziuni-si-siteuri-provenind-dintr-o-scurgere-de-documente-4277301

[134] Andrei Crăițoiu, Recorder a publicat banii dați de PSD și PNL către unele televiziuni și site-uri, provenind dintr-o scurgere de documente, 14 septembrie

Perhaps a question should also be asked about the role of CNA (Consiliul National al Audiovizualului/ National Audiovisual Council) in this system and of TVR - the publicly funded television - especially if we look at disinformation as a phenomenon that affects state security and the fact that mass media has an obligation toward education.

Regarding the large percentage of respondents who trust the online environment, including social media, some nuances are necessary. Certainly, the presence of a certain type of message on social media pages, newspapers, radio and television can cause a number of respondents to assimilate the information provided on the respective pages. However, the large number must raise questions about the risks of accessing pages that generate disinformation. In the same statistics, those who access the online environment are mainly young, therefore the information must be adapted to their means of communication and preferences regarding the assimilation of information.

On the other hand, Romania is in the first place in the DESI index for participating in social networks and on the second place is Hungary[135]. Thus, this aspect correlates with the high index of persons using social media as a source of information.

How do we explain the case of Hungary?

In the case of Hungary, the data are perfectly correlated: in total, trust in both the classic press and information from the online environment is the lowest in Europe. The only increase is noticeable in the information from social media, which enjoys relatively more credibility compared to the information acquired at the national level[136]. Correlating the data with the country's situation, with the control exercised by Viktor Orban over media

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2022, Libertatea, https://www.libertatea.ro/stiri/recorder-a-publicat-banii-dati-de-psd-si-pnl-catre-unele-televiziuni-si-siteuri-provenind-dintr-o-scurgere-de-documente-4277301

[135] European Commission, Digital Economy and Society Index Report 2019 Use of internet services Digital Economy and Society Index Report 2019 Use of internet services. https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/digital-economy-and-society-index-desi-2019

[136] Flash Eurobarometer 464,

institutions[137], control that often reaches the censorship marks[138], it is natural for the population to follow alternative sources and in this case the online environment is particularly fertile.

To this we must add the notorious Orban's critiques to EU migration policies, the menaces to the traditional values and other rhetoric used in public statements and disseminated through media. Relating to the Magyar community in Transylvania, there are several projects that the Hungarian state developed and regular visits in the community are organized in relation to established events. During most of these meetings the used themes are similar: autonomy on ethnic criteria, diplomatic tensions, foreigners are a menace to the societies, not allowing others to dilute the culture. In a certain instance, at Tusnad (in Transylvania), in 2022, Viktor Orban was accused of xenophobic and racist declarations: "this is a mixed race world. And we are us, where the people of Europe mix with each other: they move, they get jobs, they move" "we are willing to mix with each other, but we do not want to become a mixed race."[139].

The Ditrau case: what happened?

The case itself is the result of disinformation exerted through external and internal communication channels that paint people outside the community in gloomy shades, inducing feelings of insecurity and threat. For a small and relatively closed community in terms of the penetration of information from

[137] Hungary: where editors tell reporters to disregard facts before their eyes. With elections imminent, some say independent media is in a weaker state than in communist 1980s, The Guardian, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/02/hungary-independent-media-editors-reporters-orban , Reporters Without Borders, Viktor Orbán's regime continues to crush media pluralism in Hungary, https://rsf.org/en/viktor-orb%C3%A1n-s-regime-continues-crush-media-pluralism-hungary ,

[138] Eva Bognar, Hungary, Report, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism and University of Oxford, 15th June 2022, https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2022/hungary

[139] Petre Dobrescu , Discursul integral al lui Viktor Orbán la Tușnad, în limba română și în limba maghiară, 25 iulie 2022, https://www.libertatea.ro/stiri/discursul-integral-al-lui-viktor-orban-la-tusnad-in-care-acesta-profeteste-finalul-suprematiei-occidentale-aceasta-epoca-se-apropie-de-sfarsit-4221608

sources other than those coming from religious, political parties or Hungarian media, these small details (such as 2 migrants), which can go unnoticed in any society, become real problems for the entire community. The level of social unrest and emotions put into this subject is impressive. Social protests, gatherings in the community, consultations between more than 300 inhabitants of the small community and local authorities, protests from the church, petitions to the authorities to make them leave, pressure over that local bakery which was forced to apologize to the community for wrongful acts, and all this in a matter of a week.

The main concerns of the community can be accumulated in several main topics:

o *The migration is bad for the community*: "The owner of the house (where the two lived in Ditrău) was threatened, (…) and now we are taking them to Gheorgheni and we hope that people will be more open there. (. ..) they think they are migrants and they don't understand that they are legally employed, they are workers from outside the country, they are not bad people, they are educated people. They think they are a threat to their village, but we believe that under no circumstances will anything happen. We don't know how to proceed further, but we want to continue working with them," Köllő Katalin, bakery owner[140]. "Everyone should remain where it was born"[141]. "We don't want migrants".[142]

o *The "people of color" will flood the community in a few years*. "After four of five years, we will find that a quarter of the houses are occupied by black people"; "Let's assume that other entrepreneurs will bring six workers to our village for a few

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[140] Digi 24.ro, Răscoala de la Ditrău continuă. Cei doi brutari din Sri Lanka au rămas fără locuință, gazdele lor au fost amenințate, https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate/rascoala-de-la-ditrau-continua-cei-doi-brutari-din-sri-lanka-au-ramas-fara-locuinta-gazdele-lor-au-fost-amenintate-1252694

[141] RomâniaTV.net, Ditrău, cazul de ură rasială care a șocat România! Cum s-a ajuns ca minoritarii maghiari să-i alunge pe cei doi brutari din Sri Lanka, https://www.romaniatv.net/ditrau-cazul-de-ura-rasiala-care-a-socat-romania-cum-s-a-ajuns-ca-minoritarii-maghiari-sa-i-alunge-pe-cei-doi-brutari-din-sri-lanka-d_507245.html

[142] Radio Europa Libera, Ditrău- Un sat se răscoală împotriva emigranților, https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=embed_video&v=121404982505679

years. Two years pass, they will ask to settle here and bring their families and after four or five years pass we find that a quarter of the houses in Ditrău are inhabited by black people. This is why we are afraid, not only of the two Sri Lankans, but of the consequences, we must think carefully about the consequences because it is not only about tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, it is about our future, the future of our children and grandchildren" [143].

o *The migrants will generate a security risk for the community*. Our request is to give us back the safety we have lived in until now, so that we are no longer afraid of what will happen. We are not afraid of the two of them, but of the fact that our safety is affected," said priest Bíró Károly, one of the leaders of the revolt.[144] "There are neighborhoods where the police cannot enter. Am I right? Two enter Ditau, then they bring their family because they have the right, and then another 10."[145] "I heard so many bad things about migrants. R: where have you heard this? Respondent: in the news"; "In the past I worked for the Arabs. We don't want them to be brought here", "the problem is that we don't want to accept migrants here. This is the biggest problem. As far as I know there are two here and others in Gheorgheni. Other 30-40, I don't know from where, Sri Lanka or Nepal are still to come. We don't want them here in Ditrau" [146].

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[143] HotNews, Revolta de la Ditrău: "O să ne trezim că un sfert din case sunt locuite de oameni de culoare" / "Nu avem nevoie sa vină străini de la cinci mii de kilometri, că să ne învețe cum să facem o pâine" / "Nu suntem rasiști", 01 Februarie 2020, https://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-23636802-revolta-ditrau-trezim-sfert-din-casele-din-ditrau-sunt-locuite-oameni-culoare-nu-avem-nevoie-vina-straini-cinci-mii-kilometri-invete-cum-facem-paine.htm

[144] Gina Ştefan, Reportaj Harghita: Nemulțumire în comunitatea din Ditrău, după angajarea a doi muncitori sri-lankezi la o fabrica de pâine, Agerpress, 29-01-2020, https://www.agerpres.ro/social/2020/01/29/reportaj-harghita-nemultumire-in-comunitatea-din-ditrau-dupa-angajarea-a-doi-muncitori-sri-lankezi-la-o-fabrica-de-paine--439963

[145] Radio Europa Libera, Ditrău- Un sat se răscoală împotriva emigranților, minute 0,15 to 0,30 https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=embed_video&v=121404982505679

[146] RomâniaTV.net, Ditrău, cazul de ură rasială care a șocat România! Cum s-a ajuns ca minoritarii maghiari să-i alunge pe cei doi brutari din Sri Lanka, https://www.romaniatv.net/ditrau-cazul-de-ura-rasiala-care-a-socat-romania-

o *The migrants are a menace to the culture and religion of the community*. "We don't need strangers coming from five thousand kilometers away to teach us how to make a loaf of bread"; "The main problem is that they (locals - n.r.) do not want to accept people from another culture to make their bread. Many times, they attacked the fact that they do not have problems with the respective persons, but, nevertheless, do not touch their bread, our bread"[147]. "We request that the employer take into account and respect primarily the peace, self-respect and public interests, religious worship and traditions of the inhabitants of Ditrău" – petition to the local authorities.[148]. "When we bring culture ….We have our culture. Let's remain to it"; "the owners said they want to bring another culture. The word carries a lot of weight. The grand Church of Ditrau is collapsing over us, and we need another culture!"[149]

o *The migrants will increase the unemployment rate of the community*. "People are not employed, they are refused and we are outraged that the owners of the company do not want us, but the people they bring from abroad, from far away. We are not appreciated, and they are overrated and this is not a solution. It is a conflict that must be resolved (...). We must be treated as people, not as objects, as a source of income. And foreigners

cum-s-a-ajuns-ca-minoritarii-maghiari-sa-i-alunge-pe-cei-doi-brutari-din-sri-lanka-d_507245.html

[147] HotNews, Revolta de la Ditrău: " We will find that a quarter of the houses are inhabited by black people" / "We don't need foreigners to come from five thousand kilometers away to teach us how to make a loaf of bread" / "We are not racist", 01 Februarie 2020, https://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-23636802-revolta-ditrau-trezim-sfert-din-casele-din-ditrau-sunt-locuite-oameni-culoare-nu-avem-nevoie-vina-straini-cinci-mii-kilometri-invete-cum-facem-paine.htm

[148] HotNews, Revolta de la Ditrău continuă: Petiție a peste 1.800 de locuitori, în frunte cu preotul din comună, care cer patronilor brutăriei să nu angajeze străini și să le prezinte actele medicale ale muncitorilor din Sri Lanka, 11. Februarie 2020, https://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-23657298-revolta-ditrau-continua-petitie-peste-1-800-locuitori-frunte-preotul-din-comuna-care-cer-patronilor-brutariei-nu-angajeze-straini-prezinte-actele-medicale-ale-muncitorilor-din-sri-lanka.htm

[149] Ditrău- Un sat se răscoală împotriva emigranților, minutes min 0,30-0,40; 6,00-6,13
https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=embed_video&v=121404982505679

should not be treated as a source of income, but as people"[150]. "Not to hire foreign labor in the situation where the unemployment rate in the Ditrău commune exceeds 2% and thus contribute to preventing the immigration of young people."[151]

o *Historical context* "Our fear comes from the past, our fear comes from uncertainty". [152]

o *Racial references* "It is about the fact that we don't want foreigners here, not gypsies, nor migrants. It is about that." [153]

The cumulative effect of disinformation

Puskas Elemer, Mayor of Ditrau stated in an interview that "in the mass media, especially Hungarian mass media, there are many news about migrants, revolted migrants, migrants that attack, migrants that do all sort of things there with bombs and attacks. People find out, they know, and believe that the two men are also …. First they said there are two, but there are rumors that 5 more will come, and nobody knows what will happen next"[154]. Thus, the influence of the Hungarian mass media is acknowledged by the mayor. If we consider the above stated Viktor Orban declarations, it is obvious that a connection exists between the local rhetoric and the main ideas circulated in the public discourse.

What does the state do?

Ultimately, this is the important question that we must address. A verification from the territorial Work Authority, a few self-reports/notifications. But what will really change? We are already talking about changes in the collective mentality on which these controls and forms of state justice can work as a catalyst element in the sense of accentuating the feeling of injustice and aggression towards the community.

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[150] HotNews, Revolta de la Ditrău: "We will find that a quarter of the houses are inhabited by black people"" ..

[151] HotNews, Revolta de la Ditrău continuă: Petiție a peste 1.800 de locuitori, ...

[152] Ditrău- Un sat se răscoală împotriva emigranților, https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=embed_video&v=121404982505679

[153] Ditrău- Un sat se răscoală împotriva emigranților, minute 7,20-7,30 https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=embed_video&v=121404982505679

[154] Radio Europa Libera, Ditrău- Un sat se răscoală împotriva emigranților, https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=embed_video&v=121404982505679

But what should we understand from this situation from a security viewpoint? If the political leaders of another state can have such an influence over a local community in a foreign state, this means that security concerns must be emphasized especially in the context of the war in Ukraine and Russia's propaganda regarding a possible division of Ukraine based on ethnic minorities. Moreover, it is well known that Viktor Orban's rhetoric follows similar subjects with Russian propaganda. While using ethnic minorities to generate unrest in Central and Eastern Europe could be a real concern for the European security, the real problem is how the EU, NATO and the national states should address similar problems aimed at resuscitating old tensions unsettled by the Paris Versailles treaty system more than 100 years ago. In the latest declaration at Tusnad, in Transylvania, Viktor Orban emphasized that Hungary never recognized the Trianon treaty, and as a consequence they never recognized Romanians' rights over Transylvania.

From an ethnic perspective viewpoint in Ditrau village, county of Harghita, according to the latest census, the situation is presented in the table below:

Year	Total population	Romanian	Hungarians	Roma	Ukrainian	Germans
1992	348335	48948	295104	3827	28	199
2002	326222	45870	276038	3835	29	140
2011	310867	39196	257707	5326	14	70
2021	291950	33634	232157	4928	14	62

From the 1990s we can see a visible decline in the Romanian, Ukrainian or German population and a rise of Magyar and Roma ethnics. Overall, there is a decline of the population in the county and this is partly due to Romanians living abroad and working in the European Union.

The situation in Ditrau is important when we address security concerns related to disinformation or to other types in Central and Eastern Europe, because, if no clear policy is developed in this case, these minorities can be used to generate unrest as we have seen in the Balkans, as we have seen in Ukraine or as we saw in the Republic of Moldova.

Obviously, a more appropriate communication policy must be developed and supported by the state that has publicly funded

media channels which must communicate effectively. Ditrau is an example of what an inadequate policy can generate and, above all, what the non-involvement of the state can generate in problems that produce long-term effects and that are hardly visible during the period in which they are being carried out. Disinformation can generate Brexit, anti-Semitic movements, xenophobia, radicalization, etc. If we look at this situation as a singular case, we can certainly blame the community that claims the most fervently that it is being discriminated against, but that doesn't solve the problem. The state must do more, the press can do more, each citizen must do more.

From this case we must remember the dangers of such acts over humanity. After more than 75 years from the Holocaust, with an appeal to memory, we must see the future through the unforgiving lens of the past. We must understand that populist discourses, eager for political capital, can easily slip into extremism. We must understand that ideas are weapons that, through the means of communication provided by the information revolution, can destroy if misinformation is not controlled. We must understand that segregation, anti-Semitism and racism can be folded into good political speeches to control some votes, but are totally harmful to the population. In this context, education is paramount, and history must provide the necessary examples that instill in students feelings of right and wrong. Only in this way will we not forget and, most importantly, NOT repeat the mistakes of the past.

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Chapter 3

COMBATING DISINFORMATION AND BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH EDUCATION – THE PATH FORWARD FOR THE EUROPEAN SECURITY

"A coherent approach of EU policies on education, research and innovation is crucial to create 'jobs, growth, investment, and competitiveness'. Education will have to play an important role in the future Europe as investing in skills, competences and knowledge is essential to boost Europe's resilience. Investing in stronger links between education and research will support the development of human talent, which is the fundamental driver of innovation."[1]

The link between education and security has long been established in literature and practice with a *sine qua non* interlink. Without a good and reliable educational system many aspects of security could be in danger, from the economic to the societal or political establishment. The need for stronger and better educational systems, more adapted to current challenges was emphasized in the literature and by international organizations. Assessments over the quality, efficiency, functioning of the educational systems are being done annually at international or regional and national level. Policies to better

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[1] Commission Staff Working Document Impact Assessment Accompanying the document Proposals for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination Decision Of The European Parliament and of the Council on establishing the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Council Regulation establishing the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community for the period 2021-2025 complementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, SWD/2018/307 final

fill the gap in gender inequalities and to accommodate specific needs are tailored made according to national needs and financial possibilities. UNESCO, OSCE, WB, ONU and regional organizations are all contributing to this endeavor. With clear inequities around the globe[2], the educational systems try to meet the current needs of the society, by adapting the system, the curriculum, the skills and competences delivered to a dynamic society profoundly transformed by informational and technological changes.

The COVID-19 pandemic added more challenges to this matter. According to the UNESCO, the pandemic affected more than 1.6 billion students and youth[3] around the globe. The unprecedented situation presented striking inequities between countries as online education was unavailable in many areas and generated cascading effects over the national systems. Apart from the evident economic, societal or political impact, others were outlined as side conclusions of this transition to online learning. The reaction of the population during the crisis raised justified concerns regarding the institutional ability to communicate during crisis, the impact of social media over the communication during crisis, and the knowledge the citizens have on how to behave during a health crisis or any crisis for this matter.

In concrete terms, the pandemic pinpointed towards the concrete vulnerabilities left unsolved by the national security strategies, educational policies, and strategic communication practices in public sectors. Even though concepts which link security to education have been around for several decades now, their real impact on the population and its ability to respond in security aspects is questionable. There are several research questions that connect security to the social reaction during the pandemic which must be further studied:

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[2] 258 million, or 17 percent of the world's children, adolescents and youth, are out of school and more than 50% of them are in sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia, Sylvia Schmelkes, Recognizing and Overcoming Inequity in Education, UN, 2020 https://www.un.org/en/un-chronicle/recognizing-and-overcoming-inequity-education

[3] UNESCO, Education: from school closure to recovery, https://www.unesco.org/en/covid-19/education-response

Does the population have the needed knowledge to help them better react during a pandemic? The pandemic has shown us that measures for social distancing, wearing masks or quarantine were highly contested, with individuals refusing to comply, public demonstrations and even riots against the measures put in place to reduce the impact of the pandemic. According to UNESCO "Almost every country includes education for health and well-being in its curriculum."[4] WHO introduced the concept of health literacy in 1998, meaning: "the cognitive and social skills which determine the motivation and ability of individuals to gain access to, understand and use information in ways which promote and maintain good health."[5] *The Economist* underwent a study regarding health literacy around the globe and from the 9 domains identified as key components to measure health literacy, 4 are linked to education and the ability to select information: having sufficient information to manage my health; appraisal of health information; ability to find good health information; understanding health information well enough to know what to do[6]. The study emphasized that health education is less than optimal in most educational systems, even if they have integrated disciplines in the curriculum[7]. Also, the study underlined that there is much to be done in adult health literacy[8]. There are several studies published pinpointing towards the fact that the pandemic has shown that health literacy and health education are a problem in most countries as the population had difficulties to react and understand how to protect their lives during the

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[4] UNESCO, Ready to learn and thrive: What you need to know about the global report on school health and nutrition, 8 February 2023, https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/ready-learn-and-thrive-what-you-need-know-about-global-report-school-health-and-nutrition

[5] WHO, Improving health literacy https://www.who.int/activities/improving-health-literacy,

[6] The Economist, Intelligence unit, Health literacy around the world: policy approaches to wellbeing through knowledge and empowerment, 2021, p.12

[7] The Economist, Intelligence unit, Health literacy around the world: policy approaches to wellbeing through knowledge and empowerment, 2021, p. 38

[8] The Economist, Intelligence unit, Health literacy around the world: policy approaches to wellbeing through knowledge and empowerment, 2021, p. 42-44

pandemic.[9] These aspects point towards the efficiency of the education system.

Does the population trust the authorities that they are going to take the necessary measures to protect their life? This inquiry is in close connection with the first question, as not only the population has to understand what they have to do during a pandemic, but they also should have a high level of trust in the authorities who were implementing the measures. Lack of trust means lack of efficiency. According to a study published in 2022, trust in national and EU institutions has plummeted[10] in the last two years, which means that starting with the pandemic the trust in governing bodies – national or regional- started to waver, indicating that they lost their credibility during and in the aftermath of the pandemic. There is an interlink between the vaccinated and non-vaccinated respondents, with a higher level of mistrust among the population who refused vaccination[11]. It further must be identified if the way institutions communicated during the pandemic was efficient or if the mistrust comes from inefficient strategic communication policies.

For Western societies, where human rights are so well protected and the citizens well aware of their rights, do they understand the right balance between individual rights and collective rights? This means that the citizens must have the right cognitive skills and information in order to understand if they really face a breach in the protection of their human rights or if they need to compromise for the good of the society (e.g. protecting others' life while contributing to stopping the spread of the virus). The debate between individual and collective rights

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[9] Leena Paakkaria, Orkan Okanb, COVID-19: health literacy is an underestimated problem, Lancet Public Health. 2020 May; 5(5): e249–e250

[10] Ahrendt, Daphne; Consolini, Michele; Mascherini, Massimiliano; Sándor, Eszter Report - Fifth round of the Living, working and COVID-19 e-survey: Living in a new era of uncertainty, 7.07.2022, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/news/news-articles/trust-in-institutions-continues-to-fall-in-eu-despite-declining-unemployment-and-phasing-out-of

[11] Ahrendt, Daphne; Consolini, Michele; Mascherini, Massimiliano; Sándor, Eszter Report - Fifth round of the Living, working and COVID-19 e-survey: Living in a new era of uncertainty, 7.07.2022, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

was considerable during the pandemic and was a result of the lack of trust in authorities as protectors of human rights, mistrust and low health literacy. Even if the European Court of Human Rights addressed the problem, the level of information spread online concerning this aspect was ample, with citizens claiming that they are unjustifing forced to a certain conduct.

Does the population know how to filter information in order to dissect fake news from correct news?

Social media emerges as a key driver of declining trust, with an average trust score of 3 out of 10 for respondents who use social media as their preferred news source, which is much lower than 4.2 for those preferring traditional media[12].

Also, **one must question if the media remains the fourth power in the state, or if the social media audiences are replacing the force the media once had**? The question is complex, and the answers are multifaceted. No easy or trenchant answer could be given as not only the process is unfolding, but also the impact is different from one subject to another, from one age category to the other and naturally from one country to the other.

We will try to address these questions focusing more on the last one, as disinformation as a phenomenon manifested fully during the pandemic and afterwards during the war in Ukraine. We argue that there is a lack of consistency in the development of policies, the literature debate and the outcomes of the educational system when we analyze security and education especially for combating disinformation.

Social media functioned as a catalyst in this context as the false or incorrect information circling online from official or unofficial sources multiplied exponentially. Everybody was posting online on official web pages, unofficial web pages, blogs, so called media agencies but which function as a blog or podcast with no official recognition, TV and newspapers, personal

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[12] Ahrendt, Daphne; Consolini, Michele; Mascherini, Massimiliano; Sándor, Eszter Report - Fifth round of the Living, working and COVID-19 e-survey: Living in a new era of uncertainty, 7.07.2022, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/news/news-articles/trust-in-institutions-continues-to-fall-in-eu-despite-declining-unemployment-and-phasing-out-of

accounts, and false accounts. The information traveled as fast as the internet connection permitted and the population reaction was polarized at unprecedented levels.

The war in Ukraine unveiled the real scale of the information war, in which disinformation represents only one element. The complexity of the phenomenon brings forward the need for measures not only regarding social networks rules and obligations, crisis management systems and so on, but also on the educational aspect, as a long-term measure to increase security. Thus, the need to revise education for democracy, to further analyze the concept of security education and to understand if and how we can develop education for resilience. Acknowledging the difficulties in finding a common approach in resilience, and understanding the widespread implications of the concept, we must empathize that without an educational concept to support resilience no medium- or long-term solutions can be developed. If resilience centers its efforts on the community response and recovery, each individual should know how to respond, and this can be done through education.

3.1 Education for democracy in the aftermath of the Cold War, from international politics to national educational policies

The development of the concepts of education for peace or education for democracy flourished after the fall of the communist regime in the bloom of a new world order and the triumph of the democratic principles around the world. In this neoliberal world, with institutional liberalism in full development, principles were needed to address the transition at international level, thus creating a structure. At individual level, solutions needed to be found as a common set of values and principles should be embraced in the collective mentalities.

The thesis of the export of democracy was prior circulated in the literature[13] with researchers discussing if such an export is feasible in a world with different political and social background. Considering these aspects, Jacques Barzun wanders in an article

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[13] Jacques Barzun, Is Democratic Theory for Export?, Society, 9 March / April 1989, pp. 16-23

written in 1987 whether the US have a well-defined democracy, moving towards the dilemma of what is being really disseminated as there are many approaches towards democracy and in the context of the late 80s, the concept seems to be "in a state of flux" considering the ongoing international political changes[14].

In the same timeframe, the summer of 1989, Francis Fukuyama published in "The National Interest" journal another inquisitive and provocative article which theorized the end of history[15]. The famous article offered a glimpse into what the new world order could be: a peaceful international system with less conflict and more room for diplomacy.

The appealing premises postulated in the thesis, that democracies are less likely to enter into conflict with one another, gather more strength to push the concept at the political level. Thus, after the 1990s, several American presidents adopted this thesis as a fundament for their foreign policy[16]. The democratic principles and the desire for peace represent fundamental values in the American political system and in the American foreign policy, with presidents that emphasized during their administration over time the need to protect these values. Starting with the Clinton administration, the concept was embodied in the core foreign policy doctrine of the United States in an attempt to generate a more harmonious international political system. Furthermore, the concept was developed during the Bush Jr. administration to military democracy[17].

At European level, in the Maastricht Treaty, member states expressed their "attachment to the principles of liberty, democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental

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[14] Jacques Barzun, Is Democratic Theory for Export?, Society, 9 March / April 1989, p. 23

[15] Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?", The National Interest, summer 1989, https://pages.ucsd.edu/~bslantchev/courses/pdf/Fukuyama%20-%20End%20of%20History.pdf

[16] Stephen Sestanovich, Maximalist: America in the World from Truman to Obama, October 14, 2014

[17] Daniele Archibugi, "Mariano Croce, Legality and Legitimacy of Exporting Democracy Get access Arrow" in Richard Falk (ed.) et al., *Legality and Legitimacy in Global Affairs*, Pages 414–438, Oxford University Press, Published: March 2012

freedoms and of the rule of law" and one of the objectives of the common foreign and security policy was to "to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law"[18]. A common goal of the union was to "develop the European dimension in education"[19]. Thus, democracy and education were at the core of the changing European policy, which generated the European Union.

In the changing world of the end of the Cold War, democracy was seen as a positive political system based on freedom, rule of law and human rights. But without doubt one question remained: how does one transform societies and political systems developed around dictatorship into democracies? One pillar must be addressed and that is the collective mentality, as citizens need to understand their importance in the functioning of the democratic system, and the fact that they contribute to the construction of the democratic culture and political establishment. Thus, the democratic values must be embraced as social values and education has to be the main deliverable of democratic values. Changing the education system, changing the way certain disciplines are taught (such as history or literature, introducing new courses) could result in changing mentalities.

3.2 From education for democratic culture to security culture, and resilience

As a starting point, the **education for peace** concept must be mentioned as it was highly circulated in the literature for a long time, emphasizing the need to develop peace through specific education tools.

UNESCO defines education for peace: "*education for non-violence and peace includes training, skills and information directed towards cultivating a culture of peace based on human rights principles. This education not only provides knowledge*

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[18] Treaty of Maastricht, preamble, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:11992M/TXT

[19] Art.126(2), Treaty of Maastricht, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:11992M/TXT

about a culture of peace, but also imparts the skills and attitudes necessary to defuse and recognize potential conflicts, and those needed to actively promote and establish a culture of peace and non-violence"[20]. In general terms, education for peace or "*peace pedagogy is identified as relevant educational paradigm and set of educational projects aimed at solving problems of teaching non-violence and the capacity for peace in the context of the democratic movement for peace"[21]*. Both definitions emphasize that education for peace will provide knowledge and skills necessary to identify and avoid conflicts.

In 1995, in the Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy[22], UNESCO defines the interlink between education for peace and education for democracy emphasizing that they are at the core of society's development. The document gathers information about what education for peace and democracy should look like and brings together stakeholders at the international and national level in an effort to develop policies, curriculum, reforms and other instruments in order to build more peaceful societies. Of particular importance is the fact that several articles emphasize the need to build knowledge based on historical approaches of the evolution of humankind, the evolution of conflict and war and how these were settled in history, and also to build information about how international organizations are involved in building a more peaceful society and more peaceful international environments around the world. Teaching history and international relations concepts (constructivism, globalism, complex interdependencies) are seen as means in building peaceful societies and strong democracies.

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[20] UNESCO, UNESCO'S Work on Education for Peace and Non-Violence, Building Peace Through Education, 2008, p.3, ED-2008/WS/38, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000160787

[21] Serhiy Klepko, "Pedagogy of Peace and Philosophy of War: the Search for Truth", Future Human Image. Volume 7, 2017, p. 46

[22] UNESCO, Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, 1995, https://www.ohchr.org/en/resources/educators/human-rights-education-training/12-integrated-framework-action-education-peace-human-rights-and-democracy-1995

The document stresses more the importance of knowledge and less the way this knowledge should be built in the educational process, leaving it to the discretion of the state that would implement such policies. Also, international non-governmental organizations are called upon to intervene and to sustain policies around the world meant at supporting the national efforts in building more peaceful societies through education for peace and for democracy. From this viewpoint, we must emphasize that taking this document as a starting point in building a curriculum for peace and democracy, there is a certain different perspective on how education should be developed, but the outcome remains the same: a safer and more resilient society. No reference is made to propaganda, hate speech, media literacy or other aspects that we can find in the other international organizations' documents, but all the knowledge that is mentioned is meant at building the competencies learners need in order to address these problems they encounter in day-to-day life.

A remarkable aspect in this document is the fact that learning foreign languages is seen as a way "of gaining a deeper understanding of other cultures". Learning languages puts the people in the situation to confront different information and different interpretations around the same event so it can be seen in the broader sense of the word as a means of combating disinformation.

Education for democratic citizenship is a concept developed in the late '90s around the Council of Europe. The moment is of great importance as it marks several important historical moments. The fall of the Iron Curtain generated the need for a different security approach in Eastern Europe. The security needs did not limit themselves to classical security issues as foreign relations policy but also to economic stability, climate security, societal security, or education. The states that took shape after the fall of the USSR needed profound reforms in order to path the way towards democracy and capitalism. Thus, the Maastricht Treaty (1992) came at a very particular moment, in a region in search of a new geopolitical stability. The treaty reformed previous treaties and created a vision of the European Union that could generate a united European state. Thus, European citizenship was introduced, the Euro, and the main

policies of the European Union we know today. Along with European citizenship and the path towards democracy embraced by the newly created states, it opened the path towards educational policies for democratic citizenship. But the aspect that had to be identified was how this could be generated at individual level, how citizens could contribute to building strong democracies and which was the best means of delivery.

In 1996 the Secretary General of the Council of Europe launched a program of cooperation with the newly independent states with the aim to develop a "European Educational Cooperation for Peace, Stability and Democracy"[23] as a support in the process of transition to democracies[24]. One of the fields envisioned in this cooperation was history teaching, and included reforms in how history was taught and how the manuals and the textbooks should be reformed[25]. In 1998 the Enhanced Graz Process and Stability Pact were developed under the Austrian EU presidency. During the Graz workshops "the long record of history used in education to forge a public sense of national identity and loyalty by selective use of the past, with a focus on conflict with others, conveying fear, distrust and hatred of all 'outsiders'" was recalled[26]. From this viewpoint, history as a subject is seen as a potential catalyst for regional peace and reconstruction, thus setting the scene for developing strong democracies based on a different perception of the history, regional identities, and common regional evolutions. But building a strong history curriculum was not enough, as teaching democracy needs more tools than what history as a subject can provide.

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[23] Council of Europe, Stability pact, DG IV/EDU/HIST (2003)10, https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMCont ent?documentId=0900001680651409

[24] Council of Europe, "New initiative of the Secretary General", https://www.coe.int/en/web/history-teaching/new-initiative-of-the-secretary-general

[25] *Idem*

[26] Council of Europe, Stability pact, DG IV/EDU/HIST (2003)10, p.3 https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMCont ent?documentId=0900001680651409

Developed as a strategy to be implemented nationally, the concept of education for democratic citizenship has as basis two international documents: the resolution adopted in Cracow 2000 by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and the Recommendations issued two years later by the Committee of Ministers to member states on education for democratic citizenship[27].

In an analysis of the implementation of the above-mentioned programme, the authors concluded that "most European countries adopted education for democratic citizenship as a common reference point for all learning-democracy processes" and that the concept covers "a broad semantic area that includes specific activities, such as human rights education, political education, peace education and education for democracy"[28]. The results of the study emphasized general and regional approaches in implementing education for democratic citizenship.

In 2005, at the third Summit of Heads of States and Government, states recalled the importance of the three pillars human rights, democracy, and the rule of law for the Council of Europe activity while adopting the Warsaw Declaration[29]. Acknowledging that these three pillars need a stronger protection[30] the declaration stressed the need to promote the active involvement of citizens and civil society[31]. In the view of the declaration: "effective democracy and good governance at all levels are essential for preventing conflicts, promoting stability, facilitating economic and social progress, and hence for creating sustainable communities where people want to live and work, now and in the future"[32].

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[27] Bîrzea, Cezar, Cecchini, Michela, Harrison, Cameron, Krek, Janez, Spajic-Vrkas, Vedrana, Tool for quality assurance of education for democratic citizenship in schools, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000140827
[28] Council of Europe, All-European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies, 2004, https://rm.coe.int/16802f7040
[29] Art 1, Warsaw Political Declaration, Council of Europe Summit, 2005, https://www.coe.int/t/dcr/summit/20050517_decl_varsovie_en.asp
[30] Art 1 and 2, Warsaw Declaration, 2005,
[31] Art 3, Warsaw Declaration, 2005
[32] *Ibidem.*

In this vein, in the Action Plan some references to the need to build a **culture of democracy** were made. These references were constructed on the conclusion that: "democratic laws and institutions can only function effectively when they are based on a culture of democracy"[33]. Thus, "Strengthening the Security of European Citizens" and "Building a More Humane and Inclusive Europe" had at their core the implementation of the concept of "culture of democracy" as a baseline policy for the Council of Europe: "We are convinced that social cohesion, as well as education and culture, are essential enabling factors for effective implementation of Council of Europe core *values in our societies and for the long-term security of Europeans*. The Council of Europe will therefore *promote a model of democratic culture*, underpinning law and institutions and actively involving civil society and citizens."

In the view of the Action Plan, combating terrorism, corruption and organized crime, combating trafficking in human beings, combating violence against women including domestic violence, combating cybercrime and strengthening human rights in the information society, ensuring social cohesion, building a Europe for children, promoting democratic citizenship in Europe, protecting and promoting cultural diversity, or fostering intercultural dialogue can be based mainly on adequate education policies[34] developed by a culture of democracy.

From our study viewpoint, key concepts inserted in the Warsaw Summit Declaration 2005 and the Action Plan are culture of democracy, comprehensive security, and education. They all set the scene for developing an integrated approach in education for raising the security of the society as a whole and of every individual based on the understanding of political concepts and democratic values.

Starting from these two acts a three-volume guideline framework was adopted in 2018: "Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture" meant at "preventing

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[33] Council of Europe, Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, Council of Europe Publishing, April 2018, p5
[34] Action Plan, CM(2005)80 final 17 May 2005, https://www.coe.int/t/dcr/summit/20050517_plan_action_en.asp

violent extremism and radicalization" and at establishing "common goals in citizenship education"[35]. Calling upon the support of the education systems, schools and universities to adopt "democratic citizenship as a key mission"[36], the framework is not compulsory but can be adopted as a model for building competences for democracy[37].

The Framework comes more than 10 years after the Summit, and in a moment when the European security was challenged by terrorism, before the COVID -19 pandemic and the disinformation associated with the war in Ukraine. For our research, it is of particular importance that from the Warsaw Summit Declaration and the Action Plan (2005) the focus on the culture of democracy and education was kept, but the concept of comprehensive security was lost. The framework focuses on democratic competences, but little focus is given to combating disinformation, which, in 2018, was on the rise. Reference to fake news, disinformation or misinformation cannot be identified in the Framework, also no concrete reference is made to the concept of security culture.

However, certain proposed measures can be the base for a framework in combating disinformation. Combating hate speech, participating in political debate, and addressing propaganda advocating for violent extremism are pillars in education for democratic culture conceived around a combination of elements from building knowledge in matters of human rights, freedom of expression, functioning of political institutions or knowledge and critical understanding of media to competences such as analytical and critical thinking, linguistic and communication skills[38]. Even if fake news is not mentioned directly, the knowledge and competences are all designed to offer individuals the means to "be able to recognise the way in which the images and messages in the propaganda have been deliberately selected and edited in

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[35] Council of Europe, Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, Council of Europe Publishing, April 2018, p5, https://rm.coe.int/prems-008318-gbr-2508-reference-framework-of-competences-vol-1-8573-co/16807bc66c

[36] *Idem*

[37] *Idem*

[38] *Idem,* pp. 34-35

such a way to try to achieve their intended effects on the viewer"[39]. From this perspective they represent key elements of combating disinformation strategies.

The importance of the framework is significant if we consider that the Flash Eurobarometer 464, Fake news and disinformation online was published in the same timeframe (April 2018). The Document states that the European citizens consider in a proportion of 83% fake news and disinformation as a threat to democracy[40] and 37% of the respondents say that they encounter fake news every day, while 31% say it happens at least once a week[41]. In view of this fact and supporting the threat of hybrid war, the Framework can be considered a starting point in developing a methodology for combating disinformation at least in matters of democracy and political life.

Considering these elements and building on the concerns of extremism, the Porto Santo Charter was adopted in April 2021. The Charter gathered the result of the workshops and consultation developed during the Porto Santo Conference, an event organized under the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union[42]. There are several points that the Framework and the Charter have in common:

⇒the Charter is set to be a "guiding map of principles and recommendations for applying and developing a working paradigm for cultural democracy in Europe", the exact same thing as the framework;

⇒the setout goal is to develop a culture of democracy;

⇒they are both addressed to European institutions, states, education institutions and NGOs.

However, the Charter brings some new points. First, the idea to include cultural institutions in the process of education emphasized on building democratic values. Secondly, the concept of "culture in the service of a healthy democratic culture"

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[39] *Idem,* p. 34
[40] Flash Eurobarometer 464, Fake news and disinformation online published in April 2018, p20, https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2183
[41] *Idem*
[42] Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU, 2021, https://www.2021portugal.eu/en/events/?start-date=2021-01-01&end-date=2021-12-31

opens new possibilities for further educational policies meant to strengthen democratic societies by bringing cultures together and eliminating inequalities.

Security culture is a concept that brings new nuances to security in various contexts. In the literature, the concept is used in relation with national security or organizational security. In both contexts the emphasis is put on how every stakeholder or individual can contribute through their actions or policies to raise the general level of security. An important focus is put on education as a means for reaching the high level of understanding and applying rules in different contexts or situations, and the means of delivering the knowledge is diverse and refers to the culture of security that needs to be fortified.

In a national security context, the concept is defined as: "*Security culture can be defined as the sum of knowledge and information related to national security values and needs, the knowledge of which attracts the development and promotion of behaviors necessary for individual or state defense against internal or external threats. For the defense of security, be it national or global, a strong popularization of the security culture is also needed.*"[43]. Thus, security strategies imply "*a joint effort involving both military and civilian institutions, and, last but not least, the citizen's responsibility*".[44]

Georgiana-Daniela Lupulescu defines security culture as the "*totality of assimilated values and actions resulting from understanding on the one hand the concept of national security, threats, risks and vulnerabilities to national security, and on the other hand of the behavior and desirable actions in order to strengthen national security*"[45] extending security culture to

[43] Romanian Intelligence Service, Culture of security, definition, https://intelligence.sri.ro/cultura-de-securitate-surse-si-resurse/
[44] *Idem*
[45] Georgiana-Daniela Lupulescu, Security Education – The Main Tool for Strengthening the Security Culture, Land Forces Academy Review Vol. XXVII, No 3(107), 202, p 226
Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363931519_Security_Education_-_The_Main_Tool_for_Strengthening_the_Security_Culture, [accessed Jun 05 2023].

democratic culture. She argues that security education is the basis for promoting security culture, thus Romania should put more emphasis on this aspect.

From the two definitions one can draw the conclusion that security culture is a certain level of knowledge and abilities that the institutions, organizations, policymakers, or citizens have, which determines a certain response towards security related situations. In such a context, education should address all aspects and institutions.

Security culture also refers to organizations, either institutions or private companies. In this context, we talk either about security in general or information security culture[46] or cyber-security culture.[47] The focus is on how security can be enhanced through specific means, including employee's education.

Education for safety is a level of analysis which links the psychological aspects related to safety to the education needed from the early stages to lifelong learning as social challenges can change over time. Aneta Wysokinska-Senkus links the concept to sustainable development arguing that safe and security education must be given special attention as it can develop social skills and competences which help the individual to identify threats and take specific actions to prevent or correct them[48].

Education for resilience as a basic definition aims at developing the necessary skills in an individual so that he can better cope with the challenges he faces and can recuperate faster. Even if the idea of educating the individual to be resilient was well established in psychology, little development can be

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[46] J.F. Van Niekerk, R. Von Solms, Information security culture: A management perspective, Computers & Security, Volume 29, Issue 4, June 2010, Pages 476-486; A. Da Veiga, J.H.P. Eloff, A framework and assessment instrument for information security culture Computers & Security, Volume 29, Issue 2, March 2010, Pages 196-207

[47] Kine Reegård, Claire Blackett, Vikash Katta Risk, The Concept of Cybersecurity Culture, Proceedings of the 29th European Safety and Reliability Conference, 4036-4043

[48] Aneta Wysokinska-Senkus, The Concept of Safety and Security Education in the Context of Sustainability, Sustainability, 2020, 12(12), 5022,

identified in other related fields where resilience becomes a new standard in practice.

Disaster education is also associated with building resilience in a constantly changing social and political environment and the perpetual proliferation of threats nature. In this case, an extensive literature developed key means and compared best practices[49] in the process of helping key actors to better address education for disaster response or preparedness[50] and it is considered a core national responsibility by international military organizations such as NATO.

3.3. Why does the EU need to boost education in order to build resilience?

A considerable problem when addressing resilience is to develop societies capable of responding to any kind of threats, natural or man made. This means that a truly resilient society is able to respond and to recuperate fast after a challenge it had to confront. Hybrid war brings to the table unconventional security risks which address different layers of the society and to which the society must respond fast, efficiently, with or without the intervention of state institutions. Such is the case of disinformation. The role of the population in filtering this information is crucial and must be based on education as a long term effect in building resilience. But how do we generate education for resilience?

According to the Eurobarometer on fake news and disinformation, 84% of the European population consider disinformation as a threat to democracies. We know that a core value of the European Union is democracy and the protection of fundamental freedoms. Moreover, in the aftermath of the Cold War, as we described above, international organizations and

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[49] Shaw, R., Takeuchi, Y., Ru Gwee, Q. and Shiwaku, K. (2011), "Chapter 1 Disaster Education: An Introduction", Shaw, R., Shiwaku, K. and Takeuchi, Y. (Ed.) Disaster Education (Community, Environment and Disaster Risk Management, Vol. 7), Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Bingley, pp. 1 - 22. https://doi.org/10.1108/S2040-7262(2011)0000007007
[50] Kitagawa, K. Conceptualising 'Disaster Education'. Educ. Sci. 2021, 11, 233. https://doi.org/ 10.3390/educsci11050233,

states started developing curricula for education for peace, or education for democracy, education for democratic citizenship or education for democratic culture. What this information has shown us is that even the areas covered by these subjects are still vulnerable to the spread of false or misleading information in the online environment.

From the information presented in the above subchapters, it can be concluded that there are two ways of delivering education for democracy when we consider a formal curriculum: history as a subject and the way history is taught in school, and new disciplines including information about the democratic system. While the efficiency of the measures are still to be questioned with considerable part of the literature showing inconsistency when it comes to results, we must look at the data that

x	Total										
Mobility	Total										
Education level	Bachelor's or equivalent level										
Field	Arts and humanities										
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Country											
Czech Republic	..	..	..	4897	4648	4403	4167	3754	3709	3478	3452
Estonia				1083	978	907	908	856	760	722	787
Finland	3957	4013	3905	3962	4044	4192	3948	3607	3357	3499	3534
Greece				6462	7996	7996	7660	6887	6370	6690	5925
Hungary	4560	4272	4276	4125	4422	4474	4524	3770	3770	3690	8162
Latvia	1166	1035	1041	1235	1162	905	831	751	752	698	598
Lithuania	2688	2573	2559	2420	1995	2017	1973	1813	1747	1653	1524
Norway	2162	2285	2418	2252	2339	2220	2339	2377	2571	2558	2876
Poland	26950	27358	27818	26309	24264	23406	21033	20305	20545	19117	18751
Slovak Republic	..			2211	2153	1934	1740	1573	1390	1236	1213

Data extracted on 24 Jul 2023 22:42 UTC (GMT) from OECD.Stat

international organizations gathered and which helped us understand a certain trend when it comes to teaching these subjects.

While looking at the OECD[51] data regarding bachelors or equivalent level education in the field of art and humanities we can see in a 10-year time frame that the number of students following an art and humanities (including history) career decreased.

From the chart presented below we can see a general trend in former communist European states of a decreasing interest in art and humanities studies, with the rise in certain states such as

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[51] OECD, Distribution of graduates and new entrants by field,

Https://stats.oecd.org/index.aspx?Datasetcode=eag_grad_entr_field,

Latvia, Lithuania, the Slovak Republic or Poland in 2019. This data should be further correlated with the time allocated in the curriculum of each state to the subject of history. What we can conclude now, in the present state of the study, is that there is a lower demand on the market for art and humanities students.

Bachelor's or equivalent - art and humanities
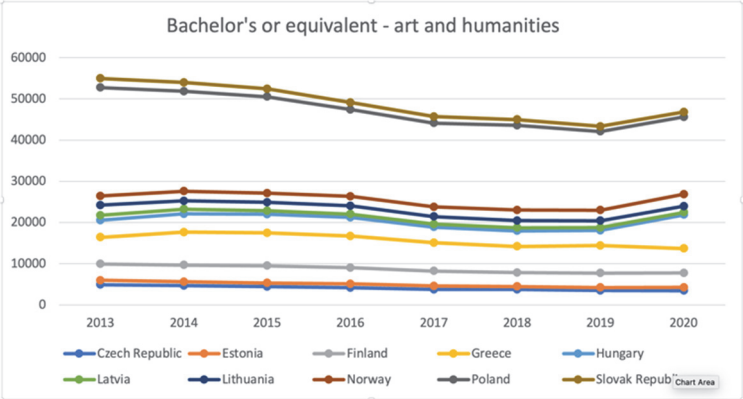
In a study we developed in the Jean Monnet Center of Excellence in European Security and Disinformation in Multicultural Societies co-financed by the EU, a survey was developed for the workshops My EU Future. The purpose of the workshops was to familiarize pupils and students from Mures Country with the opportunities that the European Union created for them and the ways they can be accessed. During the presentations, the pupils and students were asked two questions regarding their general knowledge about the EU and to what extent the school curriculum has helped them understand and acquire information about the EU. The second question regarded their general knowledge about EU funds and especially EU funds for youth. The results were impressive in a very negative manner: more than 90% of the students in the 12th grade from Targu Mures city consider that the school does not give them enough information about the EU. Continuing with the survey results,

76% of the interviewed 12th graders state that they don't have enough information about EU funds designed for youth.

Romania is an Eastern European country, a former communist state, with a high vulnerability in case of the disinformation coming from the Russian propaganda and Russian trolls' factories. The fact that students in such big numbers say they don't know much about the European Union, considering that Romania became a member country of the European Union in 2007, is a cause for worry. If we consider Brexit as a result of concentrated acts of disinformation, the fact that the young population has little to no knowledge about the EU and consider that the school curriculum gives them little information about the European Union, makes the possibility of a replicated Brexit, or even a gloomier scenario in countries where information about EU is scarce, highly probable.

In fact, in Romania the history school curriculum, which decreased considerably in numbers of hours in the last decade, has little information about the European Union, this being limited to a few hours in a semester. Education for democratic citizenship was correlated in the curriculum with the discipline "civic culture", which offers some information about the democratic system's functioning. So the response the pupils gave can be correlated with the realities of the curriculum.

In order to see if the answers we found in our study can be correlated with other situations in the European Union, we looked at the Eurobarometers to see which information is available on this subject. In the Eurobarometer Flash Eurobarometer 502 Youth and Democracy in the European Year
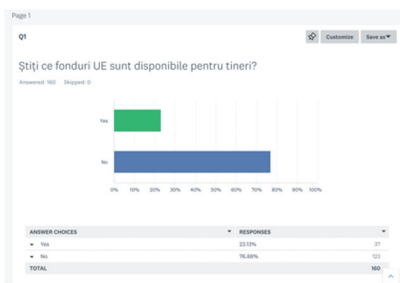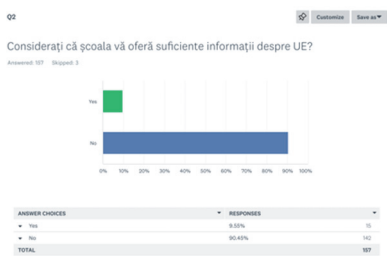
of Youth[52], from the collected data we know that most of the students and pupils know about the Erasmus for students or Erasmus for pupils. The other programs received less than 15% knowledge about them. If we consider that the main implementers of the Erasmus+ programme are education institutions, universities or high schools and that in the same Eurobarometer it is stated that they heard about the program from their education institution, it is obvious which the main disseminators of information about EU funds are. So, if we take into consideration that our survey was done on the 12th graders, non-university level, we can conclude that the data from our survey and the EU's can be correlated. In this vein, we must emphasize that the low level of information about Discover EU and European Solidarity Corps or other programs correlate with the fact that they are not coordinated through universities or education institutions, thus the access to the information is limited to other sources. The data about the level of knowledge about EU needs further study as in the Flash Eurobarometer European Parliament Youth Survey Report [53] 51% of the Romanian respondents said they have a good understanding about the EU, putting the country in fourth place in the European survey. However, when asked if they did any activity in list they choose most frequently "voted in the last local, national or European election" in a proportion of 56%[54]. But if we look at the last election results, we can see that only 25% of the young population inscribed on voting lists did actually vote[55]. This is less than half of the percent that could be found in the European

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[52] Flash Eurobarometer 502 Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth, https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2282
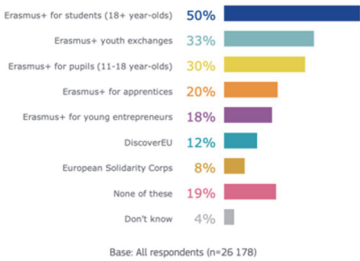
[53] Flash Eurobarometer European Parliament Youth Survey Report, 2021, file:///Users/ella/Downloads/Youth_Survey_2021_ep_fl_report_en.pdf

[54] *Idem*

[55] Mihai Peticilă, ANALIZĂ Doar 25% dintre tinerii de pe listele electorale au votat la Parlamentare, cea mai scăzută prezență de la alegerile din ultimii 4 ani, 7 decembrie 2020, EduPedu https://www.edupedu.ro/analiza-doar-25-dintre-tinerii-de-pe-listele-electorale-au-votat-la-parlamentare-cea-mai-scazuta-prezenta-de-la-alegerile-din-ultimii-4-ani/ BEC database, https://prezenta.roaep.ro/parlamentare06122020/romania-stats

survey. Thus, the result of the data is questionable, and more analysis should be done in order to properly identify this aspect.

The implications of these findings are high. If we need a reason for a more integrated approach towards education and resilience these are the data that show us that the education system is behind in delivering the needed information so that the new generations will be able to understand and function in the societies as they are today. From 1992 till now, the European system changed a lot. We talk about more competencies for the European Union, more decisions gathered and voiced at European level, more integrated policies towards security being developed and international or regional level.

Erasmus+ for students (18+ year-olds)	50%
Erasmus+ youth exchanges	33%
Erasmus+ for pupils (11-18 year-olds)	30%
Erasmus+ for apprentices	20%
Erasmus+ for young entrepreneurs	18%
DiscoverEU	12%
European Solidarity Corps	8%
None of these	19%
Don't know	4%

Base: All respondents (n=26 178)

How can we expect that the population can or should comprehend the entire system which has a great impact on their day-to-day life if we don't give them the needed information about the system per se? If not enough information about how NATO functions and its role are delivered to pupils, they will easily fall in the claws of the online disinformation and Russian propaganda regarding the so-called narrative of "NATO 's aggression over its territories". If not enough information is delivered about the EU, how can the population understand or should understand that the European Union is not a "colony" as the rhetoric of Russian propaganda claims? How can one understand that the European Union is not imposing anything and that states take part in every decision and at every level if one does not understand how the European Union functions?

There is much debate about what media literacy should look like. **But we are forgetting in this process that no media literacy can be built on the lack of knowledge**. How can I decide if an information is false or true if I don't have the fundamental knowledge on a certain subject? The main focus around the concept of education for peace was about building knowledge and history was seen as an instrument for doing that.

But how do we build knowledge about our new realities and about the high level of integration that the European Union offers?

The answers come mainly from the schools and different approaches in education must be developed. Addressing the new realities of European Union society requires a new discipline that must be introduced in the curriculum and this discipline must address the international changes on which the young's reality is built, including here NATO and EU.

In 2000 the **bachelor's degree in International Relations and European Studies** was developed in Romania, which responded to the candidate state necessities at that point. These bachelor degrees at the European level delivered the human resources needed for such a reform. By introducing a **discipline on this subject in pre-university education systems,** the needed knowledge and skills to understand and to benefit from the advantages of the present regional system can be delivered.

We must mention the Jean Monet action in the Erasmus+ Programme as a financing method for European studies and for disseminating information about the European Union. The problem with this action is that it generally requires co- financing of around 20%, which brings difficulties in accessing them while many Horizon Europe actions offer full financing. The second problem with this program is that even if a project is granted and implemented it will have a limited impact, thus creating discontinuities in an act of building knowledge about the EU. Some generations can have access to information, while others won't. The third problem with this program is that it has limited financing, thus making it a really competitive program, difficult to access in many areas. In this vein, we emphasize that the European Union should offer more funds for educational programs aimed at building knowledge about the EU with a short- and medium-term perspective.

3.4 How? Which are the possible solutions for education for resilience?

While analyzing the past policies meant at generating democratic and peaceful societies and their success narrative, we must wonder how we should approach the concept of education

for resilience. Considering that no perfect system can exist, the education for resilience should have, from our viewpoint, three main components with their existing subcomponents.

They should address the population of all ages and should be considered as an integrated approach in education, institutional strategic communication, media role in education and online information campaigns.

Two main branches should be considered as sources of education: the public one is done in formal education in schools, through information campaigns and trainings done by public institutions, military exercises, civil preparedness information campaigns, mass media education where the media institutions are public, and private, done in private companies for their employees, non formal education, NGOs and civil society and others.

We identified three directions in addressing education for resilience from the point of view of the entity delivering it: formal education (done by educational institutions at all levels, including universities), security education (done through different means by institutions in the security sector or linked with security) and private sector education (done at the workplace or in other non-formal educational contexts).

1.

2. Formal education and education for resilience

Building on the education for peace and democracy and considering the need for a more complex cooperation between all institutional and private sectors, and the imperative of building strong and resilient societies, we will emphasize the cross-sector educational policies linked to resilience. For this, we analyzed the education laws in several Central and Eastern European states, the policies in civil preparedness and civil crisis response and, if any, legal norms for education and resilience.

We identified if there are any strategies for education and resilience and, if it is the case, how this approach is done in different countries. The data collected in table 2 represents the available data online. Also, we followed if there are any direct references in the national educational law or policies to resilience, and how education is developed for resilience. While

analyzing the data we searched if there are measures put in place during the pandemic for boosting resilience. There are three main areas we followed in our research. The first one is resilience in education policies, meaning national laws, decrees, recommendations or other legal instruments available online. The second area is resilience in COVID-19 and education, and we identified laws or other legal or nonlegal documents concerning the functioning of the education system during the pandemic. We followed if the concept of resilience is mentioned and in which context. Lastly, we tried to identify if there are any references, norms and methodologies for education for safety and security.

State	Education laws and policies		
	Resilience in education policies	Resilience in COVID-19 and education	Education for safety and security
Romania	Yes[56]	Yes[57]	Yes
Bulgaria	No[58]	Yes[59]	Yes

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[56] Government Decision on approving the Project Implementation Program "Educated Romania" https://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/proiect%20HG%20program%20Romania%20Educata.pdf

[57] Education Ministry of Romania - information guide in the context of COVID-19, https://www.edu.ro/ghid-informativ-al-mec-%C3%AEn-contextul-covid-19

[58] Strategy for Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria for the 2014 - 2020 Period; Action Plan for the measures under the Strategy for Development of Higher Education in Republic of Bulgaria for the period of 2014-2020, https://www.mon.bg/en/74,

[59] Ministry of Education and Research, Guidelines for training and actions in the conditions of emergency epidemic situation in schools and centers for special educational support, https://www.mon.bg/bg/100876

Poland	No[60]	Yes[61]	Yes
Estonia	No[62]	Yes[63]	Yes
Moldova	No[64]	Yes[65]	Yes
Georgia	No[66]	Yes[67]	Yes
Ukraine	No[68]	Yes[69]	Yes

[60] Act of 14 December 2016 Provisions introducing the act - Education Law https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU20170000060/T/D20170 060L.pdf and Act
of 20 July 2018 The Law on Higher Education and Science, https://konstytucjadlanauki.gov.pl/content/uploads/2020/06/act-of-20-july-2018-the-law-on-higher-education-and-science.pdf
[61] Polish Ministry of Education, Start of the new school year 2020/2021, https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja-i-nauka/rozpoczecie-nowego-roku-szkolnego ; Schedule for students to return to full-time education in schools and institutions https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja-i-nauka/harmonogram-powrotu-uczniow-do-stacjonarnej-nauki-w-szkolach-i-placowkach; Guidelines for training and action in the event of an emergency epidemic
situation in schools and centers for special educational support, approved with my Order № RD09-4756 / 30.11.2021 https://www.mon.bg/bg/100876
[62] Analysis of the 20 acts presented in the legislation portal https://www.hm.ee/en/activities/legislative-drafting
[63] Guides to schools on COVID 19 https://www.hm.ee/et/uudised/juhend-koolidele-seoses-covid-19-levikuga
[64] Code No. 152, from 17.07.2014, Education Code of the Republic of Moldova http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=355156
[65] Order no. 1131 of 13.10.2020, Regarding the approval of the Methodological Landmarks regarding the organization of the educational process in the conditions of mixed learning in the epidemiological context of COVID-19, for primary, secondary and high school education institutions https://mecc.gov.md/sites/default/files/repere_inv_mixta.pdf
[66] Ministru of Education and Sicence – Georgia Law of Georgia on General Education, 2006, https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/download/29248/68/en/pdf
[67] Ministru of Education and Sicence – Georgia, Recommendations- In the context of the COVID19 pandemic, in order to effectively manage the learning process in higher education institutions across the country https://www.mes.gov.ge/content.php?id=11791&lang=geo
[68] Ministry of Education and Research – Ukraine, Education Law, 05.09.2017, https://mon.gov.ua/ua/npa/law-education
[69] https://mon.gov.ua/ua/npa/pro-zatverdzhennya-protiepidemichnih-zahodiv-u-zakladah-doshkilnoyi-osviti-na-period-karantinu-u-zvyazku-poshirennyam-koronavirusnoyi-hvorob-covid-19

Romania. In the education system, the Romanian Education law dates from 2011 and, thus, has no reference to resilience, but the new strategy which is being debated now has several references to resilience and security education such as: "Developing, at the level of pre-university and university education institutions, resilience mechanisms to support the adaptation of pupils and students to uncertainties and crisis situations; Preparing students to cope with a constantly changing social dynamic, through disciplines related to the needs of democratic society" and others. During the COVID 19 pandemic there were some documents and information guides developed to address education in the specific crisis context. There are initiatives for increasing safety and security in schools.

Bulgaria. Concerning the education system, the laws regulating the education system do not use the concept of resilience, but the concept of sustainability linked to the educational policies can be identified in several legal documents such as: "Action Plan for the measures under the Strategy for Development of Higher Education in Republic of Bulgaria for the period of 2014-2020", or the Strategy itself. However, they refer mainly to the link of higher education to the labor market. During the pandemic there were consecutive laws and guidelines adopted to adapt the learning programs to the new realities, including digitalization and on-line courses. There are rules for safe and security but, as international data points out, more state intervention is needed[70].

Poland. Concerning education, the law has no direct reference to resilience and how it can be developed. The Law on Higher Education and Science also have no direct reference to education and resilience But, according to the study conducted by Aneta Wysokinska-Senkus[71], there is a need to further develop education for security and safety. During the COVID-19, several legal norms were adopted or modified in order to

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[70]Ministry of Education and Research – Ukraine, Norms on Covid-19 – in schools European Commission, Education and Training Monitor – Bulgaria https://op.europa.eu/webpub/eac/education-and-training-monitor-2020/countries/bulgaria.html

[71] Aneta Wysokinska-Senkus, The Concept of Safety and Security Education in the Context of Sustainability, Sustainability, 2020, 12(12), 5022

address the specific needs generated by the pandemic context from online learning to returning to school.

Estonia. On the web page of the Estonian Ministry of Education and research the concept of resilience appears 6 times. However, in the 20 acts presented on the webpage, there is no direct reference to the concept of resilience. So, even if there measures to build resilience through education could be in place, no direct definition or correlation is made with it. During the pandemic decisions and guidelines were drafted and implemented to help the educational system cope with the realities of distance learning and anti-pandemic measures. It is also important to mention that in Estonia the legal instruments follow the needs for safety and security in schools, including here the formal educational part, but also the well-being of the students[72].

Moldova. The Moldavian Code of Education of 2014 does not mention the resilience concept. The national curriculum for schools includes disciplines such as education for health or the culture for good neighborhood, education for tolerance or regenerable resources[73]. Moldova has put in place, starting from the Education Code several strategies for combating violence in schools, aiming at reducing the phenomenon in the country[74]. However, when addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, the resilience concept can be identified in the public official discourse and in some documents[75].

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[72] School safety - means the safety of school settings and everything that happens in school. https://www.hm.ee/en/activities/pre-school-basic-and-secondary-education/school-safety

[73] Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova – curriculum - https://mecc.gov.md/ro/content/invatamint-general#faq-Curricula-disciplinare-%C8%99i-Ghiduri-de-implementare,-2019

[74] Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova - Preventing and combating violence, https://mecc.gov.md/ro/content/prevenirea-si-combaterea-violentei, https://mecc.gov.md/sites/default/files/procedura_de_organizare_institutionala_si_de_interventie_a_lucratorilor_institutiilor_de_invatamant_in_cazurile_de_abuz_neglijare_exploatare_trafic_al_copilului.pdf

[75] Ministry of Education and Research, The priorities of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research in the fields of activity were presented in a working meeting with the representatives of the European External Action

Georgia. The national education laws of Georgia do not include references to education and resilience, but have references to safety and health in schools. Concerns regarding increasing the resilience of the population can be identified in the Georgian policies in education, as Georgia included in the national curriculum the Civil Protection and Safety subject[76]. During the COVID -19 pandemic, Georgia included several reforms or guidelines to help schools and pupils to overcome the effects of the pandemic over the education sector.

Ukraine. In the Education Law of 2017, no mention for the concept of resilience could be found. There are indications regarding the safety of the pupils and students, but there are no direct references to building resilience. There are a set of norms and guidelines adopted for the pandemic context and the transition to digital learning, as well as measures for school reopening.

3. Security education and resilience

In security education for resilience we included military education and exercise, civil protection and preparedness, open days, collaboration with the educational system to raise awareness towards certain aspects, media campaigns and other forms associated with increasing resilience and response in case of a crisis.

A. Civil protection and preparedness

For EU and NATO civil protection and preparedness are at the core of the security policy. The EU's Strategic Compass

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Service of the European Commission, https://mec.gov.md/ro/content/prioritatile-ministerul-educatiei-culturii-si-cercetarii-domeniile-de-activitate-au-fost ; The Ministry of Education, Culture and Research presents the information regarding the development of the educational process within the educational institutions starting with March 16, 2021, https://mecc.gov.md/ro/content/ministerul-educatiei-culturii-si-cercetarii-prezinta-informatia-privind-desfasurarea

[76] Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, International Day for Disaster Reduction was marked at a special event organized at Europe's House, https://www.mes.gov.ge/content.php?t=srch&search=resilience&id=2963&lang=eng

emphasizes that "to strengthen our capacity to act, we will work to reinforce our crisis management missions and operation"[77].

In case of civil protection and preparedness we followed national portals, the rules and laws and presentation materials, manuals, brochures, leaflets presenting information regarding the civic response in case of emergency. Also, we followed if there are any indications or references to the response in case of war included in the civil protection and preparedness policies. Where the answer is "no", no relevant data could be identified. As the sources used were online materials, the accuracy is directly proportional to the accuracy of the data and the timely updates on the portal.

State	Civil protection manual/ courses/trainings	
	Response in case of war	Civil emergency response
Romania	No[78]	Yes[79]
Bulgaria	No[80]	Yes[81]
Poland	No	Yes[82]

[77] Strategic Compass, European Commission https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/strategic_compass_en3_web.pdf

[78] General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations, Planning, Organizing and Developing Staff Training in the Field of Emergency Situations, https://www.igsu.ro/Resources/COJ/ProgrameStrategii//pdf24_merged.pdf

[79] General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations, Planning, Organizing and Developing Staff Training in the Field of Emergency Situations, https://www.igsu.ro/Comunitate/PregatireaPopulatiei

[80] DG Fire Safety and Protection, Bulgaria https://pojarna.com/%d0%bc%d0%b0%d1%82%d0%b5%d1%80%d0%b8%d0%b0%d0%bb%d0%b8-%d0%b7%d0%b0-%d0%b8%d0%b7%d1%82%d0%b5%d0%b3%d0%bb%d1%8f%d0%bd%d0%b5/

[81] DG Fire Safety and Protection, Bulgaria https://pojarna.com/%d0%bc%d0%b0%d1%82%d0%b5%d1%80%d0%b8%d0%b0%d0%bb%d0%b8-%d0%b7%d0%b0-%d0%b8%d0%b7%d1%82%d0%b5%d0%b3%d0%bb%d1%8f%d0%bd%d0%b5/

[82] European Committee of the Regions, Poland - Civil Protection, https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Poland-Civil-protection.aspx; Dr inż. Witold SKOMRA, Emergency Management System in

Estonia	No	Yes[83]
Moldova	No	Yes[84]
Georgia	N/A	Yes[85]
Ukraine	Yes[86]	Yes[87]

Romania has a strategy regarding the Planning, Organizing and Developing Staff Training in the Field of Emergency Situations, which establishes the national reaction in case of emergency. This strategy is correlated with educational policies to some extent, but with little implementation in the educational system. The document has no reference to the intervention in case of war. There are annual trainings and evaluations for employees in public and private institutions concerning the emergency response.

Bulgaria adopted strategies for the Emergency Management and published a series of flyers, leaflets and brochures to instruct the population how to react to emergency situations. The materials make no reference to a case of war situation, or similar situations of social unrest. There are mechanisms in place for teaching the populations how to react in case of an emergency.

Poland has a strategy regarding Emergency Management System with coordination at different levels and structures meant at identifying threats and to alert early prevention systems. These activities are also backed with courses, trainings and manuals. In our research no response in case of war was identified.

Poland. Government Security Centre https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/teia/doc/Slubice_09/13WitoldSkomra-EN.pdf and European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations – Poland, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/civil-protection/national-disaster-management-system/poland_en

[83] Estonian Rescue Board, https://www.rescue.ee/en

[84] General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations, Republic of Moldova - https://dse.md/ro/adulti

[85] Georgia Ministry of Internal Affairs, Emergency Management Department, https://police.ge/en/ministry/structure-and-offices/emergency-management-department

[86] Code of Civil Protection of Ukraine (Information Of The Verkhovna Rada (VR), 2013, No. 34-35, pp. 458 https://www.global-regulation.com/translation/ukraine/563947/code-of-civil-protection-of-ukraine.html

[87] *Idem*

Estonia. In terms of emergency response, the rescue board published several information on the Home page, counseling on fire safety and how to act during thunderstorms. Also, for the COVID-19 crisis a webpage was created, which offers detailed information on every aspect related to the pandemic[88]. These portals want to generate a code of conduct for the Estonian population facing the crisis, through knowledge, attitude and behavior[89].

Moldova. In aspects of risk management/preparedness the General Inspectorate of Emergency Situations (GIES) is developed in close partnership with Romania, offering a similar structure and crisis intervention. The GIES developed several recommendations for a crisis situation and prevention, addressing several possible risks. There is no mention of a situation in case of war, no manual, and no recommendations.

Georgia. On July 12, 2018 Georgia adopted a new law on Civil Safety, in close collaboration with the EU. The new law offers new definitions for risks and adapts the Georgian system to the EU mechanism for civil protection and preparedness. As the site of the managing authority is not working the law was unavailable so we cannot state clearly if war is included as a risk in this law and, also, we could not identify brochures or other informative materials in this case.

Ukraine. Concerning the civil protection and preparedness, the Code of Civil Protection of Ukraine adopted in 2013 includes war as a threat and gives authority to the designated authorities to aid the civilians in case of war . Furthermore, the Code includes other threats, natural or manmade, which can be identified in the other civil protection mechanisms in the studied countries. In this case the presence of instability and the constant war threat generated the need to include war in the legal instruments.

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[88] Estonian Government Communication Unit, https://www.kriis.ee/en
[89] European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations – Estonia country profile https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/civil-protection/national-disaster-management-system/estonia_en

B. Military education and exercise related to boosting resilience

In military education and training we included joint transnational exercises done under the umbrella of the EU or NATO or separately at bilateral or multilateral level. Increasing cooperation in this field requires regional cooperation within the EU and NATO but also bi and multilateral cooperation. The US presence and their involvement at regional level brings further advantages in increasing interoperability, coordination, and resilience. But the way these exercises are being communicated is important and further policies should be developed in increasing strategic communication, especially the engagement in social media networks. Russia's rhetoric regarding NATO, EU or US military presence is of aggression towards its sovereignty. In multiple instances, Russia used these exercises to point out that NATO is orchestrating a "war of aggression against it". Further propaganda messages address: "NATO is at war with Russia in Ukraine"; "NATO is encircling and trying to contain Russia"[90]; "Sea Breeze 2021 Exercises are a Primitive Intimidation of Russia"[91]; "NATO is Involved in The Ukraine Conflict"[92]; "NATO Planning War Against Russia"[93]; "NATO escalates the situation in Europe through military exercises and by attempts to move nuclear weapons near the Russian

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[90] NATO, NATO – Russia – setting the record straight, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/115204.htm

[91] "Sea Breeze-2021 resembles a ritual dance with spears, the essence of which is the primitive intimidation of Russia.The Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation controls the Sea Breeze-2021 maneuvers and is ready to respond promptly and unpredictably to any provocation of the "partners" with force and all means". EUvsDISINFO, Sea Breeze 2021 Exercises are a Primitive Intimidation of Russia, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/sea-breeze-2021-exercises-are-a-primitive-intimidation-of-russia

[92] "In reality, and de jure, NATO countries are directly involved in the conflict on the part of Kyiv. Such an irresponsible political line significantly increases the risk of a direct military conflict between nuclear powers." EUvsDISINFO, NATO is Involved In The Ukraine Conflict, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/nato-is-involved-in-the-ukraine-conflict

[93] "NATO is planning a war against Russia as Admiral Rob Bauer, the chair of the NATO military committee, said at a news conference that NATO is working on military plans against Russia." EUvsDISINFO, NATO planning war against Russia, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/nato-planning-war-against-russia

borders."[94]; "NATO deployed forces in Eastern Europe in order to prepare for war with Russia"[95] and so on.

The presence of these disinformation campaigns online forces institutions to better communicate to the general public in the region the scope, the extent and the outcomes of these exercises. The information we retrieved are mainly from public institution records: documents, press releases or articles in newspapers or online journals. It is debatable if this information traveled from a press statement to the general population. Thus, adding to the reasons and scopes of the training, a strong emphasis should be put on communication.

The EU in the Strategic Compass, the policy document which sets the scene for the security and defense policy, uses in several instances the commitment to further increase security and resilience through joint exercises. Thus, in order to reinforce missions and operations, the EU "will develop an EU Rapid Deployment Capacity to allow us to quickly deploy up to 5,000 troops for different types of crises."[96]. The activities are meant at increasing regional security and resilience and military joint exercises are important for coordination, capacity building and interoperability.

Several military exercises were developed regarding different aspects: land domain, air domain, space domain or cyber domain. On 23 and 24 March 2023, the EU and the US conducted a joint naval exercise designed to increase practical maritime cooperation and support a free open Indo-Pacific[97]. In

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[94] EUvsDISINFO, NATO escalates the situation in Europe through military exercises and by attempts to move nuclear weapons near the Russian borders, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/nato-escalates-the-situation-in-europe-through-military-exercises-and-2

[95] EUvsDISINFO, NATO deployed forces in Eastern Europe in order to prepare for war with Russia, https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/nato-deployed-forces-in-eastern-europe-in-order-to-prepare

[96] Strategic Compass, European Commission https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/strategic_compass_en3_web.pdf

[97] The Diplomatic Service of the European Union, US: first ever joint naval exercise conducted between the EU and U.S. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/us-first-ever-joint-naval-exercise-conducted-between-eu-and-us_en

2022, the MILEX 22 exercise took place at European level. Designed as a CSDP activity, the exercise has as objective the "activation, deployability and interoperability of their Headquarters and forces"[98]. The exercise tests the procedures, concepts and tactics for preparing military and civilian instruments of the EU Integrated Approach to the new realities. Both civilian and military personnel participate in the exercise, for better interoperability and understanding of each other's role. In 2018 HEX-ML 18 (PACE), was conducted under NATO and EU's joint exercises. The event is a double exercise containing a CSDP planning (ML) and an event driven (HEX) crisis management exercise[99], and is meant at improving decision-making[100]. EU member states participated to the exercise and several non-EU member states were invited: Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland[101]; Exercise EUFOR Quick Response 2022[102] was developed under Operation Althea[103] in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a support facility to implement the Dayton Agreement. In the context of the war in Ukraine and considering the European Union Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine (EUAM Ukraine) established in

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[98] The Diplomatic Service of the European Union, Military Exercise 2022 (MILEX 22), 17.06.2022 https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/military-exercise-2022-milex-22_en

[99] General Secretariat of the Council, EU HEX-ML 18 (PACE) European Union Hybrid Exercise Multilayer 18 (Parallel and Coordinated Exercise) Exercise Instructions (EXINST) https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-13577-2018-INIT/en/pdf

[100] Finland in Nate, Finland to attend joint EU crisis management and hybrid threats exercise, 5.11.2018, https://finlandabroad.fi/web/nato/foreign-ministry-s-press-releases/-/asset_publisher/kyaK4Ry9kbQ0/content/suomi-osallistuu-eu-n-yhteiseen-kriisinhallinta-ja-hybridiharjoitukseen/35732

[101] General Secretariat of the Council, EU HEX-ML 18 (PACE) European Union Hybrid Exercise Multilayer 18 (Parallel and Coordinated Exercise) Exercise Instructions (EXINST) https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-13577-2018-INIT/en/pdf

[102] Catherine Smyth, Exercise EUFOR Quick Response 2022 has concluded after five weeks, EU forces in BiH, Operation Althea, https://www.euforbih.org/index.php/latest-news/3024-exercise-eufor-quick-response-2022-has-concluded-after-five-weeks

[103] EUFOR Bosnia-Herzegovina Military Operation ALTHEA, 30.11.2020, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eufor-althea/eufor-bosnia-herzegovina-military-operation-althea_en

2014[104], the EU decided to conduct training operations with the Ukrainian troops. In 2022 EU launched its training mission aiming to train 15.000 troops and in 2023 it doubled the targeted number to 30.000[105].

CSDP is an important component as civilian and military missions developed under this umbrella have at their core the mission to increase security in the region. Under these policies several common exercises and training sessions are developed. The European Security and Defense College (ESDC) organizes consultation and training sessions with institutional representatives, EU partner countries and a Working Group on CSDP missions, and operations training (WG-MOT) established in 2015. The working group is formed from relevant national training actors of EU Member States, EU institutions and CSDP structures. As a structure, the WG-MOT has four main tasks which are mainly related to education and security: it proposes new training activities; drafts the calendar of training courses and workshops pre-deployment, HEAT and in mission training; revises the curricula for up-to-date information considering the security environment, and contributes to curricula design for correlation with CSDP missions[106]. Courses like: ESDC Doctoral School on CSDP Summer University, 02-07 July 2023, Bucharest, Romania[107]; ESDC Training of Trainers Course on Investigating and Preventing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Conflict Environments 3-14 July, Böblingen, Germany[108];

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[104] European Union Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine (EUAM Ukraine), https://www.euam-ukraine.eu/our-mission/about-us/

[105] Alexandra Brzozowski, EU ramps up military support, doubles training mission targets for Ukraine, Euractiv, 2.02.2023, https://www.euractiv.com/section/europe-s-east/news/eu-ramps-up-military-support-doubles-training-mission-targets-for-ukraine/

[106] European Defense College, Working Group on CSDP missions and operations training (WG-MOT), https://esdc.europa.eu/working-group-on-csdp-missions-and-operations-training-wg-mot/

[107] ESDC Doctoral School on CSDP Summer University, 02-07 July 2023, Bucharest, Romania https://esdc.europa.eu/2023/07/19/esdc-doctoral-school-on-csdp-summer-university-02-07-july-2023-bucharest-romania/

[108] ESDC, ESDC Training of Trainers Course on Investigating and Preventing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Conflict Environments 3-14 July,

Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT) / Vehicle Safety 4×4 Driving, Lübeck, Germany,16-24 March 2023[109]; Cyber Threat Management Course, 13-15 October 2021, Bucharest organized by the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA)[110]; 18th CSDP High Level Course 2022-2023 'Otto VON HABSBURG' Module 1, Brussels, 26-30 September 2022[111] and many others are being delivered under the coordination of the European Security and Defense College and national institutions of EU member states can contribute in the process. From the mentioned training operations and courses EU approaches a wide range of thematic topics which are related to resilience education. It included activities to increase cooperation on military operations and on civilian missions with a wide range of resilience building policies. They are delivered for the personnel working in the mission but also for national policymakers, contributing thus to keeping a close relation between the mission and national authorities and creating convergence in the approach towards resilience.

The relation with **NATO** is important in this area and joint exercises with NATO are implemented based on the cooperation agreement and established agenda between the two organizations. NATO is operating based on several policies such as Enhanced Forward Presence[112] and Tailored Forward

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Böblingen, Germany, https://esdc.europa.eu/2023/07/19/esdc-training-of-trainers-course-on-investigating-and-preventing-sexual-and-gender-based-violence-in-conflict-environments-3-14-july-boblingen-germany/

[109] ESDC, Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT) / Vehicle Safety 4×4 Driving, Lübeck, Germany,16-24 March 2023, https://esdc.europa.eu/2023/03/28/hostile-environment-awareness-training-heat-vehicle-safety-4x4-driving-lubeck-germany16-24-march-2023/

[110] ESDC, Cyber Threat Management Course, 13-15 October 2021, Bucharest organised by the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA), https://esdc.europa.eu/2021/10/18/cyber-threat-management-course-13-15-october-2021-bucharest/

[111] ESDC,18th CSDP High Level Course 2022-2023 'Otto VON HABSBURG' Module 1, Brussels, 26-30 September 2022, https://esdc.europa.eu/2022/12/14/18th-csdp-high-level-course-2022-2023-otto-von-habsburg-module-1-brussels-26-30-september-2022/

[112] NATO, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm, on 18 November 2021.

Presence[113] and advanced exercises and training were developed in order to increase resilience. Allied Command Operations (ACO) and Allied Command Transformation (ACT) are the commands that develop the exercises and training for NATO and the list is revised annually[114].

"Involving societies" is a NATO priority when addressing resilience as "The limited involvement of society seems to be the weakest point in Western strategy making."[115]

In 2023 the Air Defender exercise held in Germany as a part of NATO's efforts to discourage Russia's aggressive military approach in the region: "it will demonstrate beyond a shadow of a doubt the agility and the swiftness of our allied force in NATO as a first responder"[116] More than 250 planes, (100 from US[117]) from 25 nations took part in the biggest air defense exercise simulating a EU response in case of an air attack from a foreign force.

"Defender Europe" and "Swift Response" were implemented in 2023 as the largest land exercises in NATO and NATO Allies and partners[118]. Exercises were conducted in most areas of the EU, from North to South and involved more than human resources. Simultaneous exercises were developed including parachuted drops and helicopter assaults; land troops from 20 countries coordinated several operations as "Hedgehog" in Estonia or "Iron Wolf" in Lithuania. For many countries these

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[113] *Idem*

[114] NATO, NATO exercises, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49285.htm

[115] Uwe Hartmann, The Evolution of the Hybrid Threat, and Resilience as a Countermeasure, NATO Defense College (2017), September, 2017, http://www.jstor.com/stable/resrep10245

[116] US Ambassador to Germany Amy Gutmannshe, Euronews, Germany prepares to host NATO's biggest ever air exercise over Europe, , 07/06/2023, https://www.euronews.com/2023/06/07/germany-prepares-to-host-natos-biggest-ever-air-exercise-over-europe

[117] Frank Hofmann, William Noah Glucroft NATO's Air Defender 23 exercise ends with 'great success', 06/23/2023June 23, 2023, https://www.dw.com/en/natos-air-defender-23-exercise-ends-with-great-success/a-66016171

[118] NATO, Long-planned NATO exercises across Europe get underway, 13 May. 2022, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_195250.htm

were the largest military activities since the fall of the communist regime[119]. In 1992 NATO's Crisis Management Annual Exercise (CMX) was established with the purpose to "test Alliance consultation and decision-making procedures at the strategic political-military level" [120]. The list is long and targets all the areas of military activities or related security issues, involves civilian and military personnel, and is being developed all across Europe and partner areas. Other exercises are: Dynamic Guard 23-II[121], Dynamic Messenger[122] Cyber Coalition 2023[123].

C.   Critical infrastructure protection trainings and resilience

Protection of critical infrastructures is a common priority for NATO and the EU. In the context of the war in Ukraine, the Nord Stream pipelines destruction and the utilization of energy as a weapon[124], more emphasis is put on critical infrastructures at European and NATO level. Thus, in October 2022, the Council Recommendation proposed by the European Commission a draft recommendation was adopted which covers three priority areas:

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[119] *Ibidem*

[120] "The exercise will involve civilian and military staffs in Allied and Finland and Sweden's capitals, at NATO Headquarters and in Strategic Commands. As with previous CMX exercises, CMX 2023 involves no deployed forces. CMX 2023 will include practising comprehensive responses to a complex civil-military scenario, set in a hybrid environment." NATO, NATO Crisis Management Exercise 2023 (CMX23), 09 Mar. 2023 - 15 Mar. 2023 https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_212527.htm

[121] Dynamic Guard 23-II, 4-8 sept, Turkia, "To maintain the level of proficiency Electronic Warfare and Anti-ship Missile Defence in Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 assigned units when not committed in NATO Current Operations and NATO Response Force Operations. https://shape.nato.int/nato-exercises

[122] Dynamic Messenger 23 (DYMS22) is designed to test, exercise and experiment the use of Maritime Unmanned Systems https://shape.nato.int/nato-exercises

[123] Cyber Coalition 23, 7 - 12 Nov   Estonia is a exercise concentrated on cyber defence exercices testing decision-making processes, technical operational procedures and collaboration https://shape.nato.int/nato-exercises

[124] Jan Kalvik, NATO is stepping up protection of critical infrastructure, 18/03/2023   Defence   and   Intelligence   Norway, https://www.etterretningen.no/2023/03/18/nato-is-stepping-up-protection-of-critical-infrastructure/

preparedness, response and international cooperation[125]. Work on revising the EU's Critical infrastructure directive is being sped up, and states organize updates on their legislation and transnational training so that better response in case of crisis can be developed. The targeted area is within the EU and with partner countries as the interconnectivity of critical infrastructures is vital and the war in Ukraine proves the fragility of the system and the need to decrease dependencies.

In March 2023 representatives from NATO and EU launched a NATO-EU Task Force on Resilience of Critical Infrastructure[126]. The initial targeted areas for the Task Force are: energy, transport, digital infrastructure, and space.

Locked Shields[127] is an annual exercise established in 2010 focused on increasing resilience and cyber security. With over 2000 experts participating from 32 nations, Locked Shields Exercise 2022 builds skills and competences in defending national IT systems and critical infrastructures under a massive attack. It includes cyber-attack simulation decision-making and legal and communication aspects.

In the Republic of Moldova, between 14 and 16 June 2023 an exercise on cyber security resilience of the country was organized. The purpose was to increase preparedness of the government officials and critical infrastructures coordinators[128].

In the Republic of Macedonia, between 12 and 15 September 2021 a real time information exchange on Western Balkans took

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[125] Molly Killeen, EU Commission seeks accelerated defence of critical infrastructure, Euractiv, 18 Oct 2022 https://www.euractiv.com/section/digital/news/eu-commission-seeks-accelerated-defence-of-critical-infrastructure/

[126] NATO, NATO and European Union launch task force on resilience of critical infrastructure, 16 Mar. 2023 https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_212874.htm

[127] Locked Shields, https://ccdcoe.org/locked-shields/

[128] EU neighbors east EU-supported cybersecurity exercise enhances Moldova's resilience against cyber threats, June 22, 2023, https://euneighbourseast.eu/news/latest-news/eu-supported-cybersecurity-exercise-enhances-moldovas-resilience-against-cyber-threats/

place. The exercise was designed to increase the protection of critical infrastructures in the region in case of a real attack[129].

Other training and exercises can be found on the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) webpage, and they are built to increase resilience in case of an attack.

D. CBRN joint trainings and resilience

Radiological Nuclear Chemical and Biological preparedness and response is important to EU and NATO, and several strategies and recommendations were implemented to address such risks in case of terrorist attacks and in case of war. In 2022, due to war, the Commission started building reserves of response capacity through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism[130]. In numbers it is a 540,5 million EURO of strategic reserves made of medicines, vaccines and other needed therapeutics for relief for patients exposed in CBRN attacks and decontamination equipment[131]. These funds are being managed in collaboration with HERA (Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority).

In the field of CBRN several trainings and exercises were developed to address the thematic, they are done at national and regional level and involve all sectors and institutions which should respond in case of an emergency. The Domino 2022 implemented a 48 hours exercise addressing chemical risks with a disaster medicine component. The exercises include planning conferences, training on how to use new tools, specific training command post exercise, 2 simulations at industrial platforms and more than 20 sites classified SEVESO and lessons learned and experience sharing.[132]

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[129] Countering Serious Crime in the Western Balkans, Simulation exercise on real-time exchange of information on critical infrastructure protection, https://cscwb.info/2021/09/15/simulation-exercise-on-real-time-exchange-of-information-on-critical-infrastructure-protection/
[130] European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/resceu_en
[131] European Commission, EU develops strategic reserves for chemical, biological and radio-nuclear emergencies, 6 April 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_22_2218
[132] Domino, Full Scale Exercise DOMINO 2022 France, https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/projects/domino ,

Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (HERA) was created after the COVID 19 crisis and its task is to "prevent, detect, and rapidly respond to health emergencies".[133] One of its core missions is to build necessary response capacities and one of the forms of delivery are exercises such as the regular threat prioritization exercise, set to begin in 2022 which aimed at selecting "three high-impact threats and their relevant critical medical countermeasures". [134].

Steadfast Noon is a nuclear exercise without active bombs meant at testing and training the responsiveness of the personnel and equipment in case of an attack scenario. The exercise was delivered in close proximity of Russia's threats to use nuclear weapons[135].

Conclusions and solutions

There are several conclusions which must be emphasized.

When talking about the benefits of education no mention or analysis are made to combating disinformation, the emphasis is put on the personal, economic value on the short, medium, and long term[136].

Even if initiatives are taken at national level implementing education for resilience, the implementation is not optimal or even inexistent. For example, Serhiy Klepko emphasizes that even if there are prizes for educators for peace in Ukraine, no reference to this type of education is made in "The National

[133] HERA, https://health.ec.europa.eu/health-emergency-preparedness-and-response-hera/overview_en

[134] HERA work plan 2022: Foresight and capabilities of the European Health Union, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2022/729406/EPRS_ATA(2022)729406_EN.pdf

[135] Alexandra Brzozowski NATO to hold annual nuclear exercises amid Russian threats, Euractiv, 11.oct.2022, https://www.euractiv.com/section/defence-and-security/news/nato-to-hold-annual-nuclear-exercises-amid-russian-threats/

[136] Psacharopoulos,George; Patrinos,Harry Anthony, *Returns to investment in education : a decennial review of the global literature (English).* Policy Research working paper,no. WPS 8402 Washington, D.C. : World Bank Group. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/442521523465644318/Returns-to-investment-in-education-a-decennial-review-of-the-global-literature

Report on the Status and Prospects of Education Development in Ukraine" (2016)[137]. Further, no reference is made in the 2017 report or later ones, and no reference to education for security, education for resilience or education for democracy could be found in any of the consulted documents[138]. In the beginning of the "All-European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies", the need to study how Education for Democratic Citizenship is being implemented at national level is mentioned, because, even though strongly supported by governments, the implementation of these policies lacks consistency when it comes to their implementation[139].

The definition of resilience can differ from country to country and from international institutions to another. This has a direct impact on how the concept of education for resilience can be developed in a consistent manner. In order to identify the knowledge and skills and competencies the population needs to address security challenges they can face in the local community or at national or regional level, one must be really clear about what we understand on the concept of resilience.

As we have shown in this chapter, even though there are considerable international documents, treaties, statements, resolutions adopted concerning all the areas that can be included in the concept of education in the context of resilience, little to no implementation can be identified through official governmental policies. Even though we have a strong debate at international level and at national level concerning how education should unfold, how we can build stronger societies,

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[137] Serhiy Klepko, "Pedagogy of Peace and Philosophy of War: the Search for Truth", Future Human Image. Volume 7, 2017, p. 46

[138] Vasyl Kremen, National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine National Report on the State and Prospects of Education Development In Ukraine Edited by the President of the NAES of Ukraine, Kyiv, 2017, https://lib.iitta.gov.ua/706242/2/nac%20dopovid%202017%20ENG.indd%20 22-03-2017.pdf , ETF, Ukraine Education, Training And Employment Developments 2019, https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/Country%20fiche%202 019_Ukraine.pdf , OECD, Education GPS. Country Report Ukraine, 2021 https://gpseducation.oecd.org/CountryReports?primaryCountry=UKR

[139] Council of Europe, All-European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies, Council of Europe Publications, Strasbourg, 2004, p. 9

stronger democracies, stronger individuals that can face challenges of different kinds, we can identify little concrete solutions when it comes to implement them in national laws, the national curriculum or other means of education.

One must consider that investing in education in school is not enough in order to build resilience at national or local level. There is a considerable part of the population that is no longer part of the educational system. We talk about individuals that have reached a certain age or that are retired. There are isolated communities that do not follow newspapers, do not listen to TV or do not watch talk shows or don't even have internet access. In this case, training them to respond in order to create stronger and more resilient societies can be a challenge and must be addressed through national policies.

There should be a regional approach towards education for resilience. Even though some knowledge, abilities, and competencies can serve all countries when it comes to education for resilience, there are certain types of challenges that would be faced only at a regional level. For example, the information that comes from Russia is stronger and has a considerably greater echo in Eastern Europe than in Western Europe. This means that the policies must be tailored in order to address these challenges.

Even though in the treaties, the action plans, and other documents adopted at international level to boost education there are certain competencies identified as a basis for building a stronger society, for developing education for democracy curriculum, for example, in facing the pandemic, we could see that the population's reaction was not always the expected one. Also, in addressing disinformation and populism the strategies were not effective and the rise of populism and the high level of disinformation online prove that. So, it is not enough to have some framework programs or guidelines at international level, it is not enough to talk about education for democracy, education for peace, education for resilience, it is not enough to develop some directions in which the competencies that the curriculum must deliver at the end are defined, because if those actions are not correctly defined, implemented. and quantified afterwards there will be little impact.

Combining military education with education for resilience in schools and in society through different channels, and with education for resilience for institutions and private companies, can generate a holistic approach towards education that can have a real impact in raising the level of security.

As a last conclusion, changing the name we use to define a problem is not enough and is not even useful when it comes to developing those needed skills and competencies to boost education. If we look at what international organizations, national governmental bodies, or the literature understand when talking about education for peace, education for democracy, education for democratic citizenship, education for safety, education for resilience, education for a culture of security, we can sum up that in most cases there are common competencies and knowledge identified to be at the basis of this type of education. Considering this, during the pandemic and with the rise of populism and disinformation around Europe, we can see that all these concepts and all these strategies for education have not delivered what they should have.

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Chapter 4

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION AS BOOSTERS FOR RESILIENCE

Research and innovation are important pillars in the development of every country as they fuel the economy with new products and ideas suitable for the global competitive market. Having strong research and innovation ecosystems is important for the state, for companies, for universities and for society in general. It is known that research gives a competitive advantage to companies so that they can better perform on the national, regional, and international market, but can also generate a deep metamorphosis in fields where new technologies could change the world. In this context, science, research and innovation can have a substantial impact over state security from a multitude of perspectives: economic, environment, societal, and security.

With global warming as an acknowledged global problem, the need for timely research in areas connected to this aspect is vital. Digitalization offers new possibilities to interconnect the world in the most critical moments, as the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, thus the need to further study how we can safely and efficiently digitalize the various fields that can benefit from these advancements. The pandemic has shown us the need to unify global efforts in medicine, as the world's best minds could generate the future cures for what we now call incurable diseases. These challenges and lessons generate the stringent need to further develop research, not only in developed countries but around the world, and every actor should contribute to these actions for the good of humanity.

Internationally, states are free to articulate their research policy as a manifestation of their sovereignty rights. Considering this, each state is free to allocate a certain percentage of the GDP to research, can include the research policy in strategic policies, offer funds as they see fit for the interest of the country, they can establish research centers, and generate a policy for international cooperation in the field of research. In many cases, this research

policy is interlinked with other domains such as economics, education, labor, intellectual property, and the list is open.

From a global perspective, the UN considers research as a priority. Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the General Assembly include the 9th Goal: "Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation"[1]. Even if other goals also have a research and innovation component, this goal includes strategic targets for innovation: "*Target 9.5. Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending*" and "*Target 9.a. Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries*" and "*Target 9.b. Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries*". Both targets address the stringent needs in research: human resources, infrastructure, funding, advancement, the close ties between research and business, the impact research have over the economy and technological advantages and the impact over the society. Also, it is suggestive that innovation is put together with resilient infrastructures and industry, as it points toward the close link between innovation, industry and the global market, and the need for more resilient infrastructures in research and in general as well.

When considering this goal, and all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), one must understand that their national implementation is voluntary, and states can implement policies which are linked to one or more SDGs, but the impact can be limited or even inexistent. All the specialized UN agencies contribute to the implementation of SDGs according to their competences, as established in the constitutive treaties and to the extent states accept to take part in the subsequent treaties adopted and administered by the organizations.

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[1] UN, Goal 9 "Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation" https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal9

From an institutional perspective, UNESCO is a UN specialized agency which has competences in the field of research. It develops policies and analyses concerning the main trends in the field and is also involved in implementing SDGs, mainly in the field of education, correlating Goals 4 and 5 on gender equality with Goal 9 on research[2]. In practice, the UNESCO focus is more on culture and education, as it offers little funds for research. European policies are in full alignment with the priorities set forward by the UN in the SDG for research and innovation. Also, the HE program is global, every country can participate, thus it finances the global goals in world security, having a global impact by significantly contributing to world policies. The EU policy does not consist of words and generous policy phrases, but money that the EU spends through projects and financing mechanisms, and this is more than evident in the post implementation report for the previous Horizon 2020 Programme, where around 80% of investments addressed SDGs[3].

In the EU, research and resilience have interconnected in previous policies: "*the EU is already working under Horizon 2020 to develop a sound evidence base to inform our action to strengthen resilience*". The funds were allocated to resilience in relation to security, radical ideologies, the economy, social sciences, water and food security and the challenges of large-scale migration and forced displacement[4]. As core policies, EU shares these values with partner countries who wish to associate to EU programmes and policies[5].

[2] UNESCO webpage www.unesco.org
[3] Horizon Europe, The EU Research& Innovation Programme 2021 – 27, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/select-language?destination=/media/1431
[4] Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020 Reinforcing Resilience - an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all {SWD(2020) 56 final} https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/joint-communication-eastern-partnership-policy-beyond-2020-reinforcing-resilience-%E2%80%93-eastern_en
[5] Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020 Reinforcing Resilience -

At European level, research and innovation policies fall under the state competences, EU having support policies. For the implementation of reform policies in research, the endeavor is limited to the states' willingness to develop, adopt, and implement such reforms. From a political perspective, the EU cannot impose states a certain conduit when it comes to their research policy, but it can offer funds, consultation, and consensus on certain directions in the EU research policy. In this context, Horizon Europe is the largest funded research program in the world, and, as a particularity, it is open to all the countries in the EU and outside the EU. In order to access funds, states have to reorient their research strategies to be congruent to the EU ones, in order to offer the infrastructure and support the researchers and institutions need to access funds, correlate evaluation criteria for the research career, support funds for researchers' mobility and others. Further on, the impact is profound, as states should change more than the policies in research but also in public procurement, national rules in accounting and so on.

In this chapter, we will try to identify how the research strategy of the EU is articulated to generate resilience in the EU, in the EU neighborhood and in the world. We will follow how the HE Programme understands resilience, and how the financing mechanisms are set to generate advancements and better conditions for everybody.

4.1 The Horizon Europe and resilience in the post COVID-19 context.

Horizon Europe (HE) is the main financing program for research and innovation at EU level, with a remarkable budget of €95.5 billion. The program has a duration of 7 years and represents the continuation of the Horizon 2020 Programme. The main objective of the Programme is to generate development in key areas meant at boosting sustainable development in the long

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an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all {SWD(2020) 56 final} https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/joint-communication-eastern-partnership-policy-beyond-2020-reinforcing-resilience-%E2%80%93-eastern_en

run, as the motto of the program suggests: "*investing to shape our future*"[6].

Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth emphasized that "*In Horizon Europe, we want partnerships to have more impact and to make a strong contribution to the EU priorities of green and digital transitions and resilience*"[7]; thus, the Programme corresponds to the three main directions of the EU policy: green, digital and resilience, which are strongly embedded in the structure of the funding mechanisms of HE. Every facility in the HE is oriented towards "*EU priorities of the green and digital transitions and resilience*"[8].

The budget corresponds with these ambitions and it *"demonstrates the broad consensus on the key role of Research and Innovation in accelerating Europe's green and digital transformation, strengthening Europe's resilience and preparedness to face future crises and supporting Europe's competitive edge in the global race for knowledge"*[9]. For example, "36% of Horizon Europe partnership collective resources are planned to be allocated to R&I contributing to the resilience objectives, a 74% increase compared to H2020"[10].

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[6] Horizon Europe, The EU Research& Innovation Programme 2021 – 27, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/select-language?destination=/media/1431

[7] Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, *Performance of European Partnerships : Biennial Monitoring Report (BMR) 2022 on partnerships in Horizon Europe*, Publications Office of the European Union, 2022, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/144363

[8] European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, *Performance of European Partnerships : Biennial Monitoring Report (BMR) 2022 on partnerships in Horizon Europe*, Publications Office of the European Union, 2022, p. 4 https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/144363

[9] European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, *Horizon Europe, budget : Horizon Europe - the most ambitious EU research & innovation programme ever*, Publications Office of the European Union, 2021, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/202859

[10] European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, *Performance of European Partnerships : Biennial Monitoring*

Climate. The first objective of the HE is to "**tackle climate change**"[11], centering the call on the commitment made by member states and by the EU in the Paris Agreement[12] and in full alignment of the ambitious climate programme Green Deal[13]. In this context, HE is in line with the structure of the NextGenerationEU, which has a 40% allocation to climate change and 26% to digitalization[14], or the cohesion policy (a greener, low carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy; a more connected Europe by enhancing mobility mostly mobilized in through the Cohesion Fund)[15]. From a policy perspective, HE allocates more than €15 billion to climate change in the second pillar and almost the same amount to digitalization, the two accounting for more than 50% of the pillar's two budgets.

Digital. The structure of the NextGenerationEU allocates 26% to digitalization[16] and, in the cohesion policy (a greener, low carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy; a more connected Europe by enhancing mobility mostly mobilized in through the Cohesion Fund)[17], a consistent part is orientated towards digitalization.

Report (BMR) 2022 on partnerships in Horizon Europe, Publications Office of the European Union, 2022, p. 7 https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/144363

[11] Horizon Europe, The EU Research& Innovation Programme 2021 – 27, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/select-language?destination=/media/1431

[12] The Paris Agreement, United Nation Climate Change, https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement

[13] A European Green Deal, Striving to be the first climate-neutral continent https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

[14] NextGenerationE, contribution to climate change and digitalization, Recovery and Resilience Mechanism, https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/index.html?lang=en

[15] Cohesion Policy, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/how/priorities_en

[16] NextGenerationE, contribution to climate change and digitalization, Recovery and Resilience Mechanism, https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/index.html?lang=en

[17] Cohesion Policy, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/how/priorities_en

Resilience. The political agreement on HE came at a challenging time, during the COVID-19 pandemic and is directly linked to the recovery measures drawn during the pandemic and, which were part of the new policies addressing EU resilience. As objective and budgetary structure, HE reflects that. The total budget includes funds form the **NextGenerationEU programme,** which focuses on recovery and resilience[18]. It relates to other EU funds, in the sense that the priorities are harmonized, such as: Common Agricultural Policy, Innovation Fund, Connecting Europe Facility, ERDF, ERASMUS+, Space Programme, Single Market Programme, EU4Health, Maritime & Fisheries Fund, Creative Europe, Recovery and Resilience Facility[19] and others.

The concept of resilience is not enough, as it has to be dressed in tailormade solutions for each region. Resilience is built on new paradigms in understanding security, and this paradigm needs further study. With the climate change problems, the EU decided to be at the forefront of the research in this area. In the context of the pandemic, the EU mobilized to allocate funds for research in medicine. With the war in Ukraine, the funds were used to offer solutions for the Ukrainian crisis, but no substantial change in the research policy driven towards security can be identified.

However, the present concept of resilience is more focused on identifying the specific needs aggregated to resilience and crisis contexts, as first: "EU still needs to understand its main needs, and subsequently target investments in research, development and innovation in both the short term and the long term to strengthen resilience and preparedness against future

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[18] NextGenerationEU, https://next-generation-eu.europa.eu/index_en NextGenerationEU, Use of NextGenerationEU proceeds https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/eu-borrower-investor-relations/nextgenerationeu_en European Commission, Commission welcomes political agreement on Horizon Europe, the next EU research and innovation programme, 10 Dec 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_2345
[19] Horizon Europe, The EU Research& Innovation Programme 2021 – 27, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/select-language?destination=/media/1431

cross-border health threats and other crises"[20]. The problem with this approach is that the international system is in full shift, and the actions of other actors are sometimes unpredictable, with a black swan effect. The present strategy is addressed to the leaders of tomorrow: "*If the EU under invests in R & D today, the leaders of tomorrow will not have the tools to face the urgent priorities of the future.*"[21] It is a good strategy, but what do we do with the leaders of today? The EU resilience in the context of hybrid war, digitalization and the presence of armed war at its borders needs to be timely and effective. Disinformation already plays a major role in EU security and the system rarely keeps up with the challenges. In this context, more solutions are required in order to increase EU resilience.

The important link between security and R&I is underlined in several documents: *EU security union strategy*[22]*, the counter-terrorism agenda for EU*[23]*, EU strategy to tackle organized crime (2012-2025)*[24]*, A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence. For a European Union that protects its citizens, values and interests and contributes to international peace and security*[25].

According to the HE Strategic Plan 2025-2027, the following areas are targeted by HE in matters of resilience:

● **Civil security** – as a distinctive part for defense R&I activities. HE offered funds in the H2020 to address technologies which are also used in security areas. These cover: criminal

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[20] European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, *Horizon Europe strategic plan 2025-2027 analysis*, Publications Office of the European Union, p.97, 2023, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/637816

[21] Idem

[22] European Commission (2020), On the EU security union strategy, COM(2020) 605 final.

[23] European Commission (2020), A counter-terrorism agenda for the EU: Anticipate, prevent, protect, respond, COM(2020) 795 final.

[24] European Commission (2021), On the EU strategy to tackle organised crime 2021–2025, COM(2021) 170 final

[25] A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence. For a European Union that protects its citizens, values and interests and contributes to international peace and security, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/strategic-compass-security-and-defence-0_en

activities: cybercrime, violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism, organised crime or child sexual abuse, and solutions digital forensics, detection of explosives, and innovative techniques for gathering electronic evidence in criminal investigations; resilience of critical infrastructures against hybrid threats; research for the European integrated border management – Schengen area, disaster resilience – which covers not only natural but also manmade hazards; open strategic autonomy - strengthen the EU's industrial capacity.

● **Protect our health and well-being**: pandemics, ageing population, the increased burden of non-communicable diseases, supply chain for medical products and ingredients; preparedness on cross-border health threats.

● **Ensure social fairness and building resilience.**

● **Social, institutional and democratic dimension**: crisis and democracies, metaverse and democracies; democratic rights and freedoms in times of crisis, technological development and the impact over governance style, trade; the impact of EU funds and demographic changes and ageing; new forms of inequality, etc.[26].

4.2 The architecture of the HE programme

The HE programme is composed of four priorities: Excellent Science; Global challenges and European industrial competitiveness; Innovative Europe, Widening Part and ERA. To this, the Specific Programme: European Defence Fund and EURATOM complete the scene of the EU R&I financing mechanism, which, in essence, addresses three key priorities: society, economy, science and technology.

The first Pillar, Excellent Science is composed of the European Research Council with a financing of 16 billion, Marie Skłodowska-Curie financed with €6,6 Billion and Research Infrastructures, which has an available finance of €2,4 billion, in total 27 billion EURO for this pillar. The pillar addresses 3 main

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[26] European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, *Horizon Europe strategic plan 2025-2027 analysis*, Publications Office of the European Union, p.97-103, 2023, **https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/637816**

challenges in research: gathering finance around frontier research across all fields; developing researchers' skills through training and mobility, and developing interconnected research infrastructure[27].

The Pillar 2 Global Challenges & European Industrial Competitiveness has 6 clusters in Health; Culture, Creativity & Inclusive Society; Civil Security for Society; Digital, Industry & Space; Climate, Energy & Mobility; Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture & Environment; and the Joint Research Centre. The pillar has an available budget of 53.5 billion EURO from which more than 30 billion are allocated to clusters 4 Digital, Industry & Space and 5 Climate, Energy & Mobility. The Clusters 2 Culture, Creativity & Inclusive Society (2.280 billion EURO) and 3 Civil Security for Society (1.596 billion EURO) received the smallest amount, which means that certain fields of research important in the present security context have less chance to receive a grant.

EU Missions are an important facility for financing R&I. There are 5 missions defined in the call: adaptation to climate change, including societal transformation; Cancer; Healthy oceans, seas, coastal & inland waters; Climate-neutral & smart cities; Soil health & food.

The third Pillar Innovative Europe is composed of the European Innovation Council (EIC), European Innovation Ecosystems and European Institute of Innovation & Technology. It has a 13,6 billion EURO allocation and includes new programs. The EIC is a novelty for the research programme, it is mainly open for SMEs and offers funds to breakthrough innovations that are risky for the private investors. It has 3 instruments for three different stages of the product: Pathfinder, Transition and Accelerator.

Complementary funds to HE.

EUROATOM (1,9 billion EURO) supports research and innovation in the nuclear field and mobility of researchers through three facilities: Fusion, Fission and Joint Research

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[27] Horizon Europe, The EU Research & Innovation Programme 2021 – 27, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/select-language?destination=/media/1431

Center. Even though it is a separate call, it operates under the HE rules of participation[28]. The new programme was substantially simplified, and synergies were created to HE and other EU actions. It is important to mention that the new programme has a focus on education and training and health[29].

The European Defence Fund (8 billion EURO) supports research in defense (defense innovation) through research actions and development actions. The fund has as a core objective to support the full cycle in innovation from idea to research and, then, to the final product. As in the case of EIC, SMEs are welcome to participate in the call. The main topics are: Defence medical response, Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear (CBRN); Information superiority; Sensors; Cyber; Space; Digital transformation; Materials and components; Energy and environment; Air Combat; Ground combat; Force protection and mobility; Naval combat; Underwater warfare; Disruptive technologies for defense applications; SME Calls, and other[30]. The funds operate in close relation to national funds for defense innovation.

InvestEU for Research and Innovation (R&I) addresses the private sector, while respecting competition law. The support is offered through 3 mechanisms: InvestEU Fund, InvestEU Assistance, InvestEU Portal[31].

HE and Erasmus + are, from our point of view, the most closely linked programs, not necessarily in terms of funding, but of the outcome. Considered one of the most successful funding programmes and with a budget of €26.2 billion, almost double than the previous one, the Erasmus + programme set its primary goal to support social inclusion, the green and digital transitions,

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[28] Euratom Research and Training Programme, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/euratom-research-and-training-programme_en

[29] European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Euratom research and training programme 2021-2025, Publications Office, 2021, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/200656

[30] European Defence Fund, https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-03/Factsheet_EDFCalls2023_.pdf

[31] InvestEU, https://investeu.europa.eu/index_en

and promote young people's participation in democratic life[32]. In reality, it does more than that: **by stimulating mobility, it stimulates research**. Most EaP states identified a need for stronger internationalization at university level: "the international cooperation should be more active, and universities and research institutions should make more use of their MoU"[33] and encountered difficulties in finding partners. Erasmus offers exactly this: partners, mobilities, connection of researchers. Universities are concluding Erasmus agreements with other universities or research institutions, thus building on the internationalization policy. The teachers use the programme to visit other universities for training or teaching mobilities. Along with this, possible partners for projects could be identified.

The Joint Staff Working document mentions as part of the New Deal for Youth the flagship Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe mechanism, it will support national reform processes, allowing for over 20 000 students, researchers and staff, to study or teach in a foreign higher education institution[34]. To this, it must be mentioned that Erasmus can offer much more through the following calls: Small Scale Partnership, Cooperation partnership, Jean Monnet Networks, Alliances for Innovation - Alliances for Education and Enterprises, Alliances for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills, European Universities Initiative, Support for policy reform, Capacity building (higher education), Erasmus Mundus Design Measures, Erasmus Mundus[35].

"European higher education must simultaneously respond to the moving targets of education and training and prepare the next generation of skilled digital natives to be resilient in the face of rapidly evolving societal challenges."[36]

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[32] European Commission, Erasmus+, https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/about-erasmus/what-is-erasmus

[33] Report of the event, Georgia presentation, Second Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation (EaP), 2021

[34] The Joint Staff Working Document. Recovery, Resilience and reform: post 2020 Eastern Partnership priorities, SWD(2021) 186 final, 2021

[35] European Commission, Erasmus+, https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/about-erasmus/what-is-erasmus

[36] Commission Staff Working Document Impact Assessment Accompanying the document Proposals for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for

4.3 Highlights of the HE access to funds by country.

HE is a highly competitive programe and access is conditioned by excellence. The reform of the research system and investments are part of a state's competence, and every state should set in place measures to increase participation to the programme.

It is obvious that there are considerable differences between member states in accessing HE funds. Germany, France, Spain, Netherlands, and Italy are the top countries in accessing Eu funds. In order to establish a correlation, we compared the data with the H2020 programme and FP7 presented in Graphic 1 - Access to EU research funds by state. The data confirms the same hierarchy of the top 5 countries, even if with differences from a program to another. Also, the countries with low number of grants remain in the bottom part with little difference from one program to another.

This aspect raises some questions regarding the way the program helps other research institutions or universities to have access to funds. Without proper measures, the gap will expand from one program to another, and the research ecosystems in these countries will become weaker and vulnerable to brain drain due to a multitude of factors, ranging from income, to research infrastructures and the institutional abilities to develop and manage such projects.

Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination Decision Of The European Parliament and of the Council on establishing the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Council Regulation establishing the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community for the period 2021-2025 complementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, SWD/2018/307 final

Figure 1 - Acces to EU research funds by state
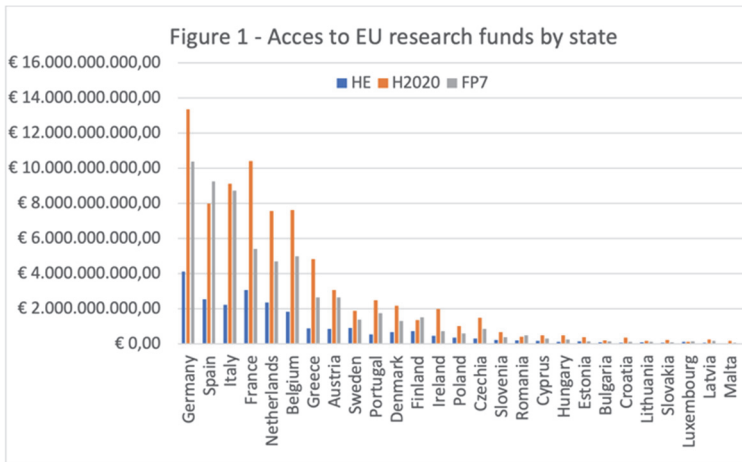
Relevant for our research is the fact that the data indicates that there is a geographical spread in accessing EU funds. Central and Eastern European states are less likely to access HE funds, and the reasons are complex, starting with the R&I ecosystem transition from communism to research infrastructures, to brain drain. This indicates that targeted governmental measures should be implemented in order to increase participation in the program. As a weak point, these countries have less likely chances to find research funding for projects dressing regional needs. The fact that from one program to the other little evolution can be identified in the successful funding application indicates that the danger for long time discrepancies in R&I ecosystems is considerable, and in the long run, the exact targets of the HE programme could be in danger.

From a political viewpoint, some states will have weaker and weaker research systems as brain drain will become a real problem, while others will increase their participation. In order to understand how political reforms could influence the participation in HE and, thus, increase resilience, we analyzed EaP Partner countries reforms and participation in the programme.

4.4. Increasing participation in HE and resilience through R&I reform. EaP partner countries case study.

"The quality of countries' institutions shapes their innovation and economic performance"[37]

States support research and innovation through the governmental structures with competences in the field. In EaP countries, they are generally linked to the Ministry of Education and Research, structures which have competences in elaborating, implementing and monitoring policies in R&I. Considering these aspects, the government has to authority and the obligation to reform the national R&I ecosystem in order to increase the state's participation to HE. The reforms take place through a normative framework linked to strategies for R&I, which, in the short and medium term, should ensure a more adapted research ecosystem to society's needs and to the economic imperatives in an international competitive environment.

Research and innovation are main drivers for prosperity and sustainability; thus, the related policies should be high on national agendas. In this context, R&I policies should be linked to other national policies for a harmonious development, should have cross-sector policies and should involve the research system and the education system, as a lot of the research is done in the universities, economy, private-public partnerships, digitalization policies or green policies.

R&I are high in the European agenda, and this is an integral part of the EaP policy. Also, resilience is embedded in the core policies of the EU foreign policy. Strengthening resilience is considered to be an "overarching policy framework" with 5 long term objectives:

● together for resilient, sustainable and integrated economies;

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[37] European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, *Horizon Europe strategic plan 2025-2027 analysis*, Publications Office of the European Union, p. 102, 2023, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/637816

● together for accountable institutions, the rule of law and security;

    ● together towards environmental and climate resilience;

    ● together for a resilient digital transformation; and

    ● together for resilient, fair and inclusive societies[38].

The Joint Communication "Eastern Partnership Policy beyond 2020: reinforcing resilience - an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all" addresses in several points the connection between EU strategy, resilience and research and the importance for EaP Partner Countries. In the strategic objective 4.1 Together for resilient, sustainable and integrated economies "better connecting education, research and innovation with private sector"[39] is seen as an essential point in increasing resilience. Also, considering the achievements of the 20 Deliverables by 2020, the "*national public research and innovation systems need to improve in performance and competitiveness, including by continuing reforms. The development of a common knowledge and innovation space between the EU and the partner countries should be fostered, using scientific evidence to create knowledge-based jobs and attract investors to innovative businesses in the EU and the neighbourhood. Research, innovation and transfer of knowledge are also key to modernisation of agriculture, a vital sector for a large part of the population in the EaP.*"[40]

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[38] Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020 Reinforcing Resilience - an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all {SWD(2020) 56 final} https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/joint-communication-eastern-partnership-policy-beyond-2020-reinforcing-resilience-%E2%80%93-eastern_en, European Commission, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's external action {SWD(2017) 226 final} {SWD(2017) 227 final},

[39] Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020 Reinforcing Resilience - an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all {SWD(2020) 56 final} https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/joint-communication-eastern-partnership-policy-beyond-2020-reinforcing-resilience-%E2%80%93-eastern_en

[40] Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020 Reinforcing Resilience -

The Joint Staff Working Document. Recovery, Resilience and reform: post 2020 Eastern Partnership priorities[41] gives considerable space to the reforms in R&I. The increase in the partner country's Global Innovation Index Score by three points and boosting excellence by increasing to 700 the number of partner country participation in HE and EU4Innovation are convened priorities for research and innovation. The implementation of these priorities needs reforms in the national investment in (R&I) policy reforms and increasing gross R&I expenditure by at least 50% to ensure sustainable growth and supporting the green and digital transitions. The support for young researchers and investment in research are considered basic needs for strong R&I ecosystems.

EU and Partner country fully commit to support the implementation of smart specialisation strategies and the development of technology transfer roadmaps[42].

Starting from the Joint Communication to the Joint Staff Working Document, R & I reforms were adopted in each EaP Partner country with the aim to reach the targets established. In the light of Russia's aggression war in Ukraine, in 2022 Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova obtained the candidate status and Georgia received a European perspective. Even if there are new policies correlated with the process of joining the UE, the EaP agenda remains valid and represent a support for the countries in their European narrative[43].

By analyzing the country's presentations during the 5 informal working groups on research and innovation, we used a

an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all {SWD(2020) 56 final} https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/joint-communication-eastern-partnership-policy-beyond-2020-reinforcing-resilience-%E2%80%93-eastern_en

[41] The Joint Staff Working Document. Recovery, Resilience and reform: post 2020 Eastern Partnership priorities, SWD(2021) 186 final, 2021

[42] The Joint Staff Working Document. Recovery, Resilience and reform: post 2020 Eastern Partnership priorities, SWD(2021) 186 final, 2021

[43] 5th Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation (EaP), Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, 23 – 24 May 2023, European Commission, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/5th-eastern-partnership-informal-working-group-meeting-research-and-innovation-2023-05-31_en   , https://eu.eventscloud.com/ehome/5th-working-group/home/

SWOT analysis tool to identify the possible solutions for EaP Partner Country to strengthen their R&I policies and increase their participation in HE to 700 projects as agreed.

a. Strengths
- Ongoing reforms;
- NPC network;
- Horizon Europe Offices;
- Proposal Writing Camps;
- Expert Consultations.

b. Weaknesses
- Low budgetary allocation to R&I;
- Need to strengthen the link between the education – research -industry triangle;
- the need for modern research infrastructure;
- the improvement of technology transfer rate;
- dynamization of the internationalization process in R&I;
- better selection of research topics;
- the development of local and international consortium;
- increase the attractiveness of the research career;
- increase the number of women in research;
- increase the number of women in research management positions;
- reduce brain drain and increase brain circulation;
- limited capacity to absorb the funds in R&I;
- need for centers of excellence;
- increase universities capacities in research;
- multidisciplinary research subjects;
- multicultural teams of researchers;
- low commercialization of research results;
- the need for a performance-based funding system;
- the need to make the funding system more diverse;
- lack of data on research capacity and research activities.

c. Opportunities
- Cooperation with EU on the association agreements and PSF;

o Statute of candidate state for the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, and the European perspective for Georgia;
o Participation in HE - an opportunity to increase cooperation in the Black Sea region;
o Regional cooperation;
o Common projects of common regional problems;
o Utilization of Erasmus + platform to find partners with more experience;
o EU support for drafting strategies on SS & TT;
o Common projects to support Ukraine and increase regional dynamics.

d.   Threats
o HE - highly competitive;
o The presence of the war in Ukraine;
o Frozen conflicts and conflicts between states;
o Slow pace in reforming the R&I ecosystem.

R&I Ecosystems in EaP partner countries based on their presentation during formal and informal meetings.

For **Armenia,** the targets convened are political priorities. The country adopted trans-sectoral reforms meant at addressing the challenges in R&I in order to increase the Global Innovation Index Score by three points, to increase the participation in HE and the integration into ERA.

The main challenges in R&I are: public funding for research; research infrastructures represent a challenge as they are fragmented and old; brain drain; researchers' qualification; the attractiveness of the research career; women in research and in research management; need for stronger policies for filling the gap between research and industry; the consolidation and optimization of the research sector; the implementation of performance based funding model and increasing the efficiency of funding; insufficient evaluation mechanism in education and research; increasing the connection between education and science; the creation of more centers of excellence; increased skills in project writing and awareness about EU funds. A main

challenge is the regional political and military instability and the presence of military insecurity[44].

To address these challenges, several reforms were developed from new or updated legislation and financing despite the war in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. First, there is a plan for increasing the national expenditures on research. In 2022, Armenia presented the target of increasing public spending in research with an increase of 50%[45]. In the 2023, the policy was revised, and Armenia presented the government commitment to increase expenditure on R&D as % of GDP to 0,52% by 2025[46]. This strategy opens the possibilities for further reforms in infrastructure and human resources.

Secondly, in the Government program for 2021-2026 there are strategies to update and modernize the research infrastructures. Several grant programs were conceived to support the modernization of the research infrastructures[47] and research equipment[48]. An objective is to increase the competitiveness of the upgraded infrastructures and facilitate

[44] 1-5th Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation

[45] Report of the event, Republic of Armenia perspective, Georgia perspective, 4th Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation, 20 October – 21 October 2022, Tibilisi, Georgia https://eu4digital.eap-events.eu/ehome/researchandinnovation/documents/

[46] EaP Priorities in research and Innovation – state of implementation. Round table discussion "Challenges for the implementation of the EaP R&I Priorities in the EaP Partner countries, with a particular focus on investing in research and innovation reform policies including supporting the green and digital transition and increasing the participation of the EaP Partner countries to horizon Europe". Armenia Perspective, 5th Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation (EaP), Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, 23 – 24 May 2023, European Commission, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/5th-eastern-partnership-informal-working-group-meeting-research-and-innovation-2023-05-31_en , https://eu.eventscloud.com/ehome/5th-working-group/home/

[47] Report of the event, Armenia perspective, Second Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Research and Innovation, on line format, 2021

[48] Government action plan 2021-2026, Report of the event, Armenia perspective, Forth Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Research and Innovation, on line format, 2022

their integration into the European research infrastructures network for which support from the EU is requested.[49]

Thirdly, institutional changes were implemented in the reform process. The Governmental program for 2021-2026 includes the Foundation for the evaluation and investment into high-risk Science to Business projects who will be finalized by 2025[50]. The Science Committee was reorganized in the Committee for Higher Education and Science through an amendment to the law on research and innovation. The Committee has as objective harmonization policies in higher education that will bring closer research and innovation, through updated curricula and introduction of new skills in research and innovation capacities[51].

In January 2020, the *Roadmap for integration into ERA* was adopted by the ministerial decree and in 2021 the *Government Action program 2021-2026* was adopted, including measures to support R&I.

Fourthly, measures were adopted to improve the attractiveness of the research career by increasing baseline salaries of research, supporting staff and research management positions according to national scheme till 2025[52]. These

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[49] Report of the event, Armenia perspective, Third Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Research and Innovation, on line format, 2021

[50] 5th Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation (EaP), Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, 23 – 24 May 2023, European Commission, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/5th-eastern-partnership-informal-working-group-meeting-research-and-innovation-2023-05-31_en

[51]

[52] EaP Priorities in research and Innovation – state of implementation. Round table discussion "Challenges for the implementation of the EaP R&I Priorities in the EaP Partner countries, with a particular focus on investing in research and innovation reform policies including supporting the green and digital transition and increasing the participation of the EaP Partner countries to horizon Europe". Armenia Perspective, 5th Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation (EaP), Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, 23 – 24 May 2023, European Commission, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/5th-eastern-partnership-informal-working-group-meeting-research-and-innovation-2023-05-31_en , https://eu.eventscloud.com/ehome/5th-working-group/home/

measures and the grant schemes developed at national level are also meant at diminishing brain drain and improve brain circulation[53]. From a policy viewpoint, the participation of women in science is a priority and programs were developed in the Government Action program 2021-2026 and law on R&I to increase their participation in science. A special call was launched in 2020, which promoted the women empowerment as research managers[54]. Programs for young researchers were developed along with mobility opportunities.

As the participation intro HE is a priority of Armenia, aside the budgetary investments in R&I, there are measures that consider increasing the quality of research and the research evaluation process, with new measures for evaluation, education and research[55]. The development of the NPC network is a priority for increasing the participation in HE as they offer support to participants who want to access funds. A center for facilitating the work of NCP was established and SIPAC played a major role in developing the participation in HE and supporting the process of becoming a full member of COST. SIPAC (HE Office) was created in 2017 as a foundation by the Armenian Government with a mandate to coordinate the activities of HE Association Agreement with the main goal to raise awareness, advise and assist potential candidates in HE. There was a budget increase with new funding schemes and calls, but a limited capacity to absorb the funds was identified.

Armenia considers SS and TT important for their development, expressing the intention to develop and implement a SS strategy and there is a project for a TT Office.

For **Azerbaijan,** the participation in HE represents a priority, thus the reform in R&I is ongoing with a trans-sectoral approach to it. The government organized consultations with the

[53] Third Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Research and Innovation, on line format
[54] Second Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Research and Innovation, on line format
[55] Report of the event, Armenia perspective, Second Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Research and Innovation, on line format,

research sector, academia and other interested stakeholders in order to develop inclusive reforms.

The main challenges in the R&I are: the need to improve the link between the education – research -industry triangle; the need for research infrastructure; the improvement of technology transfer rate; dynamization of the internationalization process in R&I; better selection of research topics; the development of local and international consortium[56]; the sustainability of funding from international donors, the need to bring education and science closer together[57]

Firstly, an increase in budgetary allowance to R&I is considered.

Secondly, programs were put in place to update the research infrastructures: technological parks were created, a decree in 2022 was adopted on sharing the public research infrastructures.

Thirdly, reforms were put in place. Institutional reforms included the establishment of the Ministry of Science and Education; the creation of the Working Group on "Technology and Innovation" and the Subgroup "The improvement of international rating indicators of scientific publications (h-index)"; "INNOLAND" for innovative ideas and expand startup movement[58]; High Technology Park; Center for Analysis and Coordination of Industrial Economy; Azerbaijan Science Foundation; Socio-Economic Development Strategy (2022-2026). Policy updates and reforms include, *inter alia*, embedding the green and digital priorities in the national agenda and funding mechanisms; the cluster on the fourth industrial revolution; reform of the IP law with focus on industrial property; international bilateral programs, individual grants, and support for publication.

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[56] Report of the event, Azerbaijan perspective, Second Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Research and Innovation, on line format, First EaP Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation, 22 April, 2021, https://www.eap-events.eu/ehome/wg-ri/agenda/ Country presentation Azerbaijan
[57] Third Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Research and Innovation, on line format
[58] Forth Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Research and Innovation, Georgia

Fourthly, reforms targeting human resources in research include: joint research projects; national joint degrees; state decree on the establishment of research universities; international joint master and doctoral programs; increasing internationalization while making English language compulsory for PhD students; academic writing courses; a diaspora center was created within ANAS; roadmap for the promotion of researchers' mobility; working group on increasing impact of research.

The activity of the NCP networks is being revised for more efficiency. More emphasis should be put on bilateral projects with EaP states (such as the ones developed with Italy, Turkey, Russia, Bulgaria or Belarus) and the EU.

For Azerbaijan the SS strategy and TT are important, and efforts are made to develop such documents at national level with the EU support.

Georgia has undergone substantial reforms to modernize the R&I ecosystem in order to increase the participation in HE. The fact that in 2022 Georgia received a European perspective builds more reforms for the harmonization with the EU system. This is a challenge and an opportunity at the same time.

Similar challenges to other EaP partner states were identified: aged human resources in R&I and underdeveloped recruitment system and reward system; lack of young researchers and ineffective doctoral training; lack of modern infrastructure; suboptimal ecosystem for startups in universities and technology transfer; the weak link between science and industry; low commercialization of research results; low and ineffective funding; the need for a performance-based funding system; the need to make the funding system more divers; lack of data on research capacity and research activities[59], there is not a clear determination of priorities in R&I in Georgia, in universities the research is feeble represented.

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[59] Second Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Research and Innovation, on line format

Firstly, a budgetary allocation increase for R&I to 1,5% of the GDP was included in the Strategy on Education and Science[60].

Secondly, there are debates at governmental level to increase and modernize the research infrastructures.

Thirdly, several reforms were put in place. The Strategic Planning for 2022-2032 addresses the funding aspects, human resources, linking science to business. There is progress in the ERA Roadmap. The Horizon Office was developed in 2021 and updated in 2023 for coordinating the NCP's and increasing the participation in HE through identification of funding sources, information, building skills in project writing for researchers, and cooperation with universities.

Fourthly, reforms are being developed to increase the attractivity of the research career, to build skills in researchers for proposal drafting, and project management.

Developing a SS and TT strategy is a priority, as it could close the gap between research and business, an aspect neglected in the last 30 years.

The Republic of Moldova received in 2022 the status of candidate state to the EU and an ambitious goal was established at the governmental level: becoming an EU member state by 2030. This ambitious goal needs consistent reforms and their active implementation. This means that the reforms in research and innovation will be amplified and accelerated in order to reach the proposed target. Even prior to the year 2022, the Republic of Moldova was active in implementing reforms in the field of research and innovation. An important step was the Agreement between the EU and Moldova on the Association to the Horizon Program, which was signed on 27 October 2021[61].

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[60] Report of the event, Georgia perspective, 4th Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation, 20 October – 21 October 2022, Tibilisi, Georgia https://eu4digital.eap-events.eu/ehome/researchandinnovation/documents/

[61] The Republic of Moldova joins Horizon Europe research and innovation programme, October 28, 2021, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/republic-moldova-joins-horizon-europe-research-and-innovation-programme-2021-10-28_en

Considering the present security context of the region and Moldova's neighborhood with Ukraine, the impact of the war is felt in many areas. More than 100.000 refugees are hosted in the country, and some of them are researchers.

The main challenges identified are similar to the ones presented already: legal framework and governance update in R&I; efficiency of the national R&I system; motivating the scientific community to participate in the calls; participation of young researchers in EU programmes; attracting experts in research; competitive human potential; brain drain, modernization of research infrastructures; narrowing the gap between research and private sector; a coherent policy for European and international cooperation

Firstly, an increase of 12,4% in 2022 compared to 2021 in expenditures for R&I, consisting of 0.23% of GDP (630 mil LEI) was implemented in order to support R&I reforms.

Secondly, reforms in research infrastructure were developed to update the existing one or build new facilities. "The Research Infrastructures Roadmap" will be developed by 2025 with the support of the EU PSF.

Thirdly, structural reforms regarding research and innovation institutions and the whole ecosystem were developed: the Government Decision Nr. 485/2022 regarding the reorganization through merger (absorption) of some institutions in the fields of education, research and innovation; National Programme in the fields of Research and Innovation 2020-2023 (includes measures for green and digital transition); the Strategy for Research and Innovation 2030 and a new National Program for Research and Innovation for 2024- 2027 are under development; amendment of the Science and Innovation Code envisaging a public funding mechanism correlated to performance[62]; implementation of the Framework Conditions for Research & Innovation and integration into the ERA. In 2022, new policies were developed and new types of projects were

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[62] Anatolie TOPALĂ, *Minister of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova welcome speech,* 5th Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation (EaP), Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, 23 – 24 May 2023, https://eu.eventscloud.com/ehome/5th-working-group/home/

developed targeting cooperation with the private sector. Building on the policy priority to increase participation in HE, a HE Office was established under the coordination of the National Agency for Research and Development, the International Cooperation and Sustainable Development Directorate (2023).

Fourthly, reforms were adopted to address the needs in human resources in research: increasing the salaries of university staff and of researchers (2023), motivation of the scientific community to participate in the calls in R&I (2022), support for applied research.

Acknowledging the need to increase NCP network activity and efficiency[63] the government, through the Ministry of Education and Research, requested the PSF support in relation to several topics: a review of the funding system for public research; a setup of a comprehensive policy for the development and effective use of public R&I infrastructures; development of measures aimed at strengthening the links between research and business[64]. In 2023, PSF finished the report and published it. The HE Office was established in 2023. Moldova benefited in 2016 from PSF support.

The Republic of Moldova finalized in 2023 a draft version of the Smart Specialisation Strategy of the country for the years 2023-2030 "SMART Moldova-2030"[65], which is being revised by JRC. A priority is the development of the technology transfer roadmap[66].

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[63] 4th Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation (EaP), Chișinău, Georgia, October 2022.

[64] PSF concludes Country Report on Moldova, 31.01.2023, ERA portal, https://era.gv.at/news-items/psf-concludes-country-report-on-moldova/

[65] Government of the Republic of Moldova, Conceptul, Strategiei de Specializare Inteligentă a Republicii Moldova până în anul 2030 https://particip.gov.md/ro/download_attachment/15658

[66] EaP Priorities in research and Innovation – state of implementation. Round table discussion "Challenges for the implementation of the EaP R&I Priorities in the EaP Partner countries, with a particular focus on investing in research and innovation reform policies including supporting the green and digital transition and increasing the participation of the EaP Partner countries to horizon Europe". Moldova Perspective, 5th Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation (EaP), Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, 23 – 24 May 2023, European Commission, https://research-and-

Ukraine received the EU candidate state status in 2022, a remarkable achievement for a country at war. The EU message is clear: people should decide their own faith without outside interference and without military pressure. Along with the candidature, Ukraine must develop reforms in order to close the negotiation chapters and become a full member. One of the areas in which the reforms will operate is R&I. However, from the EaP Partner countries, Ukraine has the most significant participation in HE, already signing 60 grant agreements (2023) and 170 entities from Ukraine received around €46 million in EU funding under Horizon 2020. In 2022 Ukraine ratified the Association Agreement to Horizon Europe and EURATOM[67].

Due to the war, in Ukraine 85% of the budget for R&I was cut[68] with no foreseeable future for a change as the war is ongoing after one and a half years.

The R&I ecosystem prior and during the war is profoundly different. The challenges identified in 2021 are merely a fraction of the current reality. Reforms are, though, ongoing, and measures are put into place in order to address the war impact over research. R&I is considered to be a main driver for reconstruction in a post war context.

Prior to the war, Ukraine identified the following challenges in R&I: need for a stronger legislative framework and strategy for R&I, low level of cooperation between science and business, outdated scientific infrastructure, isolation of scientific research from the real sector of economy and industry, difficulties in finding partners to create a competitive consortium, lack of

innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/5th-eastern-partnership-informal-working-group-meeting-research-and-innovation-2023-05-31_en , https://eu.eventscloud.com/ehome/5th-working-group/home/

[67]European Commission, Ukraine's association agreement to Horizon Europe and Euratom Research and Training Programmes enters into force, 9.06.2022, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/ukraines-association-agreement-horizon-europe-and-euratom-research-and-training-programmes-enters-2022-06-09_en

[68] Report of the event, Ukrainian perspective, Forth Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Research and Innovation 20-21 October 2022 Tbilisi, Georgia, https://eu4digital.eap-events.eu/ehome/researchandinnovation/documents/

experience on the participation in the European Union instruments of research and innovation[69].

Firstly, Ukraine's budget lost 85% of the national funding on R&I due to the war.

Secondly, infrastructures were put under evaluation in 2021 along with the drafting of the State Program for the Development of research infrastructures 2021-2026.

Thirdly, reforms were put in place addressing hierarchical institutions in research and the system *per se*. In Ukraine, 4 ministries are coordinating their efforts to reform digitalization and the innovation sector. Thus, a trans-ministerial format was adopted in order to maximize the impact of the reforms which are targeted around: scientific results, research infrastructures, dissemination in science and attracting citizens to participate in science. Several institutions were established or are under development: the Ukrainian Research Information System; Digital platforms in wartime (National Portal of International Scientific and Technological Cooperation, Online Mentor Science&Business, Research4Life portal).

Fourthly, human resources are a significant issue as, due to the challenges, Ukraine was facing considerable brain drain even before the war. During the war many researchers left the country or the ones that remain are unable to conduct research due to lack of financing or the destruction of the research infrastructures. EU and neighboring countries developed programs to help Ukrainian researchers, but the struggles are still considerable. In an effort to support the research community in time of war, projects of the diaspora were considered as the Ukrainian Science Diaspora developed under the tutelage of the Ministry of Education and Science[70]. The Horizon Europe Office in Kyiv is under development and is set to be officially inaugurated in 2023. The

[69] 1th, 2nd, 3rd Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation (EaP), on line format
[70] 5th Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation (EaP), Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, 23 – 24 May 2023, European Commission, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/5th-eastern-partnership-informal-working-group-meeting-research-and-innovation-2023-05-31_en ,
https://eu.eventscloud.com/ehome/5th-working-group/home/

objective of the office is to provide support to the National Contact Points across Ukraine and strengthen R&I networks between Ukrainian and European institutions[71].

Smart Specialization and Technological Transfer are important for Ukraine The TT reform is focused on universities as main drivers for R&I. The laws drafted for SS and TT are still in the legislative procedure and due to the war, their finalization will take time.

The EU is working closely with Ukraine in these difficult times in terms of political, economical and societal support. In the R&I system EU drafted several funding schemes for supporting the research community: Human Frontier Science Program (EU contribution EUR 3 mln 2022-2024), ERC4Ukraine; joint fellowships by Joint Research Centre and European University Institute (EUI), ERA4Ukraine; EIC4Ukraine; EURIZON project; Association Ukrainian cities to the Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities' Mission, Urban Transition Mission of Mission Innovation, EU-Ukraine Strategic Partnership on Raw Materials and others[72].

Conclusions and Solutions

Most EaP states consider Universities as main drivers for innovation, this is why some states, such as Ukraine, put universities at the core of the Technological Transfer strategy which is under development. All EaP partner countries emphasized the need for stronger internationalizations policies in research, as the case of Georgia: "the international cooperation should be more active, and universities and research institutions should make more use of their MoU"[73]. In reality, the reforms in the research and innovation ecosystem have a direct impact over the universities as they are domain providers of research, especially in central and Eastern Europe and in EaP partner countries, considering that what is in fact reformed is how the university system works and how much emphasis it puts on

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[71] *Idem*

[72] *Idem*

[73] Report of the event, Georgia presentation, Second Informal Working Group Meeting on Research and Innovation (EaP), 2021

research and innovation. Apart from the challenges presented in the 4.4 subchapter there are two main challenges that need further reforms and concrete measures in order to increase innovation and thus, the participation in the Horizon Programme. The first one concerns the main focus of the university today which is the number of students attending courses and the income they generate. Being linked to the funding they have per student or the taxis the student pay to study, universities oriented themselves more towards education and less towards research. Another catalyst in this context was the low funding towards research and the small number of grants available from national funds for research and research infrastructures.

This generated a cascade effect which presents the following parameters: funding according to the number of students; less research output; more courses per teacher from different areas generating less time for search and forcing teachers to specialize in broad subjects that serve the courses and less research; less scientific output present mostly in national journals or publishing houses and with little impact abroad; low interest in bridging the gap between research, businesses and industry; less cooperation in matter of research; and, in the long run, less interest in applying for EU funds in research.

When states draft the reforms in the research and innovation area, one must consider the realities of the main providers of research and a bottom up approach is needed. Without a major shift in the life of universities and how they are funded, little improvement will be made in accessing funds under the Horizon Europe Programme.

There are several solutions to this problem that will address many challenges which universities face in this process of reform:

1.**Modifying the funding schemes for universities.** If the emphasis will be put on research and research outcomes and less on the number of students, universities will have to change their policy in order to receive funding. This means that the national schemes for evaluation of the institution, but also of the human resources in higher education institutions will generate in the medium term an increase in the interest universities have towards accessing research funds from the European Union. At the same

time, this measure could help with the problem that universities are facing: the decreasing number of students due to low birth rates.

2. **Putting more emphasis on research at the national level by increasing funding** in this area.

3. **Stimulating research excellence by offering grants to the researchers with remarkable outcomes.**

4. **Promoting a more equitable funding scheme for states at European level**: for example, the per diem funds for personnel within the EU under the Erasmus+ Programme present considerable disparities which cannot be justified in any way: in Romania or in other Eastern European countries the maximum cost per personnel per day is €74, in Belgium or other western European countries it's more than €200. **Keeping these discrepancies only encourages brain drain and not at all brain circulation. By continuing with this type of funding discrepancies, the European Union contradicts the principle it enunciates in the main policies in research.**

5. **Brain drain is a problem for all Eastern and Central European** states, including EaP partner countries and is not solvable through funding only through MSCA. The funding scheme should be revised to address this problem.

6. **By encouraging brain drain through different cost per personnel according to geographical or other reasons, the EU is affecting the resilience of the states that have lower rates**. If we follow the main EU documents on research and on resilience, they all agree that research and innovation are main pillars for resilience. Moreover, resilience is seen as an overarching policy in the Horizon Europe Programme. Developing a more coherent European approach towards personnel costs in Horizon Europe or Erasmus plus should be a priority.

7. **Putting more emphasis on Erasmus + as a support program for Horizon Europe**. By increasing mobility, the Erasmus programme generates the bases for every Horizon Europe project: international cooperation. During the 2021 to 2023 period of reporting, most EaP partner countries mentioned the need to increase international cooperation and regional cooperation. They also identified a challenge in finding partners

for projects. This challenge can be easily overcome by using the partner network developed under Erasmus+ to identify the suitable partners for research projects. Moreover, teaching mobilities can be used to build research projects between researchers from different universities. Interesting from the country presentations is that even if some of the countries developed Horizon Europe Offices (HEO), none of them developed strategies to support universities or research institutions to find international partners for their projects. Even though the model of Tubitak, the Turkish office, was presented at the meeting of 2023 with a strong emphasis on their internationalization policy, no conclusion was made on the need to further build internationalization policies at the HEO and at universities level.

8.**More workshops on building the skills needed for drafting projects** and implementing them.

9.**Information campaigns for raising awareness on the need for a stronger cooperation between research, business and industry**.

10. **Cross sectorial reform for facilitating the implementation of research projects**. Further facilities must be built, coherent with EU norms in budgetary execution that will facilitate the implementation of research projects at national level. This could imply but not be limited to reforms in procurement, human resources, financial reporting.

11. **In matters of approaching the conjunction between research, innovation and resilience, further clarification should be made at policy level in the EU**. We followed different EU documents concerning research and innovation in relation to resilience, and we could identify that either they state that resilience was boosted even during the Horizon 2020 programme in different ways and that Horizon Europe has targeted funds for boosting resilience, or that during this program the main focus is on identifying the specific needs related to resilience. Defining resilience in an excessively broad manner can only be detrimental to the application of the concept in practice. If everything is resilience and everything can be covered under this big umbrella, what is resilience in fact? From a research point of view, what should we study? This could have

a serious impact over what we see from a security viewpoint in the terms of resilience, as little funds are allocated to the area of security and Foreign Policy Studies. Diluting the concept of resilience will further harm this research area. In the present international context, there is a great need to develop applied research in security studies and foreign policy which are both linked to the concept of resilience. Apart from the European Defence Fund, which targets more innovation in defense, there is little financing in Horizon Europe for this stringent need. Thus, identifying resilience as an overarching policy only diminishes its specific applications in matters of security.

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