

## **7. THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY: MODELS OF INTEGRATION**

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### **7.1 The European Neighborhood Policy in the first and subsequent stages of the EU geopolitical intentions**

The purpose of this study at this stage and given the fact that this topic is global in nature, should be clarified and somewhat narrowed, in our opinion, to two problems: the reform and modernization of the European Neighborhood Policy in general and the assessment of the state and development of the ENP relative to the ENP neighbors, highlighting their specific issues. This would make it possible to reveal the essence of the ENP on the one hand, and on the other, the reasons and essence of the new approaches to the comprehensive dimension of the Eastern Partnership policy and its role in the integration process on the European continent should be explained and disclosed. In our opinion, it is advisable to consider this policy in a consistent statement of the EU decision and the events involved, as well as the reasons that influenced the origin, formation, and then transformation of the ENP. In other words, the stages of creation, implementation, development and implementation of the ENP should be traced. The European Security Strategy, adopted in December 2003, designated the security of border areas as one of the strategic objectives of the EU. The ENP aims to introduce this task into EU policies, which can be achieved in conditions of political stability and with the proliferation of relevant administrative models and norms outside the EU. The ENP in this context can serve as an alternative to EU membership, as well as provide the Union with a new tool for coordinating its own foreign policy. At the initial stage of the development of projects, the ENP cooperation with the disputed territories (Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh) was ambiguous. It should be noted that the participation of the European Union in resolving issues of disputed territories remains very controversial: The EU is trying to find a balance between the desire to refrain from recognizing these territories and attempts to help resolve conflicts. Many researchers agree that the use of the ENP as a policy tool will not be successful due to the lack of opportunity for participants to join the EU in the future through participation in this initiative. In particular, such a point of view is held by such researchers as G. Cacce and K. Voltsuk and a number of others.

Regarding to the policy of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) at the moment, it would be necessary to emphasize the existing shortcomings and the need for its

qualitative improvement. At present, the EU implements its ENP in several areas: bilateral (EU-Russia) direction in a common space with Russia; European Neighborhood Policy in relations with Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan; and the third direction is the frozen relations of the EU with Belarus, which are periodically reviewed depending on the circumstances and are not as categorical on the part of the EU as before. These three directions represent three different and separate vectors of the EU Eastern Partnership policy, or in other words, parallel EU policies regarding its eastern neighbors. We uphold the position that the European Union should develop and implement a single strategy for the whole ENP and for each region and key partner country separately. It is necessary to mention the fourth direction in the East - these are negotiations and the policy of the whole EU with Turkey. It is not part of our task, but after all, the role of this country in this region should be singled out as a role of special importance and use its status, which this country has in the EU since the start of bilateral negotiations

The European Neighborhood Policy was finalized after 10 new countries joined the EU in 2004. Among others, the main objective of this first model of the neighborhood policy was to strengthen the security of the EU, to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines in Europe and to secure the external border. In March 2003, the Commission presented its Communication “Greater Europe — Neighbors: A New Framework for Relations with the EU Eastern and Southern Neighbors”, which presented for the first time the principles of the new European Neighborhood Policy and highlighted the importance of the EU in strengthening relations with neighboring countries. The European Union’s Security Strategy, approved by the European Council in December 2003, also speaks about strengthening stability and good governance in EU-neighboring countries. The historical expansion of the European Union was for him a big step towards strengthening security and increasing prosperity on the European continent, but also means changing the external borders of the Union. These circumstances not only opened up new opportunities, but also set new challenges. European Neighborhood Policy is the answer to this new situation. In March 2003, the Commission presented its Communication “Greater Europe - Neighbors: A New Framework for Relations with the EU Eastern and Southern Neighbors”, which for the first time presented the principles of the new European Neighborhood Policy and highlighted the importance of the EU in strengthening relations with neighboring countries. According to this Report, the Commission proposes the creation of the European Neighborhood Instrument to assist third countries, including countries currently covered by the Tacis and MEDA programs. This idea was further developed in the Communication prepared in July 2003, “Towards a New Neighborhood Instrument”. In October 2003, the European Council welcomed the progress made in the implementation of this initiative and encouraged the Council and the Commission to continue this work in order to ensure an integrated balanced and proportionate approach, including the creation of a financial instrument. In May 2004, the European Commission presented the “European Neighborhood Policy. “Country Strategy and Reports”, which sets out clear steps for the implementation of the European Neighborhood Policy and

methods for extending the benefits of EU enlargement to neighboring countries. These priorities are supposed to be included in a jointly agreed Action Plan, which is a key policy document in strengthening relations between the EU and partner countries. Thanks to the ENP, Europe offered its neighbors a special relationship based on mutual commitment to common values (democracy and human rights, rule of law, good governance, principles of a market economy and sustainable development). The ENP was thus laid out as a result of the debate in 2003–2004, starting with the New Neighborhood Initiative (2002) and the Greater Europe concept (2003). The purpose of the ENP was to adapt the enlarged EU to its enlarged neighborhood and promote transformation processes in the neighboring countries in line with EU standards.

At the first stage, the ENP set itself the goal of becoming a universal modernization policy, which would not allow any difference between EU neighbors in the West and in the East. The ENP has identified an Action Plan as the main universal tool. This is a document adopted between the EU and the ENP country, which takes into account the needs and capabilities of the country, as well as the interests of the EU. The Action Plan itself was not a binding document between the EU and the relevant ENP country. However, the EU has proposed joint Action Plans only to those ENP countries that have already been in contractual relations with the EU through Associative Agreements (AU) and / or Partnership-Associative Agreements. The Action Plan determines the scope of political and economic reforms necessary to bring the relevant ENP country in line with EU standards by setting short- and medium-term (3-5 years) priorities. The plan covers a wide range of issues, starting with political dialogue and reform, economic and social cooperation, cooperation in the ship system and internal affairs, in the sectors (transport, energy, informed society, environment, research and development), as well as in the human dimension (international contacts, civil society, education, health, etc.). In response to advances in achieving these priorities, the following incentives were identified: greater integration into European programs and networks, increased aid, and easier access to the market. Thus, the European Neighborhood Policy goes beyond existing relationships and offers deeper political relations and economic integration through reforms, which are a means of achieving peace, stability and economic prosperity. The level of ambition in this relationship will depend on how these values are shared by the partners. The European Neighborhood Policy does not offer the prospect of joining the European Union to partner countries, but offers privileged relations with the EU and assistance in achieving goals in various areas of cooperation. This policy applies to the EU's nearest neighbors on land and at sea: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. Although Russia is also a neighbor of the EU, relations with it are developing within the framework of the Strategic Partnership. The EU and Russia decided to further develop their strategic partnership by creating four common spaces in accordance with the decisions taken at the St. Petersburg Summit (2003). Russia and the EU are implementing five programs for cross-border cooperation for 2007–

2013. Kolarctic, Karelia, South-East Finland-Russia, Estonia-Latvia-Russia, Lithuania-Poland-Russia. Agreements on the implementation and financing of these programs were signed (2009). The Russian side allocated EUR 103.7 million for the implementation of the programs. In 2014, the parties began to develop new programs for 2014–2020. Kolarctic, Karelia, South-East Finland-Russia, Russia-Estonia, Russia-Latvia, Russia-Lithuania, Russia-Poland.

EU policy, although characterized by the introduction of enhanced cooperation with neighboring countries, does not provide for any preferences for membership in this international organization. According to researchers, this is the main disadvantage of such forms of cooperation, given the foreign policy ambitions of the latter. In turn, the political leadership of the EU understands that the lack of prospects for granting membership to countries in Eastern Europe may impede the stabilization and further development of the European region, spread nihilistic sentiments regarding the processes of European integration.

## **7.2 Strategic review of the European Neighborhood Policy of the European Union: new opportunities**

As mentioned above, EU Action Plans with ENP countries will be based on mutual commitment to common values, mainly in the areas of the rule of law, good governance, respect for human rights, including minority rights, developing good neighborly relations and the principles of a market economy and sustainable development. It is also assumed that partner countries will undertake obligations in relation to some of the most important aspects of EU external activities, including, in particular, the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as compliance with international law and conflict resolution efforts. Economic integration with the EU will allow neighboring countries to successfully implement their reform programs and economic development policies. Creating a prosperous and stable neighborhood means building a healthy political and economic system with solid foundations for socio-economic development. There is a relationship between reforms: in order to develop trade and investment, both parties must develop transport services and infrastructure communications. At the same time, strengthening the judicial and regulatory systems has a positive effect on the business climate and investments. The budget of the European Neighborhood Policy for the period from 2014 to 2020 is 15.4 billion euros. The bulk of funding goes to bilateral cooperation programs, tailored to the needs of each of the partner countries, and based on the agreed partnership priorities or the Association agenda, which are the basis for political engagement and cooperation. The two key principles of the European Neighborhood Policy are differentiation and responsibility for the outcome. This approach takes into account the different wishes of the partner countries in the development of their relations with the EU. The EU and the partner countries together determine the priorities for their cooperation, paying particular attention to common interests, which allows each of the parties to be more interested and responsible for the result. In addition to flexible individual support for the implementation of each partner country's ambitions, the ENP also provides flexibility in the use of financial assistance,

allowing the EU to more effectively respond to new challenges, such as natural disasters, security threats, and to assist countries in conflict or post-conflict situations. An example of how quickly and flexibly EU financial instruments can be used is the activation of new trust funds to respond to conflicts in Syria and Africa.

Regarding interaction sectors, the ENP has four priority areas: good governance aimed at creating a just, inclusive and stable society based on respect for human rights and civil society engagement; economic and social development, including the creation of jobs for young people as a basis for stabilizing the economic situation in the region; security cooperation, mainly in areas such as conflict prevention, the fight against terrorism and radicalization; migration and mobility, which includes both mobility and illegal migration, human trafficking and smuggling. Finally, attention is also paid to energy security and combating climate change. With many countries (Algeria, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco and Tunisia), the EU has already concluded Association Agreements. The agreements with Ukraine since 2014 are already being implemented on an ongoing basis by the Association Agreement, and with some (with Armenia in November 2017) others are in the process of negotiations (Azerbaijan). Negotiations with Libya and Syria are suspended due to local conflict situations. Association agreements mean that the country is closest to what can join the EU before or instead of becoming a candidate for EU membership. They provide for the process of harmonizing the partner country's legislation with EU legislation and include privileged trade relations - that is, the country can more easily gain access to certain sectors of the Single European market. With the EU, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, the EU even agreed on Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Zones (DCFTA). DCFTA talks are also under way with Tunisia and Morocco. Morocco even applied for membership in the European Community back in 1987, which was rejected on the grounds that it is not geographically a European country. A few years later, the Copenhagen criteria also introduced a number of political and economic prerequisites that a country must fulfill in order for the membership application to be accepted for consideration. First of all, it is stable democratic governance, a market economy and respect for human rights. As in the EU foreign policy and development policy, responsibility for the ENP is shared between four participants: the Council on Foreign Affairs, the European Foreign Policy Service (EEAS), the European Commission Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO, also known as EuropeAid) and Neighborhood and enlargement negotiations (NEAR), as well as the European Parliament. The Council and the Commission share the special role of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, which (F.Mogherini) is simultaneously a member of both organizations - the Vice-President of the European Commission and the Chairman of the Council on Foreign Affairs (besides other roles). The Council makes decisions on foreign and neighborhood policy, ultimately responsible. The EEAS assumes the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the EU diplomatic service, and the Directorate General Directorate of the NEAR and DEVCO manage the practical implementation and

financing of the neighborhood policy. The main financial instrument of the ENP is the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), implemented for the first time in the EU financial perspective for 2007-2013. The ENPI was created on the basis of the former TACIS tool (CIS Technical Assistance), the purpose of which was to assist the former Soviet countries in 1991-2006. From the very beginning, the main desire of the ENP was to go beyond the CFSP and the nature of only external relations with third countries. For the ENP partner countries, the prospect of participation in the integrated space of 4 EU freedoms was open, subject to compliance with the relevant EU standards.

The inclusion of the expansion policy in the EU's foreign policy was a turning point in its history. The adoption of economically less developed and relatively poor countries forced the Union to develop solidary instruments in order to maintain the political stability and economic development of the new EU members. The introduction in 1980 of Greece, Portugal and Spain prepared the Union for its new role in Europe, shaping an understanding of foreign policy objectives, a policy of further expansion, including the accession of the group of 8 post-communist countries in 2004. At the initial stage, the ENP had no special distinctions between southern and eastern countries. However, it soon became clear that the Mediterranean region and Eastern Europe are different regions with their own characteristics and specifics, different tasks. The EU's eastern neighbors, as opposed to the southern ones, are European countries and parties to the EU Agreement, Art. 49 of which states that every European state that recognizes the principles of p. 6 (1) may apply for admission to the EU. The determining factors are the immediate geographical proximity and size of these countries, compliance with these principles and standards. The concept of relations embedded in the ENP, although with certain problems, however, is currently working on the implementation of a comprehensive EU pan-European policy, implements its strategic initiative in Europe and provides a place for one of the leading players in the world.

The main deficit in the current EU policy towards the eastern neighborhood was the lack of a regional multilateral format of interaction with Eastern European countries. Relations between Eastern European countries, for example, Russia and Ukraine, Russia and Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova, etc. are the most important factor affecting the efficiency of the EU and its ability to defend its interests. There are many examples here that require the EU to resolve issues in a multilateral and regional format. Otherwise, the EU itself will lose the initiative, the status of a world player and will become ineffective in its relations with each.

After a radical change in Europe in 2005-2009 (establishing full control of the Russian Federation over Central Asian gas resources, defeat of the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, military intervention of the Russian Federation in Georgia, financial crisis, etc.) put the EU in front of new challenges, the need to revise its policy regarding the Russian Federation and the ENP countries as its eastern neighbors. A notable shift was the initiative during the presidency of the EU of Finland and Germany to introduce such tools in addressing the "regional components" of the Eastern ENP. A new dimension of the ENP in the field of

sectoral cooperation between the EU and the ENP countries with the introduction of such ENP tools as a sectoral agreement, thematic (sectoral) dialogue and the possibility of joining the ENP countries to the European Community Programs and Bodies. Since 2006, Finland has coordinated the EU Northern Dimension Initiative, which determined cooperation in the EU-RF Common Space (the Northern Dimension was approved as early as 1997), the EU-RF model. This provision is enshrined in the Communiqué on Strengthening the European Neighborhood Policy (12/04/2006), which also reflects the ideas of the German proposal ENP-plus, including the sectoral agreement as the main tool for the ENP, which opens up the possibility of participating in the relevant EU Programs and Bodies. Finally, on April 11, 2007, under the chairmanship of Germany, the Communiqué of the Synergy of the Black Sea Region - a new initiative of regional cooperation was made public. This new initiative was the first in the history of the eastern policy of the ENP to introduce a regional format of political dialogue between the EU and the countries of the Eastern ENP. In the EU report submitted in June 2007, Ukraine, Israel and Morocco were identified as the most likely partners for participation in Community programs. Declared their intention to participate in the programs of the Community of Egypt, Lebanon and Moldova. With the commencement of the Financial Outlook for 2007–2013 (the new budget period), the Regulation on the creation of a number of new Community programs entered into force.

By that time, the European Parliament had also become more active, which had contributed to the political decision-making process, in particular, through its resolutions and during legislative procedures. For example, the OPEN Media Hub project, administered by the NEAR Directorate General. It is part of the Open Neighborhood Program, which, in turn, is the information and communication branch of the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI), the source of funding for the ENP. ENI was established by the European Council and Parliament through a regular legislative procedure on the basis of the relevant articles of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The implementation of this project is also coordinated with the EU delegations in the partner countries that are part of the EEAS and should coordinate their activities with the work of the European foreign service in the region. In addition, the European Commission launched the ENPI Information and Communication Support Project (Info Center) in January 2009 to talk about EU relations with neighbors and partners in the east and partner countries in the Mediterranean. In our view, the role of the European Parliament could be even more efficient, given its control and political functions (hearings, commission reports and other forms). For example, recently the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko in his twitter congratulated the recommendations of the European Parliament on the creation of a new model "Eastern Partnership Plus" for Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia.

### **7.3 The policy of the Eastern Partnership of the European Union and its role in the integration process on the European continent.**

Over the past decade, the EU has significantly increased its presence in the European countries of the post-Soviet space, first within the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy, and later thanks to the Eastern Partnership initiative.

As noted above, the Eastern Partnership(EaP) is a project of the European Union, the main goal of which is the development of EU integration ties with six countries of the former USSR: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. The idea was to be viewed as a kind of regional (Eastern) dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy, which was initiated by the European Union in relation to its “new neighbors” after another expansion in May 2004, adopted in addition to the two main directions of the European Neighborhood Policy - the Northern dimension and the Mediterranean. That is, the EaP is a regional EU initiative that includes six EU member countries and six non-EU countries from Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. Eastern Partnership was initiated by Poland, and later supported by Sweden, which turned it from an individual to a much wider European project. The initiative was submitted to EU foreign ministers for consideration on May 26, 2008 in Brussels during the meeting of the Council on Universal EU Policy and the Council on International Relations (GAREC) by Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski with the participation of Sweden. The discussion on the creation of the EP was held on June 19–20, 2008 at the European Council. The Czech Republic subscribed to the proposal in full, while Bulgaria and Romania were much more cautious, believing that the new program could negate the activities of the existing Black Sea Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, which initiated the creation of supported just Bulgaria and of course Turkey. Thus, the introduction within the framework of the ENP of the idea of EaP in the EU was the next, effective step in the process of developing the initiative, creating a new model of the ENP.

Reference: - Azerbaijan and the European Union (EU) maintain their relations at the level of intensive and friendly, while Azerbaijan expressed its aspirations to become a member of the EU. The foundation of relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan (AR) and (EU) is the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), signed on 04.22.1996 in Luxembourg and entered into force on 1.7.1999. On November 14, 2016, the EU Council approved the mandate of the European Commission and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Frederica Mogherini to negotiate on behalf of the EU and EU member states on a comprehensive agreement with the RA. This new agreement should replace ATP. Negotiations on a new agreement began on February 7, 2017, after the visit of President Ilhan Aliyev to Brussels on February 6. The new agreement will comply with the principles approved in 2015 as part of the revision of the ENP, and will offer an updated basis for political dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation between (AP) and (EU). On 25.4.2017, a new stage of negotiations between (AR) and (EU) on the conclusion of an agreement was launched. The resolution on the

inclusion of Azerbaijan in the ENP was adopted by the EU 14.6.2004. Within the framework of the ENP, the Republic of Azerbaijan receives financial and economic support from the EU; in the period from 2007 to 2016, it received 200 million euros. The EU helped diversify the economy and fostered sustainable growth with international practice and its own standards. Economically, Azerbaijan is an important partner for the EU, the most reliable partner in the South Caucasus, one of the reasons for this is that Azerbaijan offers its assistance in the Southern Gas Corridor project, migration and trade. EU countries are the largest importers of Azerbaijani products, more than 50% of Azerbaijan's imports go to the EU. The basis of the energy cooperation between the parties is the Memorandum on Strategic Partnership in the Energy Sector signed in 2006. At present, Azerbaijan provides 5% of EU oil needs. The AR is a member of the Council of Europe, and therefore is included in European structures. Azerbaijan was also included in the EU4Energy program, launched in 2016 and aimed at supporting EaP countries. The EU, along with other countries, is trying to help resolve the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh by peaceful means, supporting and conducting tripartite meetings. The EU considers that the status quo in Nagorno-Karabakh is unacceptable.

- Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the EU were built on the basis of the Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation concluded on April 22, 1996 in Luxembourg. The agreement entered into force on July 1, 1999, after being ratified by the European Parliament, the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, and all national parliaments of the Union member states and the communities. However, today their relations are based on the Comprehensive and Expanded Partnership Agreement between the EU and Armenia, which was signed on the sidelines of the Eastern Partnership Summit in Brussels in November 2017. This agreement replaced the Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation between Armenia and the EU of 1999. In July 2003, the EU appointed a Special Representative for the South Caucasus. Armenia has been participating in the ENP since 2004 and in the EaP since its foundation in 2009. In early October 2001, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the development of relations with the South Caucasus. It proposed to form a conference with the participation of the EU and all three republics, including Armenia, to promote democracy, economic growth and peace. Strengthening ties with Armenia would be facilitated by the creation of missions of the Commission in Armenia and the appointment of a special representative of the EU in Armenia. On the January 10, 2002 at the next meeting of the EU-Armenia Cooperation Councils, the European Community again called on Armenia and Azerbaijan for an early agreement on Karabakh. Also announced about the intensification of the dialogue with Turkey. In 2013, the EU issued a statement in which it was noted that the 2003 parliamentary elections did not meet international standards. The EU noted the fact of fraud in the counting of votes, an unbalanced presence in election commissions and the opacity of published election results. The EU offered to assist the Armenian government in overcoming these shortcomings. Armenia was recommended to improve relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan, to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court more quickly and to apply an essentially anti-corruption strategy.

The EU welcomed the negotiations held on the construction of the Armenia-Iran gas pipeline, while calling for compliance with international environmental standards. The first conference “Armenians in the EU” took place in the European Parliament on October 18-19, 2003. The participants asked the EU to reject the request of the Turkish Republic to join the EU until it stops violating human rights towards Armenians and does not recognize the fact of genocide . During the Convention, other topics related to Armenian identity in Europe, namely, the preservation and development of the Armenian language, as well as cooperation between the EU and Armenia in the framework of the ENP and the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh were touched upon. February 17, 2006 Member of the EU Commission B. Ferrero-Waldner arrived in Armenia. The main topics of discussion were the preparation of bilateral action plans within the framework of the ENP, the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and energy security issues. Ferrero-Waldner announced that the EU supports the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group in resolving the Karabakh conflict: EU-conflict-cooperation. 10/18/2006 The EU Council approved the main objectives of the implementation of the ENP for the period from 2007 to 2013. The EU budget allocated for these purposes EUR 11.81 billion, which were aimed at the implementation of national and multinational programs to improve relations with the EU neighboring states, including Armenia. On December 10, 2006 a referendum was held in Nagorno-Karabakh, which approved the first Constitution of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. The OSCE Chairman announced that no state of the world recognizes Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state, and such a referendum only aggravates the process of settling the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. On 12.05.2007, parliamentary elections took place in Armenia, which the EU described in general as “free and fair and in line with international standards”. 16.10.2007 at the eighth meeting of the EU-Armenia Cooperation Council in Luxembourg, the progress of the implementation of the joint action plan within the framework of the ENP, as well as economic, energy and political cooperation was discussed. It was stressed that in terms of democratization, Armenia is slowly and consistently approaching Europe, and the EU is ready to continue to fully assist it. Again, as a result of discussions in the European Parliament in October 2007, the EU could not decide on Turkey’s reluctance to recognize the fact of the Armenian Genocide in the early twentieth century. On February 5, 2008, a representative office of the European Commission opened in Yerevan, which testified to the strengthening of relations between the EU and Armenia and the greater involvement of the state in the ENP. On December 10, 2008 the European Commission allowed 16 developing countries, including Armenia, to implement duty-free export of certain product names to the union. In 2009, the European Union actively began to prepare the EaP program, which implies a more in-depth cooperation with the six post-Soviet countries. Within the framework of the program, the EU is ready to promote socio-economic and political reforms in these countries, to create the necessary conditions for political association and future economic integration between the European Union and its Eastern partners. EU member states offered to take part in the program, pursued different goals in relations with it and differently perceived this initiative. On May

20, 2010, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on resolving conflicts in the Transcaucasus, which states that Karabakh must be given an interim status and "withdraw Armenian troops from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan." The document provoked harsh criticism of all political forces in Armenia, who stated that it contradicted the negotiation process of the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian said that the wording on the Karabakh settlement in this resolution does not correspond to the Madrid principles, nor the statement in L'Aquila, nor the Moscow Declaration. On January 19, 2012 Traian Hristea, head of the EU mission in Armenia, stated that the development of Armenia's relations with the EU, in particular, within the framework of the EaP program, depends on the holding of transparent elections in the country. Regular parliamentary elections in Armenia were scheduled for May 2012, and presidential elections for February 2013. The EU and the OSCE in this period implemented a program of 1.7 million euros in Armenia, supporting the holding of democratic elections in Republic. The program's goal is to enhance the role of civil society in the electoral process, provide polling stations with the appropriate equipment, as well as organize trainings and seminars to increase voter awareness. The issue of the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire in the late XIX - early XX centuries. remains a subject for discussion within the EU and continues to influence the relations of Armenia, Turkey and Azerbaijan with the EU. On January 22, 2012, the French Senate passed a bill criminalizing the denial of genocides, including the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire. The adoption of the law caused the condemnation of Turkey. A part of the European parliamentarians also condemned the adoption of the law, stating that the French initiative would complicate Turkey's already uneasy relations with the EU. S. Füle noted that the Euro-missions should not interfere in such painful issues that affect the member country and the candidate country to the EU, and should be resolved through the dialogue of historians, and not through political declarations. December 17, 2012 Armenia and the EU signed a visa facilitation agreement. For the citizens of Armenia, this agreement made it more accessible to visit EU countries on short-term visas for 180 days instead of 90. For a number of categories of citizens - members of the official delegation, scientists, students, journalists, sports and cultural figures, and others - facilitated entry procedures were provided for visas to the Schengen zone. Provision is made for lowering the tariffs to 35 euros. The visa is provided free of charge to a number of categories of citizens, including children under 12 years old and retirees. Initially, it was assumed that the Vilnius summit of the Eastern Partnership in 2013 will be the initialing of the association agreements of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia with the EU. But even before the summit, Armenia expressed its intention to join the Customs Union and refuses to associate with the EU. Armenia has joined the Eurasian Economic Union since January 2015. Thus, the process of revising relations between Armenia and the EU in 2014 is associated with a sharp exacerbation of the geopolitical game of the great powers in the post-Soviet space. Too rapidly began to develop political events around Ukraine. A new political situation has arisen, which has drawn a line not only under the post-Soviet

history of the last decades, but also, most likely, under the whole stage after the Cold War on the global scale of the world political order. Armenia, like all other states, turned out to be completely unprepared for the unexpected and rapid development of events in Ukraine, especially after the annexation of Crimea to Russia. Despite appeals from representatives of both the EU and Moscow, Armenia has long tried to maintain neutrality in the Ukrainian conflict, without expressing its opinion. Negotiations on a new framework agreement began in December 2015. As a result, on the sidelines of the EaP Summit, which was held in Brussels on November 24, 2017, the Comprehensive and Expanded Partnership Agreement between the EU and Armenia was signed. The Parliament of Armenia unanimously ratified this Agreement on 04/04/2018, conditionally it entered into force on 1.06.2018. The agreement is a modern, comprehensive and ambitious document that contributes to the deepening of political, sectoral and trade relations between the EU and Armenia in areas of mutual interest. In accordance with the new agreement, Armenia and the EU jointly developed priority areas for the development of partnerships. They include: actions to develop public institutions and state management practices, economic development and development of new opportunities in the market, strengthening ties, increasing energy efficiency, actions in the field of environmental protection and climate, mobility and contacts between people. Despite all the years of successful development of mutual cooperation between the EU and Armenia, establishing a balance between the EU and Moscow, new problems and questions arise. What prospects can the EaP of Armenia with the EU have against the background of the Ukrainian crisis and the complication of Russia's relations with the West? It is obvious that it will be very difficult for Armenia to maintain a balance with both Russia and the West, without causing a feeling of jealousy on all sides. On the other hand, in Armenia, as in all other post-Soviet states, we are seriously afraid that the further strengthening of Russia and the worsening of its contradictions with the West create the danger of losing sovereignty. It is unlikely that Armenia will wish to repeat the experience of Ukraine. So for now, Yerevan has no reason to think about the possibility of a choice. The EU also plays a major role in the implementation of e-government in Armenia. To date, EU support is aimed at introducing an electronic document management system in government institutions in Armenia; electronic tax filing system; electronic civil registration, a vehicle registration system using a “one window” technology, an automated system for issuing driving licenses, online issuance of electronic policies, a system for issuing electronic visas and an online business register. However, the still unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remains the main obstacle to stability and prosperity in the region. The EU, including through its Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia, supports the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs and together with them contributes to the peaceful resolution of the conflict. The EU also contributes to building confidence and building peace in the zone of conflict, in particular through the implementation of the European Partnership Program for the Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh (EPNK). A round table “Russia and Armenia in New International and Political Conditions” was held

at the Russian Council on International Affairs (INF). The event was held in partnership with the Public Organization “Dialogue”, headed by well-known political scientist Yuri Navoyan, who in particular stated that in 2018 a change of the political generation took place in Armenia. However, despite all the difficulties, the dialogue between the leaders of Russia and Armenia did not interrupt. However, it must be constantly maintained at the level of civil society, which requires authoritative public diplomacy and institutions of soft power. The efforts of the official institutions for this are clearly not enough.

- The relations of the Republic of Moldova and the European Union for several years have been considered in the EU as an example of the success of the Eastern Partnership program. Brussels put a lot of diplomatic and financial efforts, forcing the country's rapprochement with the EU. However, the “path to Europe” turned out to be much more difficult for Chisinau than it seemed. The country is experiencing an internal split on the issue of fundamental guidelines for foreign policy, which is aggravated by geopolitical contradictions around the future of Moldova at the level of EU relations Russia. The real foreign economic relations of the Republic of Moldova began in 1992. The collapse of the Union led to a decline in exports and imports with a tendency of their gradual growth, and by 1998 the trade balance was also in short supply, with imports exceeding exports. Dependence on a single market, which was not stable, led to the objective need to search for new foreign economic relations, and thus the need to conquer European markets appeared. Since 1994, trade and economic relations between the Republic of Moldova and the EU have been characterized by a tendency of significant growth. Moldova's relations with the EU begin with the signing of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA). This agreement is the legal basis for cooperation between Moldova and the EU and entered into force in 1998.

The PCA is a bilateral commitment regulating the basis of cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, legal, political, scientific, and cultural fields. Through this document, the EU committed itself to supporting the efforts of the Republic of Moldova to strengthen democracy and the rule of law, respecting human and minority rights, by providing an appropriate basis for political dialogue, stable economic development and completion of the transition process in a market economy, by promoting trade exchanges, investment and harmonious economic relations. The relations between Moldova and the EU were formally established through the following structures: the Council of Cooperation of the RM-EU; The Moldova-EU Cooperation Committee; The subcommittees of the Moldova-EU cooperation; Parliamentary Cooperation Committee of the RM-EU. In the context of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), on February 22, 2005 the Moldova-EU Action Plan was signed in Brussels. The Action Plan establishes a number of priority areas listed in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and, although all of them are important, special attention is paid to the following:

- Systematic efforts for a viable resolution of the Dnieper problem;
- Continuing to strengthen the stability and effectiveness of institutions that guarantee democracy and the rule of law;

- ensuring democratic processes related to the parliamentary elections in Moldova, in accordance with European standards;
- ensuring respect for press freedom and expression;
- continue to strengthen the administrative and legal capacities of the state;
- renewed cooperation with international financial institutions;
- implementation of actions to combat poverty, strengthening economic growth, secured by the private sector and the reliability of the tax system;
- Improving the investment climate through appropriate structural reforms aimed at ensuring equal, transparent and predictable conditions for business development, including the fight against corruption.

The EU delegation in Moldova was opened in Chisinau in October 2005, having received the status of a diplomatic mission and officially representing the EU in the Republic of Moldova. The mandate of the delegation includes the following tasks: the development of political and economic relations between Moldova and the EU; control over the implementation of the EU-Moldova Association Agreement; informing the public about the development of the EU, explaining and protecting certain EU policy directions; participation in the implementation of EU external assistance programs (TACIS, ENPI), with a focus on supporting democratic development and effective governance, administrative reform and development of administrative capacity, poverty reduction and economic growth. In June 2008, the Moldova-EU Mobility Partnership was launched, which gave a significant impetus to the development of bilateral relations. On May 1, 2010, the Republic of Moldova became a full member of the European Energy Community. This was a serious step towards bilateral energy cooperation. Also in January 2010, at the initiative of Romania and France, in order to advance the interests of the Republic of Moldova in the European arena, the Group was created for the European action of the Republic of Moldova. In January 2010, an official start was given to the negotiations on the Moldova-EU Association Agreement. On November 28-29, 2013, at the III Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius, the Republic of Moldova signed the Association Agreement with the EU and the Agreement on the creation of a deep and comprehensive RM-EU free trade zone. On 1.09.2014, 28 EU foreign ministers confirmed the entry into force of the Association Agreement. 06/15/2010 The Moldova-EU Dialogue has started in the area of abolishing the visa regime with the EU. 01/24/2011 Moldova received a Visa Liberation Action Plan. On November 28-29, 2013, at the III Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius, the Republic of Moldova signed the Agreement on visa liberalization with the EU. On February 27, 2014, the European Parliament voted (460 out of 510 deputies voted in favor) for the abolition of visas for Moldovan citizens when crossing EU borders. The voting of the European Parliament was confirmed by the Council of Europe on March 14, 2014, and already on April 28, 2014, the visa regime with the EU was canceled. On 26.06.2012, an agreement was signed on the accession of the Republic of Moldova to the European common aviation zone, which subsequently led to the liberalization of the air transport market of Moldova. 06.27.2014 the Agreement on the Association and Free Trade of Moldova with the EU entered into force. In

total, in 2015, Moldova sold goods to the EU countries for 1217, 6 million dollars, and imported goods from it for 1954.1 million dollars. From the beginning of 2016, active contacts of Moldova with the EU continue to be noted. In February 2016, a seminar was organized in Moldova to increase the competitiveness of small and medium businesses. The EU oversees the implementation of the Moldova Association and Free Trade Agreement with the EU and insists on the prompt implementation of Moldova's provisions of this document. The Moldovan side drew the EU's attention to the need to provide assistance in enhancing the energy independence of our country. The EU provided Moldova with 6 sets of equipment for the detection of chemical and radioactive substances. Interpol expressed readiness to help Moldova in the fight against all types of crime. In March 2016, a working group of experts on police cooperation from different European countries was held in Kishinev. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Moldova has begun work on the creation of a General Training Center for the application of laws, where junior command personnel will be trained according to European standards. In May 2016, with the assistance of foreign experts, specialists were trained in the specifics of the work of criminologists. The Ministry of Regional Development and Construction was involved in various projects related to Du-hire. The Ministry of Transport has discussed with representatives of the EU issues of restoring national highways. The Ministry of Environment was negotiating a loan for solid waste management. In 5 regions of Moldova, the EU plans to help children who are sick from birth and facilitate their access to normal education. Its representatives discussed issues of the situation of national minorities.

- Relations between Georgia and the EU. After Georgia gained state independence in 1991, and especially when President Mikhail Saakashvili came to power, its leadership clearly defined the priorities of state policy aimed at establishing closer relations with Western countries, primarily with the United States and the EU. . In his first speech to the European Parliament in 2006 in Strasbourg, Saakashvili spoke in favor of his country's accession to the EU. After the war in South Ossetia (2008), the rapprochement between Georgia and the EU slowed down noticeably. Mikheil Saakashvili accused the EU of not taking seriously and did not react to his warnings about the concentration of Russian troops on the borders with Georgia. 15.09.2008 The EU made a decision to send a group of observers for compliance with the terms of the truce and cease-fire to the area of armed conflict from the Georgian side Two weeks later, the operational phase of the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia began. 200 EU monitors from 22 community states were sent to the Caucasus. Despite the fact that the military conflict between Georgia and Russia has postponed the possible entry of this country into the EU into an uncertain future, the EU continues to strengthen relations with this state. In 2009, the Eastern Partnership program was created within the EU to assist Georgia and five other former Soviet republics. "Europe Begins Here" is a sign in the National Museum of Georgia in Tbilisi. In February 2014, the upcoming entry of Georgia into the Energy Association of Europe was announced. The goal of the Energy Association is to create a

competitive and transparent market that will be based on EU directives and the principles of the Energy Association Charter. The ultimate goal of the organization is effective integration with the EU energy market. The European Union and Georgia have very close and positive relations. The Association Agreement between the EU and Georgia entered into force in July 2016 and is aimed at political association and economic integration. The EU and Georgia have also concluded an Agreement on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), and citizens of Georgia from March 28, 2017 can carry out visa-free trips to the Schengen zone. The EU is Georgia's largest trading partner and provides technical and financial assistance to this country in the amount of more than 350 million Georgian lari (120 million euros) annually.

In 2016, the EU became the main trading partner of Georgia. It accounts for 31% of all the country's trade. The EU provides support to Georgian companies by providing them with funding, training opportunities and assistance in entering new markets through the EU4Business initiative. In general, since 2009, EU assistance has amounted to more than 2.1 billion Georgian lari (711 million euros). As a result, 63,000 enterprises received support, and 2,450 new jobs were created. EU support for agriculture has led to increased incomes for Georgian farmers. With the help of the EU, more than 1,500 farm cooperatives were created. Figures indicate a 20% increase in income and a twofold increase in employment. EU support helped open 59 information and communication centers across the country, which allowed more than 250,000 farmers to work more efficiently. Since March 2018, the liberalization of the visa regime for Georgian citizens came into force. According to the Georgian authorities, more than 160,000 citizens of the country have already been able to visit EU countries without a visa. From 2015 to 2017, 1,700 students and teachers from Georgia studied or taught themselves in the EU under the Erasmus + program. More than 5,300 young people and youth workers, along with their peers from the EU, are participating in various joint projects. Since April 2016, researchers and innovators from Georgia have been able to participate in Horizon 2020, the largest European research and innovation program. They participate under the same conditions as their colleagues from EU member states. The EU is actively working to ensure that Georgian citizens are provided with proper access to justice. The EU contributed to the creation of a government Legal Aid Service, which has already provided free legal services to over 90,000 people and represented more than 5,000 juveniles in court. In addition, the service provided free legal advice to 140,000 citizens of Georgia who cannot afford to hire a lawyer. The EU-funded various training programs for judges, prosecutors, prison officers and probation officers, public defenders and lawyers increase their professionalism and effectiveness and further ensure more effective protection of the rights of Georgian citizens. With EU support, the government has established 44 Community Centers in small towns and villages throughout the country. These centers provide 200 state and banking services, free-of-charge access to the Internet and libraries, which makes life easier for the 90,000 citizens of Georgia who live there. Georgia actively participates in large-scale regional programs on transport security and the development of the transport network, on environmental

protection, climate change and the green economy, on energy security, renewable energy sources and energy efficiency. The country also participates in the Cross-Border Cooperation Program, within the framework of which Georgia is included in the Black Sea program, aimed at reducing the amount of garbage in sea water. The EU, together with the European Investment Bank, is helping Georgia modernize the country's main artery, the East-West expressway. This will ensure the growth of regional trade and passenger traffic. EU funding is improving air quality in Tbilisi: 143 new environmentally friendly buses appeared on the streets of the capital. The purchase of buses was made possible by a grant of more than 18 million Georgian lari (7 million euro) from the E5P Foundation, the largest donor of which is the EU. The EU is committed to strengthening Georgia's security. Immediately after the hostilities in August 2008, the EU launched the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia. From this moment on, the Mission is patrolling the territories day and night, especially those that are adjacent to the administrative borders with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. About 200 observers from different EU member states are involved in the EUMM field work. In March 2014, the Framework Agreement on the participation of Georgia in the operations of the EU Common Security and Defense Policy entered into force. Since then, Georgia has participated in several operations. At the moment, its most significant contribution is the direction of about 156 co-workers to participate in an EU operation in Central African Republic (EUFOR RCA). At present, Georgia participates in the EC Mission for the training of military personnel in the Central African Republic and the EU Mission for the training of military personnel in Mali. The EU continues to support the efforts of Georgia to address the consequences of the internal conflicts that began in the 1990s in the self-proclaimed regions of Georgia - in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The EU also supports efforts to stabilize the situation created in connection with the hostilities in August 2008, remains firmly committed to its policy of supporting Georgia's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, as well as engaging with the self-proclaimed regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia for a long-term settlement of the conflict. In July 2003, the EU approved the position of the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus. The financial support of the EU to Georgia in 2017-2020 will be 1.1 - 1.4 billion Georgian lari (371 - 453 million euros). EU assistance was key to the adoption of more than 7000 European standards in the field of health, safety and environmental protection. The EU also allocated 140 million Georgian lari (46 million euros) to Georgia for macro-financial assistance. Conclusion: Georgia is an important partner for the European Union, both in the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy and in the framework of the Eastern Partnership. The revision of the European Neighborhood Policy in 2015 confirmed the EU's long-term engagement with partner countries, in particular with partners such as Georgia who wish to establish closer relations with the EU. The new ENP, whose distinctive features are differentiation and complicity, continues to strengthen ties and promote further rapprochement between Georgia and European legislation and standards. The 2016 EU Global

Strategy confirmed that Georgia is an example of the sustainability of the state and society in the Eastern Neighborhood region.

– Relations between Ukraine and the European Union after the signing of the Association Agreement by Ukraine have been steadily developing, but the country's investment indicators against the background of the ongoing armed conflict in Donbass and the political crisis worsened, and key sectors of the economy (including export-oriented) plunged into crisis. On 2.11.1991, the European Commission recognized the democratic nature of the All-Ukrainian Referendum, and the European Council, which met on 9-10.12.1991 in Maastricht (after the signing of the Bialowieza Accords), expressed a desire to develop relations with Belarus, Ukraine and Russia, “freely and peacefully expressed their will to complete sovereignization”. In the spring of 1992, the European Mission adopted a directive to begin negotiations on the preparation of cooperation agreements with Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine. The leadership of Ukraine from the very beginning stated that it considers European integration as a priority direction of the country's foreign policy. Already in the resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated July 2, 1993 "On the main directions of the domestic and foreign policy of Ukraine" the priority of the European vector and the desire to seek entry into the European Union were approved. However, the all-European policy towards Ukraine until 1994 was marked by declarativeness and utter vagueness of wording. It reflected the fears of European politicians on issues such as the unwillingness of the Ukrainian leadership to compromise on nuclear weapons on Ukrainian territory, the lack of progress on the closure of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the rise of Ukraine's confrontation with Russia, Europe's main partner in the post-Soviet space, a high degree of economic instability in Ukraine. Only in 1994, after the fundamental issue of the removal of nuclear weapons of the former USSR from the territory of independent Ukraine was resolved at the beginning of the year and its accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a Nuclear-Free State, did United Europe take the first concrete step in the development relations with Ukraine. On June 14, 1994, a basic Partnership and Cooperation Agreement was signed between Ukraine and the EU. This shift was promoted by the election of Leonid Kuchma to the post of President of Ukraine, which in comparison with the representative of the party nomenklatura Leoni-Kravchuk was perceived in Europe as a young energetic politician and a major production manager. Active reform work, which Leonid Kuchma launched in his presidency, contributed to maintaining this image. It is unimportant that the new president promised to reduce the level of confrontation in the Russian-Ukrainian relations, which was of considerable interest to Europe. In May 2009, Ukraine, along with five other former Soviet republics, began participating in a new initiative of the European Union - the EaP. At the Ukraine-EU summit in November 2010, a protocol was signed to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement on the main principles of participation in EU programs, which stipulated that representatives of Ukraine would be able to participate in the status of observers in EU programs, as well as be part of The composition of the steering committees of those programs that Ukraine will provide financial support.

In February 2011, Ukraine became a full member of the European Energy Community, whose goal is to create a single market for electricity and gas in the EU and Southeast Europe. The text of the new document was finally agreed upon in November 2011, but due to the complicated relations between the EU and Ukraine (arrest of Yulia Tymoshenko), its signing was postponed several times, while the European Union put forward a number of preliminary conditions to the Ukrainian leadership. Only on March 30, 2012, the heads of the delegations of Ukraine and the European Union initialed the Association Agreement, and on July 19, 2012, the Agreement on an in-depth and comprehensive free trade zone. In July 2012, Ukraine and the EU agreed to amend the agreement on visa facilitation. In March-April 2013, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the European Parliament ratified these agreements. On November 29, 2013, speaking at the Vilnius Eastern Partnership Summit, President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich refused to sign an association agreement with the EU, and the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers to suspend preparations for the conclusion of an association agreement between Ukraine and the EU caused mass protests in Kiev and number of regions of Ukraine, which led to the resignation of the government, and subsequently - to a complete change of government. On 2.03.2014, the new leadership of Ukraine ordered to resume the process of preparing for the signing of the agreement. On March 21, 2014, representatives of the EU and the Prime Minister of Ukraine Arseniy Yatsenyuk signed the political block of the Association Agreement (replacing the previous Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and Ukraine) that part of the document that concerns political interaction, security issues and struggle with terrorism. According to the signed document, the political dialogue should be conducted within the framework of the council of the association at the level of foreign ministers and experts. In the sphere of foreign policy, partnership is envisaged in the area of settling regional conflicts, Ukraine's participation in EU civil and military operations to overcome crisis situations, as well as in exercises and trainings. The economic part of the Agreement was signed three months later, on June 27, 2014, by representatives of the EU and President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko. It envisages the creation of a free trade zone and addresses such issues as market access, energy trade, cooperation in agriculture, transport, metallurgy, space, scientific research, tourism, entrepreneurial activities, protection of intellectual property, dispute resolution and tax conditions. On September 16, 2014, the Verkhovna Rada approved the draft law on ratification of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, which was signed on the same day by President Petro Poroshenko. 1.09.2017 The Association of Ukraine with the EU was ratified. In July 2014, tripartite negotiations of the Russian Federation, the European Union and Ukraine began in Brussels to implement the Association Agreement of the European Union and Ukraine, where the parties began to discuss practical issues of the implementation of the free trade agreement included in the economic section of the Association Agreement, in the context of its influence on trade between Russia and Ukraine, on September 12, 2014, at the Ukraine-Russia-EU trilateral talks, an agreement was reached to postpone the implementation of the agreement on the

creation of a deep comprehensive free trade zone. Within the Association of Ukraine with the EU until at least the end of 2015 and to maintain during this period of free trade within the CIS. Until that time, the EU will retain the right of duty-free access for Ukrainian goods to the European market, and European exports to Ukraine will continue to be subject to duties. On 17 May 2017, in Strasbourg, during the working visit of Petro Poroshenko to the European Parliament, a document was signed on the introduction of a visa-free regime for the entry of Ukrainian citizens to Europe. The document came into force at the beginning of June 2017. The introduction of a visa-free regime gives the citizens of Ukraine the right to move freely across the territory of 30 states. These are the 22 countries that are members of the European Union and the Schengen Agreement, four countries of the Schengen Agreement that are not members of the European Union (Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein) and four countries of the European Union that are not included in the Schengen Agreement (Cyprus, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia). The exceptions are the UK and Ireland. A visa-free regime will give citizens of Ukraine the right to stay in Europe for a period of 90 days during each 180-day period. The document does not give the right to reside, work-out or study in the EU. On the prospects of Ukraine's membership in the EU, in theory any European country can join the EU. The EU Council consults with the Commission and the European Parliament and makes a decision about the start of negotiations on accession. The Board may approve the application only unanimously. To obtain approval of the application, the country must meet the necessary criteria.

-Relations of the Republic of Belarus and the EU. The general format of relations between Belarus and the EU was formed in the early 1990s, the content of the partnership was significantly changed after the November 1996 referendum in Belarus. As a result, in the period 1997-2007, a "complex of lack of accuracy" was formed in relations between Belarus and the EU: the political dialogue was limited; the legal framework was not developed; Belarus took a limited part in EU programs, in particular, in the ENP; In June 2007, due to non-compliance with the recommendations of the International Labor Organization, the Republic was excluded from the system of EU General Preferences. During 2007-2008 The framework conditions for the restoration of the political dialogue between Belarus and the EU gradually began to change. An important step was the signing in March 2008 of the Agreement between Belarus and the European Commission on the opening of a representative office of the European Commission. Taking into account a well-balanced internal and foreign policy position of the Belarusian leadership, as well as assessments following the parliamentary elections, in October 2008, the EU Council decided to suspend a visa ban on representatives of Belarus's leadership and lift the contact ban at the highest level with the officials of Belarus and the restoration of the political dialogue between the EU and Belarus. At the end of 2008-2010, meetings of high-ranking EU representatives with the leadership of Belarus took place, during which they discussed actual problems of bilateral relations. The second stage, which began in November 1996 and continues to the present, is characterized by cooling of ties, closure of political

contacts. The main reason for the deterioration of relations was the holding in Belarus in 1996 of a referendum on introducing amendments and additions to the Constitution of 1994. In October 1996, the Ambassadors of France accredited to Minsk, Germany, Great Britain and Italy sent a statement to the Foreign Ministry of Belarus in which On behalf of the EU, they expressed concern about the threat of violation of the Constitution and noted that the chances of the Republic of Belarus to play an active role in Europe and deepen cooperation with the EU are under threat. Differences between the parties on the issue of the legitimacy of the referendum decisions led to the fact that the so-called “Belarusian question” was posed in European politics. On September 15, 1997, the situation in the Republic of Belarus was considered at a special meeting of the Council of EU Foreign Ministers. The meeting resulted in minimizing contacts with Belarus. The Relationship Statement with Belarus noted that the EU member states will oppose Belarus’s membership in the Council of Europe, will not conclude a temporary agreement or partnership and cooperation agreements with it and intend to carry out bilateral relations exclusively through the EU leadership. The EU also decided to suspend the implementation of technical assistance programs to the Republic of Belarus (TACIS, TEMPUS), with the exception of humanitarian or regional projects supporting the democratization process. As a result of the adopted resolution, the political dialogue at the highest level between Belarus and the EU member states was suspended. Thus, in spite of the objective conditions for expanding cooperation of Belarus with a united Europe, the subjective factor has come to the fore, the influence of which has minimized the achievements of the previous years. After the presidential elections (September 2001), the Belarusian leadership declared a number of measures to liberalize the economy. However, representatives of European institutions considered that these activities were not implemented even in small amounts. However, over the past two years, progress has been made in relations between the EU and Belarus. Belarus is more proactive in participating in the EaP, in particular in its multilateral formats, negotiations on the Partnership in the field of mobility have come to an end, and negotiations are under way on agreements on the simplification of the visa regime and readmission. The tangible steps taken by Belarus to respect universal freedoms, the rule of law and the protection of human rights, including fundamental labor rights, will remain a fundamental factor in shaping the future EU policy towards Belarus, as noted in the Conclusions of the Council on Foreign Relations on February 15, 2016.

#### *EU and other countries*

The EU has long included the Middle East in the list of priority directions of its foreign policy. In this regard, the EU is making special efforts to develop economic and political relations with the region. Recently, due to political upheavals in the countries of North Africa and the Middle East, the EU has changed its previously prudent position to be more active. The relations of Morocco and the EU today are built on the basis of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, which establishes an association between the Kingdom of Morocco on the one hand, the European Communities and their Member States, on the other, concluded on February 26, 1996 in Brussels. The Agreement entered into force on

March 1, 2000, after it had passed ratification in Morocco, the European Parliament and in all national parliaments of the Member States of the Union and the Communities. The Euro-Mediterranean agreements were concluded by the EU with 8 Mediterranean countries, as well as the Palestinian Authority, and defined the conditions for the relationship between these countries and the Union. The content and the text of such agreements are extremely similar, therefore the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement can be called a kind of standard agreement. Nevertheless, each agreement is unique and fixes specific issues of association, taking into account the specificity of the bilateral relations of a particular country with the EU, priorities and areas of mutual interests. The Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, which establishes an association with Morocco, provides for cooperation between the parties on a wide range of issues, mainly in the economic field, and the central component of the association is the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital. Undoubtedly, the priority in cooperation between Morocco and the EU for the long term is given to building close economic relations, up to the construction of a Euro-Mediterranean free trade zone. In addition to economic provisions, the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement provides for a political dialogue of the parties, determines the organizational structure of the association. The relationship between the EU and the Syrian Arab Republic is governed by two basic agreements: a contract of partnership and cooperation (1977) and an agreement on stabilization and association (2009). Syria is a member of the Mediterranean Union (formerly the Barcelona Process), as well as a possible member of the ENP. However, after massive anti-government speeches broke out in Syria in 2011, most EU countries openly supported the Syrian opposition and demanded the resignation of President Bashar al-Assad. In response to the suppression by the Syrian authorities of the opposition speeches, a part of the European states ended their diplomatic relations with official Damascus, and the EU, for its part, imposed an embargo against Syria. Throughout the new and recent history of Egypt was closely associated with Europe, especially the UK and France. Now Egypt has the status of a partner country of the European Union. This status is a confirmation of the EU's understanding of the fact that Egypt is a country with a consistently developing economy, clearly economically oriented towards Europe, which has economic and political weight in the Mediterranean region. The Middle East region has always been a zone of competition of large states. The attractiveness for the EU of the Middle East was determined by its geostrategic importance and rich reserves of natural resources. And in turn, conflicts in the Middle East forced competing states to make special efforts to find a better solution to a crisis situation, which gave those who could offer it certain advantages in the region. With the end of the "cold war", and also because Russia could no longer play the same role that the USSR played, the countries of Europe are returning to the region, but not as separate colonial states, but as the European Union a force capable of competing or, when necessary, cooperating with the United States. The EU is the closest neighbor of the Arab Middle East and the natural market for it. Of course, the EU is not the main external partner of the Middle East, the United States has been and remains its main partner. Therefore,

the EU's efforts to stimulate the peace process in the Middle East are essentially subordinate to American policy in this region. After the change of power in the United States began the adjustment of foreign policy programs, it also affected the Middle Eastern countries. The United States re-imagines itself in the region. And, naturally, this cannot but influence the EU policy in the Middle East and North Africa, and in turn the EU policy influences the plans of the White House. The EU's policy towards Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East is to "create an environment of stability and prosperity surrounding the EU, consisting of friendly states from Morocco to Russia. Such a policy reinforced the popularity of Europe in the East, which viewed it as a positive force in solving global problems. However, this is a new research topic.

The main goal of the EaP in a broader sense is to strengthen and deepen integration between the EU and the countries of Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus in parallel with the process of deepening integration between the EU, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, which is also ongoing. In the short term, the Eastern Partnership should reduce the differences between the EU's activities in the Black Sea and Mediterranean regions, and the EU's policy towards Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. In the long run, the EaP plans to deepen integration between the EU and non-EU countries - representatives of the initiative, up to their full integration with the EU. The EaP can also strengthen integration by proposing the EU to begin pursuing interests in relation to EU member states that are not yet adopted by the European Union at this stage of the integration process. The result of cooperation in the framework of the EaP for EU members from Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus is the prospect of joining the EU.

On May 23, 2008, samples of documents on the EaP were presented, according to which the EaP is an open organization for all 27 EU member states and applies to all Eastern partners. The proposal identifies the following countries - non-EU members, such as: from Eastern Europe - Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus, from the South Caucasus - Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia. The EaP covers those areas of cooperation that are in line with the current interests of non-EU countries regarding the European Union. According to the documents, the EaP cooperates in the following areas of main interest:

- social activities: deepening cooperation in the area of demarcation of borders and their demarcation, migration and visa facilitation, leading to the establishment of a visa-free process between the EU and these partners, and the creation of a better infrastructure of borders. In addition, exchange programs, seminars, joint research, etc., are increasing;

- economic: deepening cooperation towards the establishment of free trade zones, causing economic integration between eastern countries, creating transport networks;

- legal: developing new legal frameworks for cooperation between the EU and its partners, developing new Action Plans and Cooperation, as well as Cooperation Agreements - new agreements that move current documents forward. The proposal also includes cooperation in the implementation of these documents;

- political: the initiative provides for cooperation in strengthening the rule of law, cooperation in foreign security policy, state public service and local authorities.

In addition, cooperation must be conducted in accordance with European standards, policies and laws. For example, texts of the new legal framework between the EU and its partners should correspond to deepening the reform process in non-EU countries and be related to the alignment process with EU legislation. Moreover, progress in implementing reforms will affect the amount of EU financial support to non-member countries. According to the proposal, the key point affecting cooperation is the principle of disagreement in the ENP. This principle ensures that the progress of integration of a particular country will not be related to the scale of integration between other countries and the European Union. Collaboration should be based on specific projects. In addition, the EaP should cooperate with other European regional initiatives.

With regard to project financing, they will be supported by financial resources for non-member countries, such as: the European Neighborhood Policy Instrument (ENPI), European Investment Bank (EIB, European Investment Bank) and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development loans (EBRD, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), and also at the expense of finances from the EU budget.

<b>Eastern Partnership</b>	
Advantages	disadvantages
<p>Deepening the existence and creation of new regional relations outside the EU, for example, between Eastern European countries, Eastern Europe and Central Europe, or between the Baltic and Black Sea regions</p>	<p>The Eastern Partnership document does not include a single statement about the provision of the EU membership prospects to EU neighbors.</p>
<p>For a separately considered country:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensuring the gradual deepening of economic and political integration with the EU;</li> <li>- deepening relations between neighboring countries</li> </ul>	<p>The Eastern Partnership is a common proposal that does not offer any new areas of cooperation, new financial support or an extensive institutional structure.</p>

The absence of a membership obligation does not mean that the EaP is an alternative solution to EU membership. The proposal, which notes that the main purpose of cooperation is to deepen integration between the EU and other participants, in no way determines the boundaries of integration. In addition, the Interim Government begins the process of strengthening and consolidating

integration with the EU. Considering the controversy about further expansion relevant to the EU, integration can only move forward over time. This initiative does not involve participation in cooperation in areas such as energy or legal, which play a significant role for further integration with the EU. Also, the proposal does not contribute to cooperation in strengthening the movement of labor, cross-border cooperation, or at least common initiatives in the field of defense and security. This model of a wider range of partnerships will be developed later.

It is worth noting that Moscow considers the EAP as a regional organization directed against Russian interests. The reaction of Russian official and media sources to the EP indicates that Moscow is trying to criticize this initiative mainly emphasizing the fact that the EAP is an alternative to EU membership. All actions of Russia are aimed at ensuring that non-EU countries abandon support for the EaP.

Thus, the Eastern Partnership should be considered as a process, and not as an already formed and coordinated instrument. According to the apt expression of someone from the experts, VP - this is like a bicycle, if it stops, it will fall. It should be noted that over time, the EaP will develop and become a tool more in line with the interests of countries from Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. Also, the activities of the EaP can not only deepen the regional integration between the partners of the initiative, but also the global process. The EaP would not only be another platform for cooperation between the EU and non-EU countries, but over time it will also deepen the diversification of the ENP.

#### *Main stages of the development of the Eastern Partnership initiative*

Prague Summit. On May 7, 2009, a constituent summit in Prague was held, where a joint declaration on the Eastern Partnership was adopted and its official institution was held. The main goal of the new initiative was to declare “creating the necessary conditions for accelerating political and economic integration between the European Union and interested partner countries” by promoting political and socio-economic reforms in the EaP member countries. At the same time, the Prague Declaration emphasized that in their activities the EaP will be guided by the principle of "conditionality", that is, moving forward only if the countries participating in the program meet certain EU requirements. EAP implies the prospect of concluding a new generation association agreement, deep integration into the EU economy, concluding comprehensive agreements on free trade zones, facilitating travel to the EU for citizens, subject to the implementation of measures to improve security, the introduction of energy security measures and increased financial assistance.

- Warsaw Summit. In May 2010, Poland proposed the creation of a “group of friends” within the framework of the EaP program and invited Russia to participate in this structure. Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski noted that, in addition to Russia, Norway, Canada, the United States, Japan and other countries could be included in this group. It was assumed that Russia will be invited to discuss only some local initiatives, for example, relating to the Kaliningrad region. Russia, however, refused to include Kaliningrad in the scope of the EaP.

- Brussels meeting. In July 2012, a meeting of the foreign ministers of the European Union and the EaP countries was held in Brussels and was dedicated to Belarus. Earlier, the European Parliament called on ministers to discuss at the meeting the situation with human rights in this country. Representatives of the EU countries once again reminded that the condition for the active participation of Belarus in the EU programs is still the fulfillment of human rights requirements.

- Vilnius Summit. On November 28-29, 2013, the third summit of the Interim Government was held, at which it was planned to initial the agreement on the Free Trade Zone with Moldova and, if certain conditions are met, sign the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union. The summit was attended by presidents of the states of Transcaucasia and Ukraine, representatives of the governments of Belarus and Moldova, as well as the top leadership of the EU (Barroso, van Rompuy). Representatives of Georgia and Moldova were only able to initial the association agreement with the EU, Armenia and Ukraine refrained from signing it (despite the fact that Ukraine's initialing had already taken place). The EU representative Barroso rejected the proposal of the President of Ukraine Yanukovich on the participation of Russia in the negotiations, and Martin Schulz said that an agreement with Ukraine could be signed with the next president. The host of the summit, Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė, did not hide her disappointment and took a tough stance: "There will not be any practice or dealings with the Ukrainian leadership of the EU."

- Brussels Summit. In November 2017, the seventh EaP Summit was held in Brussels. For the first time, all six participating countries took part in its work. At the end of the summit, Armenia signed a comprehensive partnership agreement with the EU. The next summit will be held at the end of 2019.

Russian experts believe that this project challenges Russian interests in the region. Since the EaP appeared as a Polish initiative, the project may hide anti-Russian geopolitical ambitions. According to Russian experts, the highest priority component of the new initiative is its energy "component" - in particular, the creation of alternative energy routes to Russia for Europe. Another obvious goal is to undermine Russia's geopolitical influence in Eastern Europe and strengthen the EU's position here. A number of Russian experts are talking about the EU's intention to finally disintegrate the post-Soviet space with the help of the Interim Government and to withdraw the CIS countries from the influence of the Russian Federation. Their politicians assert that they are against these CIS countries putting themselves in an artificial dilemma: either forward, to the bright future of the EU, or backward - with Russia. And the fact that there were such signs at the initial stage of the EP was a fact. In addition, the Ukrainian crisis led to a multitude of international consequences - economic sanctions against Russia hampered its space for maneuver on the world market, the political resistance of Western countries buried the G8 and the prospects for new large-scale joint initiatives. In Poland and the Baltic countries, the growth of confrontation between Russia and the West fit into the general outline of an unbalanced and objective perception of the eastern neighbor and gave rise to, among other things, the emergence of scientific reports that explicitly state the need to expand the presence of American military forces in

these territories of countries. In particular, such a document was published in August 2015 by the Polish Institute of International Relations (PISM), entitled "US Military Presence in Central Europe: Implications for NATO's Strategic Adaptation, Deterrence and Allied Unity". In it, the authors advocate an increase in the number of American troops on the territory of Central and Eastern Europe, taking into account the fact that after the Ukrainian conflict and the "hostile attitude" from Russia, the United States turned out to be the most decisive and capable ally of Poland and the Baltic countries. Other CEE countries reject the idea of permanently deploying an American battalion on their territory. Germany has traditionally opposed the creation of NATO military bases in Poland, proposing to reanimate the Russia-NATO Council. Dirk Wiese, in his article published on May 23, 2018 titled "Dialogue or direct speech?", speaking of relations with Russia and the EaP countries, considers unproductive a rash classification into categories like "people who understand Putin" or "foreign policy hawks". "Today one thing is clear: after the annexation of the Crimea, contrary to international law, and the destabilization of the situation in Eastern Ukraine, Russia directly challenged the foundations of the European security system, and thus the fundamental idea of the policy of detente of Willy Brandt and Egon Bar. Mutual trust as the basis of any partnership has been greatly shaken. Therefore, the EU, together with international partners, clearly stated its position and sanctions to make it clear that there is no place for a policy aimed at forcibly changing borders in Europe in the 21st century. However, from the very beginning, the pressure was constantly accompanied by proposals of a constructive dialogue. We must continue to communicate with the Russian Federation and probe the islands for cooperation not only with the aim of resolving conflicts that take place in Syria and Ukraine, but also opposing the alienation between the societies of our countries. "

The election of opposition leader Nikol Pashinyan as prime minister of Armenia gives hope for the possibility of a reset, and not only in EU-Armenia relations. It is important that he stay true to his promises. This may be another proof of Armenia's commitment to democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights, as well as its desire to implement them. The new large-scale agreement between the EU and Armenia, signed last autumn, provides an excellent basis for this, opens up new possibilities for future cooperation with Belarus, which plays an important role as a party hosting the participants in difficult negotiations to resolve the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, demonstrates its willingness constructive participation in efforts to stabilize the situation in the region, to act as a bridge for settling relations with Russia. Thanks to special relations with Russia, on the one hand, and good relations with other EaP countries - Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan - on the other hand, Belarus, of course, will also play a significant role in this region in the future.

The six EaP countries have different foreign policy goals and orientations, while they are closely interrelated in geopolitical and security terms. Transnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the Crimea and the Donbass, Nagorno-Karabakh - each country is under different pressure from Russia, seeking to preserve its interests and spheres of influence in the region. So far, only Belarus has managed

to avoid a territorial conflict, but Minsk pays its high price for Moscow. It is therefore not surprising that 98 percent of experts from six EaP countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and from five Central and Eastern European countries (Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia) surveyed by the East European Security Research Initiative (EESRI) in December 2017, called Russia's aggressive policy as the biggest external threat to the security of the EaP countries, - writes N. Eremin's articles. Of course, external assistance, especially from the EU and NATO, is of indisputable importance for strengthening the security of the EaP region and the importance of arms and money should not be underestimated. However, the main work must be carried out by the EaP countries themselves, - many scientists and specialists speak about it. The ability to counter current threats to security largely depends on the willingness of countries to effectively implement reforms, primarily anti-corruption, political and economic, and not only in the sphere of security and defense.

As a general conclusion, we can offer an opinion that the authors of the article Knut Flekenstein and Julia Vanninger expressed on this issue. Anyone who considers an EaP program to be an EU accession candidate reduces the chances of success of this policy, which provides for much more. The meaning of this partnership is to support the EU's eastern neighbors in carrying out political, economic and social transformations so that they benefit from EU achievements and regional cooperation, and the EU itself has secured a stable and safe environment. We are talking about the maximum mutual exchange without membership in EU institutions in order to avoid the emergence of new lines of division. As part of the European Neighborhood Policy, the EaP also combines two approaches: EU support for specific reforms at the bilateral level, combined with proposals for close cooperation, and the creation of incentives to improve multilateral cooperation in the region, both between the Eastern neighbors and the EU . Therefore, at the moment, the EAP is facing two challenges. First, the EaP needs to succeed in supporting the start of reforms and their effective implementation in the neighboring states, in particular, in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, which have concluded ambitious association agreements in the areas of political cooperation and economic integration, as well as in-depth agreements and a comprehensive free trade area. The EU is obliged to neutralize the conviction that a certain stage has been completed with the conclusion of these agreements, and also to resist the demands of the earliest possible proposal to move to the next level of cooperation. On the contrary, thanks to these agreements, the opportunities for a closer partnership with a long-term perspective were created. Secondly, the EaP was faced with the challenge of dividing the partners into countries that have entered into association agreements with the EU, and countries that do not have such. For example, Georgia, and with it both Moldova and Ukraine are making every effort, on the basis of an association agreement, to get the EU to become even more willing to meet them. Despite repeated calls for a policy precisely tailored to individual neighbors, the EU should not deviate from its goals to improve multilateral cooperation between Eastern partners. This can be achieved only by maintaining at least the minimum level of consolidation within the Eastern

Partnership and avoiding permanent separation of associate and non-associated partners in each forum. In the final analysis, the key to long-term stability and security is precisely the partnership between all the neighbors. In addition, it is in the interest of the EU to stimulate the spread of the spillover effect by countries that successfully implement the reforms associated with the Association Agreement. The European Union should continue to avoid feeding unrealistic expectations from the EaP and false hopes for the prospect of joining the EU. Obviously, N. Eremin believes that the EaP is used to strengthen the EU's positions in the field of energy and security, and also is intended to confirm the role of the EU as a global player. However, this configuration leads to an increase in tension with the Russian Federation and the EAEU.

On October 25, 2017, the Head of the European External Relations Service (EEAS), Federica Mogherini, spoke in the Estonian capital Tallinn at the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Conference, which is anticipating the summit of the heads of EaP states in Brussels on November 24. The conference was attended by 469 delegates from the post-Soviet republics and other countries. She said that the EaP countries can always be sure that the EU is on their side. "You better support the reforms necessary for your countries and monitor their effectiveness." Mogherini announced 20 proposals on the development of civil society until 2020, which are to be discussed at the end of autumn. She noted that the EaP project refers "not to geopolitics and spheres of influence", but to improving living standards, "to the economy, trade, and above all to democracy, human rights and civil society." Indeed, from 2014 to 2016. With the support of the EU, 260 projects were launched in six post-Soviet republics, covering more than 600 organizations. The program of EU general financing in the EaP countries - Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, through the European Neighborhood Policy (EPS) is several billion euros, according to the plan for 2014-2020. For individual countries, assistance varies from approximately € 150 million over 7 years for Azerbaijan and Belarus to € 1 billion for Ukraine, which occupies about a third of all EU-planned expenditures for the EAP.

EU relations with Central Asian countries, with Kazakhstan. On the edge of the ASEM summit (an international organization uniting the countries of East Asia and Europe) with the participation of Nursultan Nazarbayev in the EU, they announced a new strategy for the development of close relations with the Central Asian countries. In particular, from Kazakhstan, located at the crossroads of two continents, in Brussels they expect serious initiatives to create new transport lines, seaports and terminals. "Today, relations between the two continents are reaching an unprecedented level. Asian markets account for over a third of EU exports. Almost half of the goods and services imported by the EU come from Asian countries. Every year thousands of students, scientists, researchers move between the EU and Asia. While the relationship with Asia has always been part of EU policy, we have not yet fully used our potential in this area. It is for this reason that earlier this week we proposed a new political framework for the revitalization of the EU, namely, a strategy to expand relations between Europe and Asia," Federica

Mogherini, head of EU diplomacy, said in her political article on September 19, 2018.

According to her, the EU is ready to offer Asian countries their experience in the field of regulation, technical knowledge and funding opportunities for projects that promote greater interaction and rapprochement, and will ensure financial and environmental growth. “Within the framework of the EU approach, the relationship can only be built on the basis of partnership. Many partnerships already exist. Kazakhstan, as a state located at the crossroads of continental transport and logistics lines, does change its status from a landlocked country to a connecting bridge. Especially in light of its membership in ASEM since 2014, the transit potential in the form of Kazakhstan’s initiatives to create new transport lines, seaports and terminals is extremely important. China is also promoting several transport initiatives and projects related to Europe in the framework of the Belt project and the route. Japan focuses on linking infrastructure investments with support for Japanese exports to Southeast Asia” states F. Mogherini. In addition, the EU wants to work on establishing relationships based on common principles: transparency, non-discriminatory market practices, equal conditions for economic entities, protection of intellectual property rights. “Finally, we mobilize all our levers to support projects by providing the necessary funding, using the full potential of the European Investment Bank and new instruments for foreign investment policy available within the EU budget. According to the Asian Development Bank, Asia will need more than 1.3 trillion euros per year of infrastructure investment in the coming decades. The EU is ready to support Asian countries in overcoming this challenge, using public and private funding through a combination of tools such as grants, guarantees, credit and blending,” says the head of EU diplomacy. At the same time, she says that investments must be financially viable and sustainable. In other words, the EU will support exclusively those projects that mobilize domestic resources, create value for local communities and be sustainable in the long term. “In total, Europe and Asia account for almost 70% of the world population and more than 60% of world GDP. We have the opportunity to make our ties stronger and mutually beneficial. Sustainable cooperation based on strong partnerships and transparent rules is the best way to move the EU, Europe and Asia forward,” F. Mogherini said. The ASEM Summit took place on October 18–19, 2018 in Brussels.

#### **7.4 Main stages of the integration aspirations of Ukraine to the European Union**

The significance of the European integration choice of the Ukrainian state is determined, firstly, by the fact that the European Union (hereinafter - the EU) is one of the largest foreign trade partners of Ukraine, secondly, Ukraine and the European Community have close political, historical and cultural ties, third, it is with the EU member states that the Ukrainian state has common mental and cultural values. The European choice of Ukraine is declared in regulatory legal acts, where one of the foundations of foreign policy is to ensure the integration of Ukraine into the European political, economic, legal space. The Association

Agreement between Ukraine and the EU itself is a big economic and political project that was supposed to be one of the instruments for the modernization of the Ukrainian state: deepening relations between Ukraine and the EU, further transforming Ukraine into a state with a pluralistic democracy and free market economy.

Successful implementation of the European integration policy, in particular, preparation for signing, signing and implementation of the main provisions of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, requires the gradual creation of such a system of government that will ensure the development of Ukraine as a highly developed, legal, civilized European state with a high standard of living, social stability and justice, culture and democracy, will allow it to become an influential factor in the world, will open the way to full membership in the EU.

Holding the position that the European integration processes, first of all, are a matter of the internal policy of the state, the implementation of which will allow reaching the level of European standards in all spheres of public life, we can consider European integration as a technical process that consists of three stages (Table 3).

*Table 3*

The main stages of the European integration policy of Ukraine

Stages	Necessary actions
Stage I: preparation for signing and signing of the AA (Association of Agreement)	1) to complete the main provisions and priorities of the EU - Ukraine Association Agenda
	2) to coordinate institutional, political, socio-economic and other reforms with the provisions of the EU - Ukraine Association Agenda
	3) to establish a strategic policy document and a Technical calendar for the implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU
	4) to hold a public discussion of all documents in the field of European integration and the content of reforms
	5) create mechanisms to involve all Executive authorities (Central and local) in the implementation of the European integration policy of Ukraine
	6) to fulfill the criteria, the EU developed for signing the AA
Phase II: implementation of the provisions of the	1) to improve the institutional and organizational structure of management and coordination of the European integration policy of Ukraine

AA	2) to strengthen the staff of the departments of the Central and local Executive authorities for the competence of which includes questions of European integration, and their subordination to the appropriate Central organ of Executive power
	3) to provide the state budget with priority funding for activities in the field of European integration
	4) to create an appropriate legal and regulatory base that will ensure the implementation of the provisions of the AA
	5) to continuously monitor the progress of the implementation of the provisions of the AA and the conduction of the European integration policy in general
	6) to involve civil society institutions in the assessment and monitoring of the implementation of the legal obligations assumed by Ukraine to the EU and the execution of the European integration policy
Stage III: preparation of Ukraine for integration into the European political, economic and legal area	1) to introduce a conceptual framework for reforming the key elements of the public administration system
	2) to involve civil society institutions in the process of informing the population about the principles of European integration policy, in order to obtain European integration's support
	3) to establish new institutions, organizational structures and instruments of public administration

The first part of the stage, namely, the signing of the AA, is an act of political action, because it is performed at the highest level and has crucial consequences - according to the international law, from the moment of signing, the parties are obliged to refrain from actions that may damage the goals and objects of the AA. At stage 2, there occurs a consistent and effective implementation of the provisions of the AA, which should create a solid base for further sustainable political and economic development of Ukraine. In addition, at this phase the foundation for a strategy of reforming major areas will be conducted and introduced European standards to improve the quality of life in this country. In case of the third stage, it will take place only when Ukraine, as an associate member, will be able to fulfill the obligatory economic and political conditions, which include the following actions: the existence of stable institutions; the rule of law; respect for the rights of man, citizen and minorities and their protection; the existence of an active market economy; the ability to assume responsibilities that membership implies.

The current legal basis for relations between Ukraine and the EU is the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) dated June 14, 1994 (entered into

force on March 1, 1998), which initiated cooperation on a wide range of political, trade, economic and humanitarian issues. The PCA is an important tool for attracting Ukraine to the legal framework of the single European market and the WTO system. It also has a number of important perspectives, including the prospect of building a free trade zone. In order to provide new impulse to bilateral relations and to take into account the new conditions for cooperation, in particular in the context of EU enlargement in 2004, on February 21, 2005 the Ukraine-EU Action Plan has been approved. This document allowed to significantly expanding the bilateral cooperation of Ukraine in the EU without amending the existing legal framework.

At the same time, apparently, we are interested in the fact that how the values or goals of bilateral cooperation were formulated:

- Human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, supremacy of law, human rights;
- European standards of working conditions, basic social rights, sustainable development;
- Cooperation in key areas of the EU's common foreign policy (combating terrorism, supporting international law, peaceful conflict resolution, etc.).

The first two points reflect the main traditional values, which were the historical achievements of the EU. Ukraine has an opportunity, a chance to break out of economic backwardness, relying on its main human capital resource, as it has already mentioned above. It was impossible to use it without the given above listed conditions. However, the third position reflects the fears of Russia's reaction, which was already present at that time and fully justified by now.

Initially, the EU's policy was inherently and internally contradictory toward Ukraine. On the one hand, the EU placed the country in one row with non-comparable (in size and value) with other new independent countries, on the other hand, the EU assigned a special role to Ukraine, as the joining connection in tough competition with Russia.

In 2003, the European Union warned Ukraine against concluding a customs union for the Common Economic Space (CES), stating that in the case of the creation of the Customs Union within the CES, the process of Euro-integration for Ukraine could be slowed down or cease altogether. The ATP with the European Union in the Russian Federation is served as a sharp change in Ukraine's foreign policy orientation. This statement is not true. Thus, in the law "Fundamentals of the National Security of Ukraine" (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2003), the goal of the state policy in this area was to ensure "full participation in the pan-European and regional collective security systems, gaining membership in the EU (CA) maintaining good neighborly relations and strategic partnership with the Russian Federation ". The PSA, like the SA later, assumed a political dialogue, encouraging the development of Ukraine, establishing political and economic freedoms in it, a democratic legal state, etc. At the same time, general principles of Ukraine's cooperation with the EU were laid down: cooperation with other independent states Eastern Europe, the creation of a free trade zone. In a common strategy, the EU's partnership with Ukraine, the adopted EU (GSP), noted that

"Ukraine occupies a unique place in Europe and is one of the key countries in the region."

The above description of Ukraine and its potential place not only in Eastern Europe, but also in New Europe in general (in any of its configurations) has been confirmed and continuing to be confirmed in political practice. But, recognizing this, the EU was not in hurry to change either its attitude towards Ukraine or its policy regarding its clearly expressed integration aspirations. Thus, for example, in the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP, 2002), the "Prodi formula" was proposed: "everything except institutions", which pushed the country's membership in the EU into an uncertain future and returned the relationship of the EU and Ukraine to the uncertainty that had place before the conclusion of the ATP in 1994. The reasons for this looked convincing. The attitudes of Ukraine and the EU developed between two different ideas about their goals: full membership of Ukraine in the EU and various political interpretations and tricks on the part of the EU. At the same time, Ukraine continued to insist on EU membership (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2010). The European Union did not deny Ukraine's membership in its Union, but diligently avoided any specifics, instead proposing the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP, 2004), the Eastern Partnership (EPAF, 2009), again equating Ukraine or mixing with other CIS countries, as if not seeing in them the greatest difference, not "bothering" about the features of Ukraine.

The last years of the second term of L.Kuchma's presidency, the course on Eurointegration was "diluted" by the so-called multi-vector policy. In the program for 2004-2007 nothing was said about Ukraine's accession to the EU. Ukraine has signed an agreement on the creation of the CES, but by telling the truth, that does not mean giving up EU membership. However, the events of the First Maydan, which accompanied the elections in Ukraine in the autumn of 2004, corrected the position of the EU. The resolution of the European Parliament said that they demonstrate the strength of civil society and its desire to become part of Europe. The Russian Federation held a different point of view. For the first time, the political positions of the EU and the Russian Federation towards Ukraine clearly and publicly diverged. The situation in this triangle at that time very much reminded the other that took shape during the years of V. Yanukovich's presidency and can be described as a situation of delayed decisions. According to V. Mironenko, in the first, and in the second case, it was possible to observe how events could develop if all their participants, both inside and outside, would have better understood Ukrainian specifics of the youngest European country. Internal political contradictions, of course, were very strong in it, which always divided it elite. Nevertheless, without direct intervention from the outside - both Maydan in 2004 and in 2014 could have been avoided.

The implementation of the political priorities of the Ukraine-EU Action Plan has allowed beginning negotiations in March 2007 on the conclusion of a new enhanced agreement to replace the ATP. Again, the political uncertainty that was discussed above was reproduced, its institutionalization occurred — it acquired a complete "elastic" form. Oppositionally, the Agreement did not deny anything, but did not promise anything in the new relations between the EU and Ukraine,

including Ukraine's accession to the EU. It promised the process, but not the result. Again, this is about opportunities that only give a chance without any guarantee. Thus, once again the goal was pushed back to an uncertain future. However, the movement continued, including in connection with the lack of alternatives. According to experts, the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) remained a useful, but not particularly noticeable, union, like the OSCE. In addition, the CIS institutes, which Ukraine formally belongs to, are gradually relegating to the second or third plan or are quietly dying off.

In such a situation, issues of economic support for European integration by the EU came to the fore. Meanwhile, negotiations on the free trade zone could begin only after Ukraine became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). During all this time, without receiving a weighty alternative, it had to limit its participation in cooperation with Russia and other CIS countries to bilateral relations. It was a very risky and small-minded EU policy. Despite the fact that Ukraine was paid much more attention than all other countries - "neighbors" and "partners", the ENP has changed little. Ukraine insisted on giving it clear and definite prospects for EU membership, and but the second tried to get away from this decision.

In February 2005, Viktor Yushchenko declared that the level of relations with the EU, determined by the "new neighborhood" policy, and confirmed in the EU-Ukraine Action Plan, does not quite suit Kiev. Ukraine does not intend to be just a neighbor of the European Union, but wants to be its full member. From the side of the EU, with the restrained support of Sweden and Britain, Lithuania and Poland lobbied the entry of Ukraine. Germany, Spain and France have not seen such an opportunity. The internal situation in the EU did not contribute to this either: serious differences in views on the nature and future of the EU, the financial crisis that broke out soon, the disputes over the general budget, problems with migrants and refugees, the actual denial of Turkey's membership, and the need to reform the EU. In September 2008, at the Paris Summit, the EU and Ukraine decided that the new document would be called the Association Agreement. Part of it was to be the Free Trade Zone (AA) Agreement. The agreement, as the experts rightly noted, was to become and was "not only the largest international legal document in the history of independent Ukraine, but also the most extensive international treaty ever signed by the EU with third countries."

The preparation of the SA was long, thorough, and difficult, and the adoption was accompanied by dramatic events that led to the collapse of what we call the regime of the Third Ukrainian Republic. N. Azarov "Ukraine at a crossroads" describes them in the book of memoirs. The unanswered, however, was the question of what and when prevented the development of Ukraine's relations in the East and the West at the same time. This, in our opinion, was hampered by the EU, as noted earlier, by the general uncertainty and vagueness of its position, and then by the financial crisis and the incompleteness of updating the EU's domestic and foreign policy, the lack of real EU institution reform. Moreover, from the Ukrainian side - political turbulence and a series of elections.

After Ukraine's accession to the WTO was completed on February 18, 2008, negotiations began on the creation of a deep and comprehensive free trade zone between Ukraine and the EU, which opens the way to the liberalization of the movement of goods, capital and services, as well as the broad harmonization of non-tariff economic regulation instruments. In the period from 2007 to 2012, 21 rounds of negotiations on the Association Agreement and 18 rounds of negotiations on the creation of a free trade zone took place.

Until 2012, the administration of Viktor Yanukovich, being busy with restoring relations with Russia, which in principle (not in essence) is correct, and the persecution of opponents, the strangulation of SMEs and the washing out of the middle class as such, which is wrong and even criminal, was not particularly zealous in implementation of the already identified steps. By 2011, it turned out that only eight of the seventy points on the Agenda of the association had been met to varying degrees. However, in November 2011, it was announced that all the provisions of the text of the AA were agreed. Complacency reigned in the EU - everyone was sure that, despite some of the above-mentioned features of that days' Ukrainian administration (the case of Y. Tyoshenko and others), it has nowhere to go.

In Ukraine, and especially in the Russian Federation, in the first half of 2012, opponents of the AA became active. It is difficult to say whether this was connected with the idea of reintegrating the post-Soviet space under the auspices of Russia and its newly reelected President V. Putin. However, according to numerous external signs, it can be concluded that after extending the stay of the Black Sea Fleet in the Crimea (almost at infinity, the so-called "Kharkov agreements") and the settlement of "gas disputes" to the satisfaction of all the "warm hands" on gas trading in both countries, the task of integrating reorientation of Ukraine came to the fore, without the participation of which the project lost its scope and meaning.

There was nothing unexpected in this, and especially nothing reprehensible - the normal political process. Nevertheless, the pressure was so strong that caused contrast reaction in Kiev. The administration of the President of Ukraine and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine intensified to the European direction. In the first half of 2012, the AA was initialed. Overcoming strong opposition from its own Party of Regions, whose founder was N. Azarov, and the leader V. Yanukovich, as well as a significant part of business circles traditionally oriented towards Russia, Kiev activates preparations for signing the AA. President of Ukraine V. Yanukovich enacted the decision of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine dated March 12, 2013 "On urgent measures for European integration of Ukraine." In the decision of the National Security and Defense Council, it was noted that urgent measures for the European integration of Ukraine are being taken to ensure the further development of Ukraine's strategic partnership with the EU and its member states on the basis of a political association and economic integration. The text of the AA was published in Ukrainian finally on June 20, 2013. It was greatly important the forthcoming signing of the AA in the EU within the framework scheduled for November 28, 2013 in Vilnius of the Eastern

Partnership Summit. The expected event was widely reported and presented in the Western and Ukrainian media as a historical milestone - the return of Ukraine "to Europe". However, November 21, 2013. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine by referring some unnamed shortcomings in the text unexpectedly declared that it opposes the signing of the AA. Experts have said many things about the difficulties awaiting Ukraine on this path "in Europe". According to economist A. Galchinsky, the signing of the so-called economic part of the Association Agreement with the EU is an event that can be truly epoch-making for Ukraine, although in that situation excessive enthusiasm was not entirely appropriate, because the fact of signing opens only a window opportunities that will not be easy. What has happened? N. Azarov explains this by saying that the EU refused to discuss a document prepared on a bilateral basis with the participation of a third party - the Russian Federation. It can be argued about whether the EU should have accepted these proposals or whether Ukraine itself should have taken into account in the negotiations the possible objections from Russia, the interests in which undoubtedly affected by the upcoming agreements. But in this context, something else is important. N. Azarov says that the long and short-sweat process of preparing the AA was stopped because of the position of Russia. The Ukrainian leadership could not fail to understand that the Russian administration would respond to the signing of the AA. N. Azarov, referring to the EU's concern for Ukraine's intention to join the Customs Union, recalls: "Advisor to the President of Russia S.U. Glazev. He brought calculations of the consequences for Ukraine if it signs an agreement on a free trade zone with the EU: they will be catastrophic. We discussed this topic more than once during my visits to Moscow and the visits of Russian leaders to Kiev. "

Speaking about the goal of creating a negotiating group headed by his successor S. Arbutov, N. Azarov notes that the EU's roadmap should have included a set of tools and steps from the EU that would support the Ukrainian economy at the initial stage of the free zone. Trade with the EU under conditions of potential economic sanctions from the Russian Federation". Speaking about the goal of creating a negotiating group headed by his successor S. Arbutov, N. Azarov notes that the EU's "road map" should have included a set of tools and steps from the EU that would support the Ukrainian economy at the initial stage of functioning free trade zones with the EU under conditions of potential economic sanctions from the Russian Federation". We already know that what followed this, and this has changed the relations between Ukraine and the EU. Mass opposition protests escalated into an armed protest. Attempts by EU representatives to prevent the escalation of violence and to translate the conflict into the political mainstream did not produce results. The escape of President Yanukovich in fact marked the collapse of the Third Ukrainian Republic and the completion of the period under review in EU-Ukraine relations. For a short time, a situation of anarchy was created. The separatist performance that followed in Crimea and its seizure, the occupation of part of Donbass by Russia, the danger of their spread throughout the southeast of the country, the position taken by Russia - all this, in addition, transformed the problem, contrary to the will of Ukraine and the EU, from bilateral

to multilateral. The “Ukrainian question” due to all the listed circumstances, the volatility and turbulence of international relations turned out to be dangerously pushed to their very center as a powerful disintegrative and destabilizing factor. The opportunity was not used for a decisive turn, about which at the beginning of 2000 wrote the leading Russian European scholar Y. Borko: “This turn is necessary in two aspects. The first is the search for mutually acceptable compromises where real problems and discrepancies exist; the second is a change in the language of communication that needs to be cleaned from old stereotypes, great power and nationalist rhetoric. ” This question cannot be resolved in the narrow format in which it is now being considered. And this requires a review of the positions of all parties involved in the conflict, including - the EU’s relations with Ukraine, and possibly with what the EU is and can become with Ukraine, if the crisis can be overcome, and possibly with the Russian Federation in one way or another.

The Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU dated June 27, 2014, and its synchronous ratification of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the European Parliament on September 16, 2014, indicates the completion of long-term negotiations and secured Ukraine’s civilized choice of the European vector of development. The need to develop an integration strategy of Ukraine was caused by the desire to meet the requirements of the modern world economic and political system, as well as the search for additional opportunity to counter threats in the field of international security. The specific geopolitical position and history of long-term cooperation with European countries determine the interest of Ukraine in actively participating in the integration processes on the European continent. Because of it today European integration is officially proclaimed a key priority of Ukraine’s foreign policy. For Ukraine, European integration is a way to modernize the economy, overcome technological backwardness, attract foreign investment and new technologies, create new jobs, increase the competitiveness of domestic producers, and enter global markets.

### **Control questions and tasks for self-control:**

1. What are the goals and objectives of the European Neighborhood Policy.
2. Give a definition of the European Neighborhood Policy and name its participants.
3. Name the stages of the European Neighborhood Policy.
4. What are the geopolitical intentions of the EU in the European Neighborhood Policy?
5. What are the goals in the narrow and broad sense of the EU Eastern Partnership policy?
6. The role of the EU Eastern Partnership idea in the integration process on the European continent.
7. Give a description of the contract between the European Union and Kazakhstan.