

## The burden of belonging: Romanian and Bulgarian foreign policy in the new era

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In the world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it.

Oscar Wilde

### Introduction

For all states, joining an international organization extracts a price. There are expectations, demands, conditions, more or less explicitly spelled out, that will apply to those wanting to become part of an ongoing international enterprise. This applies even to powerful countries and is one of the reasons why realist notions of foreign policy have typically included injunctions against alliance membership.<sup>1</sup> For smaller countries in particular, such as the former communist countries of Central and East Europe, the path to achieving membership in international organizations has been especially challenging. The literature is vast and growing on EU expectations and conditions applied to the East European states since membership became a possibility in the mid-1990s.<sup>2</sup> Virtually all of it focuses on these states' adaptation of their domestic political and economic structures, changes in laws and processes including, for example, the adoption into domestic law of the 80,000-page *acquis communautaire* of the EU.

The foreign policies of these states have been less frequently examined against the backdrop of their new membership in the international organizations

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<sup>1</sup>In his discussion of the 'Nine Rules' of diplomacy, Hans Morgenthau wrote, 'Never allow a weak ally to make decisions for you. [Strong nations] lose their freedom of action by identifying their own national interests completely with those of the weak ally.' Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 7th edn, rev. by Kenneth W. Thompson and W. David Clinton, McGraw-Hill, New York, 2006, p. 564.

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Geoffrey Pridham, 'European Union accession dynamics and democratization in Central and Eastern Europe: past and future perspectives', *Government and Opposition*, 41(3), 2006, pp. 373–400; Frank Schimmelfennig, *The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003; Wade Jacoby, *The Enlargement of the European Union and NATO: Ordering from the Menu in Central Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004; Ronald H. Linden (ed.), *Norms and Nannies: The Impact of International Organizations on the Central and East European States*, Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham, MD, 2002; Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier (eds), *The Europeanization of Central and Eastern Europe*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 2005; Milada Vachudova, *Europe Undivided: Democracy, Leverage, and Integration After Communism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005; Karen Henderson (ed.), *Back to Europe: Central and Eastern Europe and the European Union*, UCL Press, London, 1999; Alan Mayhew, *Recreating Europe: The European Union's Policy towards Central and Eastern Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.

they worked so hard to join. To some extent this is the result of the fact that the expectations of these organizations were less well defined and the behaviour of applicants less thoroughly judged. In the landmark 'Copenhagen criteria' announced in 1993, the EU said only that new members would need to 'take on the obligations of membership'. The relevant chapters of the *acquis* indicated that this meant taking on the EU's own binding commitments on trade and humanitarian aid as well as the obligation 'to align with EU statements' and apply sanctions and other restrictions when these were adopted.<sup>3</sup>

Most of the time such obligations have not been burdensome (for either old or new members) due in part to the ongoing struggle within the EU to forge a common foreign and security policy.<sup>4</sup> In their study of member state foreign policies before the latest enlargement, Manners and Whitman found that a complex interaction of adaptation, socialization, domestic factors and bureaucratic politics created several distinct national responses to the challenges of EU membership in the foreign policy realm.<sup>5</sup> In areas of 'high politics' in particular, as Foradori, Rosa and Scartezzini note, 'member states are quite reluctant to give up further sovereignty'.<sup>6</sup> Thus in recent years we have seen substantial disagreement among allies on several key issues; for example, relations with the USA, the war in Iraq, relations with Russia. But applicant states like Romania and Bulgaria, who valued their relationships with both the EU and the USA, could still be put on the spot either during times of disagreement, such as when the war in Iraq began, or when common policies were effectively enunciated, as was the case with the International Criminal Court.<sup>7</sup> NATO was somewhat broader in its expectations, if more forgiving in its assessments, indicating that new members should be security contributors not liabilities and that certain military policy reforms would be required.<sup>8</sup> NATO also expressed—and rewarded—case-specific expectations, for example, support for peacekeeping forces in Bosnia and Kosovo and for the US-led military action in Afghanistan.

For the relatively new Central and East European members of both of these organizations, scholarship is just beginning to assess how they have behaved domestically once they became members of these organizations.<sup>9</sup> Internationally,

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<sup>3</sup>In the annual 'Monitoring Reports' on applicant states, these aspects were covered under Chapters 26 and 27. See, for example, European Commission, 'Romania: 2005 Comprehensive Monitoring Report', SEC (2005) 1354, 25 October 2005.

<sup>4</sup>John McCormick, *The European Union: Politics and Policies*, 4th edn, Westview Press, Boulder, CO, 2008, Ch. 15; Paolo Foradori, Paolo Rosa and Riccardo Scartezzini (eds), *Managing a Multilevel Foreign Policy: The EU in International Affairs*, Lexington Books, Lanham, MD, 2007. For background on the development and mechanisms of CFSP, see Fraser Cameron, *An Introduction to European Foreign Policy*, Routledge, New York, 2007.

<sup>5</sup>Ian Manners and Richard G. Whitman, *The Foreign Policies of the European Union Member States*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 2002.

<sup>6</sup>Paolo Foradori, Paolo Rosa and Riccardo Scartezzini, 'Introduction: the system of European foreign policy', in Paolo Foradori, Paolo Rosa and Riccardo Scartezzini, *Managing a Multilevel Foreign Policy*, p. x.

<sup>7</sup>Ronald H. Linden, 'Twin peaks: Romania and Bulgaria between the EU and the United States', *Problems of Post-Communism*, 51(5), September/October 2004, pp. 45–55.

<sup>8</sup>NATO, 'Study on enlargement', available at <[www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/enl-9502.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/enl-9502.htm)>. For a critical assessment, see Zoltan Barany, 'NATO expansion, round two: making matters worse', *Security Studies*, 11(3), Spring 2002, pp. 123–157.

<sup>9</sup>For generally critical judgments, see the section entitled 'Is East-Central Europe Backsliding', of the *Journal of Democracy*, 18(4), October 2007, pp. 5–63; *Nations in Transit 2007*, Freedom House, New York, 2007, pp. 26–27.

one study of Central and East European voting patterns in the EU suggests that there appears to be no common agenda or coordinated behaviour among these new members.<sup>10</sup> This paper will focus on the foreign policy of two of the newest members and will take an issue-specific approach in order to explore how they have reacted to the often conflicting demands of domestic and international politics.

### Romania and Bulgaria as a comparative case

Romania and Bulgaria form a useful comparative set because of their similar but not identical recent histories and similar but again not identical patterns of participation and expectations involving their contributions to these two international organizations.

During the cold war both Romania and Bulgaria were members of the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). Both had been left on the Soviet side of the line dividing post-war Europe but Soviet troops were not a major presence in either. (They were withdrawn from Bulgaria soon after the Second World War and from Romania in 1958.) During the 1960s Romania crafted a foreign policy that diverged from that of Moscow on some key issues: initiating relations with West Germany; accepting MFN (Most Favoured Nation) status under a US Congressional review process that all the other communist states rejected; maintaining amicable relations with fiercely anti-Soviet China; and, most dramatically, opposing the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia. Bucharest was careful not to challenge Moscow directly. It remained a member of both the Warsaw Pact and CMEA and the Romanian Communist Party maintained perhaps the most total control of its citizenry anywhere in Europe outside of Albania. Bulgaria was reliably supportive of Soviet international views and initiatives and maintained the expected level of hostility toward the USA and NATO.<sup>11</sup>

The changes of 1989 occurred differently in the two states, a factor to keep in mind as we consider post-1989 foreign policy. While the upheavals were unexpected in both cases, that in Romania was accompanied by deadly violence and the execution of the long-time tyrant, Nicolae Ceaușescu. In both places, the ruling communists managed to restyle themselves and maintain their hold on power at least for a while. A substantial constituency was evident, especially in the countryside, for a continuation of the socialist legacy. While neither had a history of challenges to communist rule during the Soviet period, Bulgarian society did not bring with it into the post-communist period the same level of hostility toward the former Soviet hegemon nor the strong sense of the illegitimacy of the Soviet-imposed regime as was the case in Romania.<sup>12</sup>

The progress of these two states toward joining the major European organizations was similar, though for slightly different reasons in the case

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<sup>10</sup> Ondrej Schneider, *Central Europe's Lost Voice in the European Union*, Center for European Policy Analysis, Washington, 2008.

<sup>11</sup> J. F. Brown, *Eastern Europe and Communist Rule*, Duke University Press, Durham, NC and London, 1988, Chs. 8 and 10.

<sup>12</sup> On this point see, Blagovest Tashev, 'In search of security: Bulgaria's security policy in transition', in Tom Lansford and Blagovest Tashev (eds), *Old Europe, New Europe and the US*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2005, pp. 141–142.

of NATO. Both new regimes joined the Council of Europe as a first step toward joining the European Union. Both signed Association Agreements with Brussels and then formally applied to join in 1995. Neither was among those anointed in the first round of negotiations begun in 1997 but both were invited by the Helsinki European Council in 1999. The rest of the Central and East European states (plus Malta and Cyprus) were judged in 2002 to have satisfied conditions, closing all 31 chapters of the *acquis* negotiations, and joined the EU in 2004. But Romania and Bulgaria were not included, having numerous serious issues unresolved, including pervasive corruption, organized crime and judicial independence. After several other critical reports and delays, both were finally admitted at the start of 2007 but their admission was attended not only by various 'safeguard clauses' which had applied to other new members in certain policy areas,<sup>13</sup> but also by unprecedented 'accompanying measures'. According to these measures, both states must meet performance standards in the fight against organized crime and corruption and in strengthening the independence of the judiciary. Both states were threatened with reduction or loss of funds for noncompliance.<sup>14</sup> Since they have become members, their performance has been judged every six months, increasingly critically, but no sanctions have been applied.<sup>15</sup> In a separate action in 2008, however, the Commission suspended roughly 500 million euros in funding to Bulgaria, and threatened further action, due to mismanagement of funds provided to help the country prepare for membership.<sup>16</sup>

While both were eager to join the EU, the two countries' approaches to NATO differed. In Romania the first post-communist government of the National Salvation Front, later the Social Democratic Party of Romania, pushed for admission and moved quickly to try to ensure itself entry in the first cohort. Romania was the first East European state to sign on to the Partnership for Peace Program in 1994, supported and joined the NATO-led peacekeeping effort in Bosnia in 1995 and initiated reform of the military. All of this was pursued under

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<sup>13</sup> 'Act Concerning the Conditions of Accession of the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic and the Adjustments to the Treaties on which the European Union is Founded', AA2003/ACT/en 1, Articles 38 & 39.

<sup>14</sup> 'Monitoring report on the state of preparedness for EU membership of Bulgaria and Romania', Communication from the Commission, Brussels, 26 September 2006.

<sup>15</sup> Sensitive to the fact that Romania and Bulgaria are now EU member states, the process under which these two countries submit reports is called the 'Mechanism for Cooperation and Verification for Romania and Bulgaria'. The reports can be accessed at: <[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat\\_general/cvm/progress\\_reports\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/cvm/progress_reports_en.htm)>. In 2009 both the performance of Romania and Bulgaria and the verification mechanism itself came in for criticism from the European Parliament. See Valentina Pop, 'MEPs turn screw on Romania and Bulgaria corruption', *euobserver.com*, 24 April 2009.

<sup>16</sup> European Commission, 'Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Management of EU-funds in Bulgaria', COM(2008) 496, 23 July 2008, available at <[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat\\_general/cvm/docs/bulgaria\\_report\\_funds\\_20080723\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/cvm/docs/bulgaria_report_funds_20080723_en.pdf)>. *Subsidy Watch*, Issue 27, September 2008, <<http://www.globalsubsidies.org/en>> and *euobserver.com* ('MEPs turn screw') reported that funds for Romania were also frozen. For its part, Bucharest complained that loans from the EU were being inappropriately tied to the (lack of) progress specified in the reports. 'Interview with Romania's Foreign Minister Cristian Diaconescu', *EVZ*, 28 May 2009 [*World News Connection*, 28 May 2009], 'Romania Senate speaker concerned about "hidden" terms for EC's EUR5b loan', *Mediafax*, 6 May 2008.

a left-of-centre government headed by former communist leader Ion Iiescu. Bulgaria was also led by the Socialists during this time but moved much more slowly on reform, reflecting that party's hostility to NATO. With the election of Ivan Kostov in 1997 the country began to take more vigorous steps toward NATO.<sup>17</sup> Like, Romania, it supported the US-led bombing of Serbia in 1999 and contributed to the peacekeeping force in Kosovo.

In its Study on Enlargement in 1995 NATO had outlined its expectations, which included settling old conflicts, including ethnic or territorial disputes, as well as any new ones, peacefully, adopting democratic practices and instituting reform and civilian control of the military.<sup>18</sup> Once again Bulgaria and Romania fell short and were not invited in the NATO expansion of 1997. But after the attacks on the USA of September 11, 2001, the strategic value of the two Black Sea littoral states was heightened. Both countries supported the US-led military action in Afghanistan, provided bases for transshipment and sent and maintained small numbers of troops there. As a result of their behaving like 'de facto allies', both countries were extended invitations to join NATO in 2002, which they did in 2004.

Romania and Bulgaria differed from the EU accession 'class of 2004' and, to some extent, from each other. Unlike the states of central Europe, they had weaker economic and political ties to west Europe. On all measures of economic and democratic development they were significantly behind the other CEE countries. Descendants of communist parties ruled earlier and longer in the post-communist period. Centre-right governments took over in Romania only in 1996 and in Bulgaria in 1997 and only then did prospects for joining the European organizations improve. They both are located in south-east, as opposed to north or central Europe, and both have significant minority populations with external referent states, Hungarians in Romania and Turks in Bulgaria. But due to differences in recent and more remote history, their societies and leaders hold differing views of the USA, NATO and especially Russia. Romania, the second largest of the post-communist countries, also holds potentially greater energy resources.

Given these differences and similarities, it is appropriate to ask how have these two new members reacted to the intersecting dynamics of new membership in key international organizations, domestic politics and a changing—and occasionally dangerous—external environment?

### The burdens of belonging

The slower route to EU membership and the more demanding application of conditionality placed a special burden on both Romania and Bulgaria.<sup>19</sup> In Romania, a centre-right coalition won the parliamentary elections in 2004 and the leader of one of the parties, Traian Basescu of the Democratic Party, won the

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<sup>17</sup> Tashev, 'In search of security', op. cit., pp. 127–150.

<sup>18</sup> NATO, 'Study on enlargement', op. cit..

<sup>19</sup> Gergana Noutcheva and Dimitar Bechev, 'The successful laggards: Bulgaria and Romania's accession to the EU', *East European Politics and Societies*, 22(1), Winter 2008, esp. pp. 117–127; David Phinnemore, 'Beyond 25—the changing face of EU enlargement: commitment, conditionality and the Constitutional Treaty', *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 8(1), April 2006, esp. pp. 15–19.



presidency. However, the coalition fractured almost immediately over numerous issues, especially the pace of reform and drive against the country's chronic corruption—a major concern for the EU. Basescu challenged the Romanian 'oligarchs' who in addition to holding substantial economic interests, also dominate Romanian media.<sup>20</sup> But they pushed back. In 2006, the Justice Minister, Monica Macovei, was attacked in parliament for her efforts to secure meaningful reform although it was clear her efforts impressed the EU.<sup>21</sup> When the coalition fractured and Basescu was suspended in April 2007 by a parliament dominated by the opposition, Macovei was replaced.<sup>22</sup> Though Basescu handily won an obligatory referendum and thus retained the presidency, the underlying fissures between him and both his government and the parliament remained.

In Bulgaria, the impact of Brussels was, if anything, even greater. The ruling coalition came into being solely as a vehicle to take the country into the EU. Even by the weak standards one might apply to such a political marriage of convenience, the unlikely coalition of the Socialists, the NDSV (the National Movement Simeon II, the party of the former king) and the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF), the Turkish party, has worked badly. With little to knit them together ideologically and with different constituencies, the coalition's governing capacity quickly disappeared. Moreover, it has been challenged on the right by a populist anti-Turkish, anti-EU and anti-US party, Ataka, which gained nearly 9 per cent in the 2005 parliamentary elections;<sup>23</sup> and by a political movement, Citizens for the European Development of Bulgaria (GERB) headed by the mayor of Sofia, Boyko Borisov.<sup>24</sup> With regard to the EU, the major effect of this weakness has been to increase pressure on the government to try to renegotiate the entry arrangement with the EU under which it was obliged to close four nuclear reactors at Kozloduy.<sup>25</sup> In the country's first elections for the European Parliament (EP), in May 2007, GERB, whose leader Boyko Borisov has been critical of the government's negotiations, gathered the most votes.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Laurentiu Stefan-Scalat, Department of Political Science, University of Bucharest, unpublished manuscript on 'Oligarchs'.

<sup>21</sup> Christopher Condon and George Parker, 'Justice minister's corruption crusade puts Romania back on road to EU', FT.com, 15 May 2006.

<sup>22</sup> Claudia Ciobanu, 'ROMANIA: what are intellectuals doing with politics', Inter Press News Service Agency, 8 May 2007, <<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=37591>>.

<sup>23</sup> Venelin I. Ganev, 'Ballots, bribes and state building in Bulgaria', *Journal of Democracy*, 17(1), January 2006, esp. pp. 86–88; Kristen Ghodsee, 'Left wing, right wing, everything: xenophobia, neo-totalitarianism and populist politics in contemporary Bulgaria', *Problems of Post-Communism*, 55(3), May/June 2008, pp. 26–39.

<sup>24</sup> Krassen Nikolov, 'Mayor with charisma bids for power in Bulgaria', Bulgarian National Radio, 4 December 2006, <[http://www.bnr.bg/RadioBulgaria/Emission\\_English/Theme\\_Politics/Material/bbdr.htm](http://www.bnr.bg/RadioBulgaria/Emission_English/Theme_Politics/Material/bbdr.htm)>.

<sup>25</sup> See President Parvanov's statement to this effect before the European Parliament, 'Address by President Georgi Parvanov to the members of the European Parliament 01-02-2007', Brussels, available at <<http://www.president.bg/en/news.php?type=3>> and the proposal by Energy Minister Rumen Ovcharov, 'Rumen Ovcharov proposes a plan for saving Kozloduy npp units 3 and 4', published on 26 January 2007, updated on 30 January 2007, available at <[http://www.bnr.bg/RadioBulgaria/Emission\\_English/Theme\\_BulgariaES/Material/rovchplan.htm](http://www.bnr.bg/RadioBulgaria/Emission_English/Theme_BulgariaES/Material/rovchplan.htm)>. For Ataka's position on Kozloduy, see its website at: <[http://www.ataka.bg/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=13&Item=29](http://www.ataka.bg/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13&Item=29)>; for GERB's view, see the interview with Boiko Borisov, *Standart*, 2 February 2007.

<sup>26</sup> Boiko Borisov, 'Kuneva should protect us from the expensive electricity', *Standart*, 2 February 2007 (Meglena Kuneva was Bulgaria's Minister for Europe and the European Commissioner for

External relations provided additional areas for contention. Even before formally joining NATO, Bulgaria and Romania were asked to contribute to the collective defence effort led by the USA. The operation in Afghanistan was not at first a NATO action, despite the fact that NATO had invoked Article 5, offering collective defence in support of the USA. Instead, unhappy with the 'war by committee' utilized against Serbia in 1999, the USA chose to form a 'coalition of the willing' to overthrow the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, NATO allies and eventually the alliance itself took over the rotating leadership of the International Security Force in Afghanistan and gradually expanded its area of operation.<sup>28</sup> In this case, both EU and NATO members were united and supportive of the action in Afghanistan. Thus the political risks to Romania and Bulgaria of joining this action were relatively low.<sup>29</sup> Even Russia, the former cold war adversary, did not object to US deployment of US forces in and around Afghanistan, even in former Soviet republics in Central Asia.

The real challenge to these states' capacities and willingness to bear a collective burden came with the US-led decision to invade Iraq in 2003. Once again it was not a NATO action, but once again the USA asked for and received political, logistical and troop support from Romania and Bulgaria. This time, however, Europe was itself divided on the issue, with both long-time US allies (Germany) and long-time sceptics (France) strongly opposed to the US action. The latter even went so far as to criticize those EU applicant countries in the East who supported the USA, saying they had 'missed an opportunity to be quiet'.<sup>30</sup> Despite this opposition from 'old' Europe, most East European states offered strong political support to the USA and made concrete contributions disproportionate to their size and wealth.<sup>31</sup>

Domestically, supporting the war in Iraq was a simpler matter for Romania than Bulgaria. In the latter, a tradition of positive feeling toward Russia, a strong Socialist Party challenge to the government, and public scepticism about NATO, the USA and George Bush made participation in the war unpopular.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, Bulgaria did support the USA in Iraq and, like Romania, has allowed the USA to use some of its military facilities. This provoked some demonstrations in Bulgaria though not in Romania where the contingents passing through the Mikhail Kogalnicenau airbase near Constanta were expected to be somewhat larger, along with the attendant expenditure of US funds.

For the two newest alliance members, supporting the continuing US effort in Iraq is somewhat more problematical precisely because it is not a NATO action. It is a US policy, opposed by several of these countries' NATO and EU allies and,

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Footnote 26 continued

Consumer Protection). For vote results in the European Parliament elections in Bulgaria, see <<http://www.bta.bg/site/izbori2007/index.html>>.

<sup>27</sup> Michael Mihalka, 'Conclusion: values and interests: European support for the intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq', in Lansford and Tashev, *Old Europe, New Europe and the US*, pp. 188–190.

<sup>28</sup> On the evolution of NATO involvement in Afghanistan, see Rajan Menon, *The End of Alliances*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp. 191–194.

<sup>29</sup> Linden, 'Twin peaks', op. cit..

<sup>30</sup> 'Chirac lashes out at "New Europe"', CNN, [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com), 18 February 2003.

<sup>31</sup> Wess Mitchell, 'Mending fences: repairing U.S.–Central European relations after Iraq', Center for European Policy Analysis, 8 July 2008 (posted 26 October 2006), available at <<http://www.cepa.org/publications/posts/mending-fences-repairing-us-central-european-relations-after-iraq.php>>.

<sup>32</sup> Linden, 'Twin peaks', op. cit., p. 48.

in the Bulgarian case, by a substantial part of the public.<sup>33</sup> Thus to actively remain in Iraq not only puts the countries' soldiers in harm's way but more closely aligns the two states with the USA. Domestically this has produced some conflicting and sometimes contradictory actions. In Bulgaria, President Georgi Parvanov, formally not a member of a political party but most recently the leader of the Socialist Party, declared the war 'unacceptable' even while a centre-right government sent troops there.<sup>34</sup> Bulgarian troops have been both withdrawn, in 2005, and later sent back.<sup>35</sup>

In Romania foreign policy has been one domain of the struggle among the president, the government and parliament. In 2006 and again in 2007, the Prime Minister, Calin Popescu-Tariceanu, called for the withdrawal of Romanian troops from Iraq while the president insisted they would stay.<sup>36</sup> As has happened in other East Central European states since 1989, the battle is as much over the powers of the presidency as it is over the specific policies. While it would be incorrect to see foreign policy as the major axis of the intensely personal battle between Tariceanu and Basescu, the president is seen as hewing much closer to the US line in international affairs. His proclamation after he was elected that 'The Washington-London-Bucharest axis will be a foreign policy priority for Romania's president'<sup>37</sup> was often challenged by the government.<sup>38</sup> The Prime Minister once headed Romania's effort to integrate into the EU and was seen as being more solicitous of European concerns.<sup>39</sup>

### A new arena: the Black Sea

The Black Sea is home to a remarkably diverse set of states and societies as measured along virtually any dimension of political and economic change.<sup>40</sup> The region and its surroundings have been recognized by NATO, the EU and the

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<sup>33</sup> Rossen Vassilev, 'Public opinion and Bulgaria's involvement in the Iraq War', *East European Quarterly*, XL(4), December 2006, pp. 467-487. See also the discussion in Janusz Bugajski and Ilona Teleki, *Atlantic Bridges: America's New European Allies*, Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham, MD, 2007, Ch. 6.

<sup>34</sup> 'Address to the nation and the members of the Bulgarian Assembly by Georgi Parvanov, President of the Republic of Bulgaria, 20-03-2003', available at <<http://www.president.bg/en/news.php?id=32&st=0>>.

<sup>35</sup> 'Last Bulgarian troops leave Iraq Bulgaria', RFE/RL, 27 December 2005; 'Iraq coalition troops', at: <[http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/iraq\\_orbat\\_coalition.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/iraq_orbat_coalition.htm)>.

<sup>36</sup> 'Romania to pull out troops from Iraq this year: PM', Reuters, 29 June 2006 [Boston.com, 29 June 2006]; 'Romanian President rejects Iraq pullout', RFE/RL.org, 29 June 2006; 'Romania PM wants Iraq troops withdrawal in 2007', Novinite Sofia News Agency ([www.novinite.com](http://www.novinite.com)), 26 March 2007. See also Tariceanu's statement doubting 'that a massive military presence could ever solve the problem in Iraq'. 'Mideast needs political not military solution, says Premier Tariceanu', *Rompres*, 11 January 2007 [*World News Connection*, 11 January 2007].

<sup>37</sup> Quoted in Eugen Tomiuc, 'Romania: Basescu wins presidential vote, vows to fight corruption', RFE/RL, 13 December 2004.

<sup>38</sup> Calin Stoica Diaconovici, 'Basescu's axis changing course toward Berlin', *Evenimuntul Zile* (Internet Version), 31 August 2006 [*World News Connection*, 31 August 2006].

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Laurentiu Stefan-Scalat, Department of Political Science, University of Bucharest, Bucharest, 12 April 2007.

<sup>40</sup> Ronald H. Linden, 'Balkan geometry: Turkish accession and the international relations of Southeast Europe', *Orbis*, 51(2), Spring 2007, esp. pp. 332-334.



USA as an important strategic area.<sup>41</sup> In 2007 the EU launched its first attempt to develop a coordinated policy toward the region, known as Black Sea Synergy.<sup>42</sup> Not surprisingly, the states in the region have differing views of what NATO and the EU should be doing in the area. Romania and Bulgaria—the only littoral countries who are members of both the EU and NATO—find themselves, willy-nilly, at the spear's point of any policies their respective organizations formulate to meet challenges emanating from this region. These include traditional military security, dangers of terrorism, and threats represented by trafficking in drugs, weapons and people<sup>43</sup> as well as the need for better cooperation in border management, energy, transport and economic development.<sup>44</sup> As members of NATO since 2004 and the EU beginning in January 2007, these two states' unilateral preferences are structured by the expectations of their fellow allies as well as by their own differing perspectives on the region.

While Bulgarian political leaders have been cautious,<sup>45</sup> Romania's approach involves substantial activism and a clear preference for a strong 'Euroatlantic strategy' in the region.<sup>46</sup> Romania prefers a prominent US and NATO role; for example, Bucharest would prefer to see NATO's antiterrorist 'Operation Active Endeavor' extended from the eastern Mediterranean to the Black Sea—an action strongly opposed by both Russia and Turkey.<sup>47</sup> In an attempt to raise its own profile, Romania took the lead in the Black Sea Border Initiative on proliferation in 2004; hosted a Black Sea Forum in 2006; and together with the German Marshall Fund, sponsored the creation of a public/private Black Sea Trust, all of which earned fulsome praise from the USA.<sup>48</sup> Indeed President Basescu's original 'axis' notion of cooperation with Washington and London was explicitly explained in terms of 'Romania's position in the Black Sea area'.<sup>49</sup> Bulgaria is not so eager for a prominent US role and shows more concern over offending Russian

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<sup>41</sup> See NATO Istanbul Summit Communiqué, 28 June 2004 item 41 at: <<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p04-096e.htm>>; Mark Pekala, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, 'Remarks at the "Economic Development and Security in the Black Sea Region" Conference', Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC, 31 October 2006.

<sup>42</sup> European Commission, 'Black Sea Synergy—a new regional cooperation initiative', COM(2007) 160, Brussels.

<sup>43</sup> Eugene B. Rumer and Jeffrey Simon, 'Toward a Euro-Atlantic strategy for the Black Sea region', National Defense University, Occasional Paper, 3, April 2006, p. 22.

<sup>44</sup> European Commission, 'Black Sea Synergy', op. cit.

<sup>45</sup> See 'Interview with Bulgarian Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev', *Standart News* (Internet Version), 15 May 2007 [*World News Connection*, 15 May 2007], 'Stanishev: there is politics of tough-guy posturing', *BGNEWS*, 27 April 2007 [*World News Connection*, 27 April 2007].

<sup>46</sup> Romania Presedintele, 'Strategia de Securitate Nationala a Romaniei' [Romanian National Security Strategy], Bucharest, 2006, pp. 19–22. As of mid-2009 the Bulgarian parliament had not yet approved a new national security strategy.

<sup>47</sup> Interview with US embassy officials, Bucharest, 10 April 2007; Stephen Blank, 'Black Sea rivalry', *Perspective*, XVII(2), March–April 2007, available at <<http://www.bu.edu/iscip/vol17/blank.html>>.

<sup>48</sup> Pekala, 'Remarks'. Romania also took up organizational arrangements pushed by the USA. It hosts the headquarters of both the Southeast Europe Brigade, a 25,000-person force that has sent troops to Afghanistan, and the Southeast European Cooperation Initiative with a broad mandate in economic, environmental and anti-crime activities. See Jeffrey Simon, 'Preventing Balkan conflict: the role of Euroatlantic institutions', *Strategic Forum*, No. 226, April 2007.

<sup>49</sup> 'Romania's Basescu says "prioritizing" US–UK–Bucharest axis "justified"', *Rompres*, 11 January 2005 [*World News Connection*, 12 January 2005].

sensibilities<sup>50</sup> than can be found in Romania, where suspicion over Russian designs are long-standing.

Bucharest is especially interested in achieving some progress on the resolution of the 'frozen conflicts' in the region—Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia and Transnistria in Moldova—that would reduce rather than increase Russian involvement. The Russian 14th army is still in the self-declared 'Transnistrian republic' in eastern Moldova, for example, and Romanian hesitance on recognizing Kosovo (see below) is clearly linked to a desire to avoid establishing any precedence for the division of Moldova. While Romania has been active in supporting several initiatives in the Black Sea, its current diplomacy, like that of the 1960s perhaps, recognizes the need for discretion. President Basescu did not attend a summit meeting in July 2008 of the GUAM partner countries, a group that has in the past taken a more aggressive stance against Russian actions.<sup>51</sup> This was all the more noteworthy as the meeting took place in Georgia at a time of significant tension (and armed conflict a month later) between that former Soviet republic and Moscow over Russian support for the two breakaway regions.

Both Turkey and Russia have long seen the Black Sea as falling within their countries' spheres of interest. Moscow has been decidedly cool to EU initiatives on the Black Sea.<sup>52</sup> Russia is quite willing to support the kind of nuts-and-bolts activities that the Black Sea Economic Cooperation organization (which it helped found) advances, but is very wary of the more ambitious goals of the EU strategy, which give pride of place to encouraging 'democracy, human rights and good governance' in the region and calls for a more active role for the EU in the politics of the region's frozen conflicts.<sup>53</sup>

Despite the fact that Turkey is a NATO member, it, like Russia, does not welcome a large NATO or US presence.<sup>54</sup> Russia and Turkey are the predominant

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<sup>50</sup> While in Moscow in April 2007, after the controversy between Russia and Estonia over the latter's movement of a Soviet-era war memorial in Tallinn, Prime Minister Stanishev was careful to publicly reassure Russia that in Bulgaria war memorials, commemorating both the Russo-Turkish war and the Second World War, would be maintained. ITAR-TASS, 8 May 2007 [*World News Connection*, 8 May 2007].

<sup>51</sup> Vladimir Socor, 'GUAM's Batumi Summit builds partnerships amid challenges', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 9 July 2008.

<sup>52</sup> Andre Rittman, 'EU's new Black Sea Policy faces Russian misgivings', *euobserver.com*, 16 February 2007; 'Russian Federation distances itself from Black Sea Euro-region project proposed by Romania', *Rompres*, 31 March 2006 [*World News Connection*, 31 March 2006]. Russia participated in the meeting of Foreign Ministers in Kyiv in February 2008 to launch the Black Sea Synergy, but it did not join in the resulting 'Joint Statement' of the Foreign Ministers. European Commission, 'Report on the first year of implementation of the Black Sea Synergy', COM(2008) 391, p. 16, fn. 13.

<sup>53</sup> Elena Prokhorova, 'The European Union a Black Sea power?', *eurussia centre*, April 2007; available at <<http://www.eu-russiacentre.org/column.asp?id=386&lng=ru>>.

<sup>54</sup> Blank, 'Black Sea rivalry'; Suat Kiniklioglu, 'Struggling was the Black Sea', *Turkish Daily News*, 16 June 2006; republished by German Marshall Fund at: <[http://www.gmfus.org/publications/article.cfm?id=194&parent\\_type=P](http://www.gmfus.org/publications/article.cfm?id=194&parent_type=P)>. At the Black Sea Forum in 2006 most attendees were represented by presidents or prime ministers. Bulgaria sent the Foreign Minister, Turkey sent a Minister of State and Russia was represented by an observer, its ambassador to Romania. Vladimir Socor, 'Black Sea Forum seeking its rationale', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 8 June 2006, available at <[http://jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2371162](http://jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2371162)>.

naval powers in the region<sup>55</sup> and in 2004 Turkey launched its own naval operation, Black Sea Harmony, designed to duplicate (and make unnecessary) Operation Active Endeavor in the Black Sea.<sup>56</sup> In addition, Russia and Turkey play a crucial role in the global distribution of energy from the region (see below).

For both Romania and Bulgaria the issue of how to contribute to the security environment of the Black Sea is likely to become more, not less, prominent. With both alliances focusing on the security aspects of the region's energy trade and the USA having dramatically shifted its strategic interests toward the Middle East and south-west and central Asia, both Romania and Bulgaria will find that their location—which so advantaged them in getting into NATO—also puts them in the spotlight.

### The energy tangle

An important aspect of the heightened significance of the Black Sea region is its rise to prominence as a source of Europe's energy. Fully 25 per cent of Europe's oil comes from Russia, much of that shipped from Novorossiysk and other ports by tanker across the Black Sea and into the Mediterranean through the Bosphorus. Roughly 28 per cent of all of Russia's oil exports reach market via the Black Sea.<sup>57</sup> These straights are controlled by Turkey—the same Turkey that has been endlessly, and occasionally bluntly, put off for EU membership. Moreover, the increasing traffic, environmental concerns and limitations of the Russian state-controlled energy system and the physical limitations of Novorossiysk make this an increasingly fragile route.<sup>58</sup> But Turkey is also crucial as the terminus of the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan oil pipeline, which pumps Caspian Sea oil and bypasses both the Bosphorus and Russia, and the Baku–Tbilisi–Ezerum gas pipeline that brings gas from Azerbaijan to Europe. Europe is also substantially dependent on Russia for natural gas, receiving roughly 50 per cent of its imports from Russia. Newer members are even more dependent; Bulgaria, for example, meets 85 per cent of its domestic needs with Russian gas. Most of the gas arrives in Europe via the pipelines through central or northern Europe but it was learned in 2006 and again in early 2009 that supplies to the West could be disrupted by disputes between the chief supplier and states that are not even part of the EU, in this case Ukraine.

The EU has been trying without much success to move toward developing a common energy strategy that would affect both internal and external markets.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Hryhoriiy Perepelytsya, 'Military and naval balance in the Black Sea region', in Oleksandr Pavliuk and Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze (eds), *The Black Sea Region: Cooperation and Security Building*, M. E. Sharpe, Armonk, NY, 2004, pp. 191–210.

<sup>56</sup> Rumer and Simon, 'Toward a Euro-Atlantic strategy for the Black Sea region'; Mevlut Katik, 'Geopolitical competition heats up in Black Sea', Eurasianet.org, 10 March 2006. In 2008 officials in the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs asserted in an interview that Black Sea Harmony had interdicted more contraband shipping in the Black Sea than Active Endeavor had done in the Mediterranean.

<sup>57</sup> Energy Information Administration at: <[http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Russia/Oil\\_exports.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Russia/Oil_exports.html)>.

<sup>58</sup> Bernard A. Gelb, 'Russian oil and gas challenges', *CRS Report for Congress*, 3 January 2006.

<sup>59</sup> 'An energy policy for Europe', Communication from the Commission to the European Council and the European Parliament, COM(2007), Brussels, 10 January 2007; 'A European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy', European Commission, COM(2006), Brussels, 8 March

Internationally, the process involves the contradictory goals of trying to secure Russia as a reliable supplier while also supplanting it with other sources. New efforts like the 'Pan-European' oil pipeline stretching from Constanța, Romania to Trieste, Italy hold out at least the promise of bypassing both the Bosphorus and Russian supply.<sup>60</sup> But this took five years to go from a proposal to agreement and will take four more to be completed.<sup>61</sup> Judging from the German–Russian deal on a pipeline under the Baltic, and another one from Burgas, Bulgaria to Alexandroupoulos, Greece, the immediate result may be an *increase* in Europe's dependence and division among the alliance members.<sup>62</sup>

The Nabucco gas pipeline, aimed at bringing Caspian gas via Turkey and Central Europe to the West, has also made only halting progress<sup>63</sup> and has been challenged by agreements Russia has made with Hungary, Bulgaria and Serbia to bring gas under the Black Sea for transshipment further west utilizing the planned Southstream gas pipeline.<sup>64</sup> The European Commission has been careful to note that it does not oppose the Southstream pipeline and that it sees it as complementary to the Nabucco line; but it is not clear if both are commercially viable.<sup>65</sup>

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*Footnote 59 continued*

2006; for critical comment by the EU Ambassador to Washington, see 'Energy policy is EU's "big failure" of past 50 years', *eobserver.com*, 28 May 2009.

<sup>60</sup> 'Commission gives its support to a pipeline which will limit oil pollution risks in Black and Mediterranean seas', Brussels, 3 April 2007. 'Black Sea oil pipeline to start flowing by 2012', *Euractiv.com*, 4 April 2007, updated 11 May 2007. See the discussion in Vladimir Socor, 'Constanta–Trieste pipeline proposal for Kazakhstan's oil', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 3 August 2006.

<sup>61</sup> 'Croatia, Romania, Serbia sign Pan-European Oil Pipeline agreement', *SETimes*, 23 April 2008, <[http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en\\_GB/features/setimes/features/2008/04/23/feature-01](http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2008/04/23/feature-01)>.

<sup>62</sup> Vladimir Socor, 'Baltic seabed gas pipeline project: far from a done deal', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 22 May 2007; 'A bear at the throat', *Economist.com*, 12 April 2007, p. 2; 'Russia clinches Balkan oil deal', *BBC News*, 15 March 2007.

<sup>63</sup> 'Bulgaria, Hungary push Nabucco gas pipeline project', *EUbusiness.com*, 27 June 2008, <<http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/1214564525.48/>>; Svitlana Korenovska, 'Pipeline project faces obstacles, competition', *The Washington Times*, 10 July 2008. In July 2009 an agreement was finally signed by four EU transit countries (Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Austria) and Turkey to build the Nabucco pipeline. *BBC News*, 13 July 2009.

<sup>64</sup> Theodor Troev and Ed Crooks, 'Bulgaria backs Putin's plans for gas pipeline to rival EU's', *Financial Times*, 19–20 January 2008, p. 2. In September 2007 the Hungarian government, which had supported the Russian pipeline, switched its position and announced its 'total support' for the Nabucco pipeline (*Financial Times*, 18 September 2007, p. 2). Then in February 2008 Budapest agreed to support Southstream as well. 'It's in the interests of Hungary to have both pipelines crossing Hungarian territory', said Hungarian Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany (*Financial Times*, 26 February 2008, p. 2). In May 2009, Russia signed agreements with Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Serbia to speed up construction of the Southstream pipeline. Ariel Cohen, 'Caspian Basin: which way is up for regional energy development?', *Eurasianet.org*, 15 May 2009.

<sup>65</sup> 'EU "does not oppose" South Stream gas pipeline project; Nabucco still priority', *Forbes.com*, 21 January 2008, <<http://www.forbes.com/markets/feeds/afx/2008/01/21/afx4553879.html>>. Not only does the Southstream pipeline offer direct competition for the gas to be shipped to Europe, but the storage facility in Baumgarten, Austria, which would be the gas 'hub', is owned 50 per cent by Gazprom. Zeyno Baran, 'Oil, oligarchs, and opportunity: energy from Central Asia to Europe', Testimony to Committee on Foreign Relations, US Senate, 12 June 2008. In addition, while Romania supports the participation in the project of Gaz de France, Turkey opposes their inclusion because of the approval by the lower house of the French parliament of a law that would punish denial of the Armenian genocide. 'Turkey's President Gul visiting Romania amid differences over Kosovo, gas pipeline', *Associated Press*, 3 March 2008; Fulya Ozerkan, 'France seeks economic thaw against

This geographical and supplier dependence has implications for both NATO and the EU and the new allies. One question is whether the countries of these alliances, heavily dependent on energy supplied by an increasingly assertive Russia, will be aggressive, or even firm, in fighting for democratic values or protecting their the new allies when the energy spigot is controlled by Moscow. Some critical observers suggest that Europe's less than fulsome response to Russia's 'bullying' of Estonia in 2007 over the relocation of a monument to fallen Soviet soldiers provides the answer.<sup>66</sup>

Potentially this puts all of the Central and East European states—who are generally more energy dependent on Russia than the EU-15—in a similar bind. But for Black Sea littoral countries Romania and Bulgaria, the situation is especially delicate. Both countries have stated their desire for greater diversity in their energy suppliers—though Romania has once again been much more assertive on this point.<sup>67</sup> And both countries, are, in theory, in a position to do something about this as both could be home to pipelines bringing oil or gas from Central Asia to west Europe. But both are also in competition with each other to offer Bosphorus bypass routes for Russian oil or gas. As noted, Bulgaria has already signed deals for the construction and operation of both oil and gas pipelines. The Burgas-to-Alexandropoulos oil pipeline agreement was signed with much fanfare as it was expected to secure Bulgaria's place as a transit country and its access to a steady supply of fuel at stable prices.<sup>68</sup> However, the fuel it is processing and shipping will come from Russia; the pipeline will be built and majority owned by Russia and the profits will go—disproportionately in the minds of at least some Bulgarian critics—to Russia.<sup>69</sup> And neither this deal nor participation in the Southstream gas pipeline will do anything to reduce Bulgaria's virtually total dependence on Russia for its energy imports.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, at the same time this deal was signed, Bulgaria agreed to purchase two Russian built nuclear reactors which, presumably, will help replace the nuclear generated electricity Bulgaria lost when it was obliged by the EU to shut down four reactors at Kozloduy.<sup>71</sup>

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Footnote 65 continued

political chill', *Turkish Daily News*, Wednesday, 20 February 2008, <<http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/article.php?newsid=96907>>.

<sup>66</sup> Vladimir Socor, 'Russian strategy, EU drift in Estonia', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 8 May 2007. At one point Estonian President Toomas Ilves accused unnamed EU members of pursuing an 'appeasement policy' toward Russia. *EUBusiness.com*, 12 July 2007.

<sup>67</sup> 'Romanian president accuses Russia of using energy to achieve political aims', *Interfax*, 17 November 2006 [*World News Connection*, 17 November 2006]. Vladimir Socor reports that in a speech to the Jamestown Foundation in August 2006 Basescu declared that Gazprom was 'more efficient than the Red Army used to be'. *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 21 November 2006.

<sup>68</sup> Interview with Bulgarian Prime Minister.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Ilin Stanev, Editor, Foreign Desk, *Capital*, Sofia, 17 April 2007; Ivan Kostov, former Prime Minister and leader of an opposition party in parliament, Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria, was especially critical. See 'Ivan Kostov: the Bulgarian energy is dependent on Russia and this is becoming more irreversible', *BTV*, 5 February 2007. For the government's defence, see 'We expect \$35 million per year from Burgas-Alexandropoulos', *Sega*, 8 February 2007.

<sup>70</sup> In response to the high level of dependence on Russia for energy, the Bulgarian Foreign Policy Association called for a national referendum on both the oil and gas pipeline deals. *Novinite*, 23 January 2008.

<sup>71</sup> The deal was originally approved by Bulgaria's National Electric Company in 2006; Russia agreed to provide substantial financing in May 2009. *Energy Business Review Nuclear*, 28 May 2009; see also Peter Doran, 'EU energy security and Bulgaria's nuclear option', *World Politics Review*, 25 May 2009.



The movement of Bulgaria, an EU and NATO member, toward much closer cooperation with Russia was a cause for some criticism and protests during the January 2008 visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin.<sup>72</sup>

While not as dependent on Russia as Bulgaria is—especially with regard to natural gas—Romania too wants to be a transit country. President Basescu has been especially frank in urging Europe to secure its independence from Russian energy.<sup>73</sup> The Constanța–Trieste pipeline plan was a major success in oil and the Nabucco gas pipeline, with Romania as a key link, could be as well. At the same time, Romania signed its own deal with *Gazprom* in 2009 to set up a joint venture for storing natural gas in Romania and selling it to Europe.<sup>74</sup>

With regard to energy, all the EU member states are in the classic hunter-and-stag dilemma: whether to work collectively for long-term goals that benefit all or take the short-term gains of separate deals. Evidence indicates that the latter predominates among the major EU energy consumers.<sup>75</sup> Thus for the two Black Sea littoral countries to seek their own best deal does not put them out of step with the behaviour—as opposed to the declared policy—of the EU's dominant actors. But it does put them in competition with each other and with their new NATO ally, Turkey, which has declared its own desire to be an 'East–West Energy Corridor'.<sup>76</sup> Thus, on both energy and overall strategic orientation, the challenges to organizational cooperation are substantial—even before the issues of EU membership for Turkey and the independence of Kosovo come into play.

## Turkey and the EU

The issue of Turkish membership in the EU itself is beyond the scope of this paper<sup>77</sup> but there are ramifications for Romania and Bulgaria of the most recent Turkish attempts to realize a long held dream of joining Europe. Recent members themselves, these two states may have pushed the EU's 'absorption capacity'

<sup>72</sup> 'Bulgarians protest Russia's energy policy', *International Herald Tribune*, 18 January 2008, <<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2008/01/18/europe/EU-GEN-Bulgaria-Putin-Protests.php>>. Elitsa Grancharova, 'Anti-Putin protest on Sofia's Orlov Most', *The Sofia Echo*, 17 January 2008.

<sup>73</sup> Christopher Condon and Stefan Wagstyl, 'EU urged to cut reliance on Russian oil and gas', *FT.com*, 19 January 2007.

<sup>74</sup> 'Romania sets up joint venture with Russia's Gazprom for underground gas storage facilities', Associated Press, 1 June 2009.

<sup>75</sup> Pinar Ipek and Paul Williams, 'Divergence in EU member-state energy policies: a challenge to the EU's common energy policy and trans-Atlantic partnership in human security', German Marshall Fund of the United States Policy Research Conference on Energy Security, Trento, Italy, 18–19 April 2008.

<sup>76</sup> 'Turkey's energy strategy', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Turkey, available at <<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/sub.en.mfa?395d59f6-c33c-4364-9744-cff90ec18a3e>>.

<sup>77</sup> The literature on the subject is substantial and growing rapidly. Useful discussions can be found in Melem Müftüleri-Baç and Yannis A. Stivachtis (eds), *Turkey–European Union Relations*, Lexington Books, Lanham, MD, 2008; Esra LaGro and Knud Jorgensen (eds), *Turkey and the European Union*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2007; Burak Akçapar, *Turkey's New European Era*, Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham, MD, 2007; Gülnur Aybet, 'Turkey and the EU after the first year of negotiations: reconciling internal and external policy challenges', *Security Dialogue*, 37(4), December 2006, pp. 529–549; Ziya Öniş, 'Turkey's encounters with the new Europe: multiple transformations, inherent dilemmas and the challenges ahead', *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 8(3), December 2006, pp. 279–298; Steve Wood and Wolfgang Quaisser, 'Turkey's road to the EU: political dynamics, strategic context and implications for Europe', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 10, 2005.

to the breaking point, at least judging by recent EU leadership rhetoric and negative votes in France and Holland in 2005 and Ireland in 2008 on the proposed EU constitutions. Even though these two states weathered a longer and more exacting process than other Central and Eastern European states, they were not particularly welcome by the European public. The EU itself may have been trapped, as Frank Schimmelfennig argues,<sup>78</sup> by its own rhetoric and accepted these two candidates before they were fully ready. In any case, EU officials have been candid that the road to the next enlargement will be difficult, due in part to the rocky experience of the most recent entrants.<sup>79</sup> It is also possible that the scrutiny which these two states endured was in part a signal to Turkey that its behaviour would be subject to special examination.<sup>80</sup>

Before formal admission, leadership in both countries showed some apprehension that if they failed, they would be left behind among 'problematic' countries, like Turkey. Nevertheless both officially support Turkish membership, eventually. For Romania, Turkish membership presents few challenges. Turkey is already a major investor and trading partner for Romania; there is only a small and uninfluential Turkish minority in the country<sup>81</sup> and Romanian history tells a story at least as fearful of domination by Russia as by Turkey. Nor do Romanians indicate much concern about a putative 'Turkish plumber' coming to take Romanian jobs if free movement of labour is allowed. Still, Bucharest has been careful to hew closely to the EU line on Turkey saying that it should be admitted 'when all conditions are met'.<sup>82</sup>

For Bulgaria, however, it is a different story. Bulgarian history, into the 20th century is one of challenges to and repression by Ottoman rule. The 'Turkish yoke' is an almost automatic phrase that emerges in any discussion of Bulgarian–Turkish relations. A substantial ethnically Turkish and Muslim population, currently estimated at seven to eight hundred thousand, lives in the country. During the communist period, the regime of Todor Zhivkov undertook a brutal 'name-change' assimilation campaign accompanied by broader repression and pressures to leave, policies that were reversed only when the regime fell in 1989.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Schimmelfennig, *The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe*, pp. 265–278.

<sup>79</sup> In January 2008, European Commission President Jose Barroso came as close as EU officials ever do in acknowledging this link: 'We have always said that we are rating each country on merit alone and I would therefore not want to be drawn into making comparisons between different cases. Every European country is unique. Of course, we always take into account our experience from previous enlargements such as those of Bulgaria and Romania and of the countries before them. If I have to be quite honest with you, the issue is not whether we have learned one lesson or another from the past but the fact that public opinion has become much more sensitive to the issue of enlargement.' Irina Novakova, 'Jose Manuel Barroso: Bulgaria is no tiny fish in vast ocean', *Kapital*, 1 January 2008 [*World News Connection*, 1 January 2008].

<sup>80</sup> Linden, 'Balkan geometry', op. cit., p. 344.

<sup>81</sup> Ervin Ibraim, Head of Turkish Community in Romania, estimates the Turkish minority in Romania at 100,000, 90 per cent of whom live in the Dobrogea region. Interview, 11 April 2007, Bucharest.

<sup>82</sup> "'Turkey has right to join EU when it meets its standards", says President Basescu', *Rompres*, 15 February 2007 [*World News Connection*, 15 February 2007]; 'Turkey's President Gul visiting Romania amid differences over Kosovo, gas'.

<sup>83</sup> Diaz Anagnostou, 'Nationalist legacies and European trajectories: post-communist liberalization and Turkish minority politics in Bulgaria', *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 5(1), January 2005, pp. 89–111.

Ethnically Turkish Bulgarian citizens live primarily in the south-eastern part of the country where the party of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF) led by Ahmed Doğan is a formidable and well-organized political force. While not technically an ethnic party, illegal under Bulgarian law, the party is overwhelmingly Turkish and has been dominated by Doğan for years. It has been part of governments of the left and the right and is currently part of the hydra-headed coalition that includes the King's party and the Socialists. With a virtual monopoly on the Turkish vote, the party holds enormous power to create and dissolve governments, especially since in recent times the centre-right, once dominated by the Union of Democratic Forces, has disintegrated. Critics accuse the MRF of undemocratic and corrupt practices<sup>84</sup> and its leader is locked in a bitter feud with its one time ally, former Prime Minister Ivan Kostov.

Thus, Bulgarian attitudes toward Turkish membership in the EU are closely tied up with attitudes toward Doğan and the MRF. For example, Turkey is accused of using the MRF to exercise influence on Bulgaria from within.<sup>85</sup> In a nightmare—but fairly common—scenario, south-east Bulgaria would be 'Cypriotized' and eventually dominated by or even taken over by Turkey using the Turkish minority as its wedge. A Bulgarian variant of the unrecognized Turkish Federal Republic of Cyprus would come into being. Such arguments are not simply the purview of populist anti-Turkish parties such as Ataka<sup>86</sup> but are seen in more mainstream analyses. For example, in his discussion of 'Bulgaria and Turkey's Membership in the EU', political scientist Ognyan Minchev writes:

If the Bulgarian state and civil society cannot succeed in breaking up the ethno-corporate political monopoly of the MRF, in a mid-term perspective Bulgaria will be subjected to the eroding effects of the combined influence of: a) growing territorial autonomy of ethnically mixed regions, b) expanding Turkish-Muslim immigration wave, c) increasing foreign agency's control in the institutions and d) growing weakening and paralyzing of the state from within in its efforts to resist the attempts of this slow, silent but increasingly difficult to reverse expansion. In a certain future, but not very distant moment, this expansion will openly serve the Turkish nationalist strategy for geopolitical retribution and hegemonic control over the Balkans. A supple immigration wave from our southern neighbor will rapidly transform ethnic proportions in Bulgaria, making them similar to those in Cyprus, and the ethno-political control of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms as 'a state within a state' will lead to political 'lebanization'/'cypriotization' of the Bulgarian state.<sup>87</sup>

Critics of the government's position, such as Kostov and Minchev, say that Bulgaria is particularly vulnerable to the demographic as well as political implications of Turkish membership. After reports of 'voting tourism' by Bulgarian Turks living in Turkey, the National Assembly at first passed a measure restricting voting in the 2007 elections for the European Parliament to those who had lived in the country for three months prior to the elections—effectively

<sup>84</sup> Ognyan Minchev, *The Case of Turkey in the EU*, Institute for Regional and International Studies, Sofia, 2006, pp. 12–13; see also, Ganev, 'Ballots, bribes and state building in Bulgaria', pp. 84–87.

<sup>85</sup> 'DSB: Bulgarian interests to be "badly harmed" by Turkey premature EU membership', BTA, 2 May 2007 [*World News Connection*, 2 May 2006]; Interview with Ivan Kostov, 13 April 2007, Sofia.

<sup>86</sup> 'After Parvanov, Turkey gave a medal to Dogan', ATAKA, 16 January 2007.

<sup>87</sup> Minchev, *The Case of Turkey in the EU*, op. cit., p. 15.

barring expatriate Bulgarian Turks from voting. But after the MRF, a part of the governing coalition, walked out of parliament, the residency restriction was dropped in favour of a citizenship requirement.<sup>88</sup> The labour argument is less persuasive to others, who point out that the country is in fact *losing* population, especially young workers, so Bulgaria should not fear but welcome Turkish workers. 'Who will pay for our pension system?' asks former Prime Minister Filip Dimitrov.<sup>89</sup> In any case, such arguments run, Turkish workers are already in the country and are highly prized for the quality of their work.<sup>90</sup> Others suggest that Turkish membership will be good for the country's economy<sup>91</sup> and it is in Bulgaria's interests not to be the 'frontier of Europe', that is, it would be better for Turkey to be that frontier.<sup>92</sup> Still public support for Turkish membership is very low, according to one recent poll, even though the public supports enlargement in general.<sup>93</sup>

Thus the Bulgarian government may find itself caught between domestic politics and external allies. As an EU member, Sofia officially supports Turkish candidacy. That is the position of all the parties in the governing coalition. But two of the parties of the coalition are weaker than they had been, assuming that the 2007 European Parliament elections were a barometer of party support. In these elections the Socialists fell from their 2005 National Assembly percentage of 34 per cent to 21 per cent, and the King's party, which had won nearly 22 per cent in 2005, won just over 6 per cent of the vote. On the other hand, the MRF, with 20 per cent, improved their standing compared to their typical National Assembly support (14 per cent).<sup>94</sup> GERB, the leading vote getter, says it supports Turkish membership<sup>95</sup> while the opposition DSB, which does not and had called for a referendum on the issue, fared poorly, prompting Ivan Kostov to resign as its head. The EP elections did not turn on the Turkish issue and was more a vote on Bulgarian parties' performance and on politics in general—reflected in a low turnout of 28 per cent.<sup>96</sup> Antiestablishment, populist parties like GERB and Ataka (with 14 per cent) together gained the votes of more than one-third of the electorate.

In such a weak position the government may decide, as it has done on Kozloduy, that favouring Turkish membership is not a winning position in the

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<sup>88</sup> 'MRF MP's leave Plenary Hall after second-reading vote of MEP Election Bill', BTA, 14 February 2007; 'No new rules for Bulgarian expats in MEP polls', *Dnevnik*, 23 February 2007 [Bulgaria in EU Press Centre].

<sup>89</sup> Interview with Filip Dimitrov, Deputy Speaker of Parliament, and former Prime Minister, UDF, 13 April 2007, Sofia.

<sup>90</sup> See 'Interview with [Prime Minister] Sergey Stanishev', *Sega*, 7 March 2007, in which he defends the government against attacks that EU project money was going to Turkish firms.

<sup>91</sup> Plamen Dimitrov, 'The future enlargement of the EU: the Bulgarian point of view', *Dnevnik*, 10 March 2008, <<http://evropa.dnevnik.bg/show/?storyid=468922>>.

<sup>92</sup> This view was put forth by Mihail Mikov, Chairman of the Parliamentary Group of the Coalition for Bulgaria, the Socialists' group, and Biliana Raeva of the NDSV, the King's party, both of whose parties are part of the current government coalition. Both interviewed in Sofia, 19 April 2007.

<sup>93</sup> Boriana Dimitrova, 'The first year in the EU—delayed optimism?', *Dnevnik*, 1 January 2008, <<http://evropa.dnevnik.bg/show/?storyid=410890>>.

<sup>94</sup> Official results are available at: <<http://www.izbori2007.eu/results/>>.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with Nikolay Mladenov, advisor to Boyko Borisov, leader of GERB, Sofia, 17 April 2007. In the May elections Mladenov was elected to the European Parliament.

<sup>96</sup> 'Sofia's mayor's party emerges winner in Bulgaria's European polls with 100 pct of vote tallied', BNN, 2 May 2007.

competition for votes. Some evidence for this occurred during the European Parliament's debate on the 2007 Progress Report on Turkey's candidacy. At that time, the Socialist MEPs urged the European Parliament to amend the Progress Report to insist that Turkey reopen negotiations with Bulgaria to compensate Bulgarians expelled from Thrace in 1913 after the Second Balkan War. The motion was supported by GERB<sup>97</sup> and was adopted as part of the Parliament's resolution on Turkey's progress.<sup>98</sup> Adding conditions like this hardly constitutes fervent support for Turkish membership. Domestic politics have further complicated Bulgarian–Turkish relations. A visit by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdoğan in March 2008 was met with demonstrations organized by Ataka<sup>99</sup> and in the same month Turkey froze its participation in an EU cross-border project after the Burgas city council passed a resolution recognizing the Armenian genocide. The resolution was introduced by Ataka but supported by GERB.<sup>100</sup> A similar resolution was rejected at the national level.<sup>101</sup> Backsliding on this issue could put Bulgaria at odds with the USA, which is a strong supporter of Turkish membership in the EU. Along with doubts about the war in Iraq, wariness about a US presence in the Black Sea and virtually complete energy dependence on Russia, Bulgarian disagreement on Turkey will not help strengthen NATO.

## Kosovo

Probably no challenge to the new alliance members has been greater than that presented by developments in Kosovo. Both Romania and Bulgaria supported the US position in 1999 politically and logistically, allowing US overflights during the bombing attacks on Serbia and preventing Russian flights. Bulgaria even suffered an accidental bombing. Both contributed to the NATO-led force that has been in Kosovo since the end of the fighting. In early 2007 after long and fruitless negotiations between the Albanian leadership of Kosovo and Belgrade, UN special envoy for Kosovo Martti Ahtisaari presented his plan to the UN Security Council for the future of the region. The plan called for Kosovo to be a de facto independent state, with a constitution, an army and the right to sign international treaties and join international organizations. Serbia would

<sup>97</sup> 'European Parliament urges Turkey to settle long-standing issues with Bulgarian', BTA, 22 April 2008 [BBC Monitoring, 22 April 2008].

<sup>98</sup> European Parliament, texts adopted by Parliament, 'Turkey's 2007 progress report', P6 TA(2008)024. This language was not included in the Parliament's 2008 resolution on Turkey's progress; see European Parliament, texts adopted by Parliament, 'Turkey's 2008 progress report', P6 TA(2009)0134.

<sup>99</sup> After a joint press conference of the two Prime Ministers was cancelled, Ataka leader Volen Siderov claimed it was due to fear of the questions he was going to ask about compensation for the Bulgarians expelled in 1913. Luben Obretenov and Samuil Dimitrov, 'Volen Siderov proudly announces that he scared Erdogan', *Sega*, 28 March 2008, <<http://www.segabg.com/online/article.asp?issueid=2931&sectionId=2&id=0000501>>; 'The press conference with Stanishev and Erdogan cancelled', *Today.bg*, 27 March 2008, <<http://www.today.bg/print/news/20614.html>>; 'Bulgaria supports Turkey's EU bid: premier', AFP, 27 March 2008.

<sup>100</sup> 'Turkish government freezes its participation in EU Operative Program on trans-border cooperation with Bulgaria for 2007–2013 due to decision of Community Council of Burgas to recognize Armenian genocide', ARMINFO News Agency, 11 March 2008.

<sup>101</sup> 'Bulgarian lawmakers reject Armenian "genocide" resolutions', AFP, 17 January 2008.



have retained nominal sovereignty but in fact the ultimate decision-maker, as in Bosnia, was to be the International Civilian Representative who was the Special Representative of the European Union.<sup>102</sup> With Russia vigorously opposed to the UN plan and able to veto it, the Albanians reluctantly agreed to pursue one more set of negotiations over the future of the province. These talks ended in December 2007 without success and in February 2008 Kosovo declared its independence.

For Romania and Bulgaria, Kosovo presents several thorny problems. The EU and NATO are the birth parents of Kosovo's independence and both organizations reasserted their presence and institutional support.<sup>103</sup> Despite the lack of a new mandate from the UN Security Council—impossible because of a likely Russian veto—the EU has gone ahead with a proposed 1800-person justice and police force for the province, designated as EULEX.<sup>104</sup> NATO will continue to provide security with KFOR.<sup>105</sup> Several pre-2004 EU members, including Spain and Greece, as well as newer members Cyprus and Slovakia did not recognize the new state. Two of its Balkan neighbours, Romania and Bulgaria, have their own historical and contemporary reasons to be concerned about Kosovo and the new situation their alliances helped create has not made their lives any easier.

Romania in particular is concerned about the precedent that might be set in Kosovo. Its most immediate concern is how it might apply to Transdnistria, the breakaway region in extreme eastern Moldova. Here, too, a majority in the region (Russians and Ukrainians), but a minority in terms of the whole country, have established de facto independence using the claim that the Moldovan government's policies, especially a possible union with Romania, have threatened them. Led by a self-proclaimed government in Tirasopol, they fought a brief war against Chisinau and have effectively ruled the territory since 1992. Moreover, they remain in power under the watchful eye and protection of the Russian 14th army which has stayed in place despite Moscow's pledges to withdraw it. If Kosovo can achieve independence with the blessings and support of the EU, then, its leaders ask, why not Transdnistria?<sup>106</sup>

While explicitly rejecting the application of such a precedent, Romania nevertheless expressed concern about an 'avalanche' of separatist claims

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<sup>102</sup> *Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement*, 2 February 2007, available at <<http://operationkosovo.kentlaw.edu/Comprehensive%20Proposal%20for%20the%20Kosovo%20Settlement.pdf>>.

<sup>103</sup> For the EU see European Council, 'Council conclusions on Kosovo', Brussels, 18 February 2008; for NATO see 'Statement by the North Atlantic Council after Kosovo's declaration of independence', 18 February 2008, <<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2008/p08-025e.html>>; and 'Final communiqué Ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council held at NATO headquarters', 7 December 2007, <<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2007/p07-130e.html>>.

<sup>104</sup> 'Council Joint Action 2008/124/CFSP of 4 February 2008 on the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, EULEX Kosovo', *Official Journal of the European Union*, 16 February 2008, pp. 1 42/92–98. The view of the EU is that the original resolution ending the war against Serbia in 1999, UN Security Council Resolution 1244, establishes the legality of their mission.

<sup>105</sup> 'EU finalizes Kosovo mission preparations: diplomats', *eubusiness.com*, 4 February 2008; NATO, 'Statement by the North Atlantic Council after Kosovo's declaration of independence'; NATO, 'Final communiqué Ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council held at NATO headquarters'.

<sup>106</sup> 'Kosovo precedent for Transdnistria, says Pres', *The Tirasopol Times*, 18 May 2007, <<http://www.tiraspoltimes.com/node/858>>. Igor Smirnov, 'We have a stronger case for statehood than Kosovo', *The Tirasopol Times*, 6 March 2007, <<http://www.tiraspoltimes.com/node/624>>.

including Transdnistria.<sup>107</sup> Repeating this before the Romanian parliament, Prime Minister Calin Popescu-Tariceanu also reasserted the long-standing Romanian position against the existence of 'collective rights'. He pointedly reminded 'all citizens of Romania' that the country was a 'unitary state'.<sup>108</sup> This reflects the worry in Bucharest that some among the 1.9 million-strong Hungarian community, living mostly in Transylvania, might take international support for Kosovo as a sign that they can successfully create for themselves, if not independence, at least greater autonomy within Romania. Indeed, in January 2008 the National Council of the Szeklers, part of the Hungarian minority in Romania, announced that it would hold a referendum on autonomy and would send the results not only to Bucharest but to the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. Bishop Laszlo Tokes, whose attempted ouster by the Ceauşescu regime in 1989 sparked the Romanian revolution, supported autonomy as a European MP as did a new Hungarian political party, the Hungarian Civic Party.<sup>109</sup> Bela Marko, President of the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania, which was until the elections of 2008 a part of the governing coalition, did so as well.<sup>110</sup> This set off alarm bells in Romania<sup>111</sup> and combined with concerns about Transdnistria, explains the unusually unified position of the Romanian president, prime minister and parliament against Kosovo independence.<sup>112</sup> When independence was declared, President Traian Basescu labelled it 'illegal', a sentiment echoed by the Prime Minister.<sup>113</sup>

Bulgaria also expressed concerns about the possible impact of Kosovo independence on the region's stability. Some worried that the Albanians of western Macedonia, who number roughly 25 per cent of the country's population, would be given encouragement to fight for their own independence or to break away in order to join the newly sovereign Kosovo. A violent movement of Albanians in Macedonia raised this prospect in 2001 but since the signing of the Ohrid Agreement that year Albanians have been part of several Macedonian governments. By most accounts things have improved but

<sup>107</sup> 'Kosovo issue solution should not set precedent for other areas: Romanian PM', *Xinhua*, 13 May 2007 [*Romania International Media Watch*, 13 May 2007]; 'Serbian Foreign Minister pays visit to Bucharest', *Rompres*, 21 January 2008 [*World News Connection*, 21 January 2008].

<sup>108</sup> 'Romanian president, cabinet, parliament agree on rejecting Kosovo independence', *Rompres*, 19 February 2008 [BBC Monitoring, 19 February 2008].

<sup>109</sup> Zoltan Tibori, 'Kosovo sparks debate in Romania—Romanian President's party wants RMDSZ to be voted out of parliament', *Nepszabadsag*, 8 January 2008 [*World News Connection*, 8 January 2008]; 'New Hungarian party founded in Transylvania', *Politics.hu*, 31 January 2008, <<http://www.politics.hu/20080131/new-hungarian-party-founded-in-transylvania>>.

<sup>110</sup> 'Leader presents to EU envoys Romanian ethnic Hungarians' position on Kosovo', *Rompres*, 22 February 2008 [BBC Monitoring, 22 February 2008].

<sup>111</sup> 'Basescu: I believe it is out of the question that ethnic Hungarians plan independence', *Rompres*, 19 December 2007 [*World News Connection*, 19 December 2007]; Eliza Francu, 'Kosovo—intravenous serum for nationalists', *Gandul*, 12 December 2007 [*World News Connection*, 12 December 2007].

<sup>112</sup> Both President Traian Basescu and Prime Minister Calin Popescu-Tariceanu announced at the Brussels EU summit in December 2007 that Romania would not recognize an independent Kosovo. *Rompres*, 17 December 2007 [*World News Connection*, 17 December 2007]; *Rompres*, 14 December 2007 [*World News Connection*, 14 December 2007]. See also 'Romanian president, cabinet, parliament agree on rejecting Kosovo independence'.

<sup>113</sup> 'Romania's President says Kosovo's declaration of independence illegal', *SeeNews*, 18 February 2008; 'Romania says Kosovo independence "illegal": report', *AFP*, 18 February 2008; 'Romanian president, cabinet, parliament agree on rejecting Kosovo independence'.

grievances remain.<sup>114</sup> As Bulgarian Foreign Minister Ivaylo Kalfin envisioned it in January 2008, 'Another bad scenario would be if Kosovo's problems were to spill over into neighboring countries. Then we might have to start setting up new borders in the Balkans.'<sup>115</sup>

Especially if that were to happen, but even if it does not, those in Bulgaria who retain the idea that Macedonians are in fact Bulgarians, that the state was a communist fiction and that at least some of that country should be part of Bulgaria, will be strengthened. While it is unlikely such views would characterize those in power or be put into practice, the last two years have seen a growing prominence of nationalist sentiment in the country. The Ataka party, for example, went from not being represented at all in parliament to having 21 seats. In the 2007 elections for the European Parliament, Ataka won 14 per cent of the vote, some 45 per cent higher than it had in the national elections of 2005. Especially given the collapse of the centre-right and the exhaustion of political alternatives in Bulgaria—with failures of the left, the right and the King's party—an upsurge of nationalism could be a potent political force.

Sofia strongly supported the doomed Ahtisaari plan,<sup>116</sup> hoped for the creation of a common EU position toward Kosovo,<sup>117</sup> and the effective movement forward of Serbia toward EU association and membership.<sup>118</sup> Before the declaration of independence Bulgaria indicated that it would be very cautious on recognizing Kosovo.<sup>119</sup> In the event, it acted rather promptly, recognizing Kosovo roughly one month after its independence was declared.<sup>120</sup> The decision was broadly unpopular—74 per cent were opposed according to one survey<sup>121</sup> and sharply criticized from a variety of angles. One commentator raised the spectre of 'pan-Albanianism':

The Kosovo question is part of the so-called Albanian national question which became particularly prominent in the last decade of the last century and in the first decade of this century. It contains significant destabilizing potential which makes it a threat to Bulgarian national security, regional security on the Balkans, and Europe's security as a whole.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>114</sup> Armend Reka, 'The Ohrid Agreement: the travails of inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia', *Human Rights Review*, 9, 2008, pp. 55–69; 'Edging beyond ethnicity', *Transitions Online*, 4 September 2006.

<sup>115</sup> 'Interview with Bulgarian Foreign Minister Ivaylo Kalfin', 24 *Chasa*, 18 January 2008 [*World News Connection*, 18 January 2008].

<sup>116</sup> See, for example, 'Bulgaria supports Ahtisaari's plan', KosovaLive News Agency, 28 December 2007 [*World News Connection*, 28 December 2007].

<sup>117</sup> 'Bulgaria, Hungary call for common EU position on Kosovo', AFP, 5 February 2008 [*World News Connection*, 5 February 2008].

<sup>118</sup> 'Bulgarian Foreign Minister to visit Belgrade, Pristina on December 18, 19', BTA, 10 December 2007 [*World News Connection*, 10 December 2007].

<sup>119</sup> In December Bulgarian Foreign Minister Kalfin said a declaration of independence by Kosovo would be 'a bad move'. 'Bulgaria, Serbia maintain dynamic relations', BTA, 18 December 2007 [*World News Connection*, 18 December 2007]; in January 2008 President Georgi Parvanov said Bulgaria would 'not be among the states to immediately recognize an independent Kosovo', 'Kosovo independence bid eyed warily by several EU states', AFP, 2 February 2008 [*World News Connection*, 2 February 2008].

<sup>120</sup> See the Bulgarian government statement, 20 March 2008, at: <<http://www.government.bg/cgi-bin/e-cms/vis/vis.pl?s=001&p=0137&n=000575&g=>>.

<sup>121</sup> *Sega*, 25 March 2008, <<http://www.segabg.com/online/article.asp?issueid=2927&sectionId=5&id=0000911>>.

<sup>122</sup> Alexander Boyanov, 'Kosovo: the most expensive failed project', *Sega*, 27 March 2008, <<http://www.segabg.com/online/article.asp?issueid=2930&sectionId=5&id=0001001>>.

Others accused the government of being 'ruled by foreign forces'<sup>123</sup> and 'behaving like a banana republic'.<sup>124</sup> In parliament Ataka tried to delay recognition of 'another newly created Islamic state in Europe'.<sup>125</sup> Prime Minister Sergei Stanishev defended the government's action as consistent with Bulgarian national interests and peace and stability in the region. 'The worst decision for Bulgaria', he said, 'would have been a frozen conflict without international presence and surveillance since this would mean instability in the region as a whole.'<sup>126</sup>

Thus both Romania and Bulgaria find themselves pulled one way by international allies and another by national-level concerns. Both are EU and NATO members and US allies; Brussels and Washington have strongly supported Kosovo independence while both Serbia and Russia have rejected it. Romania in particular finds itself in a squeeze, caught between fears about fragmentation of Moldova and growing Russian influence in the region (especially after the upheaval and subsequent government crackdown there in 2009), its concerns about a large national minority at home, and the clear preferences of both its international organizational partners, the EU and NATO, and its major ally, the USA. Reflecting the multiple crosscutting pressures both countries face, the Romanian parliament in December 2007 passed a declaration saying that Romania's position 'should take into account the precedent on a regional and international level as well as the responsibilities taken by Romania as NATO and EU member state'.<sup>127</sup> Indeed. Attempting to square this circle, Bucharest agreed to keep its contingent in Kosovo as part of KFOR, but said it would not increase it<sup>128</sup> though initially Basescu had said Romania would 'not take part in peacekeeping in a country that it does not recognize'.<sup>129</sup> In addition, the government agreed to take part in the EULEX mission on the grounds that 'it was decided to send the EULEX mission to Kosovo before independence was proclaimed'.<sup>130</sup> Nevertheless, Bucharest reiterated its position that Kosovo's independence was illegal before the International Court of Justice in April 2009.<sup>131</sup>

Thus, while Bulgaria has a much closer historical association with—and greater energy dependence on—Russia, it has nevertheless rejected Moscow's view and recognized Kosovo while, ironically, Romania, always eager to assure NATO, the EU and the USA that it is an enthusiastic and supportive ally, and

<sup>123</sup> Boiko Lambovski, 'Tumors of democracy', *Sega*, 25 March 2008, <<http://www.segabg.com/online/article.asp?issueid=2927&sectionId=5&id=0001101>>.

<sup>124</sup> Svetoslav Terziev, 'Kosovo will recognize us for a banana republic', *Sega*, 20 March 2008, <<http://www.segabg.com/online/article.asp?issueid=2921&sectionId=5&id=0000902>>.

<sup>125</sup> Galia Gorianova, 'Kosovo spurs heated debate in parliament', *Sega*, 14 February 2008, <<http://www.segabg.com/online/article.asp?issueid=2886&sectionId=2&id=0000302>>.

<sup>126</sup> Bulgarian government statement.

<sup>127</sup> 'Romanian parliament passes political statement on Kosovo', *Rompres*, 20 December 2007 [*World News Connection*, 20 December 2007].

<sup>128</sup> 'Romania not to increase number of servicemen in Kosovo', *Rompres*, 18 March 2008 [BBC Monitoring, 18 March 2008].

<sup>129</sup> 'Romania prepared to send 175 police officers to Kosovo: president', *AFP*, 23 January 2008 [*World News Connection*, 23 January 2008].

<sup>130</sup> 'Romania's participation in EU Kosovo Mission is not independence recognition—FM', *Rompres*, 21 February 2008 [BBC Monitoring, 21 February 2008].

<sup>131</sup> *SETimes*, 17 April 2009, <[http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en\\_GB/features/setimes/newsbriefs/2009/04/17/nb-03](http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/newsbriefs/2009/04/17/nb-03)>.

much more suspicious of Russia, finds itself taking positions that are closer to those of Moscow than those of Brussels or Washington.

## **Conclusion**

What can we say about the costs, for Romania and Bulgaria, of belonging to the European alliances they have coveted? Joining both the EU and NATO has required some substantial changes, many of which they would have made anyway, such as rearranging domestic political and economic dynamics. On the international stage, taking on membership in European organizations has also required some important shifts in policies and orientations, compared to pre-1989 policies. Both new members have been expected to contribute to tasks defined by their new organizational allies or by major partners, but both were inclined to do so anyway, for example, in Bosnia and Afghanistan. The newly found interest of the EU in creating 'synergy' in the Black Sea area has not yet required an abandonment by Bucharest or Sofia of their differing views of that region. Nor has pressure to create common energy policy been more restrictive toward these two members of 'new Europe', than toward members of 'old Europe', Germany, Italy or France.

So far the potential for conflict with new allies is evident but latent. As in domestic policy, Romania and Bulgaria bring to their foreign policy tasks a unique combination of historical experience, attitudes toward that experience and domestic political context. As we can see in particular in the case of Bulgaria, this context did not disappear when states joined up. But they have not yet had to abandon their distinctive orientations toward their neighbourhood even as they try to please these key international organizations or allies. Especially when members of the new external reference groups are themselves divided, for example, on the war in Iraq or the independence of Kosovo, the luxury of following a national prerogative can still be exercised. As pressure grows, however, often sparked by events in or near the 'neighbourhood', and the salience of the region to the EU, NATO and other powerful external actors is heightened, the boundaries of these prerogatives may narrow.

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