



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

MASTER THESIS IN
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RUSSIA'S AND THE EUROPEAN UNION'S
RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR FOREIGN
POLICIES TOWARDS MOLDOVA

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Abstract

The study “*Russia’s and the European Union’s (EU) relations in the context of their foreign policies towards Moldova*” is an initial attempt to investigate the convergence of the EU’s and Russia’s foreign energy and security policies towards their common neighbour Moldova. The existing research lacks a comparative perspective on EU-Russia policies towards their common neighbours, and there is a need to fill this gap.

To reach the goal of the study, the results of previous research are presented and analyzed. In addition, the concept of convergence is introduced in the conceptual framework of this study, on which the empirical research is based.

The case study is used as a main strategy for conducting the study. The thesis covers a period of time from 1991 until 2012. The empirical data is gathered by using document analysis and 7 structured interviews with the experts in energy and security fields.

The results of this study suggest that Russia’s and the EU’s policies have both convergence and divergence aspects. Both actors share resembling goals and use some similar instruments, however, the outcomes of their policies are divergent. The limitation of this study includes a notice that it is mainly aimed to describe the most general convergence process on Russia’s and the EU’s policies, and in order to get a more comprehensive view on the resemblance concept between these actors, the further examination of convergence causes is needed.

Key words: Russia, the EU, Moldova, the area of common neighbourhood, convergence, energy policies, security policies, the Transnistrian conflict

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Abbreviations

AA	Association Agreement
AP	Action Plan
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
EaP	Eastern Partnership
ECT	Energy Community Treaty
EC	European Commission
EnCT	Energy Community Treaty
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
EUBAM	EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine
MS	Member States
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PCA	Partnership and Co-operation Agreement
SAP	Stabilization and Association Process
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

INTRODUCTION

The end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s was a period of change for both Russia and the EU. The collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1991, and reorganization of the European Communities to the EU in 1992 favored the need to develop and strengthen the relations between two large and significant political actors.

The legal basis for EU-Russian relations has been the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA), which came into force in 1997. The main goal of the PCA is the promotion of international peace and security, the support of democratic norms and freedoms. In addition, the agreement framed the bilateral relations in economic, political, scientific, civil, security and judicial dimensions of the policies (Cameron, 2007 p.118). Russia and the EU are cooperating on the mentioned issues, both at international level and in the area of common neighbourhood (European External Action Service, n.d.).

However, the PCA expired in 2007, and despite the fact that it has been automatically extended on an annual basis, the internal changes in the EU and Russia require a new framework on their relations. However, since 2007 the EU and Russia have been having difficulties signing a new post-PCA agreement (The European Commission, 2012). Moreover, a complication in agreeing on a new framework is not the only issue. The overall substance of the EU-Russian relationship is rather poor, and some researchers point out that one of the most noticeable examples of actors' disagreement and interest overlap is the area of common neighbourhood (Popescu, 2011). The area includes Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, as after the Eastern enlargement of the EU in 2004 and 2007, these countries remained the only states in Eastern Europe situated between Russia and the EU.

The fundamental dimensions of EU-Russian relations in the area of Common Spaces are energy and security fields. All common neighbours are transit states, through which Russian gas flows to European markets, and good relationship between the actors is dependent on constant and reliable energy transition. What is more, both Russia and the EU are interested in the secure neighbourhood, as any kind of conflicts or criminal issues would immediately affect them. Hence, this study is mainly concentrated on energy and security dimensions.

The majority of existing studies are focused on EU-Russian relations mostly in the context of Ukraine and Belarus, as Ukraine is the large actor rich in natural resources, and Belarus often appears on the agenda due to the permanent issues with the human rights. The significance of Moldova is usually underestimated by the researchers, therefore, this study suggests analyzing EU-Russian relations in the context of their foreign policies towards Moldova, as it is very representative in terms of demonstrating a struggle for interests between the EU and Russia.

Firstly, due to its geographical position, historical past and relatively small size Moldova has constantly been balancing between the interests of various regional powers in order to preserve its existence. Even after the declaration of its independence in 1991, Moldova has been attempted to maintain good relationships with the EU and Moscow (Schimdtke, Chira-Pascanut, 2011, p.469). Both the EU and Russia endeavor to keep Moldova as a sphere of their influence: the EU is trying to Europeanize Moldova by using the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and Eastern Partnership (EaP), while Russia is conducting an extensive and many-sided policy towards Moldova (Rodkiewicz 2012, p.3).

Secondly, one of the top priorities of both Russian and EU foreign policies towards their common neighbours are energy and security dimensions, and again the context of Moldova is very valuable for examining these policies, as the state plays an important role in energy communications between Russia and the EU. Furthermore, currently a frozen conflict in Transnistria is a powerful source of tensions between the EU and Russia in the security field.

Thirdly, despite the fact that at present the EU is more concerned about the protection of the Eurozone and saving the Union, whereas Russia is dealing with its internal political problems, it is important not to forget about international relations of the EU, which requires from the Union a clear strategy on its Eastern neighbours which would be compatible with the Russian position (Popescu, 2011, p.26).

Thus, this paper **is aimed** to get a better perspective on the relationship between Russia and the EU by examining energy and security dimensions of their foreign policies towards Moldova. Despite a number of studies have been held in order to analyze EU and Russian policies towards Moldova, there is **a gap of knowledge** on whether EU's and Russian foreign policies share the same goals, what is the differences between their instruments and outcomes. Therefore, **the main question** this paper is attempted to answer is: whether Russia's and EU's policies towards Moldova converge or diverge?

The study is significant for both academic and policies purposes. Firstly, within European Studies, the concept of policy convergence is widely applied to the research related to growing resemblance between EU's Member States (MS), while this study is attempted to contribute to the research of policy convergence by applying the conception of convergence to the sphere of international relations. Secondly, a comparative perspective on Russian and EU external policies towards their common neighbours is poorly presented in the literature, however, a comprehensive comparative analysis of their energy and security foreign policies can be a valuable instrument for creating a new framework on EU-Russian relations, which currently does not exist.

The case study **strategy** is used for research design, where the general **unit of analysis** is governmental action. The research is **descriptive**, as it is attempted to obtain information on the particular features of the issue and to provide with its detailed description (Thies, Volland, 2010). Whereas the study seeks to describe a social phenomenon of policies convergence, hence a case study method is very advantageous for this goal accomplishment, as it is more informative than other methods, because many data gathering methods can be applied at the same time.

In order to develop a many-sided and valid description of the phenomenon, the case study is based on the theoretical considerations, on the concepts and criteria for cross-national policy convergence. The collected data will include **period of time** from 1991 to 2012.

However, **limitations of the study** involve that (1) it will not deal with the casual processes of policies convergence or divergence, and (2) the contribution of the research in terms of policies convergence and divergence degree also will be limited, as no clear theoretical criteria on convergence degree have been developed within the convergence research. Therefore, (3) the study is focused mostly on general patterns of convergence. What is more, as (4) the case study is used as a research design strategy, it put some constrains on the results' generalizability, as it is difficult to generalize from one case to another. Nevertheless, the generalizability of the study is to a certain extent strengthen by generalizing findings to the conceptual framework.

In order to reach a stated goal, **the study proceeds as follows**: *To begin with*, in the Literature Review Section, the existing research on Russia's and the EU's foreign policies resemblance will be presented. Whereas this study is concentrated on energy and security fields, some studies on these dimensions will also be reviewed in the second chapter. *Thirdly*, in the Conceptual Framework Section, mechanisms, types and assessment of the convergence will be discussed. *In the next chapter*, research design and methods will be viewed. *This will be followed* by presentation and analysis of empirical findings. *Finally*, the report will be concluded with a summary of the main points.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

As it was aforementioned, the existing research on EU's and Russia's policies towards their common neighbours is lacking the comparative perspective. However, a few studies examined the resemblance of EU-Russian approaches towards the neighbours were held by Prystayko (n.d), Popescu and Wilson (June 2009, September 2009), Popescu (2011). Hence, the comparative results on overall Russia's and the EU's foreign policies towards Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova will be presented first in this chapter.

Whereas this thesis is concentrated only on energy and security dimensions of foreign policies and no comparative research has been done within this field (with exception of one relatively small comparative

study on Russia's/EU's energy policies towards their common neighbours held by Gromadzki and Konończuk in 2007, the results of single studies on EU-Moldovan, Russian-Moldovan relations within the energy and security sectors will be reviewed. In addition, a brief history of Transnistrian conflict will be presented.

1.1. A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE ON THE ENP AND RUSSIAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY

Prystayko (n.d.) analyzed the similarities and differences of EU's and Russia's approaches towards their common neighbours. One of the core differences the author mentions is that the EU has a declared formal policy towards its neighbours, while Russia's interest in Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is claimed in more informal ways. This view is supported by Popescu and Wilson (September 2009, p.317), as their comparison of Russian and EU foreign policies resulted in the conclusion that EU's policy is more formal and technocratic, but Russian policy has more tactics and is well-resourced.

Secondly, Prystayko (n.d., pp.55-63) claims that Russia does not serve as an example for its neighbours, due to its poor democratic and economic achievements, while the EU is an attractive spot for many neighbours. Admittedly, due to its development the Union maintains its neighbours' interest in European integration. However, the EU does not have intentions to offer a membership to the neighbouring countries but instead is asking to implement its *acquis communautaire*. Consequently, it is not clear for how long the Western CIS (Moldova and Ukraine, in particular) will be favorable to the EU's rules unless the Union will offer them a prospect for a membership.

As Wilson and Popescu (June 2009, p.27) pointed out, the EU's policy to a large extent is based on the assumptions formed in the 1990s, and includes the perception that the EU is the only power in Europe and its neighbours are willing to adopt its standards and democratic values. However, the EU is not the only power in the region, as Russia maintains its position of strong and influential player. Whereas a membership in the EU is a long-term goal hardly achievable for Moldova and other common neighbours, Russia offers particular benefits such as visa-free regime, open labour markets, energy and easy membership in multilateral organizations. Therefore, "*Russia makes you an offer you can't refuse, while the EU makes you an offer you can't understand*".

A similar position is presented in Popescu (2011) study. The author states that an absence of definite perspectives for the Western CIS creates danger for the EU being an attractive unity, whereas Russia is working on the establishment of Eurasian Union, which would have similar functions as the EU and include post-soviet republics (Popescu, 2011, p.20). Therefore, the Eurasian Union with its "*real offers*" might become more desired place for the CIS countries rather than the EU with its "*vague promises*".

The effectiveness of the ENP and EaP is also weakened by the fact that these initiatives do not take into account the neighbours' relations with Russia (Popescu, 2011, p.24). Popescu and Wilson (June 2009), Popescu (2011) while evaluating the European initiatives towards its common with Russia neighbours emphasized that in order to be effective, the ENP should avoid being anti-Russian.

According to Popescu and Wilson (June 2009, p.4), one of the core differences between European and Russian foreign policies towards their neighbours include the fact that Russia is using both hard and soft power instruments, while the EU implements only soft policy tools. For instance, in Moldova, Russia maintains its military presence and offers cheap gas in return for control of energy infrastructure, while the EU is not using such instruments. On the one hand, soft power can be considered as a policy corresponding to democratic and humanistic values. On the other hand, hard power is more effective, in particular for reaching short-term goals.

To sum up, the presented research findings are concentrated mostly on the most general comparison of Russian and EU foreign policies towards their common neighbours. Furthermore, the signs of both convergence and divergence can be found in the presented results.

1.2. THE EU POLICIES TOWARDS MOLDOVA

1.2.1. ENERGY DIMENSION

Since 1991, the EU has made several attempts to engage CIS, including Moldova, to the common European energy market. However, in the existing research, these endeavors are often considered as not very successful.

One of the first steps to establish energy relations based on the market economy principles between the EU and non-EU countries was the European Energy Charter Treaty (the ECT). Tudoroiu (2012, p.273) claims that despite the fact that by today the Treaty is signed by 51 members, it has never been functioning in a proper way, as two main producers – Russia and Norway have never ratified the Charter, while other countries did not fully respect the rules of the document.

Due to the same reasons the other EU initiatives to engage its neighbours in the common energy sector were also not as successful as it was expected. For instance, Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe (INOGATE) programme, launched in 1995, lacked efficiency because Russia's membership in the ECT was supposed but it had never happened, consequently, INOGATE was not very attractive for Moldova and other Western CIS, as it did not include Russia's interest (Yafimava, 2011, p. 52).

According to the Verdun and Chira-Pascanut (2008, p.433), the EU's impact on Moldovan energy sector may not only be evaluated through the direct initiatives such as the ECT. The EU was actively promoting market-oriented economy principles in energy field though other initiatives, such as the

Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) program or the EU-Moldovan PCA. The EU's interest in Moldova intensified only after 2004, then it was clear what Romania will become a member of the EU soon, and there is an evident need to maintain good links with Moldova. The main instrument to get closer became the ENP, which also envisaged some reforms regarding Moldova's energy sector. However, Moldova's attitude towards the ENP has been lacking enthusiasm. The first signs of dissatisfaction with a position of "*eternal EU neighbours*" manifested through the critics towards the ENP for not distinguishing between "*neighbours of Europe*" (like Egypt or Syria) and "*European neighbours*" (like Moldova or Ukraine), which might seeking to join the EU in the future.

The proposal to deal with "*European neighbours*" differently was suggested by Sweden and Poland and framed the EaP in 2008. The EaP is attempted to supplement with the ENP and to deepen EU's bilateral relations with the six "*Eastern neighbourhood*" states including Moldova (Popescu, Wilson, June, 2009, p.14). In general, the EaP made the ENP's key elements more explicit and is purposed to a much closer relationship between the partners and the EU (Debardeleben, 2011, p.256). Furthermore, in comparison with the ENP, the EaP puts a significant accent on energy relations between the EU and its neighbours.

As it was mentioned above, there is only one comparative study on the EU-Russia's energy policies towards their common neighbours. Gromadzki and Konończuk (2007, pp.30-34) claim that the EU still does not have a single energy policy, and thus is less involved in energy issues of their common neighbours in comparison with Russia, which has an explicit energy strategy towards CIS countries. However, the conclusion of this study may not be relevant anymore, as in 2012 Moldova joined the Energy Community Treaty (EnCT), which envisages implementation the EU energy *acquis* for Moldova and other EnCT members.

Since 2006 Moldova has been an observer of the EnCT, but recently the country joined the Treaty. According to Debardeleben (2011, pp.50-51), Moldova would rather prefer to be an observer for a longer period of time, as implementation of the energy *acquis* and compliance with EU technical standards is related to costly obligations for Moldova. However, remaining an observer was no longer possible, as the state maintains hopes to join the EU and their unwillingness to adopt the EU energy norms could have undermine the prospect for future membership. The Moldovan commitment to implement energy *acquis* caused a lot of political discussions not only within Moldova but also in Russia, as reforms to a large extent will refer to Russia's energy interest in that region.

BRIEF HISTORY OF TRANSNISTRIAN CONFLICT

The Transnistrian conflict is taking roots from the late 1980, when the *Glasnost* policy and *perestroika* appeared. This period of time is related to Moldova's national identity awakening and the establishment of the Popular Front of Moldova, supporting the surge of Moldovan national identity. Moldova was proclaiming itself Romanian and was pushing the Soviet government to recognize Moldovan written in Latin as the only state language. The Transnistrian region, largely populated by Russian-speaking citizens, found this proposal discriminative, and since then the disagreements between Transnistria and Moldova have started.

Lately, divisions between Bessarabian and Transnistrian regions became a source of even more extensive tensions. In 1990, Moldova declared itself sovereign, still within the USSR, while Transnistria claimed itself independent from Moldova and willing to recognize only the Union's laws. After the dissolution of the USSR, Moldova became an independent republic with Chisinau as its capital, whereas Transnistria reaffirmed its intentions to be independent from Moldova.

These disagreements led to several collisions between the Transnistrian and the Moldovan forces in March-July 1992, as a result approximately 1,500 people were killed. A ceasefire was reached thanks to The 14th Army of the Russian military, which was in the Transnistrian region since the Cold War, and thus became involved in the conflict between Moldovan and Transnistria units.

The first peacekeeping operation in Transnistria was held in 1992. It was supervised by a Joint Control Commission (JCC) consisting from Transnistria, Moldova, Russia and observed by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and Ukraine. At the same time, the security zone was set up, it was monitored by Russian, Moldovan and Transnistrian troops.

In the beginning, peace negotiations were held in the so-called "*four*" format between Russia, Ukraine, Romania and Moldova. Since 1993 Romania has been excluded from the process. After 1994, the negotiations continued in "*five*" format between Russia, Ukraine, OSCE, Moldova and Transnistria.

The first agreement to withdraw all Russian forces from Transnistria was signed in 1994. Since then Russia has destroyed several tons of ammunition and transported military equipment from the region. However, a significant part of ammunition and equipments are still present in Transnistria (Roper, 2008, p.85). For the second time Russian committed to remove all military forces from Moldova by the end of 2002 in the OSCE Istanbul Declaration. However, 1,500 Russian soldiers are still present in the region.

In 1997, Moldova and Transnistria signed a Memorandum intended to improve their relations, however, the document was not successful as it contained term "*common state*", and interpretation

debates on what is meant by “*common state*” hindered further progress in negotiations (Tudoroiu, 2012, p.141).

All the further attempts to resolve the conflict were not effective, and since 1992 the Transnistrian conflict has been considered as “*frozen*”, as it was not formally concluded by a peace agreement (Tudoroiu, 2012, p.136). What is more, it is often being claimed by the experts that Moldova and Transnistria are not the main players in this conflict settlement and the success of conflict resolution depends to a large extent on Russia and the EU. The policies of these actors will be presented in the next sections.

1.2.2. SECURITY DIMENSION

During the 1990s and early 2000s the EU was not taking part in the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict and showed little interest in this problem. As in the case of EU energy policies, the EU’s interest in Transnistrian region appeared together with the decision about the Union’s enlargement, as an unclear situation in Transnistria would put EU’s border stability under threat. The first detailed EU’s initiative on Transnistrian conflict settlement was the ENP and the Moldovan Action Plan (AP), launched in 2004-2005.

In the existing research the EU is often being accused of not having a definite strategy towards the conflict, however, some authors insist that the EU has been quite active in conflict resolution. In spite of this dispute, it is possible to define the twofold direction of the EU’s attitude towards Transnistria.

On the one hand, the Union is providing Chisinau with financial and technical aid in order to make it more attractive for the Transnistrian people. In 2008, the EU proposed a visa facilitation agreement to Moldova and made it the second biggest recipient of EU assistance in the neighbourhood. Moreover, the EU liberalized trade with Moldova. As a result, the Transnistrian businessmen have also showed their interest in enjoying the same advantages. In his study, Popescu (2009) states that such advantages as visa-free regime between the EU and Moldova might become a huge impetus for Transnistria to reunite with Moldova.

On the other hand, the EU is trying to urge the Transnistrian government to be more compliant (Giumelli, 2011, p.366). In 2003, the EU imposed restrictive measures towards the Transnistrian leaders, The President of Transnistria and other members of the government were impeded from entering the EU due to their “*lack of cooperation to promote a political settlement of the conflict*” (Giumelli, 2011, p.360). Due to the EU’s travel ban, the Transnistrian leaders significantly lost incomes from smuggling and trafficking activities. Therefore, the tensions in the region were intensified. Furthermore, the EU indirectly contributed to the integration of Transnistrian businesses to the Moldovan economy by putting pressure on Ukraine to accept only exports with Moldovan customs stamps. Consequently, all the

Transnistrian exporters were compelled to register within the Moldovan government. Therefore, the Transnistrian exports to the EU grew by 60 percent in 2006-2009.

However, the EU has been quite reluctant with engagement to the peacekeeping negotiations. In 2003 the OSCE proposed a peace operation in Moldova, which would be guided mainly by the EU. Nevertheless, a discussion of this possibility in the EU ceased immediately after Russian refusal to accept other peacekeeping forces within Transnistria. In 2006, the EU Special Representative in Moldova Adrian Jacobovits de Szeged tried to push forward a notion of a common EU-Russia peacekeeping operation in Transnistria. However, the majority of the EU MS had objections towards this idea because of the absence of formal conflict resolution agreement and possible complication of their relations with Russia. Consequently, The EU's involvement in 2003 failed because of Russian opposition, whereas in 2006 it failed because of the internal opposition of the MS, as they perceived the good relations with Russia as more important aspect in comparison with Transnistrian conflict settlement (Popescu, 2009, pp. 464-465).

In 2005 the format of peace negotiations was changed to "5+2", and the EU together with the United States became observers of the conflict settlement process. This was a positive change for Moldova, as it has improved their negotiating capacity. As a part of the "5+2" negotiations format, the EU assigned an EU Special Representative for the conflict resolution in Transnistria and set up an EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM). 120 EU experts are monitoring the Moldovan-Ukrainian border with a special focus on Transnistria.

In 2010, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel in a Meseberg Memorandum proposed a plan on how to settle the frozen conflict in Transnistria, the special accent was put on the reanimation of "5+2" negotiation format and need of active collaboration between the EU and Russia. The Plan was further developed later on but it was not transformed into advanced EU initiative, and thus Russia could not take it into consideration. Moreover, it is not definite whether Merkel's views would found a support in other MS (Tudoroiu, 2012, p.154).

After the launch of EaP initiative, the negotiations on a new Association Agreement (AA) between Moldova and the EU have started. It expected that the AA will be signed autumn 2013 and will include a new proposal on the conflict settlement.

1.3. RUSSIAN POLICIES TOWARDS MOLDOVA

1.3.1. ENERGY DIMENSION

Diplomatic relations between Moldova and Russia were established in 1992. However, in the early 1990s Russia did not have any experience and traditions of interstate relations with the former Soviet Union republics. Accordingly, Russia did not perceive Moldova and other new republics as a

region of special interest and at that time Russian policy towards Moldova was lacking a clear strategic vision and commitment.

Nevertheless, Russian and Moldovan partnership was driven by economic necessity, and the situation changed in 1995, when the “*Near Abroad*” was declared as “*the zone of vital interest*” of Russia, and since then the CIS member states are at the top of Russia foreign policy priorities (Kramer, 2008, p.9). Russia realized that maintaining its influence in the region is an essential factor contributing to its prestige and national interests. Furthermore, even before the USSR, the neighbouring states were parts of Russia’s empire and historically these countries were perceived as Russian partners.

Economic and energy dimension was declared as one of the main spheres within the relations between Russia and CIS. In the early 1990s, Russia provided CIS members with a wide range of economic subsidies and for some time maintained a common ruble zone. In addition, Russia supplied its neighbours with oil and gas at very low prices. However, it was not a case for Moldova, as from 1996 until 2005 Gazprom charged Moldova the highest price in CIS. Furthermore, in 2000s Putin contributed a lot in rising prices for oil and gas, and all CIS countries started to be charged more similar with the EU states (Borovskij, 2012. p.7).

Yafimava (2011, p.282) defines Russian-Moldovan energy relationship as highly asymmetrical, due to the fact that Moldova does not possess its own energy resources and is fully dependent on Russian gas imports. Due to inability to pay debt payment, Moldova transferred 50 percent of its transit network to Gazprom in late 1990s. Since then the gas transit network is owed by the Moldovagaz joint venture – a unified gas company, consisting of the Moldovan government representatives (owns 35 percent of stocks), the Transnistrian administration (owns 13 percent of stocks) and Gazprom (owns accordingly 50 percent of stocks) [Yafimava, 2011, p.273]. All Russian-Moldovan intergovernmental contracts related to energy should be approved by the Moldovagaz supervisory board. Therefore, Moldovan dependence on Russia provided Russian energy giant with a possibility to set its own rules.

Currently the Moldovan transit network is a part of the Balkan export corridor through which Russian gas goes to Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Western Turkey (Yafimava, 2011, p.262). Moreover, all Russian gas going to Europe firstly crosses Transnistria, which is *de facto* a separate territory with its own legislature. The resolution of Transnistrian question and identification of its status would affect the legitimacy of Transnistrian ownership of the network. In addition, Transnistria is responsible for a major part of Moldova’s gas debt, and since *de jure* it is a Moldovan region, its debt is included into the total Moldovan debt (Yafimava, 2011, pp.264-266).

In 2006, Moldova experienced a gas crisis, as by the end of 2005 the supply contract between Moldova and Gazprom expired, Gazprom called for a new contract at a harshly raised price. Moldova

refused to sign a new contract and started negotiations on price reduction. An agreement between the two parties was not reached and due to the absence of a document, the supplies were cut on 1 January 2006.

Taking into consideration that Gazprom owns half of the Moldovan transit network, it was impossible for Moldova to take gas out of transit pipelines without an agreement from Gazprom. During the whole year the gas supply was regulated by the short-term agreements and only after the long negotiations, a new long-term contract was signed in the end of 2006. During the supply cut-off, the EU was neutral and refused to be Moldova's mediator in the negotiations with Gazprom (Yafimava, 2011, p.86).

Current Moldovan-Russian energy relations are even more complex as an implementation of the Third Package would significantly weaken Gazprom's position in Moldova (Yafimava, 2011, p.60). The Moldovan gas crisis together with other gas crises in other Western CIS, proved that the common neighbourhood of EU and Russia is very essential in terms of secure and constant gas transportation and continuous gas supply. In spite the fact that in the future both Russia and the EU are attempted to use other than Western CIS gas transit networks, currently the area of common neighbourhood remains being an essential unit of gas relations.

1.3.2. SECURITY DIMENSION

The major role in the Transnistrian survival and formation as a state was played by Russia. As it was stressed by Popescu (2005, p.24) "*Transnistria could not have emerged without Russia, nor could it survived*". On the one hand, the presence of the Russian forces averted conflict escalation. On the other hand, it was openly supporting the Transnistrian unit and was transferring personnel and weapons to the Transnistrian paramilitary forces.

Popescu (2005) claims that the main reason of Russian concerns in Transnistria is their geopolitical interest. First of all, Russia is interested in unstable political and constitutional situation within Moldova, as the EU would not agree to grant Moldova a membership until it solves its internal problems. The results of Tudoroiu (2012, pp.148-149) study adds that unresolved Transnistrian question compels Chisinau to take into account Russian interests, as any anti-Russian measure can only put obstacles in the way of reunion.

What is more, Russia supports Transnistria because important Russian interest groups are taking part in the Transnistrian privatization processes and are benefiting from the Smirnov regime through corrupted networks. In addition, Russian military is cooperating with many Transnistrian factories, which survived only because of the Russian orders. Moreover, Transnistria is often used for illegal traffic by Russian business, military and mafia groups. There is also information that through the Transnistrian region Russian companies are illegally exporting weapons on a large scale.

Since the beginning, Russia has been engaged in the Transnistrian conflict settlement. Mostly, as a participant of “four”, “five”, and “5+2” peace negotiations formats. However, the study held by Kamiewicz, et al. (2010, p.3) evaluates those formats as largely ineffective. Each party, including Russia, had a veto right and it was rather easy to block any action which would threaten the interest groups which are benefiting from the *status quo* in Transnistria. Popescu (2005, p.20) in his research considers the OSCE as a weak actor as well, as the capabilities of this organization are often constrained by some member states including Russia.

Russia’s position towards Transnistrian status has been quite clear and stable from the start. Russia might accept the Transnistrian reunification with Moldova if only Transnistria would obtain the same constitutional status as Moldova. This would allow maintaining close relations with Russia and thus Russian influence would also increasingly affect Chisinau. The idea of equal status for both Chisinau and Tiraspol was officially proposed in a project called Kozak Memorandum by Russia in 2003. According to the proposal, Moldova should have become the Federal Republic of Moldova including a federal territory (Moldova), The Transnistrian Moldovan Republic and Gagauzia. It was offered that the Federal Republic would have competencies within three categories: (1) federation competences, (2) subjects competences, (3) joint competences (Vahl, Emerson, 2004, p. 15). This would provide Gagauz and Transnistria with an opportunity to block any Moldovan offers. Furthermore, the proposal envisaged the presence of Russian troops in Transnistria until 2020.

The appearance of Kozak Memorandum was not occasional, as Russia was using the presence of friendly Communist party. The 2001 elections in Moldova were won by the Communist party. One of the main reasons of their victory was their promise to regulate the Transnistria conflict. Taking into account, that party’s policy direction was openly pro-Russian, the Communists’ programme involved plans to access the Russia-Belarus Union, to deepen economic relations with the CIS countries and to give the Russian language an official status in Moldova. Consequently, the relations with Transnistria increasingly improved and many bilateral agreements were signed.

The federalization scenario was accepted by the OSCE, Transnistrian and Moldovan leaders. However, this idea caused negative reaction within the Moldovan society which led to anti-communist demonstrations in 2001-2003. To save the power, the Communist party refused to implement their stated goals, and in turn, the Transnistrian government stopped the negotiation processes. Instead, the Communist leader Vladimir Voronin decided to change their orientation towards Europe.

In 2008, Voronin wanted to improve their cooled off relations with Moscow, and again used the settlement of Transnistrian conflict as a promise for the elections in 2009. It was declared that some aspects of the Kozak Memorandum would be accepted by Chisinau, but the elections have changed the

situation, as a new government was formed by the anti-communist parties. Transnistria blamed the new Moldovan leaders for being a part of a Romanian and NATO intrigues, and started to speak about a new war.

An increasing need to solve the Transnistrian issues lead to the intensification of the negotiations, however, the positions of the parties were incompatible: Chisinau was ready to accept a certain degree of Transnistrian autonomy, while Tiraspol was insisting on confederation status, which would allow them to block main decisions of Chisinau and also they would obtain the right to quit the confederation at any moment (Tudoroiu, 2012, pp.142-144).

SUB-CONCLUSION

The existing research on the EU/Russian energy policies towards Moldova is not very explicit, only few studies analyzing energy policies towards Moldova have been held. On the contrary, the Transnistrian conflict was extensively analyzed by the researchers, moreover, existing studies also provides a comprehensive assessment of the EU's and Russia's positions towards Transnistria. However, the comparative perspective is almost absent in both energy and security fields.

Therefore, this study is attempted to contribute to the research on energy policies, by describing Russia's and EU's activities in Moldova and evaluating them. What is more, the empirical study is intended to bring a comparative perspective on EU-Russian policies towards Moldova and to fill the gap in the existing research.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In order to compare Russia's and the EU's energy and security policies towards Moldova, the concept of convergence will be used. The theoretical considerations are presented in this chapter.

2.1. THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN POLICY CONVERGENCE AND OTHER POLICIES RESEMBLANCE NOTIONS

In the beginning of the 1990s, the topic of convergence became an area of interest for academics, economists and politicians (Schmitt, Starke, 2011, p. 120). While there is a consensus on the definition of convergence: "*the tendency of societies to grow more alike, to develop similarities in structures, process and performances*" (Bennet, 1991, p.215), *the phenomenon of convergence* remains to be a many-sided concept, involving various notions and conceptualizations. Consequently, theoretical and empirical studies on convergence often use various and overlapping ideas of convergence, as convergence can be equated with other related concepts of isomorphism, policy transfer or policy diffusion (Knill, 2005, pp.

765-766). To avoid ambiguities in the empirical research of this study, it is essential to discuss the difference between other possible explanations of policies resemblance.

The concept of policy isomorphism is concentrated on growing similarity of organizational, institutional structures and cultures over time, while policy convergence research is focused on changes in national policy, and is related to the notions of policy transfer and diffusion. Policy transfer refers to *“processes by which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political system (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political system”*. Policy diffusion is defined as *“the socially mediated spread of policies across and within political systems, including communication and influence processes which operate both on and within populations of adopters”* (Knill, 2005, p. 767).

The perception of policy diffusion in the literature is twofold, as some scholars distinguish three mechanisms of policy diffusion, which might lead to convergence (Knill, 2005, pp. 765-766):

1. International harmonization (binding requirements stated in international and/or supranational agreements);
2. Voluntary implementation of international models at the national level;
3. Imposition of policies.

As it can be seen from above, on the one hand, diffusion is often perceived as a voluntary transfer of policy models, leading to convergence. On the other hand, the concept is related to the processes of policies dissemination by using imposition, international harmonization across the countries with a potential result of cross-national policy convergence. On the other hand, diffusion is perceived as voluntary transfer of policy models, which lead to convergence.

As a consequence, diffusion is often equated with policy transfer. On the contrary, Knill (2005, pp.767-768) stresses that for diffusion studies it is typical to use a more general approach, while policy transfer studies are focused on causes and contents of single processes in bilateral policies. What is more, the diffusion concept is more concentrated on structural and socioeconomic causes of particular models adoption, while transfer studies examine individual adoptions.

The concepts of policy transfer and policy diffusion also differ from the policy convergence idea. Firstly, both diffusion and transfer is focused on processes, while convergence studies put a significant emphasis on policy effects. Secondly, policy transfer and policy diffusion is likely to result in policy convergence but policy convergence will not necessarily be a consequence of transfer and diffusion. Thirdly, the dependent variable of policy transfer research is the content and process of policy transfer, while diffusion studies explain adoption of policies over time and convergence studies are aimed to explain changes in policy similarity over time.

Following the presented considerations, Knill (2005, p.765) has defined policy convergence as “any increase in the similarity between one or more characteristic of a certain policy (e.g. policy objectives, policy instruments, policy settings) across a given set of political jurisdictions (supranational institutions, states, regions, local authorities) over a given period of time. Policy convergence thus describes the end result of a process of policy change over time towards some common point, regardless of the casual processes.”

Taking into account the aim of this study to examine Russian-European relations in the context of their policies similarity or dissimilarity towards Moldova, it is possible to assume that the concept of isomorphism is not relevant for such research as cultural, organizational and institutional resemblance of Russia and the EU is not an object of this study. What is more, it is impossible to discuss policy transfer in case of Russian-European relations, as Russia does not have any intensions to join the Union, and, thus does not follow the EU’s example in developing their own policies.

The notion of policy diffusion has a potential to be used as an alternative explanation of policies resemblance, although this study is related to the casual processes only to a small extent, and thus, it is believed that the concept of convergence corresponds with the aim of the study in a better way, as it refers to the examination of policy resemblance over time and is oriented to the result.

In order to evaluate the resemblance between Russian-European policies towards Moldova over time, a comprehensive theoretical framework on convergence is needed. Thus, it is important (1) to mark out the mechanisms of how convergence can be reached, (2) to develop a relevant time-frame, (3) to define different types of convergence and (4) to discuss the criteria of convergence assessment.

2.1.1. MECHANISMS OF CONVERGENCE

After summing up an existing research on convergence mechanisms or drivers, it is possible to distinguish the following main triggers of the convergence:

1. *Compliance/adoption of common legislation* (refers to common legally binding rules for the group of countries. In case of non-compliance sanctions can be applied. In case of the EU, the main driving force of compliance is a perspective of membership in the Union) [Bauer et al., 2007, pp. 409-411].
2. *Competition/acknowledgement of certain international rules or standards* (such policies are aimed to gradual reduction of conflicting rules between the actors, but are only partially binding for implementers. States are not provided with a concrete models prescribing how to act in order to reach the common goal);

3. *Cooperation/Learning/Communication* (presupposes information exchange and mutual learning between actors without setting legally binding rules, as interaction between states is based on voluntary participation).

Whereas Russia does not have any intentions to join the EU, it is expected that policies based on compliance will be ineffective, while competition policies have a potential to encourage convergence between national states but their impact on non-member states is dependent on the interest of the states to participate in such policies, and EU's ability to convince them to do so (Bauer et al., 2007, pp. 412-413). Despite the fact that Russia declares a strong will to cooperate with the EU, it stresses its status of an equal partner, which also makes an adoption of regulations suggested by the EU less possible.

The convergence of Russian-EU policies is most likely consolidated in international rules, partnership agreements, associations and other networks. Therefore, communication approach is likely to have an effect on Russian-EU relations (Bauer et al., 2007, pp. 414-416). Currently Russia and the EU experience growing interdependence because of the need to address common problems in their neighbourhood, including issues of defense and energy supply (Barbe et al., 2009, p.839).

2.1.2. TIME-FRAME

As it was mentioned above, convergence can be defined as the development of policy similarity over time. Taking into account that convergence and/or divergence is a process, thus, it is essential to define a precise time frame, which would determine standards for the results interpretation.

As long as the concept of policy convergence is rather related to long-term changes, the analysis requires a relevant time-frame of analysis, which according to Heichel et al. (2005, pp. 829-830) would cover fifteen to thirty years. What is more, in order to ensure a comprehensive analysis of policy similarities, authors suggest to categorize data into a few periods (from two to five), and to evaluate policy similarity for each of them.

Therefore, Russian-EU policy convergence towards Moldova will be analyzed within a certain period of time, which will be categorized into several other time spaces, which will be specified in the research design section.

2.1.3. TYPES OF CONVERGENCE

Bennet (1991) defines public policy as *“a complex multidimensional phenomenon crucial to be absolutely precise as to the aspects of policy being compared to ensure cross-national equivalence”*. In order to examine cross-national convergence, a number of studies signed out some comparative categories (Heichel et al., 2005, p.828):

- 1 – Convergence of policy goals (actors might come together in order to address common problems);

2 – Convergence of policy content (refers to the more formal demonstrations of policy: various rules, regulations, treaties etc.);

3 – Convergence on policy instruments (the institutional tools for policy administration: regulatory, administrative or judicial);

4 – Convergence on policy outcomes/impacts/consequences (positive/negative, effective/ineffective results of policy realization);

5 – Convergence of policy style.

In this report, the policies of Russia and the EU will be partly examined by using this framework. However, the research will not include convergence of policy content, which is defined as policy demonstration through the formal forms (for instance documents, treaties), as the documents will be analyzed in the empirical research. Furthermore, the research will not examine the convergence of policy style, due to the fact that there is no clearly developed theoretical definition on how the policy style should be identified. Thus, the policies convergence within this study will be analyzed in terms of their:

1. Main goals;
2. Instruments;
3. Outcomes.

Moreover, the definition of policy instruments developed by Bennet (1991) will not be used in this research. The classification suggested by Baldwin will be applied instead, as he describes foreign policy instruments, in particular, and the examination of policy tools using Baldwin's typology will ensure more comprehensive results than an examination according to Bennet's suggested definition.

Baldwin classification of foreign policy instruments involves (Zielionka, 1998, pp.67-72):

1. *Propaganda*, which is used to influence foreign publics, rather than governments. Typical propaganda instruments are sensationalisation and manipulation of stereotypes.
2. *Diplomatic instruments*, which include:

Table 1. Diplomatic instruments

Demarches,	Offering membership,
Sponsoring peace conferences,	Sending cease-fire monitors,
Sending observers,	Administering foreign city,
International agreements,	Negotiations,
Diplomatic recognition/sanctions,	Supporting action by other international organizations,
Declarations,	High-level visits,
Making peace proposals	Sending special envoys

3. *Economic instruments* or resources which have significance at the markets in terms of money.

The measures involve:

Table 2. Economic instruments

Positive	Negative
Trade agreement,	Embargo (ban on exports),
Cooperation agreement,	Boycott (ban on imports),
Association agreement,	Suspending or denouncing agreements,
Tariff reduction,	Tariff increase,
Quota increase,	Quota decrease,
Providing aid,	Reducing/suspending aid,
Extending loans	Delaying granting of successive loan tranches

4. *Military instruments* refer to sending military troops/withdrawal of forces, peacekeeping/peacemaking, crisis-management tasks, military capacity and resources.

To sum up, within the empirical research of the study the convergence of policies will be analyzed in terms of (1) policies goals (what are the intentions of actors?), (2) policies instruments (what kind of means are used to reach ends?), (3) policies outcomes (what are the outcomes of the declared actions?).

2.1.4. CONVERGENCE ASSESSMENT

There are several types of convergence (beta- convergence, sigma- convergence etc.) distinguished by scholars, although this study treats the concept of convergence from a general point of view, involving the idea of reducing variation and distance but without being specified on the concept of convergence that is applied. The occurrence of convergence will be investigated relatively to the presented policy categories. According to Heichel et al. (2005, p.833) such examination is suitable, as the study includes only two actors.

SUB-CONCLUSION

In comparison with other policy resemblance concepts, only the concept of convergence corresponds to the aim of this study. In order to examine a general pattern of convergence between the EU and Russia's policies, the empirical research will focus on the comparison of declared main goals, envisaged instruments and outcomes of Russia's and EU's energy and security policies towards Moldova. The convergence is evaluated by identifying the resemblance between analytical categories.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

3.1. STUDY DESIGN

Whereas this study is focused on Russia's and the EU's policies, a multiple-case study is used as strategy for conducting research. The phenomenon is analyzed in the real life context as a process issue, therefore case study is the best tool to ensure a valid description of the policy convergence, as it implies using multiple sources of evidence which are crucial for developing a holistic perspective on the issue (Jones, Lyons, 2004, p.73).

Yin (2009, p.51) defines a multiple case study as enabling the researcher to explore the differences within and between cases, and is aimed to replicate findings across the case. The evidence received from the study is expected to be more compelling, contributing to the overall study's robustness.

Study questions: The main question of this study is whether Russian and EU foreign policies towards Moldova are convergent or divergent. In order to answer this question, the following sub-question based on the conceptual framework, will be answered in the empirical part of the research:

- What are the main goals of Russian and the EU energy/security policies towards Moldova? How they were changing over time?
- What are the instruments of Russian and the EU energy/security policies towards Moldova? How they were changing over time?
- What are the outcomes of Russian and the EU energy/security policies?

Study propositions: Russian energy/security foreign policy towards Moldova is considered convergent with EU's energy/security foreign policy towards Moldova when similarity between the following characteristics occurs: (1) main goals, (2) instruments, (3) outcomes.

Study hypotheses:

H1: Russia's and EU's **main goals of energy policies** towards Moldova are **convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H2: Russia's and EU's **main goals of energy policies** towards Moldova are **divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H3: Russia's and EU's **main goals of security policies** towards Moldova are **convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H4: Russia's and EU's **main goals of security policies** towards Moldova are **divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H5: Russia's and EU's **instruments of energy policies** towards Moldova are **convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H6: Russia's and EU's **instruments of energy policies** towards Moldova are **divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H7: Russian and EU's **instruments of security policies** towards Moldova are **convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H8: Russian and EU's **instruments of security policies** towards Moldova are **divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H9: Russian and EU's **outcomes of energy policies** towards Moldova are **convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H10: Russian and EU's **outcomes of energy policies** towards Moldova are **divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H11: Russian and EU's **outcomes of security policies** towards Moldova are **convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H12: Russian and EU's **outcomes of security policies** towards Moldova are **divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

Units of analysis:

The embedded unit of analysis is used in the study. Within the Russian policies case study, the *Unit of analysis 1* is Russian Energy Policies towards Moldova, whereas the *Unit of analysis 2* is Russian Security Policies towards Moldova. The variables of both main units of analysis are: (1) main goals, (2) instruments, (3) outcomes.

In the EU policies case study, the *Unit of analysis 1* is European Energy Policies towards Moldova, and the *Unit of analysis 2* is European Security Policies towards Moldova. The variables are the same as in the Russian policies case study.

Sampling procedure

Russia's and the EU's energy/security policy cases were chosen, as this sample is likely to be very informative in terms of studying the phenomena of Russian-EU relations. It is intended to provide both policymakers and academics with the better perspective on Russian-European relations and policies to their common neighbours. The energy and security dimensions are particularly relevant, as they both are claimed to be the top priorities in Russian and EU foreign policies.

The Moldovan context of policies analysis was chosen due to the fact that it is very representative in terms of demonstrating Russia's and the EU's approaches in the energy and security fields. Furthermore, the sample enhances generalizability of findings, as to some extent they can be applied to other CIS countries. The sampling is made in accordance with available data collection methods (Marshall, Rossman, 2011, p. 105).

Time-frame

The empirical research will cover the time period of 21 years (from 1991 until 2012). The goals of Russian-EU foreign policies have been changing during these years, and there were some crucial points when the direction of policies was changing, therefore the initial period of time is divided into three smaller time periods of 7 years:

1. **1991-1998.** This period is considered as a period of relations establishment between the EU and Moldova, as well as Russia and Moldova. During these years the first bilateral and multilateral agreements were signed between the parties.
2. **1998-2005.** This period is related to the foreign policies development between the actors. Russia's and EU's attitude towards Moldova is changing, and that resulted in new initiatives launching and policy changes.

3. **2005-2012.** During this period of time the previous policies are being evaluated and improved. Moldova's interest in European integration is growing, and that causes tensions in the relations with Russia.

The overall study design is presented in the Figure 1.

Figure 1. Case study design with embedded unit of analysis

<p>Case 1: Russian policies towards Moldova</p> <p>Unit of analysis 1: energy policies</p> <p>Variables:</p> <p>(1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes.</p> <p>Unit of analysis 2: security policies</p> <p>Variables: (1), (2), (3)</p> <p>Time-frame: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012</p>	<p>Case 2: European policies towards Moldova</p> <p>Unit of analysis 3: energy policies</p> <p>Variables:</p> <p>(1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes.</p> <p>Unit of analysis 4: security policies</p> <p>Variables: (1), (2), (3)</p> <p>Time-frame: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012</p>
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3.2. STUDY METHODS

Data gathering methods

Case study, as one of the most complex strategies, involves multiple methods of data gathering (Marshall, Rossman, 2011, p.94). Hence, both document analysis and interviews will be used for data collection in this research.

Document analysis

Whereas the study is focused on the policy convergence, the document analysis is considered as one of the most informative and instructive ways for understanding policies and their institutional context. It is the most advantageous method for examining the policy convergence concept, as it provides information on how trends in Russia's and the EU's policies were documented over time. Furthermore, the method increases a reliability of the whole study, as it is easy to replicate and the materials are available for others to use.

In addition, the document analysis, as a purely descriptive method, corresponds with the overall goal of the study to describe the phenomena of convergence. Document analysis allows testing theoretical issues to enhance understanding of the data. Moreover, through the document analysis it is possible to

distinguish words into content-related categories, therefore the obtained data can be easily placed within the developed conceptual framework of this study (Elo, Kynga, 2008, p. 108).

Although the main limitation of this method is that examination to significant extent can be restricted by the availability of the material. In case of this study, the research is limited by the constrained access to the Gazprom's agreements signed with Moldova, and other significant documents within the energy policy dimensions.

Within this research, the documents are perceived as government's communicative devices which represent a specific version of reality. The study includes a period of time from 1991 until 2012, consequently, plenty of documents were produced during this time, although in this study only documents corresponding to the following criteria will be used (Flick, 2006, pp.248-253):

- the documents are available for public use;
- the documents are authentic and their origin is reliable and unquestionable;
- the evidence presented in the documents is credible and relevant for the research purposes;
- the evidence is representative and it is typical of its kind;
- the evidence is clear and comprehensible;

The main sources of the documents are

1. **Legislation** of the EU on ENP, Joint Actions, Common Actions, Action Plans etc. As well, as legislation of Russia related to their foreign policies towards CIS and Moldova.
2. **Official reports of OSCE**, which contains evaluation of election processes in Moldova. The EU has based their foreign policies towards Moldova to a large extent on the OSCE conclusions.

The procedure of finding document included visiting governmental pages of Russia, Moldova, as well as the EU's, OSCE's official web sites, where the documents are open for public use.

The list of the documents selected for the research is presented in the Annex 1(pp.58-59).

The analysis of the mentioned documents is aimed to contribute to identification of goals, content and instruments convergence. However, for the evaluation of policies outcomes structured interviews will be conducted, as it is believed that comprehensive and relevant assessment of policies can be conducted only by experts.

Interviews

As it was aforementioned, documents are the communicative tools through which a certain policy is declared and realized. Thus, there is need to evaluate outcomes of the particular policies which are related to particular documents. For that reason, the structured interview with predetermined questions about certain policies was chosen as another data gathering method. The main advantage of this method is

that it will allow getting a very targeted and comprehensive assessment of the specific initiatives which were described in the previous sections of the study.

What is more, the structured interviews can easily be replicated and the standardization of this data gathering method is very high. In addition, it is relatively quick and easy to code and interpret the data, as the structure of the questions corresponds with suggested analytical categories. Hence, the reliability of the obtained data is expected to be very high. However, in comparison with other interview method, structured interviews can give rather limited results, as the structure of the interview quite strict and does not allow any deviations from the questions. Whereas interviewees will be constrained to a particular format of the interview, the forms of questions will provide them with possibility to express their opinions in depth and detail.

In the structured interviews on both security and energy issues several forms of questions will be used. The first is unstructured questions *“Do you think the Transnistrian conflict could have been solved in the 1990s? If yes, then which actor could contribute to that?”*. In the second form, semi-structured questions of the concrete issues (e.g. Kozak Memorandum or the Third Energy Package) are defined and the response is left open. In the third form of questioning, structured questions will be asked (e.g. *“Do you consider the presence of the Russian army as a positive or negative factor for the conflict settlement?”*) [Flick, 2006, p. 150]. All questions of the interviews are presented in the Annex 2 (p.59).

The interviews will be held with academics and political elites which specialize in EU/Russian energy and security policies towards Moldova. Three experts will express their opinions on EU/Russian energy policy outcomes in Moldova, whereas the other four will evaluate EU/Russian roles in the Transnistrian conflict settlement. The sample of the interviews is quite small, firstly because there are no many experts specializing on Russian/EU policies towards Moldova. In particular, there are only few specialists in the energy field. In general, around forty people have been contacted, although only seven agreed to take part in the research. What is more, the majority of the interviewees are Moldovan nationals, while experts from Russia and the EU refused to express their opinions on the mentioned issues. The list of the experts participated in the interviews is presented in the Annex 3 (p.60), however, some respondents preferred to stay anonymous, thus their names are not indicated.

Respondents for discussion on energy policies were selected on the basis of what they might know in order to assess Russian/EU energy policies towards Moldova (Aberdach, Rockman, 2002, p. 673). The experts on Transnistrian issue were chosen through a *“snowball effect”*, as they were recommended one by other interviewees. The snowball sampling is often being criticized for the high possibility of bias, as initial subjects tend to nominate people who share the same traits and views, thus the data obtained through this sampling can be very limited and one-sided (Castillo, 2009). However, as it

was mentioned above, there are relatively few professionals specialized in Russian/EU foreign policies towards Moldova, thus, it is natural that the majority of experts knows each other but they still are independent analysts which work in different countries and institutions.

Due to geographical distance, all the interviews with exception of one (conducted face-to-face) was held via *Skype*. The *Skype* programme was selected in order to ensure the visibility of visual cues and nonverbal data. Hence, the interviewing conditions would be similar to the face-to-face interviews and quality of the produced data will be higher. What is more, an ease of audio-recording in *Skype* would be a useful instrument for dealing with data collection and sharing problems (Kristie, Given, n.d.).

Interviews are expected to be useful tool for gathering data, as the evaluation of EU/Russian foreign policies provided by elites and academia will bring a deeper context to the data collected during document analysis.

The interviews were held between 1st and 11th of April, 2013 and lasted around 30 minutes in average.

Data analysis strategy

Firstly, in order to transform data into a suitable form and to ensure its validity, the interviews will be transcribed immediately (the transcriptions of the interviews are presented in Annex 4, pp.61-83). Secondly, whereas a central feature of the data analysis is comparison, the data obtained during document analysis and interviews will be categorized to the developed conceptual framework, which is used as a main guideline for analytical comparison of the data (Marshal, Rossman, 2011, p.209). The data analysis categories are presented in the Table 3.

Table 3. Data analysis categories

<p>1 category: energy policies of Russia towards Moldova in 1991-1998 (1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>	<p>7 category: energy policies of the EU towards Moldova in 1991-1998 (1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>
<p>2 category: energy policies of Russia towards Moldova in 1998-2005 (1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>	<p>8 category: energy policies of the EU towards Moldova in 1998-2005 (1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>

<p>3 category: energy policies of Russia towards Moldova in 2005-2012</p> <p>(1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>	<p>9 category: energy policies of the EU towards Moldova in 1998-2005</p> <p>(1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>
<p>4 category: security policies of Russia towards Moldova in 1991-1998</p> <p>(1) main goals; (2) Instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>	<p>10 category: security policies of the EU towards Moldova in 1991-1998</p> <p>(1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>
<p>5 category: security policies of Russia towards Moldova in 1998-2005</p> <p>(1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>	<p>11 category: security policies of the EU towards Moldova in 1998-2005</p> <p>(1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>
<p>6 category: security policies of Russia towards Moldova in 2005-2012</p> <p>(1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>	<p>12 category: security policies of the EU towards Moldova in 2005-2012</p> <p>(1) main goals; (2) instruments; (3) outcomes;</p>

The categories (1,7), (2,8), (3,9), (4, 10), (5, 11) and (6, 12) will be compared between each other.

Analytic techniques

In accordance to the presented categories, the data obtained during the document analysis and interviews will be coded both deductively and inductively. Taking into account that the data analysis categories are based on the conceptual framework, the initial codes will be deductively derived from it in advance. However, in order not to miss the unique issues raised by interviewees, the inductive codes will be developed from reading the data (Bailey et al., 2011, p.218). The codes will take forms of key words abbreviations.

Furthermore, coding will include data reduction, so the data will be divided into smaller parts for analysis, and will ensure focused analysis. Consequently, the coding will be conducted in three stages.

Firstly, the open coding will be used: the data will be divided into fragments, compared among each other, grouped into categories and labeled as a code. After this initial phase of analysis it expected to find the data corresponding with deductive codes and generate new codes for all the relevant data. After that, axial coding will be used. The connections between the data categories developed during open coding will be made. Moreover, after the assessment of existing codes, the new codes can be created and

the existing can be re-arranged. The main goal of the axial coding is to determine which elements are primary for the research and which are less important (Boeije, 2010, p.96).

After delineation of categories, the selective coding will be applied. During the last stage of coding, the categories of data and their interrelations will be evaluated, and the need to further refined/develop any categories will be highlighted. By using selective coding it is expected to fully describe the phenomenon of convergence between Russian and EU's foreign policies towards Moldova.

Coding is an essential tool for data management, as the material obtained through the interviews and documents will be archived and thus can easily be retrieved. In addition, coding is also important as a way to interpret the data and also allows assessing the data from another perspective, all that makes sure that the answer to the research question will be found (Boeije, 2010, p.115).

In addition, the cross-case synthesis technique will be used for data analysis. The technique is especially relevant in cases of Russia and the EU foreign policies, as it treats each individual study as a separate study, and provides a possibility to conduct inter-related comparison (Yin, 2009, p. 156). The collection of word tables according to the mentioned categories will be constructed in order to draw cross-case conclusions to address the initial research aim.

Interpretation of the results

After the evidence is coded and categorized, the interpretations of the data will be conducted, in order to bring meaning and coherence to the developed patterns. The interpretation of results is expected to strengthen the centrality and usefulness of data. To ensure the credibility of the interpreted data, negative findings will be adequately addressed and possible alternative explanation considered. Furthermore, in order to minimize the bias of the findings, the data and findings will be analyzed objectively, avoiding using personal opinion.

Test of study's quality, validity, and generalizability

According to Yin (2009, pp.40-45), when conducting a case study, it is essential to test it for fulfilling common criteria to all social science methods requirements:

- *Construct validity* of the study refers to identification of operational measures for the studied concepts, using multiple sources of evidence and its triangulation, establishing a chain of evidence.
- *Internal validity*. Refers to the casual relationships between variables and results.
- *External validity*. Refers to the extent to which the results can be generalized.
- *Reliability*. Demands that a study can be repeated with the same results. Transparency through good documentation and clarification of research procedures and replication through a case study database ensure sufficient reliability.

Table 4 depicts how the mentioned above criteria were strengthened in this study.

Table 4. Support for study’s quality, validity, and generalizability

	Supported by:
Construct validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use of multiple sources of evidence; - chains of evidence are clear; - triangulations is used;
Internal validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a clear research framework; - using conceptual framework to ensure the establishment of casual relations between study propositions and results.
External validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - multi-case studies are used and they include replication logic; - a case database will be created; - conceptual background is used;
Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - research procedures are clarified; - documentation is transparent; - sources of information are reliable; - document analysis and interviews can be replicated easily;

SUB-CONCLUSION

The case study is used as a main strategy for study design. Two case studies with an embedded unit of analysis will be examined and compared. Document analysis and interviews are used as data gathering methods. The data will be coded in accordance to the conceptual framework and analyzed by using cross-sectional technique. The study’s overall quality, validity and reliability are strengthened by using reliable sources of information, conceptual framework, triangulation and other elements.

4. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

The empirical results of the study are presented in accordance with developed analytical categories and time-frame. The analysis of the results is attempted to answer to the main and sub-study questions and confirm/reject developed hypotheses.

4.1. ENERGY POLICY GOALS TOWARDS MOLDOVA:

4.1.1. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

What are the main goals of Russian and the EU energy policies towards Moldova? How they were changing over time?

- **Russian/EU's energy foreign policy goals in 1991-1998 (category 1/category 7)**

During 1991-1998, both the EU and Russia aimed to establish economic and energy relations with post-Soviet countries, including Moldova. In the documents signed during period of time of 1991-1998, Russia declared the following intentions: (1) *“to develop common economic space, common European and Eurasian markets”* (The Alma Ata Declaration, 1991), (2) *“to develop energy relations with post-Soviet states”* (The main conception of Russian energy policy in the new economic conditions, 1992). The EU's main aim during the 1990s was promotion of *“a new model for energy co-operation in the long term in Europe and globally”*. Neither the EU, nor Russia had a separate energy strategy towards their neighbours during this period of time, energy policies of both Russia and the EU were part of economic strategy towards all post-Soviet states.

Both actors stress the need to develop new energy relations with newly independent states, which would be based on the principles of mutual cooperation and non-discrimination. Both the EU and Russia mentions the intentions to implement principles of anti-discrimination and anti-monopoly in all economic sectors. The only difference is in the fact that the EU highlights that a new model of relations should be framed within market economy principles, while Russia does not mention market economy ideas in their strategic vision, although it claims about the importance of collaboration between the EU, CIS and Russia.

- **Russian/EU's foreign policy energy goals in 1998-2005 (category 2/category 8)**

In 1998-2005 both Russia and the EU attempted to strengthen their position at the foreign markets, and to deepen established relations with their neighbours. Russia stresses its role of *“the leading energy power in the world”*, and confirms its intentions *“to ensure guaranteed energy supply and transit to all neighbouring countries”* (The Doctrine on Energy Security in Russia, 1998), and *“to strengthen Russia's position at the world's energy markets”*(The Energy Strategy until 2020, 2003). Special

attention is paid to cooperation with Eastern and Western Europe, in order to develop “a single energy and energy infrastructure system”.

While Russia attempted to become a leading energy power and to maximize its national benefits, the EU declared its intentions to integrate non-EU members’ energy markets with the EU internal energy market. The EU viewed energy partnership with neighbouring countries as its major element, and was aimed “to improve energy network connections between the EU and its partners, as well as legal and regulatory convergence”. Furthermore, the EU intended “to enhance integration of the energy markets of participating countries with the EU energy market”. Therefore, it aimed to “converge energy markets on the basis of the principles of the EU internal energy market.” (The ENP Strategy Documents, 2004).

- **Russian/EU’s foreign policy energy goals in 2005-2012 (category 3/category 9)**

In 2005-2012, both the EU and Russia aimed to be leaders in the Near Abroad. During this period of time Russia aimed to establish the system of energy purchase/sale between the CIS in order to form single market space in electricity and energy sectors (The Agreement on creation of single electricity and energy market, 2007). Moreover, it was intended to further promotion and strengthening of foreign economic positions of the country. In addition, it pointed out the need to form “a single energy space between Europe, Russia and Asia” (The Energy Strategy until 2030, 2009).

The EU’s main goal during this period of time was a creation of single regulatory space for trade in network energy. What is more, the Union envisaged a necessity for MS to implement *acquis communautaire* of the Community on “*energy, environment, competition and renewable energies*” (The Energy Community Treaty, 2006).

The EU also aimed “to strengthen the energy security of the EU and of the partners with regard to long-term energy supply and transit” and “to integrate Eastern European Countries and EU energy markets”. Furthermore, the Union is attempted “to develop and implement mutual energy support and security mechanisms, including early warning mechanisms and joint security actions”. In addition, the EU aimed to develop the following aspects: (1) further acceleration of legislation on energy policy between partners, (2) interconnected and diversified energy market, (3) diversification of supply and transit routes (The EaP Strategy documents, 2006).

Moreover, the main objective in the relationship between the EU and Moldova was identified as “going beyond past levels of cooperation, to deeper political cooperation and gradual economic integration including in the energy sector” (The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument Republic of Moldova Country Strategy paper, 2007-2013).

H1: Russia’s and EU’s **main goals of energy policies** towards Moldova **are convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H2: Russia's and EU's **main goals of energy policies** towards Moldova **are divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H1 is corroborated, H2 is rejected, as during 1991-2012 Russia and the EU were declaring very similar energy policy goals towards their common neighbours including Moldova. Both actors in the beginning were aimed to develop energy relations with post-Soviet states, and later on both were intended to deepen collaboration with them. The EU and Russia express their goal to be dominant powers in the region.

4.2. SECURITY POLICY GOALS TOWARDS MOLDOVA:

4.2.1. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

- **Russia's/EU's foreign policy security goals in 1991-1998 (category 4/category 10)**

During the 1991-1998 period of time, Russia was actively expressing its interest in the Transnistrian conflict process and declared its intentions to take part in the conflict settlement. In *the Agreement on peaceful regulation of armed conflict in Transnistrian region of Republic of Moldova* (1992), Russian status as conflict mediator using “*peaceful political means*” was approved. This Agreement obliged conflicting parties to take all necessary steps to reach the ceasefire and to stop all the armed actions against each other. After the ceasefire, in order to establish the security zone between the actors, the conflicting parties were supposed to withdraw their troops and military equipment within 7 days. Moreover, the Agreement decreed that blockades or sanctions between the parties were inadmissible.

In order to reach this aim, Russia and Moldova signed *an agreement on Joint Commission Establishment (1992)* aimed to “*organize monitoring of security zone and to maintain peace by making preventive solutions reached through the consensus.*”

Furthermore, Russia was a part of the OSCE Mission, and in one of the OSCE Mission reports (1993) it is pointed out that the prime objective of the Mission is “*the restoration of Moldova's territorial integrity*”, however, it is also acknowledged that “*Transnistria cannot successfully be governed within a centralized state*”, and therefore it offered to give Transnistria the status “*of a Special Region with its own regional executive, elective assembly, and court, Constitution*”. Transnistria is considered as “*an integral part of the Republic of Moldova but enjoying the considerable self-rule*”.

The EU was not involved in any of these processes, and the EU's security goals towards Moldova during this period of time were expressed only in the documents related to economic relations between the actors. Consequently, the PCA was expected “*to increase security and stability by an increasing convergence of positions on international issues of mutual concern*” (The PCA, 1994), while through

TACIS programme the EU aimed to support economic growth in Moldova, thus contributing to a more stable atmosphere within the country (TACIS, 1992).

- **Russia's/EU's foreign policy security goals in 1998-2005 (category 5/category 11)**

In 1998-2005, Russia reaffirmed its intentions to resolve the Transnistrian conflict, and proposed a very detailed plan of conflict resolution in the Kozak Memorandum (2003). It was stated that Transnistrian conflict should be solved through *“the transformation of the state structure of the Republic of Moldova with the goal of creating a united, independent, democratic state based on federal principles with the borders of the Moldovan SSR on 1 January 1990.”*

What is more, during *the OSCE Odessa Meeting*, Russia together with other participants reconfirmed *“the commitment to achieving a final settlement of the Transnistrian problem by means of political dialogue”* (The OSCE Odessa Meeting Document, 2005).

Meanwhile the EU acknowledges the need to settle the conflict and expresses its intentions to take an active part in the conflict settlement process. In 2001 Moldova joined *the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe (1999)* which aimed *“to encourage and strengthen co-operation between the countries of South Eastern Europe as well as to streamline existing efforts to assist South Eastern Europe's political, economic and security integration in Europe.”*

Furthermore, the EU intended *“to enable neighbouring countries to share the benefits of enlargement in terms of stability, security and well-being”*. In addition, the Union was aimed *“to search for viable solution to the Transnistria conflict”* and *“continue and develop political dialogue and cooperation on Transnistria”* (The ENP Strategy Documents).

By accomplishment of the travel ban on Transnistrian leaders, the EU aimed *“to make a substantial progress in negotiations on the settlement of Transnistria's political process”* and to encourage the leaders *“to make substantial progress in negotiations on the settlement of Transnistria's political status within Moldova”*. The travel ban was not valid only on the basis of urgent humanitarian need or intergovernmental meetings related to democracy promotion, human rights and the rule of law in Moldova (EU Travel ban on Transnistria leadership: collection of relevant documents, 2003).

Through the EUBAM initiative, the EU was attempted *“to contribute to enhancing Moldovan and Ukrainian capacities for border and customs controls and border surveillance along their common border, including on the Transnistrian section”*. It was expected that the border control would reduce all illegitimate flows such as weapons, drugs, trafficked human beings, as well as *“contribute to a peaceful resolution of the Transnistrian conflict”* (EUBAM documents, 2005).

- **Russia's /EU's foreign policy security goals in 2005-2012 (category 5/category 11)**

During this period of time Russia and Moldova did not sign any significant documents on the conflict settlement, and negotiations on issue resolution were mainly hold within *5+2 format* meeting, which aimed to settle the conflict in Transnistria, although concrete steps were not developed.

During one of the OSCE meeting (2012), the parties of “5+2” format aimed to renew the negotiations and to engage in the process more actively (The OSCE document, 2012). During OSCE meeting in Vienna (2012) Russia claimed that it is aimed to encourage the progress of Transnistrian conflict settlement, although they will support the unity of Moldova only in case Transnistrian region will receive a special status within the state.

In 2005-2012, the EU's even more actively declares its willingness to contribute to the Transnistrian conflict resolution. The principal aim of *the EaP* in the security field was “to promote security and stability”. What is more, the initiative was based on two tracks. Through the first, bilateral track the EaP attempted “to create a closer relationship between the EU and each of the Partner countries”. While though the second multilateral track it is aimed to provide “a new framework for cooperation and exchange of best practice” (The EaP Strategy documents, 2006).

In the ENP and EaP Country Strategy Paper (2007-2013), the EU also declares its intentions “*to promote prosperity, solidarity, security and sustainable development worldwide*”. What is more, it is highlighted that “the EU attaches great importance to the resolution of the Transnistria conflict and is actively involved in ongoing efforts to achieve a settlement, amongst other things through an EUBAM on the Moldovan-Ukrainian border, including the Transnistrian section”. (The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument Republic of Moldova Country Strategy paper, 2007-2013)

The Meseberg Memorandum (2010) proposed by Germany attempted to establish EU-Russia Political and Security Committee which would serve as forum for discussions on “*international political and security agenda*”. Furthermore, it envisaged the aim to set up closer cooperation between Russia and the EU on Transnistrian issue within the “5+2” format, which would help “*to guarantee smooth transition from the present situation to a final stage*”.

H3: Russia's and EU's **main goals of security policies** towards Moldova are **convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H4: Russia's and EU's **main goals of security policies** towards Moldova are **divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H4 is corroborated for 1991-1998 period of time, as the EU was not directly involved in the Transnistrian conflict settlement during 1990s, and did not express an extensive interest in the conflict

settlement as Russia did. Therefore, the H3 for 1991-1998 is rejected. H3 is corroborated for the 1998-2005, 2005-2012 period of time, as both the EU and Russia are declaring their strong interest in conflict resolution. Consequently, H4 is denied for the same periods of time.

4.3. POLICY INSTRUMENTS TOWARDS MOLDOVA

4.3.1. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS:

What are the instruments of Russian and the EU energy policies towards Moldova? How they were changing over time?

- **Russian energy policy instruments in 1991-1998 (category 1)**

1) Diplomatic (Zielionka, 1998, p.68)

- offering membership in CIS ;
- negotiations;
- high-level visits;

2) Economic (Zielionka, 1998, p.70)

- creation of free trade zone;
- support of building important objects for energy utilization;
- regulation of prices on energy resources (tariff decrease for Moldova);
- changes in customs inspection;
- trade agreements;

- **EU's energy policy instruments in 1991-1998 (category 7)**

1) Diplomatic(Zielionka, 1998, p.68)

- international agreements (the PCA, the Energy Charter Treaty)
- high-level visits

2) Economic (Zielionka, 1998, p.70)

- cooperation agreement;
- providing aid (TACIS)
- training of executives in pipeline management.
- restriction of monopolistic activities

In 1991-2012, both Russia and the EU used only diplomatic and economic instruments for their energy policy implementation towards Moldova. During 1991-1998, Russia was actively negotiating with Moldova on the membership in CIS conditions, new agreements on energy trade. What is more, during these years, Russia kept energy prices low for Moldova and other CIS countries. The EU was less active in comparison with Russia, however, in addition to establishing energy trade relations with Moldova, it

have been actively using an economic aid, as an instruments intended to attract Moldova's attention to the EU.

- **Russian energy policy instruments in 1998-2005 (category 2)**

1) Diplomatic (Zielionka, 1998, p.68)

- diplomatic support to Gazprom in Moldova
- active dialog with CIS countries on energy trade and transfer conditions;

2) Economic (Zielionka, 1998, p.70)

- Gazprom and Moldova signed an agreement about 50 percent of Moldovagaz stock transfer to Gazprom;
- increase of energy export;
- energy price increase;

- **EU's energy policy instruments in 1998-2005 (category 8)**

1) Diplomatic (Zielionka, 1998, p.68)

- communication between the EU and Moldova on energy issues
- organization of information events

2) Economic (Zielionka, 1998, p.70)

- financing energy projects (renewable energy, energy security projects in Moldova);
- funding building and modernizing infrastructure;
- upgrading gas transmission network

In 1998-2005, Russia was actively supporting Gazprom's position in Moldova, and to increase its benefit from energy relations, there was a significant raise of energy price for Moldova. While the EU was further developing its energy relations and was quite active in diplomatic communication with Moldova. Moreover, the EU was continuing provision of economic aid to Moldova. However, initially the funding was mostly directed to support overall economic situation in Moldova, in 1998-2005, the EU's financial aid to Moldova became more targeted on energy sector, as a significant amount of money was meant for various energy projects and energy infrastructure funding.

- **Russian energy policy instruments in 2005-2012 (category 3)**

1) Diplomatic (Zielionka, 1998, p.68)

- negotiations between Gazprom and Moldova on energy prices;
- negotiation between Gazprom and Moldova on new agreement declaring energy transfer;

2) Economic (Zielionka, 1998, p.70)

- gas prices increase
- suspending of gas exportation to Moldova
- temporary energy transfer agreements
- energy tariffs decrease (after the gas crisis)

- **EU's energy policy instruments in 2005-2012 (category 9)**

1) Diplomatic (Zielionka, 1998, p.68)

- offering a membership in the Energy Community;
- offering a membership in the Third Energy Package
- high-level visits;
- negotiations (on Association Agreement, Third Energy Package implementation etc.)

2) Economic (Zielionka, 1998, p.70)

- quantitative energy import/export restrictions (imposed by the ECT)
- creation of single market (envisaged in the ECT);
- cooperation agreements (ECT, Third Energy Package);
- financial support to sustainable energy investments (INOGATE project 2008-2012);
- financial support of the EaP energy objectives (INOGATE project 2012-2015);

The most frequent instrument used by Russia during 2005-2012 in its energy policy towards Moldova is tariff increase/decrease, which caused many negotiations and high-level meetings between Russia and Moldova. At the same time, the EU is offering a membership in the ECT, and agrees on intensive cooperation with Moldova in the energy sector and continues extensive financial aid to Moldova's energy sector.

H5: Russia's and EU's **instruments of energy policies** towards Moldova are **convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H6: Russia's and EU's **instruments of energy policies** towards Moldova are **divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H5 is corroborated for the whole 1991-2012 period of time, as Russia and the EU use the same groups of instruments (diplomatic and economic). Moreover, the majority of the used diplomatic instruments are the same (offering membership, high-level visits, negotiations). Nevertheless, H6 is also corroborated for the entire period of time, as economic instruments are divergent: Russia, as a major energy supplier, is tend to change the prices for gas in order to achieve its aims, while the EU is extensively using economic aid instrument to gain a long-term Moldova's favour.

4.4. SECURITY POLICY INSTRUMENTS TOWARDS MOLDOVA

4.4.1. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

What are the instruments of Russian and the EU energy/security policies towards Moldova? How they were changing over time?

- **Russia's security policy instruments in 1991-1998 (category 4)**

1) Diplomatic (Zielionka, 1998, p.68)

- sponsoring peace conference,;
- international agreements;
- diplomatic recognition;
- making peace proposals;
- sending cease-fire monitors;
- administering foreign city;
- negotiations,
- supporting action by the OSCE,
- high-level visits;

3) Military (Zielionka, 1998, p.72)

- withdrawal of forces,
- crisis-management task,
- peace keeping

2) Economic (Zielionka, 1998, p.70)

- providing aid;

4) Propaganda (there are no documents proving that propaganda have been used, but the previous research often claims that anti-Moldovan propaganda was extensively used by Russia)

- **EU's security policy instruments in 1991-1998 (category 10)**

1) Economic (Zielionka, 1998, p.70)

- cooperation agreement (the PCA);
- providing aid (TACIS)

During 1991-1998, Russia was using diplomatic, economic, military and propaganda instruments in its security policy towards Moldova. It was a very active participant in the Transnistrian conflict, as well as in the process of this conflict settlement. The EU was only using some economic instruments in order to set up economic relations with Moldova, but directly it was not engaged in the conflict settlement by any means.

- **Russian security policy instruments in 1998-2005 (category 5)**

1) Diplomatic (Zielionka, 1998, p.68)

- negotiations
- high-level meetings
- proposal to settle the conflict

2) Military (Zielionka, 1998, p.72)

- peace keeping

- **EU's security policy instruments in 1998-2005 (category 11)**

1) Diplomatic (Zielionka, 1998, p.68)

- offering membership (in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, ENP)
- supporting action by OSCE;
- high-level visits;
- travel ban
- establishment of EUBAM
- designation of EU Diplomatic Representative to Moldova

2) Economic (Zielionka, 1998, p.70)

- cooperation agreements (ENP, AP)
- providing aid (ENP)

In 1998-2005 Russia is using diplomatic and military instruments in their security policy towards Moldova. It makes a proposal on conflict settlement in Kozak Memorandum and provides with a plan how to do it. Despite the fact that Russia was obliged to withdraw its military forces, the troops are still present in Transnistria, as Russia claimed that they are implementing peace keeping mission. The EU is becoming more engaged in the conflict settlement by imposing travel ban on Transnistrian leaders, setting up EUBAM and EU Diplomatic Representative to Moldova. Furthermore, Moldova becomes part of the Stability Pact for Eastern Europe and ENP. In addition, the EU is providing financial aid.

- **Russian security policy instruments in 2005-2012 (category 6)**

1) Diplomatic (Zielionka, 1998, p.68)

- negotiations
- high-level meetings

2) Military (Zielionka, 1998, p.72)

- peace keeping

- **EU's security policy instruments in 2005-2012 (category 12)**

1) Diplomatic (Zielionka, 1998, p.68)

- offering membership (EaP)
- supporting action by OSCE;
- high-level visits;
- travel ban (suspended in 2012)

2) Economic (Zielionka, 1998, p.70)

- partnership agreement (EaP)
- providing aid (EaP)

During 2005-2012, Russia's and EU's security policy instruments towards Moldova did not change a lot in comparison with 1998-2005 period of time. Russia is continuing using military force in Transnistria and keeps negotiating on Transnistrian conflict settlement with Moldova and within the OSCE. The EU is continuing taking steps towards further Moldova's integration to the ENP and EaP policies. In addition, the EU became an observer of OSCE and recently suspended the travel ban towards Moldova.

H7: Russian and EU's **instruments of security policies** towards Moldova are **convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H8: Russian and EU's **instruments of security policies** towards Moldova are **divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H7 is only partly corroborated for the 1991-2012 period of time, as both Russia and the EU use diplomatic instruments in their security policies. H8 is fully corroborated for 1991-2012, as Russia and the EU have been using different instruments in their security policies towards Moldova. The EU has only been using "*soft power*" instruments, while Russia was using military and propaganda instruments to achieve its goals.

4.5. OUTCOMES OF ENERGY FOREIGN POLICIES TOWARDS MOLDOVA

4.5.1. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

- **Russian energy policy outcomes in 1991-1998 (category 1)**

What was the effect of Moldovan membership in CIS in terms of its energy relations with Russia in 1990s?

All experts agreed that Moldova by joining CIS confirmed its intentions to go the Eastern direction. During that period of time it was the only option, as Moldova was dependent on Russia's energy sources since the USSR times and the energy relations between Moldova in Russia in 1991-1998 were transferred from the past with minor changes. What is more, one of the experts pointed out that

Moldova's membership in CIS *"helped to recover overall relations between Moldova and Russia after the Transnistrian conflict."*

- **EU's energy policy outcomes in 1991-1998 (category 7)**

How would you assess the EU's attempts to encourage energy relations between the EU and non-MS, including Moldova in 1990s?

All experts agreed that during the 1990s, Moldova was mostly concentrated on its relations with Russia and CIS countries, and did not pay a lot of attention to the EU's propositions. However, the EU was not very active in Moldova either, as Expert 2 claimed *"there were minor attempts to do that but they were not any concrete steps offered..."* The EU's initiatives expressed in the ECT and INOGATE were also not very effective, as *"the participation in these programmes was more technical than actual."*

- **Russian energy policy outcomes in 1998-2005 (category 2)**

One of the main goals of Russian foreign energy policy in early 2000s was to strengthen its positions at the foreign energy markets. Do you think Russia succeeded to become a leading energy power in Moldova? What actions contributed to that?

All experts agreed that Russia's attempts to become a dominant energy power in Moldova succeeded due to the fact that Russia possesses energy resources, and because Russia's internal energy policies contributed to Gazprom's rising as a monopoly in the Near Abroad, including Moldova. Furthermore, not favorable internal economic situation in Moldova furthered to the Gazprom's position strengthening – due to its inability to pay gas debts, Moldova transferred 50 percent of its national gas transmission company Moldovagaz to Gazprom.

- **EU's energy policy outcomes in 1998-2005(category 8)**

Do you think ENP/EaP are effective tools in terms of gradual energy markets integration between the EU and Moldova?

The opinions on ENP/EaP effectiveness in terms of gradual energy markets integration were quite diverse. Expert 1 states that thanks to the ENP, and EaP, in particular, as Moldova's relations with the EU *"becoming closer and more developed"*. Furthermore, he mentions the EU's willingness to finance energy projects, which are aimed to increase energy transmission between Moldova and Romania, thus Moldova would become less dependent on Gazprom.

Expert 2 stresses that the ENP and EaP can be considered as effective tools if only Moldova would further support an idea of Euro- integration, however, he highlights that *"taking into account that Russia is the dominant energy supplier in Moldova, the integration might be very slow"*.

Expert 3 do not consider the ENP as an effective tool for Moldova's energy market integrations, as according to him *"Moldova wasn't taking ENP very seriously"*, while Moldova's achievements in the economic sector within the EaP initiative, the Expert considers as minor.

- **Russian energy policy outcomes in 2005-2012 (category 3)**

What led to the Energy crisis in Moldova in 2006?

All the experts pointed out that during 1998-2005 Russia was aimed to maximize its benefits and was raising a lot a gas price for CIS, including Moldova. That led to the energy crisis in Moldova in 2006. What is more, according to Expert 1 and Expert 2, *"Russia's demand for high price is related to its aim to control the energy systems in the CIS countries."* As a consequence of agreement signed in 2006 to finish the gas crisis, Gazprom got even more shares in Moldovagaz and now holds more than 60 percent of them. Expert 1 also sees the reason of gas crisis in Moldova's refusal to implement Kozak Memorandum.

Moreover, all the experts stated that during the crisis time, Moldova was waiting for the EU's intervention and support, however, it did not happen. Expert 3 claims, that Moldova *"was sure that Romania will supply them with gas until they reach a more favorable agreement with Russia, but Romania refused, as Moldova owed them quite a lot of money already."*

How would you evaluate possibility that Moldova might become a member of Eurasian Union led by Russia?

None of the experts claimed that Moldova's membership in the Eurasian Union is impossible, although they agreed that such decision to a large extent is dependent on the composition of government and what political views (pro-Russian or pro-European) will be dominant.

The Expert 1 and Expert 3 evaluated an idea of the Eurasian Union as potentially attractive to Moldova due to the fact that Eurasian Union is the large market, where Moldova *"has potential to realize its main export products"*. In addition to that, according to Expert 1, more than 300 000 Moldovan citizens work in Russia and membership in the Eurasian Union would ensure a better social protection to them. Expert 3 states, that if Moldova joins the Eurasian Union *"it automatically will not pay such a high price for gas."*

- **Evaluation of the role of Transnistrian conflict in energy relations between Russia and Moldova in 1991-2012 (additional category)**

All the experts agreed that Transnistrian conflict makes energy relations between Russia and Moldova more complex. Firstly, because *"Transnistria is consuming a lot of energy for which it's not able to pay, while the debt for that energy is going to Moldovan account."*, that causes dissatisfaction of Moldova, as Transnistria is *"highly industrialized piece of land"* in comparison with Moldova, and requires a lot of resources, while the debt for them is on Moldova's account.

Secondly, Transnistria possess some shares in Moldovagaz, that makes Gazprom's control even more explicit, as according to Expert 1 *"Transnistria shares the same interests as Russia"*. Thirdly, Russia tends to manipulate Moldova in questions related to Transnistria by using its energy power. According to Expert 2, *"few years ago Russia proposed Moldova cheaper gas if Moldova will agree to grant them a long-term lease for the Russian troops in Transnistria"*.

- **EU's energy policy outcomes in 2005-2012(category 9)**

How would you evaluate Moldova's decision to become a member of the EU's Energy Community?

The experts' opinion on Moldova's decision to join the Energy Community varies. Expert 1 notes that it's a step towards the membership in the EU, and at the same it is a possibility *"to get rid of Russian monopolistic power in energy sector"*. Expert 2 claimed that for now it is impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of this step, as not enough time has passed since its implementation. Both Expert 2 and Expert 3 agree that this decision will worsen Moldova's relations with Russia and due to that will pay higher price for gas.

Do you consider the Third Energy Package as a potentially successful policy for Moldova?

Two of three experts consider the Third Energy Package as a potentially successful policy in Moldova, which has a great power to challenge Gazprom's position and to diversify Moldova's energy sources. However, the success of this initiative is dependent on a development of *"a good strategy with concrete steps and deadlines"*. According to the experts, the most significant obstacle on the way to the Third Package implementation is the absence of the plan on how to make Gazprom less dominant in Moldova.

The Expert 3 is rather critical to the Third Energy Package, he thinks that Moldova should think about today, as *"cheap gas, electricity and heating are needed now, not tomorrow"*, and therefore Moldova should *"quit obligations to implement the Third Energy Package and to start negotiations with Russia on lower gas prices"*.

How the Third Energy Package will affect Russia's energy policy towards Moldova?

Experts coincided that the implementation of the Third Energy Package will force Russia to change its energy policy towards Moldova. Now the effect is quite negative for Moldova, as *"if Moldova will be stick to the EU, then they can't count on gas at the lowest prices"*, however, the Expert 2 and the Expert 3 point out that Moldova is not that significant for Russia, as Ukraine in terms of energy export, therefore *"after some years Russia will not pay attention"* to Moldova's commitment to implement the Package, and *"if it will not be profitable for Gazprom to maintain energy relations with Moldova, it will just leave that market"*.

- **What is your forecast for the European/Russian energy relations with Moldova? (additional category)**

Expert 1: *“I think in the nearest future both EU and Russia will be hardly working on the closer cooperation between each other. We all know that Russia has something what the EU doesn't – energy sources, but the EU is a very important market for Russia, so it also should be flexible in order not to lose.”*

Expert 2: *“Moldova is constantly balancing between the EU and Russia, and swing to one or another side usually makes relations with one side more complicated. Now Moldova made a significant swing towards Europe, and that made energy relations between Moldova and Russia much more complicated. I believe it is too late to talk about Russian-Moldovan energy relations in the past context, and it is too early to talk about future relations. But definitely there will be a lot of changes.”*

Expert 3: *“I think all three parties are interested in saving status quo. I don't think there will be major changes in European and Russian energy policy in the nearest future.”*

H9: Russian and EU's **outcomes of energy policies** towards Moldova are **convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H10: Russian and EU's **outcomes of energy policies** towards Moldova are **divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H9 is rejected, H10 is corroborated for the 1991-2012 period of time, as the outcomes of EU's and Russia's energy policies towards Moldova were divergent during the entire period of time. During the 1990s and early 2000s, Russia managed to become a leading energy power in Moldova, from which Moldova is getting energy resources. The EU succeeded to become *“a reference point”* for energy reforms in Moldova only recently. However, the success of the EU's policy is multi-valued, due to the fact that there is no any clear developed strategy on how to implement reforms envisaged in the EU's *acquis communautaire*, and thus, to challenge Russia's monopolistic position in the region, which is very stable.

4.6. SECURITY POLICY OUTCOMES TOWARDS MOLDOVA

4.6.1. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

- **Russian security policy outcomes in 1991-1998 (category 4)**

In your opinion, was it possible to solve the Transnistrian conflict in the 1990s? If yes, then what peace operation or agreement would play a crucial role in that?

The experts' opinions on the possibility of conflict resolution during the 1990s were different. Expert 4 highlighted that at that time it was possible to sign a document constituting that the conflict is settled, while it was impossible to reintegrate Transnistrian political and economic system with

Moldovan. Expert 6 shares the same views and adds that at that time “*did not have the necessary support to deal with the issue of separatism*”.

On the contrary, Expert 5 and Expert 6 state that the political conditions during 1990s were favorable to the conflict settlement and Transnistria’s unification with Moldova, but there were not any plans of reintegration in Moldova, as it “*relied too much on Russia, whereas Moscow simply paid to little attention to this problem, did not have to act quickly because status quo was satisfying*”.

- **EU’s security policy outcomes in 1991-1998 (category 10)**

Due to the fact that the EU was not having security policy towards Moldova until 2000s, and was implementing only economic policies in the region, this period of time was not evaluated by experts. The overall EU’s economic means and their role in the security situation in Moldova will be evaluated in other category.

- **Russian security policy outcomes in 1998-2005 (category 5)**

How would you evaluate the effectiveness of Kozak Memorandum if it would have been applied?

All the experts agreed that Kozak Memorandum had a potential to reunite Moldova and Transnistria, and was the only actual proposition on the conflict settlement. However, experts claimed that “*it’s difficult to imagine how it would work*”, as “*Moldova wouldn’t be a viable state*”. In a reunited Moldova Gagauzia and Moldova could easily block any unfavorable Moldovan decision of Moldova, and the country could not make any steps towards the EU or other international organization, Moldova would become pro-Russian state.

However, Expert 7 pointed out that if Kozak Memorandum were changed and became less referring to the Russia’s interests, it would have a great potential to resolve the conflict and to contribute to parties’ reunification.

- **EU’s security policy outcomes in 1998-2005 (category 11)**

How efficient was the travel ban imposed by the EU against Transnistrian leaders?

None of the experts considers the travel ban against Transnistrian leaders as an efficient policy, as Transnistrian leaders have not become more willing to cooperate with the EU and “*didn’t bother about the travel ban*”. Expert 5 assumed that travel ban might have been more efficient, “*if Ukraine had joined the ban*”

How would you assess outcomes of EUBAM in terms of Transnistrian conflict resolution?

The experts do not think that EUBAM affected a lot the settlement of Transnistrian conflict, however, the experts considers EUBAM as an effective policy in terms of improving the relations between Moldova and Ukraine and “*enforced a regime on Ukrainian-Moldovan border, which relates to Transnistrian economic agency*”.

- **Russian security policy outcomes in 2005-2012 (category 6)**

How would you evaluate the effectiveness of “5+2” negotiations format?

Experts opinions about “5+2” negotiations format was twofold. It is considered as not very efficient instrument in terms of conflict resolution; at the same time “5+2” is not unnecessary. “5+2 *hasn’t worked for a few years and hasn’t been able to resolve the Transnistrian problem*”, but “*good format to keep all the parties updated*”.

Expert 7 pointed out that “*thanks to the 5+2, many technical issues between Transnistria and Moldova were resolved*” such as the rail freight traffic reopening and diploma recognition questions. Expert 4 and Expert 7 coincided that “5 + 2” could have been more efficient if Transnistria would be more willing to participate in the negotiations and not only discussions on the technical issues but also political disputes would appear on the agenda of “5+2” format.

- **What is your opinion about Russian military presence in Transnistria? Do you think it as a positive or negative factor for the conflict settlement? (additional category applicable for the whole period of 1991-2012)**

All experts perceive Russian military presence in Transnistria as a negative factor for the conflict settlement. Expert 4 states that the presence is negative because “*there is no reason for Russia to keep military presence unless they don’t want conflict to be solved*”. Expert 5 claims that Russian military presence “*makes Transnistria too self-confident*” and expert 6 adds that “*it is used by Transnistria as a shield for maintaining the status-quo*”. However, Expert 4 and Expert 7 do not consider military presence as the crucial factor in the conflict resolution, as withdrawal of Russian troops would not settle the conflict.

- **EU’s security policy outcomes in 2005-2012 (category 12)**

It is often said that the EU by using economic means is attempted to make Moldova more attractive for the Transnistrian people. Do you consider ENP, EaP and other related initiatives as effective tools for possible Moldovan and Transnistrian reunification?

The experts consider ENP and EaP and other EU’s economic tools as potentially effective instruments which “*can make Moldova more attractive for the Transnistrian people*”. However, the experts insist that it is impossible to settle the conflict only by economic means, as “*it is not only about economy but also about democracy and rule of law*”. What is more, Expert 6 notes that none of *none of these initiatives was fully implemented in Moldova*”.

Do you think a German Plan proposed by Angela Merkel in 2010 could help solving the Transnistrian conflict?

All experts assess the Meseberg Memorandum as a potentially successful step in the Transnistrian conflict resolution, as this plan was proposed by Germany “*one of the most influential actors in the EU paid attention to Transnistria, and that reintroduced Transnistrian problem*”. What is more, Germany is a more reliable partner for Russia, as the whole the EU. However, the experts stressed that this plan was forgotten “*mainly because of lack of political will of Russia*”.

- **What solution to this conflict do you see? How and then can it be applied? (additional category)**

Expert 4: “*Most likely Moldova will take European direction and then it will always try to integrate Moldova, but practically it will not be a priority for them.*”

Expert 5: “*Moldova and Transnistria should reach a compromise (so interest of the Transnistrians elites and people should be taken into account) and both the West (I mean mainly the EU) and Russia should be guarantors and supervisors of a reunification*”.

Expert 6: “*In the conditions we have I see no solution soon. Given the type of the conflict, I think that the political solution is the only solution available and real*”

Expert 7: “*I think the best solution is to recognize independence of Transnistrian region within Moldova, and to develop a very clear framework on the relationship between the Transnistrian region and Moldova.*”

H11: Russian and EU’s **outcomes** of security foreign policies towards Moldova are **convergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H12: Russian and EU’s **outcomes** of security foreign policies towards Moldova are **divergent** during the following periods of time: (1) 1991-1998, (2) 1998-2005, (3) 2005-2012.

H11 is denied, while H12 is corroborated. Due to the fact that Russia was involved in the Transnistrian conflict and its settlement from the beginning, it managed to become a very influential actor in Transnistria, therefore, it is quite easy for Russia to keep the *status quo* on Transnistrian questions. The EU’s policies and economic means, which were intended to make Moldova economically attractive for Moldova, have not been really successful yet.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed to answer the question whether Russia's and the EU's energy and security policies towards Moldova are convergent or divergent. Within this study policy convergence was perceived as a process of policy changes over time towards some common point, and assessed by comparing Russia's and the EU's policy goals, instruments and outcomes during 1991-2012. The results of the thesis indicated that Russia's and the EU's policies are both convergent and divergent. General aims of Russia and the EU in energy and security sectors are convergent, both actors are interested in being the leaders in the region, having constant and secure energy relations, both are constituting their interest in a comprehensive partnership with their common neighbours and both are expressing their concerns and willingness to settle the Transnistrian conflict.

Furthermore, the parties are using rather similar instruments to achieve their aims. However, Russia tends to use both soft and hard power, while the EU is using only soft power instruments. This result confirms findings of the previous research. Both Russia and the EU extensively use diplomatic and economic instruments. However, in the case of the EU, economic instruments (financial aid, in particular) are the main method of actions, while Russia uses military instruments in their security policies, and in the energy sector it tends to manipulate with energy prices to reach its goals.

The outcomes of Russia's and the EU's policies are divergent, however, it is possible to assume, that current issues which Russia and the EU face in the energy and security sectors need to be addressed through the mutual dialog and assistance. According to the experts, future EU's and Russia's energy relations with Moldova will need to adopt a lot of changes, as the Moldovan current commitment to implement energy *acquis* will significantly challenge Russia's position on the energy market. Therefore, the need to find a compromise acceptable for all actors will most likely increase. The EU/Russia's cooperation on the Transnistrian issue and resolution of the conflict is less likely in the nearest future, however, according to the experts, a political agreement on Transnistrian issue between the EU and Russia could significantly improve the situation in Transnistria.

This study corresponds with the result of the previous research that the EU's energy and security policy is more formal and is regulated by a number of official documents and bilateral agreements signed with Moldova. Russia's policy is less formal, the majority of policies conducted towards Moldova are described only in the documents related to all CIS. However, many of Russia's actions were not presented in the documents. Consequently, one of the implications of this research is the inability to fully evaluate Russia's policy due to the absence of relevant documents. However, the interviews with experts contributed a lot to fill this gap.

In the conceptual framework it was defined that the main mechanism of policies convergence between the EU and Russia is *competition/acknowledgement of certain international rules or standards*. However, further research is needed in order to get a more explicit knowledge on how convergence between Russia's and the EU's policies occurs. It is possible to assume, that both Russia and the EU shares some common foreign policies values, thus, that explains why the convergence of aims and instruments occurs. Hence in order to define the casual processes of the convergence, further examination is needed.

Today both Russia and the EU are powerful and influential actors, which aim at dominance on the international scene. The area of common neighbourhood is, on the one hand, is a stumbling block in EU-Russia's relations, as both powers are willing to maintain their influence in the region. On the other hand, the area of common neighbourhood has the potential to become an initial point for the development of more comprehensive and strong cooperation between Russia and the EU.

It is very likely that further EU's and Russia's policies towards Moldova and other neighbours will be conflicting, and may negatively affect the overall substance of EU's and Russia's relations. Therefore, in order to avoid these difficulties, both Russia and the EU should be more willing to cooperate with each other, developing common points of convergence and basing their further policies on the acknowledgement that both of them are large and powerful actors, and the best results can be achieved only by developing collaboration not competition. The implication of this study includes a possibility to be used as a material to the examination of Russia's and the EU's relations in the context of their common neighbours.

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APPENDICES

ANNEX 1

The list of documents used in the document analysis

Type of policy	Period of time	RUSSIA	THE EU
Energy	1991-1998	The main conception of Russian energy policy in the new economic conditions (1992) The main conception of energy strategy until 2010 (1995) Gazprom's agreements with Moldova	The Energy Charter Treaty (1991) TACIS (1992) The PCA (1994) INOGATE (1995)
	1998-2005	Energy Strategy until 2020 (2003) Gazprom's agreements with Moldova	The ENP (2003) The EU Moldova Action Plan (2004)
	2005-2012	Energy Strategy until 2030 (2009) Gazprom's agreements with Moldova	The Energy Community Treaty (2006) EaP (2008) Association Agreement (2010) The European Union's Third Energy Package (2009)
Security	1991-1998	The Collective Security Treaty (1992) "Four" negotiations documents	TACIS (1992) The PCA (1994)
	1998-2005	Kozak Memorandum (2003) "Five-sided" format documents	The Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe (1999) Travel ban on Transnistrian leaders (2003) The ENP (2003) The EU Moldova Action Plan (2004) EUBAM (2005)
	2005-2012	"5+2" negotiations documents	Proposal of visa-facilitation agreement (2008)

			EaP (2008) Association Agreement (2010) A German Plan (2010) “5+2” negotiations documents
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ANNEX 2

Interview questions on Transnistrian issue

1. In your opinion, was it possible to solve the Transnistrian conflict in the 1990s? If yes, then what peace operation or agreement would play a crucial role in that?
2. What is your opinion about Russian military presence in Transnistria? Do you think it as a positive or negative factor for the conflict settlement?
3. It is often said that the EU by using economic means is attempted to make Moldova more attractive for the Transnistrian people. Do you consider ENP, EaP and other related initiatives as an effective tool for possible Moldovan and Transnistrian reunification?
4. How efficient is the travel ban imposed by the EU against Transnistrian leaders?
5. How would you assess outcomes of EUBAM?
6. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of Kozak Memorandum if it would have been applied?
7. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of “5+2” negotiations format?
8. Do you think a German Plan proposed by Angela Merkel in 2010 could help solving the Transnistrian conflict?
9. What solution to this conflict do you see? How and then can it be applied?

Interview questions on Energy dimension

1. What was the effect of Moldovan membership in CIS in terms of its energy relations with Russia in 1990s?
2. One of the main goals of Russian foreign energy policy in early 2000s was to strengthen its positions at the foreign energy markets. Do you think Russia succeeded to become a leading energy power in Moldova? What actions contributed to that?
3. What is the role of Transnistrian conflict in energy relations between Russia and Moldova?
4. What led to the Energy crisis in Moldova in 2006?
5. How would you evaluate possibility that Moldova might become a member of Eurasian Union led by Russia?

6. How would you assess the EU's attempts to encourage energy relations between the EU and non-MS, including Moldova in 1990s?
7. Do you think ENP/EaP are effective tools in terms of gradual energy markets integration between the EU and Moldova?
8. How would you evaluate Moldova's decision to become a member of the EU's Energy Community?
9. Do you consider the Third Energy Package as a potentially successful policy for Moldova?
10. How the Third Energy Package will affect Russia's energy policy towards Moldova?
11. Do you think the EU is intended to accept Moldova as a MS in the future?
12. What is your forecast for the European/Russian energy relations with Moldova?

ANNEX 3

Experts participating in the interviews

1. Anonymous (Energy)
2. Anonymous (Energy)
3. Anonymous (Energy)
4. Moldova expert on Transnistrian conflict (Security)
5. Marcin Kosienkowski, Expert on the Transnistrian conflict (Security)
6. Leonid Litra (Security)
7. Moldovan Foreign and Security policy expert (Security)

ANNEX 4

Interview transcripts

Interview 1 with Moldovan Energy Expert

- 1. What was the effect of Moldovan membership in CIS in terms of its energy relations with Russia in 1990s?**

The Moldovan dependency on Russian energy sources goes back to the Soviet Union times, so energy relations between Moldova and Russia within CIS were basically the same as before, especially in the beginning, as in 1990s Russia was forming as a state as well, and it was busy with its internal

problems. The membership in CIS only confirmed the Moldovan dependency on Russia in terms of energy, and at some point tied Moldova closer to Russia and other post-Soviet countries.

2. One of the main goals of Russian foreign energy policy in early 2000s was to strengthen its positions at the foreign energy markets. Do you think Russia succeeded to become a leading energy power in Moldova? What actions contributed to that?

Russia succeeded in doing so much earlier! No one had alternative energy sources, or ways of transportation, so Russia was and is the leading energy power, as it possesses resources. But by the end of 1990s and in early 2000s, Gazprom raised significantly, and it became a monopoly in Moldova. Due to inability to pay debts Moldova gave 50% of Moldovagaz company to Gazprom, so that made Moldova very dependent on it, and consequently, Gazprom was becoming stronger and stronger not only in Moldova but in many other countries. It happened because during the 1990s Russia was providing Moldova, as well as Belarus and Ukraine with a very cheap gas. It was even cheaper than in Russia. But economically Moldova was very weak and couldn't fully pay even for the low-priced gas, therefore Russia required a political loyalty. In Moldova it succeeded, as 50+ shares in Moldovagaz gave Russia an ability to control the whole transit system through Moldova to the Balkans and to manage Moldova's gas system.

3. What is the role of Transnistrian conflict in energy relations between Russia and Moldova?

Personally I don't consider Transnistria as a separate actor in energy relations, it is a part of Russia in that sense. There is no need to talk with Transnistrian leaders, as they are very dependent on what Russia thinks. But Transnistria makes everything more complex. First reason for that is that Transnistria consuming a lot of energy for which it's not able to pay, while the debt for that energy is going to Moldovan account. It's really interesting, that then it comes to debt paying, Russia treats Transnistria as a part of Moldova, while when it's connected to something else – Transnistria is independent. But during the last negotiations, Russian side mentioned that the debt will be counted separately for Chisinau and Tiraspol, but we shall see if these words would transform into actions.

Secondly, there is no alternative infrastructure for energy transportation from Russia to Moldova, only this which involves Transnistria, and of course Transnistrian involvement into Moldovagaz, it also contributes to a situation which creates many questions. So, to conclude, I think the role of Transnistria in relations between Moldova and Russia is not that significant because it shares the same interests as Russia and they are kind of marionettes but at the same time, without Transnistria the future of Russian-Moldovan energy dialogue would be a bit calmer.

4. What led to the Energy crisis in Moldova in 2006?

Formally it was caused by Moldovan inability to pay. In 2005, Gazprom expressed its intentions to increase the gas price, that was opposed by Moldova and it refused to pay a new price. Why Russia raised the price? Well, Russia says that it was done because of Russia's aim to bring its prices closer to the European energy prices, in order to benefit more. But I think the main reason was political, the energy supply cut was kind of punishment for Moldova for taking pro-Western direction. When in 2006 Moldova's government took more pro-Russian direction, then the relationship between Russian and Moldova became a bit warmer and they agreed on gradual increase of prices during the next 5 years.

5. How would you evaluate possibility that Moldova might become a member of Eurasian Union led by Russia?

It is hard to say is it huge possibility or small but this idea is quite popular in Moldova. Firstly, the Moldovans realize that now the EU is busy with its own internal problems and now this organization is weakened by economic crisis, and no one knows for sure how everything will turn within the EU. While the Eurasian Union is very attractive for Moldova, firstly, because it's a really huge territory, thus very large market. Secondly, there are more than 300 000 Moldovan citizens which works for Russia, and Russia is the most attractive spot for Moldovan labour migration, at least for now. If Moldova joint the Eurasian Union – the social protection of these workers will increase a lot. Furthermore, as in case of wine embargo and energy crisis – the EU hasn't done anything to help Moldova, and many Moldovans do not see the EU as their protector in that case, thus some people see that the way to protect their wine industry and ensure constant energy supply is being in a strong partnership with Russia. Of course, there are many questions on viability of such union and also on Russian economy capacity. But I must say that not the whole Moldova is in favour of European ideas, some citizens see Eurasian Union as a better place to be.

6. How would you assess the EU's attempts to encourage energy relations between the EU and non-MS, including Moldova in 1990s?

I don't think the EU was really interested in its neighbours during the 1990s. As for real, the EU tried to promote market economy principles in the ex-Soviet states, and there also Energy Charter Treaty in early 1990s, INOGATE...but these initiatives were not very effective for creation a common energy market, even for Moldova the participation in these programmes was more technical than actual...you see what I mean? Moldova wasn't thinking as Europe at that time, and there weren't even any talks about energy relations between the EU and Moldova. And what the EU could offer? Russia was providing with

cheap gas, supporting the ruble and etc., the EU wasn't that significant for Moldova, thus all the initiatives weren't successful.

7. Do you think ENP/EaP are effective tools in terms of gradual energy markets integration between the EU and Moldova?

I think they are quite effective, as in comparison with 1990s and early 2000s, now these relations are becoming closer and more developed. As you know, this year is the year of Irish EU Presidency, and around one month ago some priorities for Moldovan-EU relations were formed for this year in Dublin. To a large extent it was dedicated to the development of political dialogue between two actors, as well as active participation in the EaP and also it envisages closer economic and trade cooperation. Within the energy sector, it was planned that Moldova will sustainably implement the Energy Strategy, and in turn, the EU promised to find additional finances for some energy projects. These energy projects are mostly between Moldova and Romania. I think it is planned to have a gas pipeline between Moldova and Romania through which 20% of gas will be transported, and 80% will be received from Gazprom. Also the EU has offered some projects for electricity transportation, also between Moldova and Romania. Also it is planned to give further development to the European Commission's initiative on creation of the EU-Moldova Joint Energy Task Force, which would control and support the realization of Moldovan obligations to the Energy Community.

8. How would you evaluate Moldova's decision to become a member of the EU's Energy Community?

I think it's quite a positive step. On the one hand, if I think about the possibility to join the EU, then it won't be possible without becoming a part of the Energy Community. On the other hand, even if Moldova won't become a member of the EU, the membership in the Energy Community will let Moldova to stir Russia a bit, and maybe get rid of Russian monopolistic power in the energy sector, find alternative sources of energy supply. So, I think it's good!

9. Do you consider the Third Energy Package as a potentially successful policy for Moldova?

Well, I hope it will be successful but it is also very challenging, as we need to build a new energy sector, where Gazprom will not have its monopolistic power and we will have alternative sources of gas and other infrastructure. We are not against Gazprom or Russia but we are against monopolies. The Third Energy Package will make from Moldovagaz three separate branches, responsible for transmission, distribution and supply. In general, the Third Package is considered as an instrument which will ensure

energy security in Moldova. Moldova is in tough position for these reforms, actually. Just because it 100% dependency on Gazprom and absence of its own energy sources. It will take a lot of time to change this position, and then we can talk about how successful this policy is. But for now we really need to develop a good strategy with concrete steps and deadlines, what should we do to be ready to implement the Package by 2020.

10. How the Third Energy Package will affect Russia's energy policy towards Moldova?

Well, Gazprom holds a majority stake in the Moldovagaz, and it wants to ensure that Gazprom and Moldovagaz could manage gas transport, supply and distribution, so Gazprom will not lose. So, implementation of the Third Energy Package is causing a lot of concerns about Gazprom's business. Russia tries to manipulate Moldova, by offering a great discount on gas but instead is asking to give up the implementation of the Package. And if Moldova will be stick to the EU, then they can't count on gas at the lowest prices, Russia said. The postponement of the Third Package implementation until 2020 gives us time to find a solution which would be beneficial for us and Gazprom. We don't want bad relations with Russia.

11. Do you think the EU is intended to accept Moldova as a MS in the future?

I hope so, but so far the EU doesn't proceed more than talks on the prospects for membership. Even Association Agreement which was planned to be signed in November this year in Vilnius... it will not be signed yet, most probably in 2014. As a Euro-optimist I believe that Moldova will become a member of the EU during the next 15-20, but there might be some changes and obstacles.

12. What is your forecast for the European/Russian energy relations with Moldova?

I think in the nearest future both EU and Russia will be hardly working on the closer cooperation between each other. We all know that Russia has something what the EU doesn't – energy sources, but the EU is a very important market for Russia, so it also should be flexible in order not to lose. So, in my opinion, in the EU-Russian energy relations should be more compromises, more cooperation and flexibility. But at the same time, the relationship will not be simple, as Russia and the EU quite different actors, in terms of many things but they have similar goals – both actors are interested in stable and beneficial energy relations. Russia wants to have markets, the EU wants to have a supplier, the EU and Russia wants to have secure partnership, but I think in order to have it, they need to put more effort and as I said to cooperate and communicate much more than they do now.

Interview 2 with Moldovan Energy expert

1. What was the effect of Moldovan membership in CIS in terms of its energy relations with Russia in 1990s?

Well, Moldovan intention to join CIS meant that Moldova was going to the East, as other post-Soviet countries it did not want to lose benefits from the cooperation with large and economically stronger Russia, with Ukraine. It was profitable decision for Moldova, and with the help of various CIS agreements Moldova established economic relations with Russia and other states. At that moment it was inevitable, and there were no other alternatives for Moldova.

2. One of the main goals of Russian foreign energy policy in early 2000s was to strengthen its positions at the foreign energy markets. Do you think Russia succeeded to become a leading energy power in Moldova? What actions contributed to that?

Yes, I think so, the Gazprom made everything to be the dominant energy power. It succeeded only because there were not any alternative gas supplier for Moldova. So, through whatever means, but Russia reached the stated goal to strengthen its positions as much as possible, at least in case of Moldova.

3. What is the role of Transnistrian conflict in energy relations between Russia and Moldova?

It is hard to talk about Transnistria as about a part of Moldova, as they possess themselves as independent, but in real life Transnistria makes Russian-Moldovan gas relations even more complex, as it draws Moldova more to the Russian side, and is an obstacle for Moldova to take a European side. As Transnistria is a little friend of Russia, and also owns some shares in Moldovagaz, if I remember it's around 15%. Also it's a highly industrialized piece of land and requires quite a lot of energy sources, but at the same time it's rather poor and has an enormous energy debt, which is by the way belongs to Moldova. So, I would say that Moldovan objections towards Transnistria don't bring any positive moments in Moldovan energy relations with Russia. I mean, that makes them even more dependent on Russia. But it is also interesting that few years ago Russia proposed Moldova cheaper gas if Moldova will agree to grant them a long-term lease for the Russian troops in Transnistria. I don't really know all details and how it ended but the gas plays not the last role in the postponing the conflict settlement.

4. What led to the Energy crisis in Moldova in 2006?

For many years Moldova (together with Georgia) was paying for gas more than other CIS countries, and when Gazprom decided to double the price Moldova refused to pay and that led to the

crisis. Russia's demand for high price is related to its aim to control the energy systems in the CIS countries. After an agreement between Gazprom and Moldova, Gazprom holds more than 60 per cent of Moldovagaz. It was kind of a small favour for settling the Moldovan gas debts. I may say that Moldova is not the most important country for Russia in that case, Ukraine and Belarus are larger markets for Russia, but it never succeeded to get the entire control where. Moldova is weaker, and at that time the EU didn't provide it with any support. Also I see the gas crisis and wine embargo as a consequence for refusal to implement Kozak Memorandum, but the main reason, I think, is Gazprom's wish to be as dominant as possible.

5. How would you evaluate possibility that Moldova might become a member of Eurasian Union led by Russia?

I think such possibility clearly depends on the leading power in the Moldovan government. For now, it has been promised that Moldova will not get back and will never leave an idea of Euro integration, but potentially, a party with pro-Russian interests can come, and then we will most probably turn towards Russia. We are the state which is supposed to balance between other powers. We will never turn completely left or completely right, as in order to have benefits from the relationship with Russia we need to be friends with Russia, in order to ensure benefits from the EU, we need to be friends with the EU, if that includes taking their rules of the game – then yes, we will do that but if in that rules will be written that we should not be partners with Russia, then I don't think it will ever work.

6. How would you assess the EU's attempts to encourage energy relations between the EU and non-MS, including Moldova in 1990s?

There were minor attempts to do that but they were not any concrete steps offered, or proposals of membership, or...anything was offered. The EU started TACIS but it was doing more for them and from the good will rather than with an intention to get CIS countries to the EU. I am not sure that the EU considers us as potential MS even now, so in the 1990s no one was even considering such thoughts as real.

7. Do you think ENP/EaP are effective tool in terms of gradual energy markets integration between the EU and Moldova?

Yes and no. Through the ENP and EaP Moldova needs to make a lot of steps, reforms and actions to be closer to the EU...for now we have the government supporting Euro-integration, but we had also other governments which weren't supporting the idea to go Western way. So, I would say that as long as

Moldova will agree to implement the EU rules, they should be considered as steps towards integration of markets and energy markets, and everything else. But if the wind changes...I am not sure that the efforts of the ENP and EaP will be that visible, as Moldova can give up integration idea. But I don't think it will happen, there is very small possibility that Moldova will refuse this way. Hmm..I am not giving you a concrete answer (laughing). Well, in the end I think ENP and EaP are effective tools for gradual integration. Here I want to stress the word gradual, as taking into account that Russia is the dominant energy supplier in Moldova, the integration might be very slow.

8. How would you evaluate Moldova's decision to become a member of the EU's Energy Community?

I am not sure how to answer a question, as I can't really predict how it will turn out. It is said that Moldova will get an access to European Energy market, but at the same time it will definitely worsen its relations with Russia, as they are against such decision. I really can't answer unambiguously whether it is good or bad, some time should pass.

9. Do you consider the Third Energy Package as a potentially successful policy for Moldova?

Potentially – yes, but really..I can't imagine how it will work. They say that the transmission and supply will be separated but no one tells how. What if we have only one Gazprom who is doing that? Of course, there are some smaller firms which don't get access to the market because of Gazprom but still, I don't think the Third Energy Package will resolve it problem in the nearest 10-15 years. Moldova has time until 2020 to prepare itself and Russia for the Package implementation but as usual, there are talks, but no concrete actions. It is only said that the Moldova needs a detailed plan. Where is that plan? Where are the preparations for that plan? I haven't seen them yet.

10. How the Third Energy Package will affect Russia's energy policy towards Moldova?

Until now the effect was negative, but I think after some years Russia will not pay attention to that. Russia would be more nervous if Ukraine would go that way, as around 80 percent of Russia's European export goes through there. Moldova is significant but not that significant. What is more, the relations between Russia and Moldova have never been very good, so I think the Third Energy Package will not lead to the World War III (laughing).

11. Do you think the EU is intended to accept Moldova as a MS in the future?

Not in the nearest future, but in 20-30 years – maybe. It depends on what kind of organization the EU will be at that time. For now – I don't think the EU considers Moldova as a potential member.

12. What is your forecast for the European/Russian energy relations with Moldova?

The natural gas is 100 percent is imported from Russia, and such Moldovan dependency on imports makes Moldovan energy sector insecure and causes a high vulnerability of macroeconomic stability of the state. What is more, we shouldn't forget that the whole gas transit and distribution is owned by Moldovagaz, where most of the shares are owned by Gazprom and the Moldovan Government has only small part of shares. So, I would say that Moldovan energy sector belongs to Russia, to answer your question I would say that Russian energy relations with Moldova are simple on the one hand, as Russia fully controls Moldovan sector, and no additional questions occurs, but on the other hand they are complicated as Moldova can't change a lot because it's completely dependent on Russia, Gazprom in particular. Also for now there is no alternatives for Moldova..like other viable sources of gas, only Russia.

I may say that Moldovan government is trying to avoid this dependency, it searchers for other solutions, as building energy infrastructure between Moldova and Romania, joining the European Energy Community...

Moldova is constantly balancing between the EU and Russia, and swing to one or another side usually makes relations with one side more complicated. Now Moldova made a significant swing towards Europe, and that made energy relations between Moldova and Russia much more complicated. Russia wants to have its energy monopoly, but Moldova, which is taking European direction, wants to benefit from both Russia and the EU. Russia is not very happy about that, therefore Moldova is a bit reluctant with *acquis communautaire* implementation. I believe it is too late to talk about Russian-Moldovan energy relations in the past context, and it is too early to talk about future relations. But definitely there will be a lot of changes. But for now, Russia and Moldova has an agreement on energy transportation and its prices, so it's nice, as we were able to find a common solution despite all the debates on the Third Energy Package.

Interview 3 with Moldovan Energy Expert

1. What was the effect of Moldovan membership in CIS in terms of its energy relations with Russia in 1990s?

Energy relations between post-Soviet Russia and post-Soviet Moldova were saved from the Soviet Union; there weren't any alternative options to develop energy relations with other countries. In the 1990s Moldova was really concentrated on CIS, and it didn't express any interest in the EU, as it considered the EU less important partner than Russia. I also think that Moldova's membership in CIS helped to recover overall relations between Moldova and Russia after the Transnistrian conflict.

2. One of the main goals of Russian foreign energy policy in early 2000s was to strengthen its positions at the foreign energy markets. Do you think Russia succeeded to become a leading energy power in Moldova? What actions contributed to that?

Yes, Russia became a leader, as now Moldova is 100 percent dependent on Gazprom, which also owns the majority of shares in Moldovagaz. It happened because no one else has gas but Russia.

3. What is the role of Transnistrian conflict in energy relations between Russia and Moldova?

After the conflict and Transnistrian separations, the main parts of energy infrastructure including gas transportation system was left in Transnistria, thanks to that Transnistria has many ways how to control Moldova, and of course Transnistria makes energy relations between Russia and Moldova not that simple. It would be much easier for Moldova if Transnistria would be *de facto* its part.

4. What led to the Energy crisis in Moldova in 2006?

Gazprom wanted to get more money and raised the price for Moldova, Moldova didn't want to pay, as it was sure that Romania will supply them with gas until they reach a more favorable agreement with Russia, but Romania refused, as Moldova owed them quite a lot of money already. So, that led to the energy crisis.

5. How would you evaluate possibility that Moldova might become a member of Eurasian Union led by Russia?

For Moldova Eurasian Union is a very large market, where Moldova has a potential to realize its wine, vegetable, fruits, canned goods – everything what is the main export products. Also if Moldova join the Eurasian Union, it automatically will not pay such a high price for gas.

6. How would you assess the EU's attempts to encourage energy relations between the EU and non-MS, including Moldova in 1990s?

During the 1990s the EU-Moldovan relations were not intense at all. At that time the EU wasn't a priority for Moldova, the priority for political and economic cooperation was given to CIS, which Moldova joined in 1994. Only in 1998, when Russia declared that the relations with the EU are strategically important and gave them priority, Moldova started to think about the EU a bit more, but very soon got back to CIS.

7. Do you think ENP/EaP are effective tools in terms of gradual energy markets integration between the EU and Moldova?

Moldova wasn't taking ENP very seriously, I should say, but EaP became the main priority for Moldova. One of the main aims is to develop stronger energy relations with the EU countries. And last year Moldova was named as a leader of EaP implementation, but mostly in a humanitarian sense, while economic achievements were considered as minor.

8. How would you evaluate Moldova's decision to become a member of the EU's Energy Community?

I don't think it was a good decision, as Moldova didn't evaluate its possibilities to diversify the energy resource market and missed the possibility to lower gas price. However, it gained Brussels' political support and some financial resources for networks' modernization. But the influence of these factors to Moldovan economy is very insignificant in comparison with Gazprom's influence.

9. Do you consider the Third Energy Package as a potentially successful policy for Moldova?

Third Energy Package is like a nice fairy tale about gas prices decrease in the non-defined future. But cheap gas, electricity and heating are needed now, not tomorrow, not the day after, but today. For that reason, I think it would be better for Moldova to quit obligations to implement the Third Energy Package and to start negotiations with Russia on the establishment of common energy infrastructure with Russia, to lower the gas prices for Moldova.

10. How the Third Energy Package will affect Russia’s energy policy towards Moldova?

There might be some changes in the gas agreements between Russia and Moldova, but I don’t think that Russia will significantly change its policies only because of the Third Energy Package. Moldova is not the biggest market for Russia, and it’s not that important.

11. Do you think the EU is intended to accept Moldova as a MS in the future?

The EU is not ready to accept Chisinau confronting with Tiraspol. But Moldovan entrance to the EU is dependent not only on its territorial integrity, but also on economic, social, legal factors. Now Europe is in crisis and it must solve its internal problems first, and now it cares about new members at the least. Europe doesn’t have any intentions to offer Moldova a membership. Most likely it will sign an Association Agreement soon, in order to push Euro integration idea in Moldova, but not more.

12. What is your forecast for the European/Russian energy relations with Moldova?

I think all three parties are interested in saving status quo. I don’t think there will be major changes in European and Russian energy policy in the nearest future.

Interview 4 with Moldovan expert on Transnistrian conflict

1. In your opinion, was it possible to solve the Transnistrian conflict in the 1990s? If yes, then what peace operation or agreement would play a crucial role in that?

Well, it depends what do you understand then you say “to solve the conflict”. Conflict was possible to solve in the way Russia was seeing in 2003. Well, if you put in this context “signing the paper” and putting sides to sign this paper and say “we solve the conflict”, so it could be done in the 1990s or a bit later as Russia tried. But if you understand through conflict resolution something more, solution which would work on the ground, which will be sustainable and will address the issues which promote the conflict and make both sides to function, then I don’t think that in the 90s it was possible. There were agreements to have Federation or Confederation but there were things which are only papers.

In Soviet space you have plenty of papers which were signed: between Belarus and Russia, Ukraine and Russia but nothing worked unless there was a political mean to push forward and there were some conditions on the ground which will make this solution work. So if it was about signing papers – yes, and we signed plenty of agreements, if it was really about solving the conflict, reintegrating Transnistrian political and economic system of Moldova – no. When we signed this agreement to have our stamps, custom stamps, there were able to export products freely. At the same time there was agreement that they would not create any custom posts on the administrative border. So, instead of

holding on the commitment what happened – Transnistria took the stamps, created custom check points for exporting goods. And then we asked what they do, they said “ok, it’s accomplished you have to agree on this”. Then we tried to solve this issue with Ukrainian friends, they refused to help us. Until 2006, Transnistria was exporting stamps which Moldova namely gave in the end of 90s.

2. What is your opinion about Russian military presence in Transnistria? Do you think it as a positive or negative factor for the conflict settlement?

If you take quantitative sense there are only 1.500, not much. It’s not a big military in comparison with Armenia, or Abkhazia or Ossetia. Of course, presence is negative because for 20 years we had no shots between Transnistria and Moldova, except then the civilian was killed last year during the New Year holidays. Basically there is no reason for Russia to keep military presence unless they don’t want conflict to be solved and unless they don’t want evacuate military equipment and weapons from “Kolbasnaja”. The problem is, I don’t know, how effectively they secure “Kolbasnaja” deposit . Some arms are sold on the black market. Second thing is that partially or more than half of the ammunition is so old that it is dangerous to transport. So, it should be dealt by experts who probably after evaluation will have to...I don’t know how to say...but it should be solved without taking it out from Transnistria because if it blow, then windows will be blown within 100 kilometers. Maybe even reach Brussels (*laughing*). So, everybody will hear!

Ok, so Russian presence is negative, Russia is trying to protect the status quo symbolically important because nobody will go there because there is Russian foothold. So, no one wants to mess up with nuclear power, you know. It used to create some tensions when Russia needs this. Last year, they introduced without announcing some Moldovan part and Joint Commission which make important decision in the security zone. They didn’t announce that they introduce some arms for Russian peacekeepers. Then Moldova said that it was a mistake, and then Transnistria say “these aggressive Moldovans, we need more peacekeepers, we need more arms and all the stuff”. And this created tensions during “5+2” talks, so instead of talking something serious about how to connect those two banks of the river, we were talking about this military stuff. Then if you take military terms, Transnistria supported by Russian army, is stronger than Moldovan army. So, if someone who should complain about military presence should be Moldovans not Transnistrians.

3. It is often said that the EU by using economic means is attempted to make Moldova more attractive for the Transnistrian people. Do you consider ENP, EaP and other related initiatives as an effective tool for possible Moldovan and Transnistrian reunification?

Potentially yes, and some instrument EU employed have changed *status quo*. For instance, asymmetric preferential regime which was enforced for Moldova since 2007 or 2008 under which we

export some categories of products without customs duties, that was applied for Transnistrian economic agencies as well. After they registered in Moldovan Legal persons, they received all the necessary documents for exports. And this made Transnistria to be more exposed to the European market and to export more to the EU than into post-Soviet countries. Irony is that the biggest importer in Transnistria is Economic Agency which is owned by Russian oligarchs. Despite they were under economic blockade, they were enjoining regime in Moldova to make money in the EU. So, economically yes, it's working this way but there are some trends, recent trends on part of Russian Federation to neutralize the EU attractiveness and the EU market advantages. Economically, Transnistria became more connected to the EU, it made them at least to meet more often with the EU delegation, they are more receptive to some projects. They actually want to use EU's money for their domestic development.

It also helps to reconnect Transnistria and Moldova. Actually it proves that the conflict does not have ethnic basis, again, in comparative perspective. Guys in Nagorno-Karabakh do not trade with Azerbaijan, and the same is not happening in Abkhazia or South Ossetia. But at the same time, no one should expect that Transnistria leaders will give up their big political objectives. For instance Shevchuk want to enjoy some fruits of the EU, he wants better economic development for Transnistria but this does not mean that he became politically closer to Moldova. And I think Russia will do everything to prevent him from that.

But economic start could not work without political, so it is possible to say that Transnistria was forced to get closer to European market, so now Russia has to look to the East and to promote regulation and integration and to neutralize any possible EU's effect. Currency is another way to tie Transnistria closer to the Russian market or to make it dependent. Well, if you look 10 years ago , EU was not even there, it was only Russia. If you look now, Russia is continuing to pay some addition to pensions, and they are keeping their eye on many other issues, so Russia is still a big player. And probably Transnistrian leaders would like to play between Russia and the EU. What Russia will try to do, is to limit Transnistrian capacity to play between the EU and Russia.

4. How efficient is the travel ban imposed by the EU against Transnistrian leaders?

It was lifted. Basically, it was imposed because we are not very cooperative on talks. So, talks were suspended in 2006, and until 2009 then Moldova and the EU tried to revive the talks. Somehow Shevchuk was exempted from the travel ban, so he could travel to Europe to different events and seminars. And later on our government suggested to the EU to suspend the ban. So, the ban is not valid for half of the year, but this decision supposed to be reviewed by the European Council every year. It is unlikely that the travel ban was imposed because of Transnistrian government unwillingness to talk.

5. How would you assess outcomes of EUBAM?

It is a very good start because first this enforced a regime on Ukrainian-Moldovan border, which relates to Transnistrian economic agency. Second, they improved the quality of custom offices between Ukraine and Moldova. Third, they were playing important role in process demarcation at the Ukrainian-Moldovan border. I am not sure that it was finalized but it was said that it will possible be finished by the end of this year. Then EUBAM was very important in terms of improvement border management between Moldova and Ukraine. So, EUBAM did a lot of good stuff at the technical level but also in terms of socialization and mediation between Ukrainians and Moldovans. Because relations were pretty tense until 2009, they start to improve now, and EUBAM played an important role not political but on the export level and as honest broker EUBAM played its role, and I think that it should stay there for another 5-10 years. Because it facilitates control, traffic and improves trust.

6. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of Kozak Memorandum if it would have been applied?

It's difficult to imagine how it would work. Of course, it was just a document, was it viable? I doubt. If it worked, it would create very dysfunctional Moldovan whatever it was – Federation or Confederation and I think if it would be signed, we would not have EUBAM or anything related to the EU, because the way it was designed, Moldova would be a state which would not be able to make a decisive move towards EU or NATO, because Transnistrian and Gagauzia would have a blocking decision every time. We have dysfunctional Moldova without Transnistria, as the camps fighting on EU integration or Eurasian integration but imagine what would be having Transnistria inside of such government? Moldova would be probably worse than Ukraine (*laughing*).

7. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of “5+2” negotiations format?

Again, what are the benchmarks to judge about effectiveness? Until recently it was dead. I cannot an assessment. It was revived in 2011, and we had a very positive half of the year, and then people enthusiastically oriented towards finding the solution. The easiest part was done, as there was an agreement on principles and procedures of negotiations. So far, nothing serious was solved through “5+2” format. The security issues weren't even discussed, as Transnistrians didn't want to talk about that, while Moldova says that they can talk about social issues, human rights, economic stuff but we have to have some political discussions as well. The EU's position is the same.

Transnistria only wants to have economic benefits and trying to play its own game in order to become more solid inside. Everyone wants the same thing but plays a different game. But Transnistria took an aggressive position and just blocked everything. And then they experience pressure from the EU,

OSCE and other international actors, and then again Transnistria involves into negotiations. So, in term of political solution “5+2” wasn’t effective but in terms of solving some technical issues (like recognition of diplomas) and having negotiations – yes, some small stuff is moving.

8. Do you think a German Plan proposed by Angela Merkel in 2010 could help solving the Transnistrian conflict?

I think all the diplomats forgot about this plan one year ago or even earlier. People talk about that as about an opportunity which was seized by Russians. What is more, there was never a consensus within the EU about this plan, and then Russia also didn’t help Germany to promote the plan. Thanks to the plan, it was possible to remove Smirnov from the leading position but another half of the plan didn’t work. Probably it was a good idea but it wasn’t implemented. But this initiative was important in terms of Germany – one of the most influential actors in the EU paid attention to Transnistria, and that reintroduced Transnistrian problem.

9. What solution to this conflict do you see? How and then can it be applied?

Well, I think there are three possibilities. First possibility is that Moldova goes West, gets visa-free and DFCTA, but without Transnistria, as Transnistria refused to take part in that. So, Moldova goes West and in maybe 15 years it get EU membership. Transnistria remains as it is.

Second scenario would go West, with building many links with Transnistria and in 5-10 years time, Moldova becomes attractive for Transnistria in terms of free travel, infrastructure...many things. Somehow following Cyprus scenario and having referendum on reunification. That would be the EU’s scenario. A negative scenario would be the Russian one. Moldova has dysfunctional and corrupted government, thus Russia can play as it wants.

But most likely Moldova will take European direction and then it will have time it will always try to integrate Moldova, but practically it will not be a priority for them.

Interview 5 with Marcin Kosienkowski, an expert of Transnistrian conflict

1. In your opinion, was it possible to solve the Transnistrian conflict in the 1990s? If yes, then what peace operation or agreement would play a crucial role in that?

I assume that you ask me about a period about the 1992 war? It seems to me that it was possible to solve the Transnistrian conflict in the 1990s (I mean to reintegrate Transnistria and Moldova). Despite the fact that Transnistrian remembered the 1992 war, Moldova had changed. The Popular Front lost its political influence and was replaced by moderate post-Communists (former collective farm chairmen), Moldova joined CIS, plans of reintegration with Romania was abandoned, Snegur was replaced by moderate Lucinschi, Russian was still widely used, Moldova didn’t want to remember lost war, etc. What

I want to say is that the situation stabilized. The problem was that Moldova didn't have a plan of reintegration, made too many unilateral and unwise concessions to Transnistria (as it turned out supporting its de facto independence), underestimated influence, capacity, and interests of Transnistria, relied too much on Russia (it seems to me that Moldova thought that it would get a "gift" from Moscow, namely Transnistria; what meant that Chisinau may have believed that it didn't have to do too much). Whereas Moscow was not fully committed to reintegration (I don't mean it didn't want to reintegrate Moldova, it simply paid little attention to this problem, didn't have to act quickly because status quo was satisfying, focused on internal problems, etc.).

2. What is your opinion about Russian military presence in Transnistria? Do you think it as a positive or negative factor for the conflict settlement?

I consider the Russian military presence in Transnistria a negative factor for the conflict settlement. It makes TN too self-confident and (somehow) frightens and annoys Moldova (and violates its neutrality). On the other hand, Moldova shouldn't pay so much attention to this problem it is not so important and there were so many unsuccessful attempts to resolve this problem. Instead, Moldova should focus on finding resolution of the conflict; and one of its provisions would be withdrawal of its forces (I assume that so called "synchronization rule" promoted by Moscow is still valid).

3. It is often said that the EU by using economic means is attempted to make Moldova more attractive for the Transnistrian people. Do you consider ENP, EaP and other related initiatives as effective tools for possible Moldovan and Transnistrian reunification?

Let me start from saying that I agree that the EU by using economic means can make Moldova more attractive for the Transnistrian people. But it is not only about economy but also about democracy, rule of law, etc. And I believe that this is the EU's strategy. However, I wouldn't consider ENP, EaP and other related initiatives as effective tools for possible Moldovan and Transnistrian reunification. First of all, what is missing is a lack of "golden carrot", which could encourage Moldova to implement democratic and free market reforms. By saying "golden carrot" I mean prospect of the EU membership, which Moldova has not been offered yet. Moreover, the EU is not critical enough of activity of the Alliance for European Integration, which has taken also some undemocratic steps. Thus, the idea of European integration somehow loses its credibility in the Moldovan society.

4. How efficient was the travel ban imposed by the EU against Transnistrian leaders in terms of conflict resolution?

The travel ban's efficiency was minimal. I didn't affect the Transnistrian leaders, they didn't bother about it. They could easily travel to Ukraine and Russia, the main places of their destination. If Ukraine had joined the ban, the situation could have been different (than Transnistrians couldn't leave

Transnistria, at least by land). I write “could” because nobody know if Ukraine had really implemented it. I met Dmitriy Soin in Ukraine, a person wanted by Interpol... I suppose that he had no problems with entering Ukraine.

5. How would you assess outcomes of EUBAM?

I positively assess outcomes of EUBAM. It has imposed some control mainly over the Transnistria -Ukraine border, develop cooperation between Moldova and Ukraine customs, it has started to engage Transnistrian customs, improve some standards, curbed smuggling to some extent. Interestingly, it showed that Transnistria is not as “bad guy” as it had been claimed (for example, no smuggling of arms was registered) but it could have a positive effect (Europe doesn’t have to be frightened so much about Transnistria and its authorities). Of course, more could be done, EUBAM could be granted more powers.

6. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of Kozak Memorandum if it would have been applied?

It is really hard to say. On the one hand, it is said that Moldova wouldn’t be a viable state (disproportional influence of Transnistria and Gagauzia, what in its turn could trigger Moldova opposition). On the other, Kozak Memorandum was the only document signed by Moldova and Transnistria And it may have been possible to handle contradictions, resolve problems, etc., later on. It seems to me that Putin (as a godfather of the memorandum) would be personally interested in the existence and viability of the reunified state (by viability I don’t mean democracy, rule of law, and well-being but lack of political conflicts). Stubborn, non-loyal Transnistria elites could have been simply removed. Of course, Moldova would be pro-Russian.

7. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of “5+2” negotiations format?

It is hard to say about the effectiveness of “5+2” negotiations format because it hasn’t worked for a few years and hasn’t been able to resolve the Transnistrian problem. I would ask a question in a different way: is it useful? Yes, it is, it allows the West and Russia, and conflicting parties to talk about the conflict and the problems related to the dispute. Moreover, it is a better format than the previous five-sided format without the representation of the West. So there is a possibility to have a discussion, to present different points of view, Moldova is not alone (taking into account that it is more pro-Western).

8. Do you think a German Plan proposed by Angela Merkel in 2010 could help solving the Transnistrian conflict?

I don’t think that there is any German Plan on the resolution of the Transnistrian conflict. There were some rumors but if say that it was proposed by Angela Merkel I suppose that you are referring to the Meseberg Memorandum. There was such a statement: “the EU and Russia will cooperate in particular

toward a resolution of the Transnistrian conflict with a view to achieve tangible progress within the established 5+2 format.” Merkel suggested that it would be a test for plans of enhancing EU-Russian cooperation on security issues. Generally I think that it is a very good idea that Germany decided to take a leading role (it can be assumed that on behalf of the whole the EU) in contacts with Russia concerning the TN problem. The EU is too heterogeneous structure and not fully respected by Russia, while Germany is a strong player with good relations with Moscow, and more reliable for Russia. However, not too much has been achieved so far (mainly because of lack of political will of Russia).

There were rumors that Berlin wanted to federalize Moldova (following the example of federal Germany), what met with Chisinau criticism. I don't think that it would be dangerous if European/German standards were implemented and if the West/the EU/Germany gave political and financial support and supervised implementation and functioning of a federation.

9. What solution to this conflict do you see? How and then can it be applied?

I can't give you any “recipe” and refer to any other conflict resolution or autonomous/federal entity. I don't know too much about detailed regulations. What I know is that Moldova and Transnistria should reach a compromise (so interest of the Transnistrians elites and people should be taken into account) and both the West (I mean mainly the EU) and Russia should be guarantors and supervisors of a reunification. If the emphasis were put on democracy, human rights, rule of law and reunified Moldova would get considerable development aid (Moldova and Transnistria are small, not too much money is needed), then fears of Moldova and TN could disappear and Russia could be ashamed to further and overtly defend its geopolitical interests and abandon the idea of reunification on the basis of provisions from the Kozak Memorandum (but even a compromise reunification will be beneficial – Russian will be used, Transnistria regional, pro-Russian entity will be kept, etc. – at least for some time, later on much will depend on Russia's policy).

There is no hatred between people (as for example in Bosnia and Herzegovina), there are many links (people from Transnistria working and studying in Moldova, common Olympic and football teams, etc.). In the beginning, Moldova and Transnistria elites may not be satisfied to accept the plan so external pressure would be needed. Complementary steps would be appreciated such as implementation of CSBM. As a result a unified Moldova would be a European state from the Soviet period (I know it may be a vague term, I mean that borders would be from the Soviet times, relations between ethnic groups and some kind of mixed Romanian-Russian culture too but values would be European, etc.). However, it is a hard task, so I think that status quo will be kept for at least next 10 years. Moldova elites are not happy about idea of sharing power with Transnistrians, democratic and economic achievements are quite poor

(despite the fact that Moldova may be the best among other EaP countries), etc. I don't think that other scenarios are possible (such as independence of Transnistria).

Interview 6 with Leonid Litra, an expert of Transnistrian conflict

1. In your opinion, was it possible to solve the Transnistrian conflict in the 1990s? If yes, then what peace operation or agreement would play a crucial role in that?

In general I think it was not possible because Moldova did not have the necessary support to deal with the issue of separatism. The only theoretic possibility of not escalating the conflict was to avoid pro-Romanian rhetoric and action.

2. What is your opinion about Russian military presence in Transnistria? Do you think it as a positive or negative factor for the conflict settlement?

Russian military (not involving the peacekeeping mission) has a negative impact in the conflict settlement because it is being used by the TN as a shield for maintaining the status-quo.

3. It is often said that the EU by using economic means is attempted to make Moldova more attractive for the Transnistrian people. Do you consider ENP, EaP and other related initiatives as effective tools for possible Moldovan and Transnistrian reunification?

The tools that you mentioned have the potential to make Moldova more attractive, however, until now none of these was fully implemented in Moldova. I think that the EU has immediate tools that can influence in a positive manner the settlement process: visa liberalization EU-Moldova and budgetary support (assistance in general) and medium term tools – DCFTA in 5-7 years when the positive outcomes of this agreement are expected. Also, on medium terms, the possible infrastructure improvement with the support of EU would be helpful.

4. How efficient was the travel ban imposed by the EU against Transnistrian leaders in terms of conflict resolution?

It appears that the travel ban did not influence the process at all. It was a sanction rather directed to show that Smirnov actions were not welcomed in the EU and US, but as we saw on practical level no changes happened.

5. How would you assess outcomes of EUBAM?

My impression is that EUBAM does a good job especially in terms of raising the qualification of the border guards and customs, but as well boosting the cooperation between Ukraine and Moldova, in short is a kind of Europeanization of the border-related structures, with this an increased ability to detect illegal activities on border.

6. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of Kozak Memorandum if it would have been applied?

Difficult to assess, however, I think that the biggest impact was the so called “transnistrianization” of Moldova, meaning that Moldova would become a non-functional state in terms of decision-making and the foreign policy direction would have significantly suffered, while the Russian military presence would have been legalized.

7. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of “5+2” negotiations format?

The 5+2 so far produced many kilograms of documents that are solving some technical problems but are not touching upon the most important issues. I think that 5+2 is a good format to keep all the parties updated and to avoid surprises such as Kozak memorandums, but at the same time, 5+2 is not able to generate consensus. One of the reasons is also the fact that Russia was part in the conflict and cannot be presented as mediator and guarantor state.

8. Do you think a German Plan proposed by Angela Merkel in 2010 could help solving the Transnistrian conflict?

I think the plan could significantly improve the environment for settlement but the problem is that Russia is a part of the plan and at this moment there are no clear signs that Russia is respecting the Meseberg agreement.

9. What solution to this conflict do you see? How and then can it be applied?

In the conditions we have I see no solution soon. Given the type of the conflict, I think that the political solution is the only solution available and real. The policy of small steps has its limitations and cannot replace the political agreement.

Interview 7 with Moldovan Foreign policy and Security expert

1. In your opinion, was it possible to solve the Transnistrian conflict in the 1990s? If yes, then what peace operation or agreement would play a crucial role in that?

I think it was possible to solve the conflict immediately after cease fire, if only Russia and Moldova would be willing to do so. There were several agreements made between the parties, but none of them included an actual plan about how to reunite states. I don't think other scenarios were possible, as Moldova and international community wouldn't recognize independence of Transnistria, as it would create a precedent: many other countries might also follow the example of Transnistria, separate and require recognition.

2. What is your opinion about Russian military presence in Transnistria? Do you think it as a positive or negative factor for the conflict settlement?

In the beginning, when the conflict escalated, the Russian military played a significant role in Transnistrian independence from Moldova, as it has been actively supported the Transnistrian side. Even after the ceasefire Russians left there. Well, it wouldn't be correct to call them "Russians", as in this military division there are many Transnistrians. So, Russia was reluctant to withdraw its troops. But, what is the reaction of Moldova?

During all the negotiations, they were putting a significant emphasis on the necessity to withdraw Russian troops from Transnistria, but at the same time they were reducing their own army, now it consist from 7000 people, it's a really small number even for Moldova. Does it mean something? I think it means that Moldova does not really feel insecure because of Russian military presence. Coming back to your question..is it positive or negative factor? It is negative factor, but I don't think it is crucial for conflict settlement. Having troops in Moldova is against stated public will and legislation but it's not an extraordinary issue – Russia have their troops in many other countries, as well as the US. So, I don't really think if Russia withdraws all its troops from Transnistria, the conflict will be settled.

3. It is often said that the EU by using economic means is attempted to make Moldova more attractive for the Transnistrian people. Do you consider ENP, EaP and other related initiatives as effective tools for possible Moldovan and Transnistrian reunification?

Personally, I consider EaP as a better initiative than ENP, because Moldova is more willing to implement the latter, as it brings it closer to the EU. ENP was directed to all the neighbours, while the EaP is more precise. However, the Association Agreement is not developed yet, but I think it potentially might be a very effective tool in terms of future cooperation between Moldova and the EU. Does it affect conflict settlement? Hmm..it makes Transnistrian people to want the same benefits, such as visa facilitation agreements, better trade conditions and so on. At some point, economic means can be effective, yes. But I also think it cannot work on its own, as something else is needed for reunification. Transnistria not necessarily should be part of Moldova in order to join some benefits from the EU, I think.

4. How efficient was the travel ban imposed by the EU against Transnistrian leaders in terms of conflict resolution?

I don't think it was efficient. Nothing really changed due to the travel ban, I think the majority of Transnistrian leaders from the list were moving freely during these years. It definitely didn't encourage Transnistrian leaders to be more active in the conflict resolution processes and willing to cooperate with the EU on these issues.

5. How would you assess outcomes of EUBAM in terms of Transnistrian conflict settlement?

I don't think it had any particular effect on Transnistrian conflict, but in terms regulating relations between Moldova and Ukraine this policy was really efficient. In comparison with other initiatives, this policy has actual results.

6. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of Kozak Memorandum if it would have been applied?

I can't imagine how it would really work, but the whole idea of Kozak Memorandum – to reunite Moldova and Transnistria to one state, with Transnistrian special status within that state – is really good. But in order to viable, the document should have avoided very obvious pro-Russian direction. I think during all these years Kozak Memorandum was the only decision, having a potential to solve the conflict. However, this decision wouldn't be acceptable for Moldova, as the Gagauzian and Transnistrian representatives (most likely representing Russian interests) would block any unfavorable decisions. But I believe, if the concept of the document will be changed a bit, and it would let Moldova to have more power in decision-making, then this initiative would be very effective in terms of conflict resolution.

7. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of “5+2” negotiations format?

The overall effectiveness of the 5+2 wasn't very high until now. But in 2011, it was quite active and they managed to agree on the collaboration rules and they were some actual proposals made. Thanks to the 5+2, many technical issues between Transnistria and Moldova were resolved, last year the rail freight traffic connecting Moldova and Transnistria was reopened, some question of education were also addressed. For instance, they managed to agree on diplomas recognition. So, some small stuff has been done through 5+2. But there weren't any effective political discussions within this format, as Transnistria is not participating, and Russia will be happy only if similar to Kozak Memorandum requirements would be implemented, the EU does not really have a clear vision how to reunite Moldova and Transnistria, and for now Moldova supports the EU. But only for now, maybe it will shift towards Eurasian Union idea soon, who knows.

8. Do you think a German Plan proposed by Angela Merkel in 2010 could help solving the Transnistrian conflict?

I think it was a really good initiative but unfortunately it wasn't further developed. Again, the talks about Transnistrian conflict settlement are appearing from time to time on the agenda, but those are just talks – no one proposes concrete actions how to make that. The only concrete proposal was Kozak Memorandum but it wasn't viable because it would make from Moldova another Transnistria, which is completely dependent on Russia. The Meseberg Memorandum definitely would have a potential to solve

the conflict, as it was talking about Russia's and the EU's intensive collaboration and consensus searching, unfortunately none of these actors was not really interested in this plan development and implementation.

9. What solution to this conflict do you see? How and then can it be applied?

I think the best solution is to recognize independence of Transnistrian region within Moldova, and to develop a very clear framework on the relationship between the Transnistrian region and Moldova. I think it will be possible to do any moment when all sides will express interest in that. I think it's extremely important for Russia and the EU to agree first, as both Moldova and Transnistria are dependent on their opinions and actions. But it only in theory..in practice, during such conflict settlement it's really hard to avoid all the interests' groups, some political ambitions. Therefore, I don't see any viable solution to this conflict in the contemporary conditions.