THE EU'S BLACK SEA INITIATIVES
AND THEIR EFFECTS ON MIGRATION CONTROL
AND SECURITY COOPERATION[*]

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ABSTRACT

European Union's (EU) Black Sea Policy aims the promotion of democracy and enhancement of civil society dialogue at its first phase. However the current unresolvable conflicts between Abkhazia and South Ossetia that belongs to Georgia and Russia, Nagorno Karabagh problem between Azerbaijan and Armenia certainly increases terrorism, illegal migration and crime potential of the Black Sea region. This situation directs the EU to develop more strategies and policies on security cooperation and migration control over Black Sea area- as political and economic stability in Black Sea-a neighbor region, has a primary importance for the EU considering its security and migration policies. Therefore three complementary policy and initiatives of EU, namely- European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), Black Sea Synergy (BSS) and Eastern Partnership Initiative (EaP), has been aimed to create a favorable ground for fostering stability, security and prosperity around the Black Sea. This paper specifically examines security and migration cooperation between Black Sea Countries and the EU in the abovementioned initiatives. Such aims and results of these initiatives will be studied in relation with EU's Migration and Security Policy goals.

Keywords: Black Sea Synergy, Eastern Partnership, European Union Migration Policy, Security Control.

ÖZET

Avrupa Birliği Karadeniz Politikası öncelikle demokrasinin geliştirilmesi ve sivil toplum diyalogunun güçlendirilmesini amaçlamaktadır. Fakat Gürcistan ve Rusya'nın dâhil olduğu Abhazya ve Güney Osetya'daki çatışmalar, Azerbaycan ve Ermenistan arasındaki Dağlık Karabağ problemi Karadeniz bölgesindeki terörizm, yasadışı göç ve suç potansiyelini kesin bir şekilde artırmaktadır. Bu durum AB'yi, komşu bir bölgedeki siyasi ve ekonomik istikrar AB'nin gü-

venlik ve göç politikası nazarında öncelikli önemi olduğu için, Karadeniz havzası üzerinde güvenlik işbirliği ve göç kontrolü hakkında daha fazla stratejiler ve politikalar geliştirmeye yönlendirmektedir. Bu nedenle AB'nin üç tamamlayıcı politika ve girişimi olan Avrupa Komşuluk Politikası, Karadeniz Sinerjisi ve Doğu Ortaklığı Girişimi Karadeniz'deki istikrar, güvenlik ve refah için uygun ortam yaratmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu makale yukarıda belirtilen girişimler üzerinden özellikle Karadeniz ülkeleriyle AB arasındaki güvenlik ve göç işbirliğini incelemektedir. Söz konusu girişimlerin amaçları ve sonuçları AB'nin Göç ve Güvenliğe dayalı politika amaçları üzerinden incelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Karadeniz Sinerjisi, Doğu Ortaklığı Girişimi, Avrupa Birliği Göç Politikası, Güvenlik Kontrolü.

The Black Sea region is a very big and constantly growing market with nearly 400 million people living in the area of 10 states, as Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. This is what major interests such as trade, energy and transportation among the countries of Black Sea and with their neighbors like the EU increases its weight every day. In such an atmosphere, countries, both from Black Sea and the EU, would like to cooperate more in order to increase their trade potential, energy efficiency, transportation networks and democracy functionality using bilateral or multilateral measures. However the Region is also known with unresolved frozen conflicts and such conflicts are the major obstacle for further cooperation and development of the Region as a whole. Therefore, issues like border conflicts, frozen conflicts and problems arose from illegal migration and organized crime are urgent problems to be solved in such a booming atmosphere.Where the EU stands in this picture? In James Sherr's words from Defense Academy of the UK, The EU should answer the question, if it wishes to be seen in the Black Sea region in principle as a magnet or as a barrier? (Lange 2007: 2). This paper discusses EU's Black Sea policies and initiatives in terms of migration control and security cooperation as one of the major determinants of cooperation between Black Sea countries and the EU and tries to figure out on which occasions it is a magnet or a barrier in security and migration issues.

Migration and security is one of the major determinants due to its importance with economic and social effects- both in positive and negative manner. Mentioning the negative effects at first sight, refugees and asylum seekers originating from the Black Sea region continue to be a population of concern as they have the potential sources of illegal and uncontrolled migration or human trafficking, or they can have negative effects for the economies of countries where they live. Currently, there are certain countries in the Black Sea region which continue to be countries of origin for refugees mainly due to continued areas of conflict. On the other hand, the role of

remittances in the economic development of the region is an increasingly important issue as remittances are normally positively linked to consumption, social services, and investment. According to the World Bank, in 2007 the countries of the Black Sea received USD 26.7 billion in remittances (or 8.4% of worldwide flows), 1.5 times more than in 2000. Remittances today account for more than ten per cent of GDP in Moldova, Armenia, and Albania (Manoli 2014: 9). Therefore migration is becoming to be a bigger source of income for countries of origin.

It is estimated that there are more than 23 million migrants in the Black Sea region, accounting for 6.8% of its population (Manoli 2014: 8). Explained with statistics in more detail, there were 32.4 million emigrants from the Black Sea Region in 2005. Russia not only has the highest numbers of immigrants, but also the highest total number of emigrants in the region referring to 11.5 million. This is followed by Ukraine at 6.1 million and Turkey at 4.4 million. However in terms of emigrants as a percentage of the total population, the Russian figure represents only 8 per cent of the total population and only 6 per cent for Turkey. Ukraine is slightly higher at 13 per cent but not among the highest in the region. On the other hand, Albania, Armenia and Georgia have the highest numbers of emigrants as a percentage of total population in the region with 27.5 per cent, 26.9 per cent and 22.9 per cent respectively (IOM, Migration in the Black Sea Region: An Overview 2008, 2008: 36). Stock of emigrants as a percentage of the total population in 2010 has a slight difference from 2005 data. In 2010 Ukraine is 14.4 per cent, Armenia is 28.2 per cent and Georgia is 25.1 per cent; however Albania is an exception with a considerable increase in its percentage that counts for 45.4 per cent (Manoli 2014: 9).

Growing numbers of migration as shown by the statistics directs countries to migration management and security control inside their borders, cross border activities or international organizations through cooperation partnerships. Therefore while mentioning international partnerships on migration and security, one can say that the EU is the main partner for Black Sea region that the dialogue between Black Sea countries and the EU is trying to be intensified with many cooperation and initiatives. Therefore, proceeding sections of this paper is allocated to Black Sea region's position in migration and security policies of the EU in line with cooperation activities and EU's initiatives namely Black Sea Synergy, Eastern Partnership and European Neighborhood Policy respectively. The conclusion section questions the position of the EU as a magnet or barrier of migration control and security policy in this regard.

1. What Migration and Security Means for Europe?

Security, in the widest sense, contains transparent and accountable governance, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, and economic and employment prospects. Migration, in this sense can be a concept under securi-

ty as migration flows increase, in the modern world, reached unprecedented scale as a result of globalization. This phenomenon actually directs countries to take security cautions and management mechanisms for controlling migration. Considering the EU vision, the same inclination is seen towards this concept as well. A view from European citizens approves this situation especially as security is a greater issue for Europeans in 2015 than at any time since a generation ago. The global financial crisis left many people feeling insecure about their own personal situation. War and conflicts on the EU's doorstep raise security challenges for bordering Member States, while the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters travelling between the EU and conflict zones has become a key security challenge for the EU. (Special Eurobarometer 432, 2015: 2). According to Special Eurobarometer No. 432, 19% of respondents, all including European Union citizens, view irregular immigration as one of the most important security challenges. In eight Member States, at least a fifth of respondents consider irregular immigration to be one of the most important security challenges. Unsurprisingly, the highest proportions is observed from the countries that are on Mediterranean immigration route such as Malta (46%), Italy (40%) and Greece (33%). (Special Eurobarometer 432, 2015: 21).

Parallel with the citizens' perceptions, EU is trying to perform a common migration policy under Justice and Home Affairs Heading since 1980's. We can see a twofold approach in those policy initiatives and implementations of the Union; it tries to form a secure place inside its borders on the one hand and tries to minimise such threads that increases security pressure from neighboring countries through cooperation activities, financial and administrative aid on the other hand. Hence, the EU's approach can be observed from citizens' opinions too as explained in Special Eurobarometer No. 432. Having identified the main challenges to EU security, respondents were asked to rate how important certain challenges are to the internal security of the EU. Just over four in five respondents (81%) regard management of the EU's external borders to be important: 40% say it is very important, and 41% think it is only fairly important. When the focus of the discussion turns to the potential sources of threats to EU security, %86 of EU 28 respondents agrees that war or political instability in regions outside the EU is a potential source of thread to EU security. (Special Eurobarometer 432, 2015: 29). Those findings directly lead us to the concerns for Black Sea region as it can be a thread for Europe's security for destabilization of regional security- namely regional conflict. In terms of state fragility, especially on bad governance, ineffective judiciary system and low level of economic development makes the Black Sea region explicit to corruption, organized crime and illegal migration to flourish.

Those concerns are reflected in a Joint Communication on the implementation of ENP and it was mentioned that:

"*The unstable security situation, coupled with a number of 'frozen conflicts' which prevent the EU and its partners from fully reaping the benefits of cooperation under the ENP, underlines the need for the EU to further strengthen its contribution to security in its neighborhood, thereby also enhancing its own security. This is an area of shared interest for the EU and a number of its partners, even those partners which have so far shown little willingness, or capacity, to fully engage with the EU under the renewed ENP. Such action should also foster traditional security capabilities e.g. in the areas of military advice and training, police, justice and border management cooperation, and should assist partners, where possible, with implementing their international obligations on broader security challenges under the relevant treaties.*" (Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit, Access on 22.05.2015: https://eu2015.lv/images/news/2015_05_22_RigaDeclaration_EaP.pdf).

This section of the paper specifically refers to the dialogue between the EU and Black Sea countries through EU's political attempts towards the conflicts in the Region and cooperation programs and processes under EU's Global Approach for migration.

1.1. EU's Political Attitude Towards the Conflicts in the Black Sea Region

We can basically talk about four frozen conflicts including Ukraine- Crimean Peninsula problem in the Black Sea region; and those are Transnistria in Moldova, Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia, Nagorno-Karabakh in Armenia and Azerbaijan. In each of the conflict, the EU maintained a stance in line with its security principles and as all 5 countries (Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia and Azerbaijan) are part of ENP today, the EU uses this sole instrument to support them as resolution of conflicts, building trust and good neighborly relations are essential to economic and social development and cooperation as explained in Riga Summit Declaration on May 2015 (Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit, Access on 22.05.2015: https://eu2015.lv/images/news/2015_05_22_ RigaDeclaration _EaP.pdf).

Talking first on the annexation of the Crimean peninsula by Russia, it is not recognized by the EU and the international community; the EU suspended fiscal aid to its funded projects in Crimea with the exception of those in support of civil society and citizen-to-citizen contacts. Furthermore, European Council invited the European Commission to re-assess EU-Russia cooperation programs with a view to taking a decision, on a case by case basis, on the suspension of the implementation of EU bilateral and regional cooperation programs in July 2014 (SWD (2015) 6 final, 2015: 1). This conflict actually demonstrated how an uncommitted government, disconnected from the wider sentiment of the population and subject to unacceptable external pressure can provoke great political and social disarray.

The European Commission announced on 5 March 2014 a Support Package for Ukraine, frontloading and reinforcing many of the EaP policies and instruments. As stated by Presidents H. Van Rompuy and J. M. Barroso on 18 March, the European Union does neither recognize the illegal and illegitimate referendum in Crimea nor its outcome (JOIN (2014) 12 final, 2014: 3).

Concerning Transnistria conflict in Moldova, the EU was invited to join together with the USA the mediation process in October 2005. It is the only frozen conflict where the EU is part of the settlement mechanism. Here, a major contribution of the EU is the Border Assistance Mission, functioning since December 2005 on the Moldova-Ukraine border. The other EU mission is a peacekeeping mission that aims equal shares for Russian, Moldovan and Transnistrian troops. However it is not meeting any international standards and not the requirements of the current situation either that requires an alternative mission for the region (Ora 2006: 53).

EU involvement in the resolution of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is very limited as financial assistance from the European Commission is the most direct form of support for conflict resolution. The EU has adopted a "wait and see" approach to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, because, there is not any consistent EU strategy for the South Caucasus. It has not been actively involved in the Nagorno Karabakh conflict resolution process. It only provides its support to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations (UN) in their efforts to solve the frozen conflicts in the region. (Efe 2012: 192)

Concerning Abkhazia and South Osetia, although the EU is the largest donor of (non-military) aid to Abkhazia since 2004 and South Ossetia since 1997, that could not lead to a main role for the EU in conflict resolution process, the EU's formal role was limited to observer status at Joint Control Commission economic meetings only for South Ossetia (Coppieters 2007:7). However the situation changed in 2008 and EU played a major role as a mediator. In two rounds of mediation process, the French presidency of the EU achieved first a cease-fire agreement between Tbilisi and Moscow on 12 August 2008 and caused a withdrawal of Russia which counted as one of the few success of the EU as a major actor in conflict resolution.

EU's political attitude towards the conflicts explained above, actually shows the efficiency of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) on global scale. However it is argued that the EU's involvement on conflicts in Black Sea region is quite weak, in general, as indicated in Riga Summit Declaration. The Declaration stresses the need for stronger EU engagement to further promoting stability and confidence building and called for EU's strengthened role in conflict resolution and confidence building efforts in the framework or in support of existing agreed formats and processes, including field presence when appropriate (Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit, Access on 22.05.2015: https://eu2015.lv/images/news/2015_05_22_RigaDeclaration_EaP.pdf).

1.2. Global Approach to Migration and Security for the Black Sea

Global Approach to Migration and Security which concentrated on countries in the African and Mediterranean region was adopted at the European Council in December 2005 and it generally aimed to "bring together both legal and illegal migration, external relations and development policy to address migration in an integrated, comprehensive and balanced way in partnership with third countries" (COM (2007) 247 final, 2007: 18). In the report of Global Approach for Migration, the Commission stressed lack of a common action on EU Countries' migration recognition information which increases illegal migration and expressed the need for a comprehensive approach for each step of migration including EU countries and third countries as well (Samur, 2008: 6). Practically it means a cooperation with third countries on development assistance, specifically referring to training, advice or support missions for police and military personnel or such grant programs on migration management for third countries.

In its first implementation year, the European Council in its Conclusions called on the Commission "to make proposals on enhanced dialogue and concrete measures" with regard to applying the Global Approach to the Eastern and South Eastern regions neighboring the EU. There were two specific reasons behind this decision. The first reason comes from migration statistics. It says nearly one third of foreign nationals residing in the EU come from that region (COM (2007) 247 final, 2007: 3-4). So there was a reasonable need to involve Eastern and South Eastern including Black Sea region. Second reason behind expanding Global Approach to Migration comes from changes in EU's borders to Eastward enlargement in 2004 and 2007. The sub chapters are devoted to EU's assistance programs on border management towards Black Sea countries and a specific Black Sea Region process namely Prague Process under Global Approach to Migration policy.

1.2.1. Cooperation in Border Management

In terms of minimizing migration threads for its own borders on the one hand and supporting reform of the security institutions of former authoritarian regimes into more transparent, accountable and democratically controlled security sectors on the other hand, the EU involved in several countries in border management, monitoring or advice/support missions in the East. Such important missions for Black Sea region are EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) to Moldova and Ukraine that launched in 2005 and EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia that is deployed in 2008 for a year and extended each year accordingly. €31 million is allocated to EUMM according to Article 14 of the related Act (COUNCIL JOINT ACTION 2008/736/CFSP, 2008). For the years of 2011-2013, EUBAM has a budget of €21 million and a staff of approximately 100 seconded and contracted staff mostly from EU member States, and more than 120 national staff of Moldova and Ukraine on the other hand.

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In those Missions, partner countries learn how to facilitate the movement of persons and goods across borders while at the same time maintaining secure borders. They are encouraged to 'reform the security and law enforcement sectors (including the police) and establish democratic control over armed and security forces' as well (JOIN(2014) 12 final: 14). Reform of security and law enforcement sectors was initiated in 2013 for Moldova, and police and border management is a focal sector of EU support in the framework of the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI) from 2014 onwards.

Border management cooperation is easily observed from EaP implementation reports. The implementation reports subjects are held on platforms as multilateral cooperation components. In platform 1 namely- "Democracy, Good Governance and Stability", asylum, migration and border management issues are being discussed through panels. In addition to the experience of the EaP Police Cooperation Program, a new panel on cooperation in Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) was set up under the EaP's 'multilateral track' in 2013. This panel focuses on CSDP matters in order to help eastern partners improve their capacity and their contributions to CSDP missions and operations, and to share information among EaP countries, Member States and EU institutions (JOIN(2014) 12 final: 14). Moreover labor migration and migrants' access to rights, detention, asylum and trafficking in human beings was the work of 2014 panel. An expert meeting on detention was held in Chişinău in March 2014 and EaP countries were keen to continue engaging with the panel. The Panel on integrated border management continued to guide the implementation of the pilot projects under the integrated border management Flagship initiative. 2014 panel also focused on concrete practical case studies where the Military Staff of the European Union (EUMS), international organizations, the EUBAM and the partner countries exchanged best practices in areas such as joint border control, joint transit system or fast lane corridors (SWD (2015) 76 Final: 12).

EU also has some special projects with third countries on border management. A new capacity building project led by Frontex (A European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders) began in June 2014 as a follow-up to the three years of EU financed training. The capacity building work in this project predominantly focuses on training curricula in the partner countries, specialized training, the fight against corruption, and human rights aspects (SWD (2015) 76 Final: 16).

1.2.2. Prague Process

The Prague Process, is a political initiative formed in 2009 and its basic purpose is to promote migration partnerships between the states of the European Union/Shengen area, Western Balkans, Eastern Partnership, and Central Asia, as well as Russia and Turkey. The Process is led by Poland,

while the Core Group, comprised of 15 states, the European Commission and International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), supports the Senior Officials Meetings. The Senior Officials group constitutes the decisive body of the Prague Process. The representatives of the Parties of the Process are gathered through Ministerial conferences, Senior Officials' meetings, workshops, group or study visits.

2 international conferences are important as those shape the Process' road map. In Poznan Conference on November 4, 2011, The parties agreed on the Action Plan and 2012- 2016 as its timeframe for implementation. The Prague Conference, in the same year, adopted a Joint Declaration including six main topics for cooperation in the area of migration. The areas where cooperation should be further strengthened are the following:

- preventing and fighting illegal migration,
- promoting readmission, voluntary return and sustainable reintegration,
- addressing legal migration and mobility with a special emphasis on labor migration,
- promoting integration of legally residing migrants in their host societies,
- making migration and mobility positive forces for development,
- strengthening capacities in the area of asylum and international protection. (2nd Ministerial Conference of the Prague Process-Building Migration Partnerships in Action, 2011, Access on 01.06.2015: https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/What-We-Do/docs/Action-Plan-2012-2016-en.pdf)

Border management issue is directly related with the first heading, namely "preventing and fighting illegal migration". The parties decided to the promotion and development of Integrated Border Management through the development of a comprehensive training strategy on border management, including on mechanisms to ensure access to international protection for those in need, the setting up of an inventory of existing border security technologies and the identification of technological needs under this heading (2nd Ministerial Conference of the Prague Process - Building Migration Partnerships in Action, 2011, Access on 01.06.2015: https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/What-We-Do/docs/Action-Plan-2012-2016-en.pdf). It is important to notice that learning about the migration situation in participant countries, ownership of the migration profiles, the necessity of national endorsement, and the updatability of the data is scarce and that leads to slow progress of the Process in general. Hence in the last workshop held on February 12-13, 2015 in Lisbon, the same concern is concluded by the Parties too (Prague Process Quarterly Review, 2015: 4) which questions the efficacy of the Process in the future.

2. The EE Initiatives for Black Sea Region Including Migration Management and Security

The EU aimed to form a solid Union inside its members and tried to create a more open dialogue with its neighbors after its enlargement periods, especially with the enlargements of 2004 and 2007. Due to this fact, it started special initiatives with third countries surrounding the EU. Starting in 2004 with ENP, the EU initiated many policies namely BSS in 2008 and EaP in 2009. This section of the paper will specifically study those Initiatives towards Black Sea, including their scope and functionality.

2.1. Black Sea Synergy as a Stillborn Initiative

With EU membership of Bulgaria and Romania, the prosperity, stability and security of the neighbors around the Black Sea becomes as immediate concern to the EU. However Black Sea region is described as a region with unresolved frozen conflicts, with many environmental problems and insufficient border controls thus encouraging illegal migration and organized crime. Therefore the EU believed that enhanced regional cooperation could generate more mutual confidence and, over time, could help remove some of the obstacles that stand in the way (COM (2007) 160 Final, 2007: 2). In accordance with this purpose, the Council adopted Conclusions on the Commission Communication "Black Sea Synergy – a New Regional Cooperation Initiative in 2007. The BSS Initiative is complementary to the European Neighborhood Policy, the enlargement policy for Turkey and the Strategic Partnership with the Russian Federation and the primary task of BSS was therefore be the development of cooperation within the Black Sea region and also between the region as a whole and the European Union.

The 2007 Communication formulated 10 concrete goals and tasks in BSS and "managing movement and improving security" is one of a main task under the Synergy. Other tasks are formulated as environment; energy; transport; maritime policy and fisheries; research, science and education networks; employment and social affairs; trade; democracy and frozen conflicts. Managing movement and improving security task describes border management improvement and customs cooperation at regional level as security increase that will help to fight organized cross-border crime such as trafficking in human beings, arms and drugs and contributes to preventing and managing irregular migration. According to the Commission, Black Sea regional actors might usefully "*develop best practices*, *introduce common standards for saving and exchanging information, establish early warning systems relating to trans-national crime and develop training schemes*" (COM (2007) 160 Final, 2007: 4). This could build on the experience and activities of the SECI (South-East European Cooperation Initiative Regional Centre for Combating Trans-border Crime) regional centre and the BBCIC (Black Sea Border Coordination and Information Centre based in Burgas).

After the first year implementation of BSS, the Commission wrote a report explaining Synergy's first year activities. It is mentioned that, the EU decided to establish Cooperation Platform on Migration in the Black Sea region in April 2008, in line with Global Approach to Migration priority actions which is actually founded as EaP in 2009. 2008 report described the platform that would include Member States, EU agencies, countries bordering the Black Sea and regional organizations and will aim to provide focused and strengthened migration dialogue and improving practical cooperation between Member States and the countries in the region. Each Black Sea country is expected to establish national centers that will feed/exchange relevant information to/through the Coordination Center (COM (2008) 391 Final, 2008: 4).

The first year implementation report was criticized by other EU actors such as EU Parliament for leading to dispersion on large number of priority objectives and indicating uneven progress across sectors, with very limited achievements in sectors such as democracy, trade and conflict resolution. (Delcour and Manoli, 2010, p. 4) Hence, parallel with Parliament's criticisms, the latter progress under this field caused failure of BSS and resulted with dead born of this Initiative. For example, holding no other high level political meeting after Kiev Meeting on 2008, contributes to the lack of visibility and policy guidance under the BSS. Moreover, the BSS has been overshadowed by the EaP, the latter benefiting from stronger political support from EU Member States, additional funding, an operational structure, clearer tasks in the form of flagship initiatives, and a more coherent target group of states. Lastly, BSS lacks visible funds. The initiative has the potential to be financed from various instruments, e.g. the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA); yet there is no reference in any of the Synergy's documents to the overall BSS funding allotted from these various instruments (Delcour and Manoli 2010: 10,15) Those resulted with booming of EaP and falling of BSS as policy tools over time.

2.2. Eastern Partnership As Part Of European Neighborhood Policy

The ENP was build in 2004 as an EU Communication. The Commission explained ENP as developing a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighborhood- a 'ring of friends' to enjoy close, peaceful and co-operative relations where the main rationale of the ENP is "all but membership" meaning that the dialogue contains everything except membership that is basically defined with involving in EU institutions (Efe, 2012: 193). Its aim is formally described as developing a special relationship between the EU and each of its partner countries, contributing to an area of security, prosperity and good neighborliness. The main messages of this communication was therefore, that the ENP helps to make Europe and its neighborhood a better, safer and more prosperous place, that the ENP improves people's

lives, by contributing to more democratic, open and equal societies, to greater prosperity, and by creating networks between the EU and neighboring countries (JOIN (2014) 12 final, 2014: 6).

The EU launched the Eastern Partnership initiative at its Prague Summit on 7 May, 2009, setting within the framework of its Neighborhood Policy, goal of developing economic and political relations between the EU and six countries of the Black Sea region that are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. In the joint declaration 2009 Prague Summit of EaP, the parties declared that *"the Eastern Partnership will seek to support political and socio-economic reforms of the partner countries, facilitating approximation towards the European Union. This serves the shared commitment to stability, security and prosperity of the European Union, the partner countries and indeed the entire European continent"* (Efe, 2012: 194). Therefore it has brought in particular a perspective of new enhanced bilateral framework agreements –Association Agreements– between the EU and its Eastern Neighbors.

EaP as eastern dimension of ENP was formed on bilateral and multilateral tracks. The bilateral dimension aims to foster closer bilateral relations between the EU and each eastern partner country, while the multilateral dimension provides a forum for dialogue and exchange, through thematic platforms and flagship initiatives (SWD (2015) 76 Final, 2015: 2). Current Flagship Initiatives are notably on Integrated Border Management, Small and Medium Enterprises, energy issues, environment and climate change and natural and man-made disasters and Sustainable Municipal Development Flagship Initiative was launched at Riga Summit 2015 as a new Initiative (Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit, Access on 22.05.2015: https://eu2015.lv/images/news/2015_05_22_RigaDeclaration _EaP.pdf) Multilateral cooperation component of EaP has 4 thematic platforms as good governance, economic integration and growth, energy security, and contacts between people. Those platforms meet twice a year to review and discuss next steps in the policy dialogue between the EU and EaP countries.

On bilateral dimension, the cooperation is fostered by three phases. The first phase is Association Agreements, including Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (AA/DCFTAs) which concerns not only the liberalization of trade in goods and services, but also has broad provisions on the approximation of partner countries' legislation with the trade-related EU acquis (SWD (2015) 76 Final, 2015: 3). Sector cooperation is the second phase of bilateral cooperation and the third phase is justice, freedom and security issues on migration and mobility that includes mobility partnerships, readmission agreements and visa liberalization action plans. As concrete progress can easily seen from yearly implementation reports with EaP countries in terms of signed agreements mentioned above, it can be argued that bilateral dimension of EaP is one of a reason to fostering this

Initiative. As EU believes that the BSS did not work in a holistic perspective; it turned back to micro-regionalism strategies referring divisional and connected strategies (Kurt, 2015: 408). Due to its importance on migration and security cooperation with Black Sea Countries, visa liberalization action plans (VLAP), mobility partnerships and readmission agreements will be studied in sub headings as components of bilateral cooperation on migration and mobility.

2.2.1. Visa Liberalization Action Plans and Mobility Partnerships

Visa liberalization is seen as a priority area by most partner countries of the EU and VLAPs have been important instruments for advancing far-reaching reforms. Objective of a VLAP can be defined as identifying all the measures that need to be adopted and implemented by partner country and to indicate in clear terms the requirements that have to be achieved for visa free travel. Each plan is conducted with special conditions and requirements of a partner country- named as benchmarks and meeting the criteria of the VLAP is the basic determinant for entering Schengen area. The process is monitored by the Commission and report to the Council and the Parliament regularly as progress reports.

EaP, countries started their VLAP process where some of them entered Schengen area with Commission's proposal, the European Parliament's and Council's decision. Moldovan citizens were able to travel visa-free to the Schengen area starting from 28 April 2014 after Moldova met all the criteria under its VLAP. Ukraine made substantial progress by adopting a number of substantial legislative packages to fill the gaps identified, and moved to the second phase of its VLAP. Georgia, on the other hand, adopted important laws in the areas of document security, asylum, data protection and anti discrimination. The October 2014 progress report on Georgia's implementation of its VLAP concluded that the first-phase requirements of the visa dialogue had been met, and as a result the second phase was launched. (SWD (2015) 76 Final: 7). Ukraine and Georgia's completion of the implementation of the 2nd phase VLAPs by the end of 2015 is mentioned in the Joint Declaration of the Riga Summit which means that those can be part of Schengen area in 2016.

Mobility partnership agreements, on the other hand are soft law agreements that are used as a mechanism to enhance cooperation and control migration with third countries. The parties of those agreements are member states of the EU, the European Commission and a third country. Those agreements are generally composed of two sections- first section is a declaration including means of a deeper cooperation and the second one activity list composing integration, human trafficking and borders. EU signed mobility partnerships with Black Sea countries before and after EaP. Moldova, as an example, is the first Black Sea country to sign the Agreement in 2008, before EaP was formed. A Mobility Partnership between the EU

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and Georgia was established on 30 November 2009 and EU signed Mobility Partnership Agreement with Armenia in 2011. EU-Azerbaijan Mobility Partnership was formed in December 2013. The last Mobility Partnership is signed with Belarus on February 2015.

2.2.2. Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreement

Readmission agreements, as their nature, are one of the fundamental measures for the countries of origin that wants to increase the protection wall against migration flow under security concerns. Those agreements are designed for readmission of illegal migrants from signatory parties nationals and third country nationals. The EU aims to control migration flow and impose upon the migration control to third countries with readmission agreements. According to Article 63-3(b) of Amsterdam Treaty, readmission subjects are defined under Community competence and the Union gives power and reinforced the EC to complete readmission agreement (Bouteillet- Paquet, 2003: 369). The new generation readmission agreements run the logic of building economic cooperation and assistance agreement, visa facilitation in line with the implementation of readmission agreement. Therefore while the readmission agreement make compulsions to the parties especially on readmission of the third country nationals, the cumbersome of those agreements are eased with visa facilitation regimes taken by signatory country from the EU as a bargaining element.

Concerning Eastern European partner countries' readmission dialogue with the EU, one can say that the first step of implementing visa facilitation and readmission agreements has been achieved for several countries of Black Sea and visa facilitation agreement in line with readmission agreement are signed with many EaP countries. It means in countries where the Agreement is in force, EU facilitates getting visa to that country's nationals specifically described in the related Agreement and those nationals are defined such as businesspeople, students, academicians, musicians, patients and so on.

Ukraine and Moldova are the first Black Sea countries that signed Visa Facilitation Agreement and Readmission Agreement and those Agreements are entered into force in 2007. A Visa Facilitation Agreement and Readmission Agreement with Georgia has been entered into force in March 2011. EU signed visa facilitation Agreement in December 2012 and the readmission agreement in April 2013 with Armenia. Both agreements entered into force in January 2014. Lastly, EU and Azerbaijan initialed the readmission agreement in July 2013 and signed the visa facilitation agreement in November 2013. Both agreements entered into force in September 2014. Moreover Visa Facilitation Agreement and Readmission Agreement negotiations with Belarus has begun lately that is expected to be finalized in coming years.

CONCLUSION

The EU is extending its security policies on supranational level and boosting the protectionist and eclectic wall against migration since 1980's, however the last decade may be the decade of an obvious growing concern coming from its citizens' on illegal or uncontrolled migration to Union due to political instabilities and frozen conflicts at its Eastern borders- namely countries in the Black Sea region. As it is pointed in the paper, the EU, generally, has not been the main global actor to suspend or solve the conflicts in the Black Sea. Therefore it evolved cooperation policies with Black Sea countries to minimize threads related to migration and security at her doorstep. Such policies are mentioned as BSS and EaP as part of ENP and it is seen that the EU is more successful on implementing micro- level and mainly bilateral migration and security dialogue with Black Sea countries, like the EaP, rather than vast and integrated policies like BSS. Moreover one can claim that the cooperation with third countries forms different levels of migration and security integration with the EU. Here, while EU member states are like the core, having the common Acquis and decision making processes; third countries are articulated to EU's migration and security policies as loose circles and the integration model is differentiated from one country to another- Moldovan citizens were able to travel visa-free to the Schengen area for example; however Belarus only has a mobility partnership Agreement yet. This approach can be derived from EaP explanation in 2009 Prague Summit, that mentions "*facilitating approximation towards the European Union*" on subjects like migration and security policies. Thereby, the EU can be described as a magnet as it tries to embrace a secure and controlled area including different integration models with each Black Sea country.

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