

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY: THE CASE OF UKRAINE AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE RELATION WITH RUSSIA

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Abstract. *The implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2004 was an instrument established to achieve a rapprochement between the countries of Eastern Europe and the Southern Mediterranean with the European Union. Since this common policy began, it has evolved very differently in the distinct countries that are part of it. One such country is Ukraine, which has developed special relations with the European Union. So much so that, since the implementation of a specific dimension called the Eastern Partnership in 2009, relations have been fluctuating between Ukraine and the European Union.*

Keywords: *European Union, Ukraine, European Neighbourhood Policy, Regional development, Eastern Partnership, Russia.*

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EUROPEAN UNION'S MISSION IN SOMALIA. TEN YEARS OF SUCCESSES AND FAILURES (2008-2018)

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Abstract. *The European Union as a global actor has received a growing boost in recent decades. Somalia is the country that has captured more attention in the last ten years as it remains as a Failed State. The phenomenon of piracy and terrorism led the EU to intervene in 2008 for the first time. In order to stabilize the region Brussels has launched three different missions: EU Navfor Atalanta, EUTM Somalia and EUCAP Nestor-Somalia. This paper presents a detailed analysis of the three missions to draw conclusions about the successes and failures of the EU presence in Somalia a decade later.*

Keywords: *Somalia, EUTM, Navfor-Atalanta, EUCAP, EU's Foreign Policy, Africa*

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UNDERSTANDING THE GLOBAL DEMOCRATIC DECLINE. CASE STUDY: THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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Abstract. *This paper aims to investigate the global democratic decline and examines specific indicators and qualitative data released by major research bodies around the world (Center for the Future of Democracy, Freedom House, The Economist Intelligence Unit, Idea International). It focuses on the status of democracy, quality of democracy and citizens' satisfaction with democracy. An overall conclusion is that the world experiences the worst democratic decline from the past two decades.*

Furthermore, a closer analysis is being completed for the United States of America situation with the purpose of understanding the democratic erosion from 2016-2020. The current research concludes with a series of recommendations regarding the social polarization, the spread of disinformation and the ultraconservative movements, and improvements needed for the overall health of democracy.

Keywords: *democratic erosion, democracy status, satisfaction with democracy, US presidential elections*

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SOFT POWER AND ITS IMPACT ON FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS

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Abstract. *Discussions about the use of soft power and its influence on foreign affairs have developed a lot in recent years, especially due to the great complexity characterizing the international scene and relations. In this context we can all agree on the importance of finding the best solutions to the present problems and hybrid threats at the international level. Using soft power in order to „build bridges” between international actors may represent one of the most efficient ways in order to find those solutions to the common problems. Therefore, in the present paper we will try to analyze and establish what is the impact soft power can have when it comes to making a foreign policy decision.*

Keywords: *soft power, decision-making, foreign affairs, multilevel governance, non-state actors.*

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THE ACCESSION NEGOTIATION CHAPTERS BETWEEN MONTENEGRO AND THE EUROPEAN UNION¹

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Abstract. *The aim of the paper is to analyze the progress of the negotiations between these two entities. The objectives of the article are: to present the context of the negotiations, to show the institutions which are involved in the process, to present the debating groups, the lobby and a case from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration from Montenegro, to show the current state of these negotiations (to analyze the most relevant chapters from the process from the European reports), to evaluate.*

The literature review is related to the significance of the paper explained in the previous work (about candidate countries' negotiations with the EU, in the waves of enlargement starting 1973). Montenegro does not meet the conditions for membership of the EU. All negotiation chapters are not closed. To resolve this issue, the EU works towards revealing the mandatory requirements related to the accession process, while the candidate country is striving to meet its membership conditions by creating the necessary institutions during the process. About the methodology, the paper starts with the theoretical part (from special sources). There are official documents of studying the international elements. This article is analyzing some of the domains from the European Commission reports on Montenegro from 2015 and 2018. I am transforming the content into position documents. They will have the following structure after the analysis: introduction (presentation of the issue, the circumstances), points of agreement, points of disagreement and conclusions (document analysis). The paper has chosen to analyze the European reports related to the accession negotiation, because the information is objective and it shows both sides (EU and Montenegro throw agreement and disagreement points). By using a case from a ministry from Montenegro and lobby groups leads to highlight the Montenegrin point of view.

Keywords: *Turkey, accession negotiations, enlargement, progress.*

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GAMIFICATION IN TRANSPORT SERVICES AND THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

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Abstract. *As far as an increasing number of scientists are warning us about the destructive potential of climate change, humanity is facing a tremendous technological revolution. Also, the potential of new technologies to decrease the carbon footprint is significant, but the transition is highly dependent on people's choices and behaviour. This is why, a new way of motivating people around the world emerged: gamification. But, as good and innovative this idea seems to be, as many concerns it rises. Because the focus is mainly on technology, in this paper I will analyse the process of gamification through the lens of the digital divide. The concept was first used in the 1990s to describe the social and economic gap that emerged between those who had access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and those who did not. Today it is mainly focused on the possibility that people would become even more marginalized due to the lack of basic skills and the impossibility to afford the new technologies on the market. Consequently, my research question is: "Is it possible that the introduction of gamification in the field of transportation increases the digital divide?". I will try to answer this question by analysing what categories of people are targeted by gamification in transportation services and which are those that could be excluded. Also, my approach is not limited to a specific country or global area, but is considering gamification and digital divide at an international level.*

Keywords: *gamification, inequality, digital divide, transport, Millennials, Gen-Z.*

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ASSESSING THE GAMIFICATION APPROACH ON THE EU'S CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY²

Ana Maria COSTEA *

Abstract. *The present article aims to tackle the issue of gamification of smart cities from a cyber-security point of view. More specifically, the analysis is going to focus on the transportation sector and its effects over the security of the individuals, economic operators and states. Firstly, the article is going explain the concepts are being employed throughout the paper like: critical infrastructure, gamification, smart city and Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS). Secondly, the analysis is going to focus on the needs and main benefits that smart cities bring to the life quality of its citizens, thus cause and effect. After establishing the current status quo, the analysis is going highlight the security vulnerabilities that can arise from using ITS and the gamification technics in smart cities especially in the case of IPT since it is part of the critical infrastructure of that state. Taking into consideration the benefits and the costs, the analysis is going to be finalized with recommendations regarding possible ways to reduce the cyber security related costs for transportation gamification at the level of the European Union. In order to be able to develop the recommendations, the following research questions are going to be addressed: Which is the impact of smart cities and gamification in Europe? How should the EU dealing with its cyber-security vulnerabilities especially in the transportation field?*

Keywords: *critical infrastructure, cyber-security, the European Union, transportation*

² The article is part of the development of a study on the application of the game approach in logistics and transport training (Output Title O4) under the Erasmus + strategic partnership project „Building an innovative network for sharing of best educational practices, incl. game approach, in the area of international logistics and transport“, Project number: KA203 / HE-25 / 13.09.2019

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REINFORCING CULTURE AND TALENT OPERATIONS AT TRUSCO NAKAYAMA CORPORATION

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Abstract. *This paper illustrates how a traditional Japanese company, Trusco Nakayama Corporation (hereinafter NKC), strategically focuses on culture and talent operations in order to drive business sustainability and innovation. The authors worked directly with NKC executives, business leaders, organizational architects and talent operators to determine the main components and characteristics of their talent strategy and culture development efforts. The paper further describes how key elements of Japanese culture and traditional Japanese business practices were taken into consideration when developing the corporate strategy for value creation and business growth.*

Keywords: *Innovation, Organization, Transformation, Sustainability, Strategy, Japan*

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JAPANESE OPEN INNOVATION IN SILICON VALLEY: INNOVATION OUTPOSTS AS EFFECTIVE WAYS OF ABSORBING INNOVATION INTO CORPORATE ECOSYSTEMS

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Cristian Iulian VLAD^{****}

Abstract. *We define open innovation as a business management model for innovation that promotes collaboration with people and organisations outside the company. This research illustrates how Japanese companies focus on collaboration, ecosystem development, and user integration to initiate social innovation opportunities. The authors worked with investors, key executives, and business architects from NTT Docomo Ventures, Inc. to underpin the main characteristics of their social innovation strategy and to determine how their organisations draw from experience in user engagement and their corporate philosophy to create sustainable business models and to develop a unique and long-lasting value proposition.*

Keywords: *Organization, Transformation, Sustainability, Talent, Strategy, Ethics*

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REFLECTIONS ON DATA OF ORAL HISTORY COLLECTED BY THE SURVEYS OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY FROM ORADEA

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Abstract. *This is a paper based on my PhD thesis “The history of the Jews from Romania and Hungary (1945-1953) in the Romanian and Hungarian Historical Writings”. From the consultation of the edite bibliography that we put at the basis of the present study it results that we have studied of an appreciable literature dedicated to the study of Jewish phenomena after the Second World War, published in Romania and Hungary. Written by Romanian and Hungarian historians, some of Jewish origins, the edite bibliography reveals us a series of particularities of the evolution of Jewish community during communist period in Central Europe.*

The sources of oral history allow us to give new insights on a community on fighting for the coming out from the tragedy of Holocaust, the adaptation to the newly political economical realities of the area, but also for the prezervation of identity. Thus were questioned 8 members of the Jewish Community of Oradea, who either them or members of their family members were returned from deportation with the view of the early postwar years in Oradea and their welcoming back in the community near the Crisul Repede River.

Keywords: *Jews, Holocaust, deportation, oral history, questionnaire, Romania, Hungary.*

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THE RIGHTS OF THE NATIONAL MINORITIES IN ROMANIA FROM AN EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD

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Abstract. *The educational rights of minorities have always reflected not only the degree of openness of a state, but also the regime in power in that country. Currently, the national minorities in Romania enjoy full rights, which make our state an example of good practices in this regard, but this has not always been the case. This is the reason why, in this article, I chose to focus on the interwar period, a period that offers us an overview of the stages that Romania has gone through in regard of educational rights for the national minorities.*

Keywords: *Constitutions, legislation, stages, changes, political power*

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DIVORCE IN THE DRUZE COMMUNITY AS A MINORITY IN THE STATE OF ISRAEL

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Abstract. *In this article I tried to explain about marriage and divorce to members of the Druze community. The marriage procedure is a procedure that requires members of the community to act in accordance with many years of tradition, because there is no complete equality between a man and a woman in all the religions in the world except the Druze religion and the small Druze community that gives both spouses to choose the other side and also to divorce him to choose another and also the possibility of divorcing him because marriage should not continue by force.*

Keywords: *Israel, Druze community, divorce, tradition, religious law*

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MINORITY INTEGRATION POLICIES AT THE NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVEL

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Abstract. *The purpose of public policies in the field of national minorities can be dual, namely, to protect the specific (cultural, linguistic, ethnic) identity of people belonging to national minorities, and to ensure harmonious coexistence between majority and minorities, as well as between minorities themselves. Thus, this paper aims to analyse the policies and measures defined at national level in the field of minority integration, as well as European models or regulations with rank of recommendations for Member States. To this end, have been resorted to qualitative methodology instruments as data analysis and case study. According to the OSCE, "to support the integration process, [are needed], policies, to create a society in which diversity is respected and in which all people, including all members of ethnic, linguistic, cultural or religious groups, contribute to building and maintaining a civic, common and inclusive identity". Therefore, the research questions on which the paper focuses, refer firstly to the extent to which Romania has managed to apply minority integration policies, and secondly, what are the European models that Member States could follow in order to ensure an efficient and substantial regulation and application of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities.*

Keywords: *national minorities, public policies, integrative tools, European models.*

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ETHNICITY AND DEMOGRAPHICS IN UNITED ARAB EMIRATES. THE CURIOUS CASE OF A COUNTRY WITH MORE FOREIGNERS THAN NATIONAL POPULATION

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Abstract. *The purpose of this research is to demonstrate how a state can shape its policies in order to successfully meet the social challenges caused by the large number of foreign nationals who settle in that state for a better living. The political, social and economic aspects will be analysed in order to find an answer to the research question, namely: (how) has the UAE managed to find the right solution to manage an atypical social context, in parallel with meeting the continuing need for economic development?*

Keywords: *Labour politics, Migration, Society, Human rights, discrimination.*

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THE 10 NOVEMBER CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT IN THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH PROLONGED CONFLICT: FIRST STEP TOWARDS SETTLEMENT OR NEW FREEZING?

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Abstract. *The common declaration signed by the Presidents of Russia and Azerbaijan and the Prime Minister of Armenia on November 9, 2020, put an end to the one month and a half military clashes that had taken place in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone (Nagorno-Karabakh proper and the seven adjacent districts surrounding it) since September 27, 2020. The entry of the Russian troops into the region represents, in fact, a new “freezing” of the conflict on the new alignments of the troops (which are becoming the new “Line of Contact”), for an indefinite period of time. While Azerbaijan has fulfilled most of its objectives, taking back the seven adjacent districts and the southern part of Nagorno-Karabakh proper, it has not succeeded in taking back Nagorno-Karabakh entirely. Moreover, the status of Nagorno-Karabakh remains undetermined, which also leaves room to further tensions and/or negotiations.*

Keywords: *Nagorno-Karabakh, frozen conflict, ceasefire declaration, OSCE Minsk Group.*

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COMPRENDRE LE CONFLIT ACTUEL DE L'ITURI

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Abstract. *Depuis plusieurs siècles, les groupes ethniques Hema et Lendu s'accusent réciproquement de volonté d'extermination. L'année 2020 a apporté un revirement de la violence à plusieurs niveaux. Subdivisé en trois sections, ce travail adopte principalement une approche descriptive, afin de pouvoir apporter un éclaircissement sur complexité de la problématique évoquée. À travers le temps, sur le soustrait ethnique conflictuel ont été déposées des éléments tout aussi explosifs qui ont généré le conflit interminable qu'on connaît aujourd'hui.*

Keywords: *RDC, violence, conflit armé, ethnie, ressources, territoire*

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THE CAUSES, DIMENSIONS AND PARADOXES OF THE ROHINGYA CRISIS

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Abstract. *The Rohingya Muslims, an ethno-religious minority group from Myanmar, are one of the most persecuted minorities in the world. The atrocities committed by Myanmar security forces against the Rohingya, including mass killings, sexual violence and widespread arson, are considered crimes against humanity. The global community has reacted against these persecutions and described the situation as a case of ethnic cleansing, even genocide. This paper will try to examine the facts that led to these oppressions, the reasons behind the Rohingya's loss of citizenship under the 1982 Citizenship Law and its consequences. It will also present their long history of severe discrimination, the numerous restrictions they were subject to and the unimaginable horrors they have experienced.*

Keywords: *nationalism, Buddhism, discrimination, ethnic cleansing, genocide, refugee, human rights.*

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COMPLICATED RELATIONS BETWEEN ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN IN THE CONTEXT OF RELATIONS WITH THE EU

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*Mircea BRIE***

Abstract. *Geographically and geopolitically, Armenia and Azerbaijan are located in the South Caucasus region or the Transcaucasia region, as it is often called. The geopolitical situation in this region is very dynamic, characterized by politico-military tensions and the clash of interstate and international interests. The South Caucasus region and the Black Sea and Caspian subregion are of major importance, given the transit of energy resources from the Caspian Basin and Central Asia.*

Armenian-Azerbaijani relations constitute the main problematic direction in the foreign policy of both Armenia and Azerbaijan. From a legal point of view, these relations are practically absent, as both neighbouring states are neither at peace nor at war, there are no diplomatic, trade and economic relations between them.

Nagorno-Karabakh is a dispute over the province's status as a major source of tension between the governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the leadership of the self-proclaimed republic of Nagorno-Karabakh, in the mediation of which other international actors got involved, such as OSCE, the Minsk group consisting of France, the Russian Federation and the USA. In conclusion, it should be noted that the border of the Nagorno-Karabakh region, about 100 kilometers, is one of the most dangerous militarized areas in the vicinity of Europe.

Keywords: *Armenia, Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh, European Union, Russian Federation*

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THE ROLE OF THE EU IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS

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Abstract. *Although the European Union's actions on the management of the Covid-19 crisis have been harshly criticized by the lack of dedicated mechanisms to protect the health of European citizens, an analysis of EU action in the field of health will give us the opportunity to know and understand the situation created in the European area as a result of the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic.*

This Article aims to highlight the main actions taken by the EU in the field of health and in the management of the Covid-19 crisis.

Keywords: *Pandemic, Council-19, EU, European Union functional Treaty, Regulation, Decision*

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EU COUNCIL DECISION-MAKING: A DISCUSSION ON THE LATE WEIGHTED VOTES CRITERION

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Abstract. *In the wider extended academic concern regarding the decision-making system that the EU is and should be using, a voting frame rediscussed in the Brexit context and whose modification proposals are usually widely debated, this paper focuses on a peculiar aspect of the intra-institutional decision-making process, i.e. on what was known as the weighted votes component of the qualified majority voting used in the EU Council. What was the logic of establishing this system, how did it develop and why the member states decided to abandon it? These are the main questions to whom the article will answer, with the aim to indicate that the current modified Lisbon system, despite its alleged improvements in terms of legitimacy, transparency and adaptability to enlargement waves, offered a new QMV definition that is still locked in the blocking minorities safety nets of the EU power politics game.*

Keywords: *Council of the European Union, European Union, qualified majority voting, weighted votes*

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THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN THE ABSORPTION PROCESS OF NON-REFUNDABLE EUROPEAN FUNDS ASSIGNED TO ROMANIA BETWEEN 2014-2020

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Abstract. *Public acquisitions have been a constant challenge in the application process for public funds, especially in the application for European non-reimbursable funds.*

The low rate of absorption relating to the programming period 2014-2020 is closely linked to the manner of processing public acquisitions in Romania, these engendering most of the delays in the application process of non-reimbursable funds projects.

Although Romanian primary legislation relating to public acquisitions is balanced by the community's acquis, secondary legislation shows inconsistencies and leaves room for interpretation, with many scantily regulated subjects.

Corroborated by the lack of clear descriptions of the roles relating to the National Authority for Public Procurement and to the Managing Authorities in regards to the verification of public acquisitions made by beneficiaries of European funds, this causes not only delays in the application process of the projects, but also financial corrections and a low rate of absorption.

Keywords: *European funds, public acquisitions, absorption rate, cohesion policy*

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IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS ON THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract. *The currently Covid-19 crisis has repercussions on all areas of activity, including on the education system not only at the national level, but also at the international level. This article aims to highlight the main effects of the Covid-19 crisis on the education system.*

Keywords: *Covid-19 crisis, education system, impact.*

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