

CHARLES UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Institute of Political Studies

Department of Political Science

Master's Thesis

2019

Danylo Stonis

CHARLES UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Institute of Political Studies

Department of Political Science

Intermarium Concept in Contemporary Geopolitics

Master's thesis

Author: Danylo Stonis

Study programme: Geopolitical Studies

Supervisor: Prof. Martin Riegl, Ph.D.

Year of the defence: 2019

Declaration

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on 03.05.2019

Danylo Stonis

References

Stonis, Danylo. „Intermarium in Contemporary Geopolitics“. 151 pages. Master's thesis (Mgr.). Charles University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Political Studies. Department of Political Science. Supervisor Prof. Martin Riegl, Ph.D. Prague, 2019.

Length of the thesis: 295 374 characters including spaces

Abstract

This work is trying to establish and answer three questions about the concept of Intermarium: Which concepts of the Intermarium that were formed in the past, are still relevant in modern geopolitical circumstances? What political conditions force the country to become a potential participant of the Intermarium? What minimal number of countries is sufficient enough for membership in the Intermarium to provide its effective activity in the political arena? The questions are answered through the implementation of a comparative method. The chosen method is applied to the selected states of the specified region on the basis of two selected cases that correspond to analogical situations in the history of these countries and resulted in the birth of the concept of the Intermarium as one of the possibilities for solving the political crisis in the historical period, which is chosen for the case. This work with case studies will allow the researcher to obtain a high level of conceptual validity as well as to evaluate the indicators that fully explain the theoretical concepts. Since certain internal and external factors such as political system, political culture, state power, economic independence, defensive capabilities, cultural and historical mentality, membership in international organizations are subjected to studying, a large number of these factors can be seen and evaluated together with unexpected aspects of the concrete variable factor and additionally to determine which of conditions presented in a case can permit an assessment of the political events in the past and predict the development of political processes today.

Keywords

Intermarium, Three Seas Initiative, comparative method, security policy, alternative energy market, economic independence

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank numerous people who helped me in many ways since I have started to write this thesis more than a year ago. Especially several of them do deserve special acknowledgment. In the first place, I have to express the deepest gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Martin Riegl. He helped me from the earliest beginnings and spent countless hours consulting this thesis. Without him and his tireless effort and endless patience, this work would never be finished. My parents supported me throughout the time I spent writing this thesis, for whose support I feel very grateful.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	7
Introduction.....	11
1. Methodology.....	18
1.1 Comparative method.....	19
1.2 Factors selected for research.....	23
1.3 Formation of the Research Summary.....	25
1.4 Selection and Analysis of Case Studies.....	29
2. Origins of the Intermarium.....	29
2.1 The Rise of The Intermarium Concept.....	29
2.2 The Reimplementation of the Intermarium.....	53
2.3 Intermarium in contemporary politics.....	68
2.4 Summary of Chapter 2.....	90
3. Case Studies of Potential Member States of the Intermarium.....	93
3.1 Case Study: Poland.....	93
3.1.1 <i>Membership in EU</i>	93
3.1.2 <i>Membership in NATO</i>	98
3.1.3 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with the US</i>	99
3.1.4 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with Russia</i>	100
3.2 Case Study: Slovakia.....	101
3.2.1 <i>Membership in EU</i>	101
3.2.2 <i>Membership in NATO</i>	103
3.2.3 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with the US</i>	104
3.2.4 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with Russia</i>	106

3.3 Case Study: Czech Republic.....	109
3.3.1 <i>Membership in EU</i>	109
3.3.2 <i>Membership in NATO</i>	110
3.3.3 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with the US</i>	111
3.3.4 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with Russia</i>	113
3.4 Case Study: Slovenia.....	114
3.4.1 <i>Membership in EU</i>	116
3.4.2 <i>Membership in NATO</i>	118
3.4.3 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with the US</i>	119
3.4.4 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with Russia</i>	120
3.5 Case Study: Hungary.....	121
3.5.1 <i>Membership in EU</i>	121
3.5.2 <i>Membership in NATO</i>	122
3.5.3 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with the US</i>	123
3.5.4 <i>Perception of Russia as an Aggressor</i>	124
3.6 Case Study: Romania.....	125
3.6.1 <i>Membership in EU</i>	125
3.6.2 <i>Membership in NATO</i>	127
3.6.3 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with the US</i>	128
3.6.4 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with Russia</i>	129
3.7 Case Study: Bulgaria.....	131
3.7.1 <i>Membership in EU</i>	131
3.7.2 <i>Membership in NATO</i>	133
3.7.3 <i>Bilateral Cooperation with the US</i>	134

3.7.4	<i>Bilateral Cooperation with Russia</i>	135
3.8	Case Study: Croatia.....	136
3.8.1	<i>Membership in EU</i>	136
3.8.2	<i>Membership in NATO</i>	136
3.8.3	<i>Bilateral Cooperation with the US</i>	138
3.8.4	<i>Bilateral Cooperation with Russia</i>	139
3.9	Case Study: Estonia.....	140
3.9.1	<i>Membership in EU</i>	140
3.9.2	<i>Membership in NATO</i>	142
3.9.3	<i>Bilateral Cooperation with the US</i>	142
3.9.4	<i>Bilateral Cooperation with Russia</i>	144
3.10	Case Study: Latvia.....	144
3.10.1	<i>Membership in EU</i>	145
3.10.2	<i>Membership in NATO</i>	145
3.10.3	<i>Bilateral Cooperation with the US</i>	146
3.10.4	<i>Bilateral Cooperation with Russia</i>	147
3.11	Case Study: Lithuania.....	149
3.11.1	<i>Membership in EU</i>	149
3.11.2	<i>Membership in NATO</i>	149
3.11.3	<i>Bilateral Cooperation with the US</i>	151
3.11.4	<i>Bilateral Cooperation with Russia</i>	152
3.12	Case Study: Austria.....	153
3.12.1	<i>Membership in EU</i>	153
3.12.2	<i>Membership in NATO</i>	154

3.12.3 *Bilateral Cooperation with the US*.....154

3.12.4 *Bilateral Cooperation with Russia*.....155

3.13 Summary of Chapter 3.....156

Conclusions.....161

List of References.....167

"Where there are no common interests, there can't be the unity of goals, not to mention the unity of actions"

Friedrich Engels

Introduction

In modern Europe, amid the economic crisis and political instability, there is an active search for alternative approaches to the creation of a foreign policy vector for the development of states that can geopolitically influence processes both in the EU and in the Eastern Europe as well. This happens due to the emergence of new political forces among not only leading EU member states (France, Germany), but also among neighbouring countries, that actively influence stability and security in the region (Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus). Therefore, in the political environment of European countries, different opinions are increasingly expressed regarding the assessment of risks and threats to further political development in the case of a possible political crisis in the EU and subsequent fragmentation of the European Union. Among the main projects that appear in the environment of both the European and the world order, the idea of creating a regional grouping based on the "Three Seas Initiative" project is actively disseminated. Basically, this project can be interpreted as a logical continuation of the political project, started at the beginning of the 20th century under the name "Intermarium", the main reason for which was the lack of an effective security structure in Eastern Europe amid the collapse of the Russian Empire and the emergence of newly formed and still fragile states of Eastern Europe such as: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, which quickly became targets of Bolshevik aggression.

In this paper, the term "Intermarium" will refer to the primary concept of the unification of the states of Eastern Europe, proposed in the twentieth century. In order to analyze and research the modern concept of the unification of countries on the

basis of the Intermarium, the modern term which is currently proposed as the name for the association of the countries of Eastern Europe - the Three Seas Initiative - will be used in the work. But in the title of the paper, the term Intermarium will be referred to as the primary concept of the unification of the countries of Eastern Europe, both in the original and contemporary interpretation of it - the Three Seas Initiative, which is actively discussed in modern political circles.

Nowadays, the European Union recognizes that there are many different informal groups of close cooperation within it, such as the Scandinavian states, the Baltic states, the Franco-German "engine", the Weimar triangle, the Vishegrád Group, etc. Therefore, the "Three Seas Initiative", proposed as one of the possible variants of regional groupings, and at the same time act as a logical continuation, enhancement and improvement of the original concept of the Intermarium, is actively discussed among modern world politicians and scholars.¹

To date, the form of the "Three Seas Initiative" proposed for consideration as an informal co-operative platform includes 12 member states of the European Union between the Baltic, Adriatic and Black Seas: Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Austria.

The main priority of this platform is the formation of the infrastructure and economic unity of the predominantly Eastern European states on the "North-South" axis.

In general, the "Three Seas Initiative" following the Dubrovnik forum is emerging as a new format for strengthening the cooperation of the EU member states from Central and Eastern Europe, whose ultimate goal is to increase their economic

¹United Nations, New York: Resolutions and Decisions adopted by the General Assembly during its seventieth session. Volume III 24 December 2015 – 13 September 2016. General Assembly Official Records. Seventieth Session Supplement No. 49, 2016.

and political opportunities, as well as to ensure security and sovereignty within the European Union.

According to the Dubrovnik forum, the capability of this format depends on the ability of the member states to form common goals and agree on ways to achieve them, while effective and timely solution of the most significant problems of the region will be a priority for states interested in further support of this initiative.²

As the primary spheres of strengthening cooperation between Central and Eastern Europe along the North-South axis, such geopolitically significant sectors as energy, transport and mass media were chosen, which should unite the Adriatic, Baltic and Black Sea regions. The key goal of the initiative is to provide a political basis for the implementation of specific strategic cross-border projects worth a total of 50 billion euros, without creating more new alliances.³

But it is necessary to remember, that in the constantly intensified globalization process, such a strong and influential political player as the USA is also interested in the development of the situation in Eastern Europe as well as in the security of the entire region. Nowadays, the United States and its allies have reacted to the Ukrainian crisis by providing financial and material aid, which includes economic sanctions against Russia, the creation of a joint military unit and the one billion dollar loan in order to strengthen European security.⁴ From the US point of view, Intermarium (Three Seas Initiative) can become one of the tools that can be used to establish a long-term equilibrium of national interests among NATO allies in the Eastern European region.

²Forum "Strengthening Europe: Connecting North and South" (Croatia, Dubrovnik) 2016.

³Forum "Strengthening Europe: Connecting North and South" (Croatia, Dubrovnik) 2016.

⁴Vitaliy Martynyuk: "The Three Seas Initiative: what can Ukraine contribute and what it can receive". Yevropeiska Pravda, September 2, 2016.

Therefore, the visit of US President Donald Trump to Poland and further participation in the regional forum on the Three Seas Initiative can be considered as a political strategy, aimed at the Central and Eastern European countries becoming an instrument of US influence on the pan-European policy in the region, which is analyzed.⁵

The historical origin of the "Intermarium" concept dates back to the beginning of the twentieth century: as early as 1918, almost at the same time as the declaration of independence of Poland, the chief of state, Józef Piłsudski, began discussing the creation of a new union, the Federation of Eastern European Nations, the so-called Intermarium, which should have consisted of newly formed states, following the collapse of the Russian Empire: Poland, Ukrainian People's Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia.

Such federation could have significantly changed and affected the current geopolitical situation in Europe, significantly pushing aside the traditionally competing for gaining a profitable, dominant position in the region states, such as Germany, France and Britain.

While planning such a federation, the Poles took into account the undeniable weight of such association both for Europe and for each of the states which could have been a potential candidate for membership, especially since they had a good historical example: the Federation of Slavic Countries, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which at the peak of its power was located almost from the Baltic to the Black Sea and thus could alone resist numerous attacks of the Mongol-Tatar Horde. At that time the project failed because of the complicated political situation. Later in 1941, Polish and Czech governments in exile began negotiations on the creation of a new federation of Slavic people, based on opposing the threatening

⁵Andreas Umland: "How to Solve Ukraine's Security Dilemma: The Case for a New Security Pact between the Baltic and Black Seas". Atlantic Council, April 12, 2016.

expansion of the Soviet Union. But at that time the project was not implemented due to the complicated political situation.

Hence, in this paper, two case studies will be presented, where historical and political reasons, which have made the Intermarium initiative impossible to implement in aforementioned historical periods, will be examined and analyzed.

However, the original concept of the Intermarium is now obsolete. Century ago, it provided the creation of a federation, which would include the states of Central-Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. This would mean integration of infrastructure, economics and research and, most importantly, development of military cooperation in order to ensure security in the region. But today the enlargement of the EU, its stabilization agreements in the Western Balkans, the membership of the EU countries in NATO and the association agreements with the Eastern European countries that were signed within the framework of the “Eastern Partnership” program cover the majority of these areas. Although these association agreements do not imply any prospects for EU membership, nevertheless they provide further integration of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia into pan-European economic, political and legal processes.⁶

But the possibility of cooperation in the field of security in this program, unlike previous concepts of the Intermarium, is out of the question. Therefore, these countries should unite in the "Three Seas Initiative" project, which could also become a regional defense alliance against Russia, while the platform of the Three Seas Initiative, although proposed to countries that are members of the EU, does not exclude project cooperation with other countries in the region that do not have EU membership.

Their interest in integration can be easily understood: the war in Ukraine, the inert reaction of the West to it, the disinterest of Western politicians in the

⁶“Poland and new military alliance against Russia in Central and Eastern Europe”. Eurasia Daily. June 24, 2016.

negotiations, and the lack of a real force capable of resisting Russia's aggression. These are the main reasons why the states of Eastern Europe and the Caucasian region will be pleased to consider the possibility of creating an alliance capable of resisting not only Russia, and not only in a military confrontation.⁷

It is possible to assume that some Scandinavian and the Western Balkan states may also be interested in forming such an alliance. The aggression of Russia against Ukraine only strengthened the sense of solidarity and the need for mutual assistance between all these countries, regardless of whether they are members of NATO or not. The annexation of Crimea by Russia has also dragged Turkey into this game, as the Turks are worried because of the fate of the Crimean Tatars, who are a fraternal nation.

It would seem that in modern historical realities the most favorable conditions for intensive integration processes have finally formed on the strategic for Europe Baltic-Black Sea axis. Two global continental challenges - the aggressive policy of Russia and the internal crisis of the European Union have opened a wide window of opportunity for the implementation of the Intermarium project in the modern concept of the Three Seas Initiative, which was only a theoretical abstraction for a long time.⁸

It should be noted that even today, there are certain historical, political and economic peculiarities that complicate the approaches to the creation of the multifaceted project Intermarium, as an alliance designed to meet all the challenges of modern realities, starting with the security of the region and ending with its infrastructural and economic strengthening. Differences in relation of the states of the region towards Russia as well as to each other stem from historical experience, ideological motivation, tendency to political cooperation and specific economic interests. As it turned out, in Central Europe, the political leadership lacks a national

⁷Oleg Polishchuk. "Polish roads. Why Warsaw has not learned lessons from the defeats of the first and second Rzeczpospolita" December 3, 2016.

⁸"Dubrovnik forum. How General James Jones sees "The Three Seas Initiative". Strategic Culture Fund. September 1, 2016.

consensus and a common strategic understanding of the regional security environment, as well as a concurrent assessment of potential threats.

This paper is designed to investigate the main reasons why the states of the region are capable of creating the Intermarium or why their endeavor will result in a failure. In order to ensure the clear and parsimonious definition of these reasons, this paper will attempt to answer the following research questions:

- Which of the previous concepts of the Intermarium are still possible to apply nowadays?
- What political conditions force the state to become a potential participant of the Intermarium?
- What minimal number of states is sufficient enough for membership in the Intermarium to provide its effective activity in the political arena?

One of the key questions of the work, necessary for the complex and thorough research, is the optimal number of states participating in the Intermarium, which is sufficient for its existence as an effective alliance as well as for the definition of the key areas of its activity that will satisfy the majority of other participants in the project. It will also involve the detailed analysis of the thesis that the Intermarium with any number of participants in any form, regardless of the economic or political (defense) aspect will be the shield of Europe from the external policy and intrigues of Russia, which utilizes not only its armed forces, but also its energy resources to build up influence in the global economy, and achieve its geopolitical goals (which poses a certain threat).

Then the connection of the north and south of Europe with an improved energy infrastructure that will be an important part of the "Three Seas Initiative" will allow to change this situation without excluding the possibility of uniting the armed forces of the participating states in the event of a tensed political situation or direct

aggression from Russia, without a direct reaction side of NATO, which corresponds to the political and national interests of the United States.

1. Methodology

While selecting an appropriate methodology for conducting the research, the preference was given to those approaches and techniques which provide reasonable answers to specific research questions. Furthermore, it is necessary to take into account the usefulness of the chosen method for a specific research, along with the existence of many other methods of research. Therefore, my research gives preference to rationalism as one of the epistemological views, which is defined in a theory, also known as a theory in which the criterion of the truth is not sensory but intellectual and deductive.

Since the investigated object has rather deep historical prerequisites with similar political features and individual characteristics that can be specified and can have the character of permanent and variable factors, I prefer to reject the quantitative research methods in favor of a qualitative method of comparative research as more substantial for this study.

The chosen approach involves the comparison of the same type of political processes and phenomena. Its ubiquitous application in political science can be explained by the inability to apply the experiment in political science research. Comparative analysis allows us to identify the general and particular features in political phenomena and processes. Comparison of political situations in various political processes helps to explain their similarity, to ascertain the trends of their development, to determine the specific features of each individual case.

Such choice of methodology provides my work an adequate demonstration of its viability as a full-fledged tool for a comprehensive assessment of the political concept of "Intermarium" as well as objective answers to the questions posed.

The essence of the comparative method is the comparison (juxtaposing) of the similar and different political phenomena, for example, political regimes, parties,

movements, political systems, ways of developing political concepts, adopting and implementing political decisions, etc. This method allows to identify the general and the particular in the researched objects, to assess the existing realities more objectively, to determine the patterns of development of the observed phenomena, to find optimal solutions to the current problems.

However, according to Voskresensky, “a comparison of political situations endeavors to explain a particular political phenomenon and find ways to solve the problems that arise”.⁹

Therefore, in this work, the concept of a comparative method will be adopted, as being more appropriate for the tasks set.

1.1 Comparative method

The main purpose of this study and the strategy of the case study is to identify common trends and distinctive peculiarities of the Intermarium phenomenon.

For this purpose, a comparative method was chosen, which juxtaposes variable factors of the hypothesis. Thus, it is convenient to use the approaches developed in the book by Stephen Van Evera “Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science”.¹⁰

Applying his concept of defining the constant and variable factors for a comparative study, we can formulate key concepts for the study I am conducting.

Therefore, I assume the Intermarium concept will be viable, if the minimum number of states in the Eastern Europe, that is going to participate in it has sufficient capacities and significant economic interests for the moderation of their common security policy and development strategy in the region.

⁹Voskresensky A.D. “Political comparativism as a part of the discourse of the world complex regional studies: general laws and specificity of their transformation in the East” // Vostok, 2005, №2.

¹⁰Stephen Van Evera. “Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science”. Cornell University Press 1997. ISBN 0-8014-8457-X.

Taking as a basis the concept that the unification of countries on the Intermarium platform will be an effective structure capable of fulfilling the function of the mitigating security policy for the European states against external threats, while the nature of the threats can vary, both politically and economically, hence Intermarium is a security regulator in Europe, on condition that a certain (minimal) number of states is willing to participate in it. Based on the mentioned above and applying the approaches of Dr. Van Evera, I will define the key concepts for research. In our case, the variable is a concept that can take various meanings, for example: the number of states ready to participate in the Intermarium, depending on the historical period, political situation, economic indicators and external threats. Variables can be classified as dependent and independent. In my case, the independent variable is the concept of creating the Intermarium, which leads to security increase and economy cooperation, while the dependent variable represents the number of states ready to participate in the Intermarium, which may change depending on the political or economic situation in the region. At the same time, it should be taken into account that the idea of creating the Intermarium itself as an effective project is caused by the aggravation of the political situation in the region, which is presented by numerous severe external threats, particularly from Russian Federation. As a result, I research factors, which influence dependent variable: political and economic threats.

In my paper a study of the dependent variable that is influenced by external and internal factors will be conducted. In the first part of the work, the comparative method will be used to analyze factors that influenced the dependent variable in the past and characterized political and economic situation in Europe. The result of this study will serve as a basis for identifying the dependent variable that will define the states which participation is necessary for the implementation of the Intermarium as a viable concept.

As mentioned above, the comparative method was chosen as the most appropriate approach for the solution of the tasks set, namely, to identify those

political trends and events that contributed to the emergence of the idea of the Intermarium in different historical periods and to understand the reasons why the concept of Intermarium was not implemented in the past as well as its current interpretation in the format of the Three Seas Initiative. My research is based on a comparison, which is the basis of such a logical method as analogy. It involves the construction of typologies and classifications that will be conducted on the basis of two cases based on historical examples of situations when the concept of the Intermarium had the prerequisites for its implementation. Any comparison is aimed at solving two problems: it must define the existing patterns and provide a historical explanation of the phenomenon.

Therefore, the fundamental principle of comparison will be used for my study: only phenomena and concepts with similar features can be compared.

Two operations (two processes) of comparison are based on this principle. One of them is an identification operation, based on the determination of common features. According to this operation, it is possible to compare only equal concepts that reflect comparable concepts and phenomena. Another operation is a distinguishing operation, for example, the establishment and explanation of differences.

Depending on which processes are used, the comparison can be complete (if it consists of two processes—identification and distinguishing) and incomplete (if it consists only of the identification process). My task in this paper is to make a complete comparison of the factors that are inherent in each historical period, corresponding to the cases chosen for comparison. A clear number of factors will be established, which serve as the characteristic of the political situation in the region in a particular historical period. They will be compared in order to determine similar characteristics in both political situations of the past and the political trends of the present, as well as differences between them and the appearance of new variables that

lead to discrepancies in the case studies. The study will have a comparative nature for carrying out qualitative method, while the author adheres to the following rules:

1. Quantitative discrepancy must be preceded by qualitative identification.
2. Comparison of the phenomena must be necessarily done by the most essential features.

Thus, while comparing the political situations that contributed to the birth of the idea of the Intermarium, the signs related to the political alignment of forces in the region in comparable periods, the assessment of military threats, the threats to the loss of independence by the countries in the region, economic priorities and trends relevant to the periods under study, must be analyzed first.

3. During comparison, it is necessary to identify and analyze the objective conditions which cause the emergence of the analyzed variables in order to understand the causes of certain events that contributed to the current political situation in the periods compared, as this will help to understand their essence and draw analogies.

As Voskresensky stated, “Comparisons will be conducted in the time plane ("temporal" comparison). Temporal comparison can be retrospective when there is a comparison with the past, and forecast one, when there is a comparison with the future”.¹¹

In this paper, however, comparison of the factors described in cases with modern political realities is not just a method, but a complex methodological strategy that influences the variable factors related to the subject of research, their initial conceptual structure and formulation of research hypotheses, selective tools for the analysis of empirical material and for development of the concept of Intermarium. Despite this, comparative method is not just a method of comparing different or

¹¹Voskresensky A.D.

common variables for individual states, with the purpose of selecting them for participation in the Intermarium, but a research task aimed at assessment of the situation and the political prerequisites for creating an "Intermarium" with minimal number of states for its viability. According to this approach, the researcher consistently studies and analyzes potential participants of Intermarium one after another, which leads to the most informative and accurate result. In other words, the research strategy assumes that the choice of the researched factors occurs depending on the hypothesis obtained from the cases studied. The factors that identify the choice of criteria are determined: comparing the results of different states in different cases will corroborate or infirm the chosen theory. The comparative method by its very nature usually includes contrasting objects. At the very least, this should be the minimal number of states and in its maximum - all the states of Eastern Europe, whose political attitude can lead to the creation of the Intermarium. Finally, the comparative method allows the researcher to get acquainted with all the cases that are directly related to his theory.

1.2 Factors selected for research

According to Van Evera's methodology, the selection with the dependent variable is possible in any of the following three situations:

a) if the conditions of the selected cases can be compared with a known casual situation.

b) if the dispersion of the values of the variable under study within the case is sufficiently significant, for example, multiple comparison procedures can be performed within the case;

c) if the data is sufficient to track the process.¹²

¹²Stephen Van Evera.

Hence, in this work, I use the comparative method for political situations and trends that occur in the contemporary political environment as well as in processes that occurred in history, and were reflected in the cases that were chosen for research. The factors, which had different effects on world politics in each case, such as the state in the political arena, political strategy, economic projects, will be compared. Such an approach will allow me to identify those political and economic factors that are most relevant to the current situation in Eastern Europe and are different from those that prevailed in previous historical periods.

It is necessary to mention, that this approach requires selection of factors which allow to reveal the willingness of each of the twelve states to join Intermarium:

- The assessment of the national security environment in the state and the response to the Russia's policy towards it.
- Specific economic interests of each state in joint projects which include the participation of Russia in them.
- The experience obtained in relations between the potential participants of Intermarium throughout history.

This will allow comparing the relevance of the Intermarium project for the Eastern European states in different historical periods of its implementation as well as the reasons which caused the failure of the project.

The other factors are presented by bilateral relations between the US and the potential member states of the Intermarium (the level of cooperation, security or economic cooperation, etc.). This approach is relevant because the US influence on geopolitical processes is more significant than in the periods considered in previous cases.

Therefore, the following criteria will be considered for conducting such a research:

1. Bilateral cooperation between the USA and each of the twelve potential Intermarium members.
2. Membership of the potential member state of the Intermarium in NATO.
3. The economic cooperation between the United States and the countries that may potentially be members of the Intermarium.

1.3 Formation of the Research Summary

The result of the comparison will be an assessment of the current political situation as a possible prerequisite for the implementation of the Intermarium political project with the participation of a minimal number of states in the region.

Selection of the minimum number of states worth to participate in the Intermarium project can be done by choosing the selected parameters that satisfy objectives of the creation of the Intermarium concept in the format of the Three Seas Initiative, taking into account the factors that, as a result of the study, had the greatest impact on Intermarium in the past. The scheme for conclusion of the research summary is presented by (Fig.1):

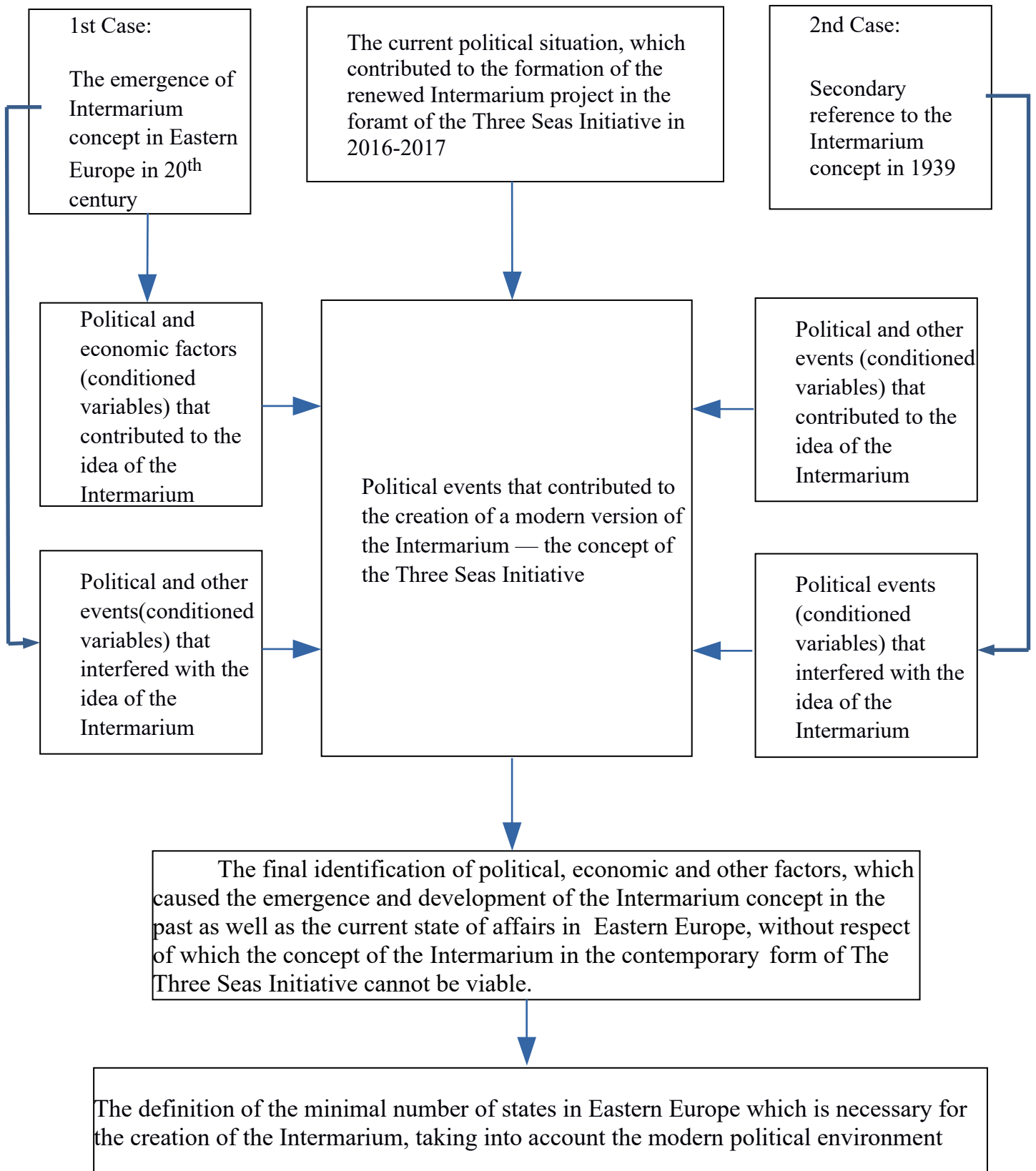


Figure 1: Scheme for conclusion of the research summary. Source: author

The aforementioned study will reveal the discrepancies in the attitude of the selected states towards Russia and towards each other, which stem from historical experience, ideological motivation, willingness to political cooperation and specific economic interests. The impact of external factors on behalf of the United States and Russia will also be taken into account, particularly the overall strategic understanding of the regional security environment, as well as the concurrent assessment of threats. In order to summarize the results of the study designed to determine the minimum number of states, which factors satisfy the necessary requirements for full-scale participation in the Intermarium project, the following table was developed, which includes questions that will be investigated for each country (Tab. 1).

Factors for the participation in Intermarium		Poland	Czech Republic	Slovakia	Hungary	Slovenia	Croatia	Romania	Bulgaria	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania	Austria
Internal	Presence of discrepancies with current EU policy												
	Bilateral cooperation with the United States												
	Presence of political will to create new alliances to diversify the energy market and develop the region												
External	Membership in EU												
	Membership in NATO, cooperation with the United States within the framework of NATO												
	Perception of Russia as an aggressor and a tendency to reduce cooperation with it.												

Table 1: Factors which affect the prospects of participation in Intermarium.

Source: author

Factors which influence the dependent variable (number of states) can be identified as internal and external.

As it follows from the table, the internal factors reflect political economic and social trends in the country, which can have positive or negative impact on the country's prospects of participation in the Intermarium. The influence of external factors will be estimated according to the relationship between countries participating

in Intermarium and countries that can influence Intermarium, such as Russia and the USA. The issues of economic cooperation of potential members of the Intermarium with Russia and the USA as well as issues regarding evaluation of threats from Russia and, accordingly, the possibility of military cooperation with the USA will be considered separately.

The positive factors will be defined as those that contribute to the expansion of economic potentials and opportunities for the country that will participate in the project, and urge pro-European political direction of the state. Another positive factor can be represented by country's membership in former Eastern Bloc and negative experience in political relations with USSR and later, Russia.

Negative criteria will include criteria which reflect the high degree of dependence of the country's economy on Russian major economic projects, which can negatively affect the decision of the country to participate in the Intermarium, since in this case aggression from Russia may seem unlikely and therefore it is unnecessary to consider the Intermarium as an instrument to confront the Russian threat.

Altogether, the summarizing of the aforementioned criteria for each of the countries selected, as well as a thorough analysis of the correlation of positive and negative criteria, will allow to assess the extent to which each of the selected countries is ready to participate in the Intermarium and which of the countries are eager to join the Intermarium as soon as possible.

1.4 Selection and Analysis of Case Studies

In this chapter, the historical events will be examined that will disclose the history of the concept of the Intermarium. In order to achieve this goal, two cases that reveal both political and economic reasons which contributed to the emergence of the

Intermarium project, will be analyzed. Also, the work on these cases will answer the two questions that were raised while writing this work, namely:

- Which of the previous concepts of the Intermarium are still possible to apply nowadays?
- What political conditions force the state to become a potential participant of the Intermarium?

To answer the first question, it is necessary to rely on the work in the field of contemporary scientists from different countries who are interested in development of the concept of the Intermarium and therefore explore its history and prospects for its adjustment to modern conditions.

2. Origins of the Intermarium

2.1 The Rise of The Intermarium Concept

In order to conduct a successful analysis of historical events and a full-scale answer to the questions stated in the work, the author designed the framework of the case as follows:

- Firstly, the definition of reasons which inspired the idea of the Intermarium;
- Secondly, the definition of its concepts and motives will be examined, as well as the reasons why the concept of the Intermarium was not implemented previously;
- Thirdly, the finalization of the case in form of a summary.

In order to provide the complete database of the Intermarium chronology it is crucial for the analysis to determine the origin of ideas for the creation of a political union of Eastern European states, known as the Intermarium. At the beginning of the 20th century, in spite of political changes in Europe caused by the First World War and the subsequent revolution in Russia, a number of political concepts were created that aimed to establish cooperation between the national movements of the people of the former Russian Empire in Eastern Europe. However, new players in the political arena of Europe after the collapse of the Russian Empire did not have enough strength for the sustainable development and opposition to the emerging Bolshevik aggression. Therefore, political steps were developed, which aimed at uniting the countries of Eastern Europe and the Baltic into political alliances designed to strengthen their positions against oppression on the part of Soviet Russia.

The political events of those years contributed to the endeavors of the Baltic States to unite against Bolshevik Russia with the support of the troops of the White Army, led by General Yudenich, who opposed the Bolshevik regime in Russia. So on

August 26, 1919 the British representative General Marsh tried to organize the armed forces of the Baltic States, Poland, General Yudenich's troops, sponsored by the Allies, and the joint Russian-German troops of Colonel Bermond-Avalov, sponsored by the German Empire, for a joint action against the Bolsheviks.¹³ Nevertheless, Marsh's attempts failed because of the distrust of the Baltic nations towards the White Army which discarded the possibility for the people of these states to build independent states outside the Russian Empire. After the failure of General Yudenich's campaign, new skills of diplomacy were required to keep the independence and confront the Bolshevik threat to the Baltic States. Previously, the governments of the Baltic States relied heavily on the support of the Entente. However, the Entente members viewed the role of the Baltic States mainly as a symbol of oppression in their anti-Bolshevik campaigns, thus their support would be terminated as soon as the anti-Bolshevik powers won in Russia. The principle of self-determination of nations was not intended for people under the rule of Russia, Great Britain or France. Nevertheless, there were factions in the British government that supported the independent Baltic States, as well as American politicians like Herbert Hoover, the future president of the United States, and Professor Samuel E. Morrison, who sympathized with the aspirations of the Baltic States.¹⁴

The difficulty of making political decisions for the Baltic States was that if the Baltic States had signed peace treaties with the Soviet government, which had yet to be recognized, they risked losing vital support from the Entente. On the other hand, however, if the Soviet government won against its potential opponents, the Baltic States risk losing their independence regardless of their treaties with the Soviets. Moreover, the territories of the Baltic States included significant native Russian entities, while a significant part of Latvia was occupied by Soviet troops. The

¹³ Lithuanian Quarterly Journal of Arts and Sciences Volume 14, LITUANUS Foundation, Inc, No. 1 – Spring 1968. ISSN 0024-5089.

¹⁴ Lithuanian Quarterly Journal of Arts and Sciences Volume 14.

governments of the Baltic States could not solve this political conundrum without external assistance.

Under such conditions, the Baltic leaders decided that it is in their own interests to adopt and formulate a common policy. As a result, the first Baltic conference took place in Riga from 10 to 12 September 1919. Only Latvians and Estonians could participate in it. Finns and Lithuanians were not able to attend the conference due to poor transportation conditions. The participants decided not to sacrifice those Latvian territories, which were still kept by the Soviets, in peace negotiations with Russia.¹⁵

During the second conference in Tallinn from September 14 to 15, 1919, the delegations of Finland, Latvia and Estonia were headed by prime ministers, and the Lithuanian delegation was presented by high-ranking government officials. The participants realized that the prolongation of hostilities with the Bolsheviks would help General Yudenich, who did not recognize the Baltic governments. On the other hand, the Baltic States did not want to create tensions with the allies, which provided them with some assistance. Military representatives proposed the withdrawal of Bolshevik troops on the line Petrograd-Vitebsk-Orsha and the disposition of the Red Army fleet in neutral harbors. British diplomatic representatives warned the Baltic countries as early as of September 16, 1919 that Britain would not approve the conclusion of peace treaties with the Soviet government. The United States and France have announced similar warnings in the next few days. Probably, in spite of this reason, the representatives of Latvia and Lithuania did not appear at the preliminary Estonian-Soviet conference in Pskov from September 17 to September 19, 1919.¹⁶

The third conference was held in Tartu from September 29 to October 1, 1919. The delegations were headed by the Prime Ministers of Finland, Estonia and Latvia

¹⁵LithuanianQuarterlyJournal of Arts andSciences Volume 14.

¹⁶LithuanianQuarterlyJournal of Arts andSciences Volume 14.

and the Deputy Prime Minister of Lithuania. Under the influence of Estonia, the Baltic leaders decided to cease hostilities with the Soviets, but Finland did not dare to take such a step. It was agreed that the peace talks should be postponed until October, so that the Bolshevik government was offered to compensate the Baltic States for its losses during the First World War and the War for Independence and create a neutral zone along the ethnic borders of Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania that will be controlled by the League of Nations. The allied and associated states will be invited to recognize the Baltic countries de jure. These four states also agreed to maintain a common policy, at least till the end of the peace negotiations. If the peace conference fails, the countries will have a free hand in their relations with the Russia. During the conference, the Program was presented by the Foreign Minister of Latvia, Siegfried Meyerowitz, which included plans for a defense alliance, merge of economic systems, a common banking and monetary policy, a political declaration of mutual support, a common foreign policy and a free access to the Baltic and to the Black Sea.

Despite the intricate diplomacy, military operations in the region continued and the situation shifted quickly enough that it was made possible to involve new partners into the idea of creating a union of Eastern European countries.

The attack of the joint German-Russian troops on Latvia on October 8, 1919, interrupted further discussions regarding peace negotiations with the Bolsheviks. Estonia and Lithuania were overwhelmed by the fate of Latvia. The General Headquarters of Latvia and Lithuania had already foreseen such an invasion and sent armored trains to Riga to support the Latvian troops. French and British naval squadrons were dispatched to the Gulf of Riga. The defeat seemed to be inescapable. If the Latvian troops were defeated, nothing could save Lithuania and Estonia from the Soviet occupation.¹⁷

¹⁷LithuanianQuarterlyJournal of Arts andSciences Volume 14.

While military operations in the west continued, representatives of the Baltic countries met again in Tartu on November 9 and 10, 1919, to continue discussing Bolshevik proposals for peace. Ukrainians, Finns, Poles and Belorussians sent their observers. Although Estonia and Lithuania were ready to immediately begin peace negotiations, Latvia wanted first to liberate the rest of the country from the Bolsheviks. On November 17, the Bolshevik representative Maxim Litvinov agreed with the representatives of the Baltic States to exchange prisoners, both military and political. On November 18, the Estonians decided to realize their plans for holding a peace conference with the Bolsheviks. Their conference began on December 6, 1919. Observers from Latvia and Lithuania arrived in Tartu on 8 and 12 December, respectively. Unable to negotiate with Russia, the Estonian leader postponed the talks until January 3, 1920.¹⁸

The next step was a conference in Riga from August 6 to September 6, 1920. The Latvians organized it with great enthusiasm. They invited not only Finland, Estonia, Lithuania and Poland, but also Scandinavian States. Scandinavian kingdoms did not respond and did not even send observers. This was evidence that the Scandinavian countries should be excluded from the negotiations. Ukrainians and Belorussians arrived uninvited. Ukrainian representatives were finally admitted on August 20, but not Belorussian - on the grounds that Soviet Russia could be offended. Romania on August 18 announced that all countries from the Baltic to the Aegean Sea should become an obstacle to Bolshevism, but they were not invited to participate in building this "bridge", but not a barrier between East and West. The interest of the Polish representatives in the union was increased due to the fact that their country was in an unenviable situation. Bolshevik forces defeated two Polish armies and went to Warsaw. Poland's accession to the creation of a political union against the aggression of Bolshevik Russia gave the negotiations a new direction by

¹⁸Lithuanian Quarterly Journal of Arts and Sciences Volume 14.

allowing them to expand the scope of their political plans and develop new concepts for the unification of the countries of Eastern Europe and the Baltic States.

As can be seen from the foregoing, despite the best efforts of the countries of the Baltic region and partially the countries of Western Europe, the problem of future cooperation and maintenance of the security of new countries that gained independence after the collapse of the Russian Empire persisted. Leading politicians of that time considered the most acceptable options for solving the current political situation. One of the most progressive ideas was introduced as a scheme that represented an alliance between all countries bordering Russia in the West—Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and optionally Romania and Ukraine.

The program was announced at a conference in Riga in 1920 and filled with extremely valuable proposals for international cooperation—postal, telegraph, telephone and railway conventions; anti-smuggling campaign; Convention on Civil Rights; cooperation in banking, insurance, financing sphere, etc.; termination of customs duties on transit cargo; protection of works of writers, artists and scientists, exchange of information on customs and transport systems, etc.¹⁹

All in all, such an alliance has not only contained a defense component, but also an integrated development of the infrastructures of the unifying countries. The alliance was named Prometheism.

The idea of a struggle for independence from the Russian Empire, even if it had been represented by Bolsheviks, found a response among not only Ukrainian and Polish patriots, but also representatives of other nations who were under the rule of the Russian Empire.

Hence, by the end of the 1920s Prometheism already included representatives of Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkmenistan, Kuban and Don Cossacks, and Crimean Tatars.

¹⁹Lithuanian Quarterly Journal of Arts and Sciences Volume 14.

The essence of Prometheism was the support of Poland for nations, which were enslaved by Russia, and later the USSR, therefore stimulating them to fight for independence. It was an approach, aimed to weaken Russia and create allies among the nations of Eastern Europe and Asia. The source of this movement was the tradition of the struggle "for our and your freedom." In fact, Prometheism claimed that Poland would support the sovereign states of Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, Turkmenistan, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. With the exception of diplomatic activities, it was also military cooperation with Ukrainians, Georgians and Azerbaijanis.

This trend has received considerable support in the country not only in political circles associated with the Polish leader Józef Piłsudski, but also among military and social elites, which considered Prometheism as the idea of creating a regional alliance to strengthen influence not only on the course of events in Poland, but also to improve the country's position in Europe.

The detailed project of the confederation of the Intermarium was actively supported by the first head of the revived Polish state, Józef Piłsudski, by hypothetically expanding the Baltic-Black Sea area to the Adriatic Sea. He did not intend to include in Intermarium only those states, that had been a part of Russian Empire, and already in the 1930s he began negotiations with other countries. In his opinion, only the existence of an alliance between Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and, optionally, Finland will allow Central European countries to avoid domination of either Germany or Russia.

Piłsudski's support of Prometheism was based on a deep knowledge of the Russian Empire, obtained at a time when its government in exile left Eastern Siberia. The term "Prometheism" was suggested by the Greek myth of Prometheus, whose

gift of fire to mankind, against Zeus will, began to symbolize enlightenment and resistance to despotic power.²⁰

The promoter of the Prometheus concept, written by the Polish historian Czaraskiewicz, was Marshal Piłsudski himself, who, back in 1904, in a memorandum to the Japanese government, indicated the need to use in the war against Russia numerous non-Russian minorities who lived around the basins of the Baltic, Black and Caspian seas, and stressed that the Polish nation, by virtue of its history, love of freedom and uncompromising position towards the three empires that divided Poland and ceased its political existence in the late 18th century, in this battle Poland, undoubtedly, will take a leading position and will help emancipation of other nations oppressed by Russia.²¹

The key passage from Piłsudski's 1904 memorandum read:

“The strength and importance of Poland among the constituent parts of the Russian state compels us to set ourselves a political goal—to divide the Russian state into its main participants and to free the countries that were forcibly included in this empire. We view this not only as an achievement of our country's cultural aspirations for an independent existence, but also as a guarantee of this existence, since Russia, deprived of its gains, will be weakened enough that it will cease to be a formidable and dangerous neighbor”.²²

The Józef Piłsudski's position implied that the Intermarium would allow the states of Central Europe to avoid domination of Germany or Russia in their region. This idea at that time was criticized by the USSR and all Western powers. Only France supported this project. This confederation was supposed to extend from the Black and Adriatic seas to the Baltic Sea, which was emphasized by the name itself.

²⁰ Edmund Charaszkiewicz "Przebudowa wschodu Europy" ("The Restructuring of Eastern Europe"), *Niepodległość* (Independence), London, 1955, pp.125–67.

²¹ Edmund Charaszkiewicz.

²² Edmund Charaszkiewicz.

This was the prototype of the forthcoming concept of the alliance of the Three Seas Initiative, which, even to this day, has certain place in world politics and continues to arouse the interest of researchers and scholars of our time.

In order to identify the key reasons for failure of the Intermarium project in this particular historical period, it is necessary to examine the recent works of modern researchers which are dedicated to the history of the creation of the Intermarium concept especially works of modern researchers and scientists from Poland. The research is complicated by the fact that the project was not implemented and the researchers who are now investigating this subject and studying the historical facts of that time are not able to give an unambiguous assessment of the concept of the Intermarium regarding its positive or negative influence on the development of the participant states after this project was rejected and abandoned in 1920s. To recreate a situation in Central Europe that was established at that time is a difficult, albeit impossible task therefore, many researchers, when analyzing historical events, pay more attention to political and economic facts that would be prioritized for the Intermarium member countries, assuming that the project was implemented at that time.

The evaluation of the concept of Prometheism by our contemporaries allows us to better understand the tendencies and events that led to the collapse of a seemingly politically competent and promising project.

Progressivity of the idea of Józef Piłsudski has been widely discussed among the scientific circles of modern Polish researchers and their evaluation of the events of 1920 shows the strengths and weaknesses of the concept of the Intermarium of 1919-1920.

For example, modern Polish historian Henryk Bartoszewicz in his work: "Dyplomacja Polska Wobec Koncepcji Międzymorza w latach 1918-1926", notes that according to Piłsudski, one of the main areas of political activity was the

implementation of the concept of a federation of all countries between Poland and Russia. The head of state formed his opinion on the activities of Polish diplomacy, stating, among other things, that Poland must hurry with the official recognition of Estonia and Latvia and with the establishment of Poland's representation and influence in all states surrounding the Baltic Sea. At the same time, he put forward proposals for the establishment of Eastern diplomatic missions. He offered to continue the mission in Finland, Estonia and Latvia.²³

Overall, it can be concluded that Piłsudski, while implementing his political concept of the Intermarium, expected that after settling the western border issues, Poland would become a dominating force in the Central and Eastern Europe, with which everybody would have to be reckoned, including the Entente members.

During the activities of the first two offices of the Second Polish Republic, a number of memorandums and instructions concerning the Polish Eastern policy were created in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The first document developed at that time concerned international relations of Russia, Finland, Latvia, Ukraine, the Caucasus and Persia; it appeared between November 1918 and January 1919. Later a project designed to tear Russia apart was developed, which pinnacle was a statement contained in a confidential undated note in November-December 1918.²⁴

Polish politicians openly declared: "Our most optimal option: Russia, close to the ethnographic borders of Great Russia, has voluntarily refused from the position of the superpower, using international help, although dangerous for Finns, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Belorussians and Ukrainians, so these nations will seek support in Poland. " In the draft instructions for the Polish delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, prepared for Polish Foreign Minister Vasilevsky on November 23, 1918, he advocated the nations of the Russian Empire for legal independence. It was

²³Henryk Bartoszewicz: "Dyplomacja Polska Wobec Koncepcji Międzymorza w latach 1918-1926" in „Międzymorze: Nadzieje i ograniczenia w polityce II Rzeczypospolitej”. Bibliotheca Europae Orientalis. pp. 89-122.

²⁴Henryk Bartoszewicz.

assumed that during negotiations with the governments of the Entente states the Poland regarding its eastern border would agree with the principle that the lands seized by Russia will not be united even in the form of federation. A set of instructions was created, which stated that the desired decision would be the federation of Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine, but he found no further support.²⁵

In addition to the already developed concept of Prometheism, the Polish government considered a wider range of cooperation with other countries in the Eastern European region. In 1919, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs also worked on the concept of cooperation with the states of the southern part of the region. So, in addition to the already developed memorandums, on April 20, a letter was written on the necessity of concluding a Polish-Romanian military alliance directed against Bolsheviks.

The project suggested that military cooperation between Poland and Romania would not only protect the nations neighboring with Russia from the invasion of Bolsheviks, but would also create a positive attitude toward a permanent alliance between the two countries. Furthermore, the Polish-Romanian Union had to increase Poland's role in Central and Eastern Europe and at the same time reduce the importance of the Romanian ports in the Black Sea for Polish foreign trade. Moreover, he said that the creation of the alliance with Romania, which must be a temporary military convention so far, would be the first step in Polish foreign policy that would allow Poland to retain the initiative to manage the Eastern European affairs.²⁶

As can be seen from the aforementioned facts, 1920 was the main period of struggle for shaping the eastern border of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth for Poland, and a significant part of Polish diplomacy was dedicated to solve this issue. That is why the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland worked mainly to gain allies in

²⁵Henryk Bartoszewicz.

²⁶Henryk Bartoszewicz.

the war against Bolshevik Russia. In the sphere of external policy, Poland's interests were in the north and northeast of Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and in the south—the Ukrainian People's Republic and Romania. Warsaw wanted to prevent the Baltic States from signing peace treaties with Russia.

On March 8, 1920, at a secret meeting of the Council of Ministers of Poland, new rules were established according to which the Polish authorities would agree for peaceful negotiations with the Soviet government. In addition to formulating the position on the eastern border of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Polish government declared its support for the creation of an independent Ukrainian state. However, the concept of the Belorussian state was abandoned in order to give the Minsk region and the territories located further to the east, self-government and cultural autonomy. On the other hand, the Vilnius and Grodno territories were to be included in the borders of the Commonwealth without any concessions to the Belorussians. It was confirmed that attempts to include Lithuania in the federation had failed. It was also decided that, before the negotiations with Russia began, measures would be taken to reach an agreement with Finland, Latvia and Romania by signing mutual treaty regarding the peace requirements.²⁷

Confirmation of this Poland's external policy in 1920 can be found in the works of another Polish historian Andrzej Nowak: "Polska, Rosja i Ukraina: Strategiczny Trójkąt Koncepcji Józefa Piłsudskiego w Latach 1918-1920". The historian notes that one of the key questions of the dispute about the principles of Central and Eastern European politics, which were developed and implemented by Józef Piłsudski, is still a matter of assessing the role of the Intermarium concept in this policy.

At the same time, Poland's leading role toward other participants in the commonwealth remains controversial, since many politicians of that time noted in

²⁷Henryk Bartoszewicz.

this approach the aspects of Piłsudski's imperialism, which were only slightly hidden, but actively supported and promoted in political circles of Poland of that time.²⁸

The twofold vision of Poland's role in the creation of a new political union resulted in another approach to the interpretation of the Intermarium project, the main inspiration of which was presented by the political opponent of Piłsudski, Roman Dmowski, who is now considered the creator of the concept of Polish nationalism. In his view, the geopolitical situation in the world has changed significantly, and the ideas of a multinational federation or confederation have lost their paramount importance. He put forward the idea that the state should fight for its independence and success. Roman Dmowski saw no threat from Russia. He considered it a weak state, lagging behind in terms of civilization indicators and not posing any threat to Poland. At the same time, Dmowski saw a threat from Germany, considering it a more modern, dynamic, cultural and economic force. Finally this concept had ultimately won in Warsaw. In 1921 the Riga Treaty was signed and a reshaping of borders took place. Poland was forced to recognize the existence of the borders of the Belorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR.

Realists in Poland spoke out for a strong Poland, trying to minimize conflicts with national minorities. Undoubtedly, young conservatives foresaw the course of history. In Russia, there were reasons that significantly influenced the views of politicians of that time and the decisions they made correspondingly. One of the main reasons is the weakness of cultural development in Russia.

Roman Dmowski believed that the source of poor state of affairs in Russia's cultural sphere was not only defeat in the war against Japan followed by revolution of 1905, but also the cultural and ethnic diversity, bureaucratic expansion and the absence of historical consolidation of conquered territories. He noted that the Russian

²⁸Andrzej Nowak: „Polska, Rosja i Ukraina: Strategiczny Trójkąt Koncepcji Józefa Piłsudskiego w Latach 1918-1920” in „Międzymorze: Nadzieje i ograniczenia w polityce II Rzeczypospolitej”. Bibliotheca Europae Orientalis. pp. 43-62.

Empire included both the culturally strong Polish population on its western borders and the underdeveloped area of the eastern periphery. On the eve of the twentieth century, it became obvious that the policy of Russification was a disaster for the people of the Russian Empire.

Dmowski called Russia “a colossus on clay feet”. According to Dmowski, “Being an empire is a problem for it, because only half of the population is represented by indigenous Russians. All these factors, according to Dmowski, lead to progressive centralization of state, which took place and, instead of uniting the tsarist state, led to the opposite effect”.²⁹

The second factor that influenced the political opinion of Dmowski was in his opinion a potential threat from Germany.

Roman Dmowski pointed to the strength of the German Empire after its unification in 1871. He argued that Germany would seek to further expand its territories at the expense of Austria, Switzerland and the Netherlands, considering common German roots of these countries. He believed that Germany would sooner or later seek to dominate Europe, because they have the appropriate economic potential, demographic integrity and cultural bases. By comparing forces of both invaders of Russia and Germany, Dmowski came to the conclusion that one should look for an ally and in the person of Russia against the German progressive force.

Orientation towards Russia is another aspect that distracts Polish politicians from the national democratic concept of Prometheism, which involves protecting the common interests of all neighboring powers and does not take into account Poland's personal priorities.³⁰

²⁹Andrzej Nowak.

³⁰A. Mróz: „Historic prerequisites of the Eastern European Policy in Poland. Conditions, Concepts”. Central European University, 2009, pp.20-29

Even before Poland regained its independence in 1918, national activists postulated that the Polish borders would be stretched along the Oder line. However, Dmowski proposed a reverse solution, as a result of which the Riga Treaty of 1921 caused the separation of Ukrainian and Belorussian territories between the USSR and Poland.

Polish researchers confirm such a sequence of development of historical events in their works, which are related to the Intermarium concept.

For example, Andrzej Nowak in his work “Polska, Rosja i Ukraina: Strategiczny Trójkąt Koncepcji Józefa Piłsudskiego w Latach 1918-1920”, notes the following information about the political situation of that time:

In all matters of the eastern border regions from Eastern Galicia to Lithuania and everything connected with Russia, it is necessary to represent the direction chosen by the national democracy evenly. We must try to explain to the Entente members that Russia, after experiencing a long-term serious internal disease, will remain weak for a longer period of time as a patient, with a demoralizing influence on its neighbors. The expansion of Poland will be solution for this post-war Eastern European disease, which is oriented towards Russia.³¹

As a matter of fact, Polish politicians, in their absolute majority, rejected the idea of Poland's confederate ties with Belarus, Lithuania and Ukraine, but, on the contrary, sought to divide these territories with Soviet Russia and seize the de facto occupied West Ukrainian and West Belorussian lands, as well as the Vilno region (modern City of Vilnius with the surrounding area).

As the Polish researcher Andrzej Nowak notes in the Polish political circles of that time there was an opinion that the borders of the future Poland should be provided with the possibility of expanding to the east and keep full colonization activity. Colonization of the Eastern Europe is a necessary condition for the revival

³¹A. Mróz.

and development of industry destroyed, the only solution for mass employment of the unemployed, or those who were forced to emigrate:

“I must say that we want well-established relations with Russia. The friendly disposition of these relations is easier, because the expansion of both countries goes to the east. Russia, destroyed, exhausted by bloodshed, is unable to return to the west. Russia therefore does not accept any of its own land, and, in particular, without reaching any of its agricultural wealth, Poland must provide a sufficient area for expanding its own agriculture, as well as create a comfortable and solid state border in the east. This border should be included in Lithuania, Pinsk, the western part of Volyn and industrial areas of central Galicia. Lithuania should be united with Poland because of the need for colonization, the historical community, the religious tradition and, finally, the many cultural works that the Poles brought to it”.³²

As a result of this political vision of the future construction of the Polish state, the democratic approaches developed by Pilsudski for the possible unification of the peoples of Eastern Europe within the framework of the coffee-making became practically useless. As a result, Pilsudski's idea was changed due to the dynamic political situation in Europe.

The ideas of the leader of Poland in the framework of foreign policy, faced reality in the international political arena. The attitude of the authorities of adjacent countries to Poland, from the Baltic to Poland and to the Black Sea, was against the concept of the federation, and this was also not favorable for the implementation of Pilsudski's idea. His doctrine was motivated by a certain political situation and in 1920 it was relevant in spite of the aggression of Bolshevik Russia and the political and economic weakness of countries that gained independence after the collapse of the Russian Empire. At that time, the idea of the Alliance of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe for the purpose of defending against Bolshevik aggression was

³²Andrzej Nowak

relevant and depended on the voluntary participation of independent states in this region with the support of the Baltic States, the Balkan States and Czechoslovakia.³³

This idea of uniting with Yugoslavia, Romania and Czechoslovakia, also known as the Little Entente was conducted by Piłsudski when he was the commander of the General Staff of the Polish Army, and pursued his own policy in the east. In order to implement this idea, negotiations began with France to conclude a military alliance. The negotiations were successful. In February 1921, the Polish-French agreement on military cooperation was signed. This alliance still had to be completed by agreement on military cooperation with one of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Thus, negotiations began with the Romanian government. In particular, relations Romania-Russia relations were similar and both states had access to the Black Sea ports, which, if the Baltic Sea was blocked by the Germany, would be strategically important for Poland. After exhausting negotiations, a political and military agreement was signed with Romania on March 3, 1921. It also considered strengthening cooperation with Czechoslovakia.

Therefore Piłsudski continued to strive for the implementation of the concept of a union, trying to create a large alliance stretching from Finland to Romania, which was to become the center of the union of countries 4. Representatives of the camp connected at the time with the Marshal were negative about such an association, accusing it of blocking the isolation of Hungary. The plans were grandiose, but due to the weakness of Poland's position and the reluctance of representatives of other powers, the only alliance concluded by Poland was an alliance with Romania, which took place in 1921.

In April and May 1922 the basic policy of Poland was proposed at the Genoa Conference which was attended by the European countries and Russia. This

³³A. Mróz.

conference was held to define relations with Russia as a state of Bolshevik policy and develop economic relations with it. As a result Poland decided to start cooperation with Russia at the expense of good relations with the newly created Eastern European countries such as Ukraine and Belarus as well as to strengthen their positions by signing cooperation agreements with Central European countries such as Romania and Yugoslavia. Eventually, a joint conference was held in Belgrade. Such actions on the part of Poland finally closed the possibility of implementing the Prometheism concept.³⁴

On the other hand, the same debates of the Genoa Conference strengthened Poland's position and its independence. Unfortunately, the results of the recognition of Soviet Russia and its cooperation with Germany, which was aimed at destabilizing the situation in Poland by provoking national conflicts with Ukraine, were negative.

In general, the Conference failed due to Russia's excessive demands and the lack of agreement on a non-aggression treaty. But this was the moment where Prometheism concept during the Second Polish Republic was close to implementation.

Contemporary historians are still arguing whether it was possible in the spring of 1920 to achieve the complete ceasefire in Eastern Europe on the basis of a Polish-Bolshevik peace compromise. The study proves that the Bolsheviks did not see themselves as heirs of the Russian Empire and did not support the concept of Prometheism as an alliance of equal nations.

The Polish researcher claims that the conditions proposed by Piłsudski to the Bolsheviks clearly demonstrate that there can be no talk of a peace treaty. For Piłsudski, the crucial condition that would allow the signing of the peace treaty would be Lenin's consent to the creation of an independent, non-Soviet Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus. This condition Lenin simply called criminal. The Bolsheviks were ready to

³⁴“Intermarium is going to the summit - a project that will cease Russian aggression”. From.ua, 12 June 2017.

satisfy Polish ambitions in the east. Most of Lithuania and Belarus, Western Ukraine - could also be transferred to Poland, but under no circumstances did the Bolsheviks want to give up control of the entire Ukraine with its economic and strategic importance. At this decisive moment they were equally relentless masters of the inherited empire, as the generals of the White Army, Kolchak and Vranghel, imagined.³⁵

Drawing an analogy between the political events of the early twentieth century and the situation in modern Europe, many researchers are studying the political and economic factors that will help to detail the reasons that urged the countries of Eastern Europe and the Baltic at that time to develop the Intermarium project and the more detailed this picture of political factors will be, the more plausible will be the creation of a Three Sea Initiative in our day. The most meticulous are the studies of the German researcher Stefan Troebst.³⁶

He pays special attention to the priority of Poland's national interests in the construction of the Prometheus plan. It is no accident that after 1918 in Poland the degree of political and economic opportunities was much higher than in Hungary or in the Czechoslovakia. This was primarily due to the complex territorial and political relations between Poland and Germany along the southern coast of the Baltic Sea: East Prussia as a German exclave, Danzig as a Free City under the control of the League of Nations, the Polish Corridor - as part of the "Warsaw" politics in history. However, another reason was in the geopolitical design of Polish foreign policy. The "Jagiellon" view of Poland stretched "from one sea to the other", which was promoted by the national movement of the nineteenth century, adopted by Pilsudski as a basis for his policy towards Bolshevik Russia, and also applied by his successors.

³⁵Piotr Cieplucha: "Prometeizm i Koncepcja Międzymorza w Praktyce Polityczno-Prawnej Oraz Dyplomacji II Rzeczypospolitej". *Studia Prawno-Ekonomiczne*, t. XCIII, 2014 PL. ISSN 0081-6841 s. 39-55.

³⁶Stefan Troebst: "Intermarium and "Wedding to the Sea": Politics of History and Mental Mapping in East Central Europe". *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire*, 10:2, 293-321, DOI: 10.1080/1350748032000140813

This is especially true for the Foreign Affairs Minister, Colonel Joseph Beck, who, after Piłsudski's death in 1935, developed ambitious concepts for Poland's foreign policy. First of all, he attempted to reduce the influence of Czechoslovakia in Eastern Central Europe - the goal caused by new bilateral treaties between Prague and Moscow and the general tension in Poland-Czechoslovakia relations since 1919. One of Beck's several goals was to gain access to the Danube, which was internationalized in 1921 and, therefore, to the Black Sea. Another and much bolder goal was to turn Poland into a leading power in the "small states belt", from Estonia to Greece and thereby strengthening Warsaw's political balance in the relations between the Soviet Union and Germany. At the same time Beck tried to get British support for the Baltic Sea region, whereas in South-East Europe he hoped for support from Italy. In the 1920s, Beck used the name "Intermarium" for his new project. This concept, which now also included the coastlines of the Adriatic and Aegean Seas, was supported by attempts to improve the overall transport infrastructure of the region coordinated by the Inter-Ministerial Consultation Commission on Polish Maritime Policy.³⁷

Thus, already at the very beginning of the creation of the Intermarium project, Poland's interest in strengthening its positions as a maritime power was taken into account, which in turn repelled and alarmed neighboring states.

However, the aggressive policy of the Bolsheviks, the occupation of Belarus and Ukraine by the Red Army put an end to these ideas. In turn, the inability to reach agreement with the Lithuanian leadership and the seizure of the Vilnius region by the forces of General Lucjan Żeligowski turned away Lithuania from the idea of joining Intermarium. The idea was also criticized by the USSR and all Western countries, with the exception of France. I did not find the concept of Piłsudski's support among the Poles, most of whom were supporters of the creation of a purely Polish ethnocentric state.

³⁷Stefan Troebst

Working on the concept of the Intermarium allowed the author to note that interest in this concept among modern scientists, historians and politicians is not weakening and many researchers are turning to the idea of the implementation of the Intermarium in order to study in more detail the reasons why this project was not realized in the early twentieth century. Of particular interest are the Polish researchers who pay much attention to the historical facts which influenced Poland's policy in the 1920s as well as the process of state unification at that time. Also an important factor is represented by the result that scientists of many Western European state, who study the concept of the Three Seas are trying to reflect all external and internal factors in Polish politics of that time for an unbiased judgment of the reasons that prevented the progressive concept of that time to be implemented in the form of the Intermarium project.

Based on the study of historical prerequisites of the emergence of the primary concept of the Intermarium, it is possible to note certain reasons that contributed to its emergence and also to clarify the reasons why this concept was not realized at that time. Of the main reasons for which the concept of the Three Seas Initiative was introduced, the following can be named:

1. After the collapse of the Russian Empire new players appeared in the political arena of Europe, whose people sought independence and self-determination. But these new powers did not have enough resources for their influence on the world arena and therefore needed both military and political support.

2. Revolution in Russia led to the Bolsheviks coming to power and their aggression towards the Western countries as political and class enemies. In addition, the Soviet Union was not going to abandon the imperial heritage of Russia on contrary to the countries that gained independence after the collapse of the empire, therefore urging Bolsheviks to recapture these states through open military aggression. Such a political situation has led the governments of these countries to the need to consider opportunities for joint opposition. Moreover, the creation of a

military alliance from the countries of Eastern Europe was also beneficial for the countries of Western Europe, since then a shield would be formed from the military approaches of the Soviet Union.

3. The concept of Intermarium was very progressive for its time. It implied the unification of countries on democratic foundations, while providing for the possibility not only of a military alliance, but also joint development of infrastructure, transport routes, mail and other forms of communications, which would allow the implementation of joint economic projects. Also, issues of strategic importance for the economies of Central European states which had no direct access to the sea could be solved. Such an alliance would allow these countries to expand their capabilities through the use of corridors designed to provide access to the sea through the territories of the Allied countries. Also, the democratic basis for the unification would give an opportunity to expand the union at the expense of new members from not only of Eastern Europe, but also of other nations that emerged from the collapse of the empire: Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Such an approach would significantly weaken the positions of Russia and in turn create a worthy counterweight to the countries of Western Europe: Germany and France.

One of the main factors why the implementation of the Intermarium project did not take place is the weakness of Poland's political position as a power that announced the creation of such an alliance. The rapid change in the political situation and the large-scale military offensive from the Soviet Union did not allow to create a deliberate and coordinated decision to unite countries that would satisfy all sides.

The second factor is the immaturity and improvidence of politicians of that time, which were frightened by the democratic nature of the project and its broad perspective of implementation. In the Polish government circles, the concept of a national priority over other countries won, which in turn alienated the participation of the Baltic States, Czechoslovakia and Romania in the union. There was also an omission that countries such as Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania and Finland were not

perceived as full partners and became the subject of aggressive territorial bargaining with the Soviet Union.

The third important factor that influenced the failure of the concept of the Intermarium was the negative attitude to the project on the part of Great Britain, which opposed the creation of a military and economic union of Eastern European states. As the Finnish historian Henrik Mejnander observes: “They simply do not have enough interest in this region, and therefore are not ready to resist the antics of Russia, not a single Western state will come to the rescue, if there are no self-interests”.³⁸

It turned out that France in the concept of Intermarium acted in a secondary role, and if the Great Britain still allowed the support of Poland, the United Kingdom could not afford such threat as the creation of the most powerful union in Europe. The maximum that it could be interested in is a shield in the form of Poland, which would separate Germany and Russia, and would not allow them to unite under any pretext.

Overall, as summarized by the Polish researcher Andrzej Nowak:

“Poland detained the Bolsheviks, destroying its great project—revolutionizing, or rather, Sovietizing Europe. Pilsudski, like Lenin, lost his great project in 1920 in a collision with general fatigue after the First World War and revolutionary turmoil, which for six years had been draining the strength of Eastern Europe. However, the simple creation of a grandiose plan and an attempt at its implementation became practically a part of the postwar heritage, influenced its form by showing the possibility of creating an agreement. How much the suffering of Ukrainians, Poles and other peoples of Eastern and Central Europe, including the Russians themselves, cost their failure in 1920, could be seen with the greatest pain from the point of view of the next 70 years of the existence and spread of communism. This experience and,

³⁸Anatoliy Shara: “Historian Henrik Meinander: Russians are Unlikely to Agree to Fight in the Third World; The Finnish Historian Advised Ukraine to Act More Cunningly”. Apostrophe.ua, 11December 2016.

*at the same time, the memory of that chance today help to think and work for the achieving of balance of powers in Eastern Europe”.*³⁹

Polish policy of reintegration of East and Central Europe met an active opposition to German diplomacy and thus could not find support among the Western powers—the UK, since the region did not reach any of its interests; France, because it was too weak and still anchored in the Little Entente. Poland also did not get Italy's support (although it thought it would be), because the Italians could not risk antagonizing relations with the Germans.⁴⁰

2.2 The Reimplementation of the Intermarium

This section of the research is devoted to the second case, which explores the historical reasons that contributed to reimplementation of the idea of the Intermarium concept in the political circles of Eastern and Central Europe in 1938-1942. The study will examine the works of modern Polish, German and Ukrainian historians, such as: Florin Anghel, Henryk Walczak, Renata Zawitowska, Wojciech Szczepański, Agnieszka Kastory, Elżbieta Znamierowska-Rakk, Stefan Troebst, Andriy Bondarenko, Leo Marich, Igor Zagrebelny, Oleksandr Maslak, Olena Semenyaka, who studied the reasons for the revival of the ideas of the Intermarium, as well as the reasons for which it could have not been implemented at that time.

The interwar period in Central Europe, despite being relatively short, was completely filled with the birth and development of numerous political ideas that influenced political trends among the countries of the region.

The basic concept, which was developed, in particular, by the Government of Poland, assumed the preservation of the territorial integrity of the country, as well as the spread of Polish influence right up to the Black Sea, while taking into account

³⁹Andrzej Nowak.

⁴⁰Henryk Bartoszewicz.

possible economic benefits. The second task of both Polish politicians and politicians of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Czechoslovakia was to confront the Bolshevik threat from Russia and the fear of Nazi Germany, which was rapidly gaining military power.⁴¹

The fact that Poland was serious about the process of creating an association of Eastern European countries, not only in terms of joint military policy, but also in terms of the development of joint economic projects is mentioned by Polish researcher Irena Stawowy-Kawka in her article “Agricultural Bloc and the Concepts of Integration of Eastern Europe and South-Eastern Europe in the years 1930-1932”, where it is stated that Poland attempted creating joint Eastern European markets for agricultural products, as well as their supply and marketing: “At the first Agricultural Conference in Warsaw on August 26-29, 1930, nine countries participated: Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Finland, Yugoslavia, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Hungary. The agenda included such topics as: establishing such export of agricultural products of each of the conference participants so that they not only could become a mutual market for each other, but also have the possibility of concluding international agreements and the possibility of joint action in relations with other countries. It was important to discuss an export dumping system that strengthened industrialized countries and which was inappropriate for agricultural countries because it introduces an unpredictable factor of arbitrariness and hesitation into international economic life. It was considered important for future cooperation to establish in the area of all countries participating in the conference a minimum amount of provisions in the field of veterinary law, in particular with regard to the protection of animals and the fight against their diseases. Such actions were aimed at ensuring that importing countries from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe

⁴¹Piotr Cieplucha.

can supply products that meet the same sanitary standards for all parties to the agreement.”⁴²

The Baltic and Central European countries after assessing the complex political situation, realized the necessity for a creation of a “geopolitical union” that would act as a shield against the emerging aggression from both Bolshevik Russia and Nazi Germany. Therefore, several political concepts were developed for building political alliances in Europe. The first of them was proposed by the Polish politician Joseph Beck, who presented his vision of the concept of the updated Intermarium.

The core of this idea was first of all to protect Poland from Nazi Germany and the USSR. Poland was strong enough to influence other smaller states from Eastern and Central Europe and serve as their leader. However, the idea of creation of such Intermarium concept has not developed. Firstly, it was not possible to achieve the conclusion of the Polish-Hungarian-Romanian agreement. In October 1938, Romania did not decide to act against Czechoslovakia. The King of Romania Carol II and Romanian Foreign Affairs Minister Nicolae Petrescu-Comen did not believe the Hungarians, fearing that sooner or later they will attempt to seize Transylvania, which they lost in the Trianon Treaty.⁴³

The events of that time are widely disclosed in the work of Marek Konrat: “Third Europe“. Polish Concept of Intermarium (1937-1938)”, who claims that the Intermarium is a concept that was not invented only for the purpose of propaganda. This was a manifestation of Poland's search for additional security guarantees in spite of the consequences of the development of the new political system created by the League of Nations after the First World War.⁴⁴

⁴²Henryk Bartoszewicz.

⁴³Leo Marich: “Cultural Threats to the Intermarium States and how to overcome them. Croatian Perspective”. National Correspondent 26.09.2016.

⁴⁴Marek Konrat: "Trzecia Europa". Polska Koncepcja Międzymorza (1937-1938)". Miedzymorze: Nadzieje i ograniczenia w polityce II Rzeczypospolitej. Bibliotheca Europae Orientalis. pp. 123-152.

The idea of Intermarium was more precise in general vision than the finished concept. This initiative was one of a series of different concepts presented during the interwar years (and not only in Poland), how to reconstruct and integrate the regions of Eastern and Central Europe. Joseph Beck, like Marshal Pilsudski, did not fully appreciate the stabilizing role of Czechoslovakia in the organization of political power in Central Europe. He did not expect that the fall of Czechoslovakia would lead to the hegemony of the Third Reich throughout Eastern and Southern Europe.

The second vision of the unification of the Eastern European states was undertaken by the Baltic States, which put forward the concept of the Baltic Entente. One of its main tasks was to protect the Baltic countries from the Russian threat. The initial idea was that the Baltic Entente (or the Union) would include adjacent countries. Representatives of the Baltic countries, Finland and Poland, as well as from the Belorussian and Ukrainian people's republics were invited to a conference in Bulduri, Latvia, in 1920 to discuss the alliance. But at the time, it was not the only grand scheme of encouraging small state sovereignty. Supporters of the Scandinavian-Baltic Union also spoke out. The Polish leader, Józef Piłsudski, formulated his framework for a regional union - Intermarium (Międzymorze). This vision, as mentioned before, was based on the historical experience of cooperation between Poland and Lithuania (Rzeczpospolita), aimed at a federation of states stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea, where Poland is the natural leader of the federation. In the early version, originating in the early 1920s, Intermarium was originally supposed to include Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine and create a reconstruction of the aforementioned Commonwealth. A later interwar version sought to bring countries from the Balkans, Central Europe and the Baltic Sea region.⁴⁵

Such plans were a response to the perceived threats faced by smaller states in the region as a result of a resurgent, revanchist Germany and a destabilizing

⁴⁵Oleksandr Maslak: "Intermarium – between project and reality". <http://banderivets.org.ua/mizh-mor-ya-mizh-proektom-ta-realnistyu.html>

revolutionary Soviet Union. However, all these interwar attempts were futile. By coincidence, although Poland was a major supporter of cooperation and benefited most from greater collective security in the region, it was mainly its own conflicts with its neighbors who stood in the way of cooperation. The disagreements between Poland and Lithuania were the most insurmountable obstacles, since rival demands regarding Vilnius and parts of the Belorussian territory made it impossible for any friendly resurrection of the idea of the Commonwealth. Admittedly, Lithuania was also a problematic partner, since Latvia and Estonia feared that participation in the Baltic Entente would lead them to conflict with Germany over the Lithuanian annexation of the Memorandum. Pilsudski Intermarium was based on the heroic story of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, aimed at creating a federation of states stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea.⁴⁶

Despite the contradictions of the policies of the countries of Eastern Europe, during the interwar period, they realized that in European geopolitics of that time they were assigned the role of a periphery meeting the geopolitical interests of great powers, and not their own. This prompted the governments of Eastern European states to create alliances, but due to regional tensions and rival ambitions, such initiatives rarely produced result. For example, the alliance between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (Baltic Entente) in 1934 was concluded for 15 years, but it never became the basis for close interstate cooperation until the states were annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940.

The political events in Europe before the Second World War were greatly complicated by the aggressive intentions of the Nazi government in Germany and the ambitions of the Bolshevik government in the USSR. The USSR's rejection of the Intermarium concept in the Pilsudski's version was obvious because in Moscow this plan was viewed as a direct infringement of its interests aimed not at creating a

⁴⁶Marek Konrat.

European coalition, but at advancing socialist ideals to the west and initiating the unification of countries against the German Nazis under the aegis of the USSR.

Immediately after the establishment of the Nazi government in Germany, in 1933, the policy of the USSR was aimed at creating a system of collective security in form of an alliance of European powers against a potential aggressor. In 1935, these efforts succeeded. Treaties on mutual assistance of the USSR with France and Czechoslovakia were concluded.

But these steps did not bring the expected results.

The British and French governments were interested in preserving the status quo that had developed in Europe as a result of the First World War of 1914-1918, and considered the policy of the Soviet Union and the communist movement as a major threat to their countries. The leaders of the United Kingdom and the French Republic sought political and territorial stability at the expense of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to satisfy the expansionist demands of the Third Reich and the Kingdom of Italy, to reach a "broad" agreement with them and thus secure their own security, pushing the German-Italian aggression onto the Central and Eastern Europe.⁴⁷

In March 1938, without any opposition from the Western powers, the Third Reich performed an annexation (Anschluss) of Austria. After this, the German pressure on the Czechoslovak Republic was sharply strengthened. On April 24, 1938, the Nazi Germany demanded that the Autonomy be granted to the Sudeten Region.

Then the UK intervened in the political game. Great Britain entered World War II, not because its government decided to fulfill its promises to Poland, but because it realized that it was time to withhold Germany, that the further growth of his power was a danger to the Empire.⁴⁸ The result of her political intrigue was the signing of the "Munich Treaty".

⁴⁷Marek Konrat

On September 30, 1938, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, Prime Minister of the French Republic Eduar Daladier, District Chancellor of the Third Reich Adolf Hitler, and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Italy Benito Mussolini.

Main paragraphs of the treaty:

- a) The Sudeten Region separates from the Czechoslovak Republic and is transferred to the Third Reich from 1 to 10 October;
- b) all property, including weapons, fortifications, personal belongings, livestock, furniture of citizens, must remain in place;
- c) The Czechoslovak Republic must satisfy the territorial claims of the Polish Republic and the Kingdom of Hungary ⁴⁹

The Government of the USSR declared its readiness to fulfill its obligations under the Soviet-Czechoslovak Treaty of 1935, which provided for the Soviet Union to assist the Czechoslovak Republic in the event of aggression against it, provided that such assistance was simultaneously provided by the French Republic.⁵⁰

On September 13, the Nazi leadership inspired the rebellion of the Sudeten Nazis, and after its suppression Germany began to openly threaten the Czechoslovak Republic with an armed invasion. On September 15, at a meeting with Hitler in Berchtesgaden, Prime Minister of Great Britain, Chamberlain agreed with Germany's request that part of the Czechoslovak territory be transferred to it. Two days later, the British government approved the "principle of self-determination", as the German annexation of the Sudeten Region was named.

⁴⁸Shemshuchenko Y.S. "England-Germany Declaration". Judicial Encyclopedia: [in 6 vol.] / Kiev, Ukrainian Encyclopedia, 1998. Vol. 1. 672p.: ISBN 966-7492-00-X

⁴⁹Pokrovska I.S. "Munich Treaty 1938". Ukrainian Diplomatic Encyclopedia in 2 vol. Kiev, Knowledge of Ukraine, 2004— vol. 2— 812p. ISBN 966-316-045-4

⁵⁰Shemshuchenko Y.S.

On September 19, 1938, the Czechoslovak government submitted to the Soviet government a prompt reply to the questions: a) Will the USSR, under the treaty, grant immediate assistance if the French Republic remains faithful and will also provide assistance; b) whether the USSR will help the Czechoslovak Republic as a member of the League of Nations.

After discussing this request on September 20, the USSR considered it possible to give positive answers to both of these questions. On September 21, the Soviet ambassador to Prague confirmed the readiness of the Soviet Union to provide such assistance. However, obeying the Anglo-French pressure, the Czechoslovak government surrendered, agreeing to satisfy Hitler's demands.

On September 22-23, Chamberlain met again with Hitler, which further strengthened the requirements for the Czechoslovak Republic and the timing of their implementation.

As Shemshuchenko states,

*“Taking advantage of the moment, their territorial claims were expressed by the Polish Republic and the Kingdom of Hungary. This allowed Hitler to justify the annexation of the Sudeten Region to the "international" nature of the requirements of the Czechoslovak Republic. These events did not relieve tension in the region and forced the USSR to look for new ways to resist German aggression and promote the ideas of communism in Europe”.*⁵¹

During the negotiations of the USSR and Western European states, the unwillingness of Britain and France to give specific military commitments and develop real military plans to counter possible German aggression was revealed. Moreover, the British government held negotiations in London with German representatives on the delimitation of spheres of influence. And this further strengthened the fears of the Soviet government that its Western partners were trying

⁵¹Shemshuchenko Y.S.

to send Hitler's aggression to the east, the aggression that had already led to the Munich Agreement and the division of Czechoslovakia. As a result of the failure of the Moscow talks, the USSR lost hope of creating a military coalition with the Western powers and found itself in a hostile environment when in the West its potential opponents were both Eastern Europe and the Baltic States and Germany, and militaristic Japan acted as an aggressor in the East. Under these conditions, the USSR decided to agree to the German proposals to start negotiations on concluding a non-aggression treaty.

The position of the Western powers predetermined the breakdown of the Moscow negotiations and put the Soviet Union before an alternative: to be isolated before the direct threat of an attack by fascist Germany or, having exhausted the possibilities of concluding an alliance with Great Britain and France, to sign the non-aggression treaty proposed by Germany also known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact - an intergovernmental agreement signed on August 23, 1939 by the foreign affairs ministers of Germany and the Soviet Union. On the part of the USSR, the treaty was signed by the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs V. Molotov, on the part of Germany by the Minister of Foreign Affairs I. von Ribbentrop.

The parties to the agreement pledged to refrain from attacking each other and to maintain neutrality in the event that one of them became the object of military actions by a third party. The parties to the agreement also refused to participate in the alliance of powers, "directly or indirectly directed against the other side." Provided for the mutual exchange of information on issues affecting the interests of the parties.

More importantly, the treaty was accompanied by a secret protocol, which became known only after the defeat of Germany in 1945. This protocol defined the Soviet and German "spheres of influence" in Northern and Eastern Europe.⁵²

⁵²Peganov A.: "Czechoslovak crisis 1938-1939. Mutual Bindings of the Unpretentious Domestic and Political Conjunction and Problems of National Minorities" p. 91-109. *International Relations: History And Modern Aspects, Theories And Research Practices*, vol. 2, Moscow-Stavropol, 2011.

The protocol consisted of a short preamble and the following four paragraphs:

1. In the case of the territorial-political restructuring of the regions that are part of the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), the northern border of Lithuania at the same time is the domain of the interests of Germany and the USSR. In this case, Lithuania's interests regarding the Vilno region are recognized by both parties.

2. In the case of territorial-political reorganization of the regions that are part of the Polish state, the boundaries of the interests of Germany and the USSR will approximately pass through the year of Narva, Vistula and Syan. The question of whether it is in the mutual interests of the desirable preservation of an independent Polish state and the boundaries of this state is desirable can only be finalized only during further political development.

3. In the case of the Eastern Europe from the Soviet side, the interest of the USSR in Bessarabia is emphasized. The German side claims its full political indifference in these areas.

4. This protocol will be kept by both parties in strict secrecy.⁵³

In the north, Finland, Estonia and Latvia went to the Soviet sphere of influence. Poland should have been divided in the event of a "political reconfiguration" - the territory east of the rivers Narva, Vistula and Syan fell into the Soviet Union, and the western part - Germany. Lithuania, which was adjacent to Eastern Prussia, had to fall into the German sphere of influence, but the second secret protocol in September 1939 had given most of Lithuania to the Soviet Union.

After the Baltic states were forced to accept the agreements, Stalin focused on Finland, convinced that the capitulation of Finland could be achieved with little effort. The Soviet side demanded territories on the Karelian Isthmus, islands in the Gulf of Finland and a military base near the Finnish capital of Helsinki, the Finnish

⁵³Sevostyanov G., Havkin B. "Official Soviet Documents of Soviet-German Treaties 1939". New and Contemporary History, vol. 1, 1993.

side rejected these demands. As a result, the Red Army launched an attack in November 1939. After three months of war against Finland and numerous losses, the Soviet Union concluded a temporary peace.⁵⁴

On September 1, 1939, Germany began the invasion of Poland, and on September 17, 1939, Soviet troops entered Polish territory. The territorial division of Poland between the USSR and Germany was completed on September 28, 1939 by the signing of a treaty of friendship and border. Later, the Baltic states, Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, as well as part of Finland, were annexed by the USSR.

The events described above had a negative impact on the Intermarium concept studied in this paper. Poland as the main initiator of the creation of the Intermarium was a bargaining chip in the relations between two totalitarian powers.

Poland became useless in the triangle Germany - the USSR - England and France (the latter "hoped" on the collision of Germany with the USSR). It is necessary to mention here the plans of the British and French commands to attack the USSR back in 1940.⁵⁵

Poland was left alone in the political arena and the prospect of its development and formation as an autonomous power capable of uniting the countries of Eastern Europe was destroyed. In addition to the Molotov Ribbentrop Pact, it was not envisaged that the sovereignty of Poland and its territory should be preserved. In fact, they were deprived of any political and economic independence. Also, other countries, potential Intermarium participants such as Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Austria lost their independence or fell under the influence of the USSR and Germany.

As for the Balkans, On April 27, a coup d'état took place in Yugoslavia, and on April 5, 1941, the new Yugoslav government signed an agreement on friendship and

⁵⁴Semyryaga M.: "Baltic States Join USSR". International Life, vol. 2, 1990.

⁵⁵Mertsalov A., Semyryaga M.: "Secrets of Stalin's Diplomacy". Moscow, 1992.

non-aggression with the USSR, which referred to friendly relations between the states, even in the event of an attack on one of them. In the end, Yugoslavia became a victim of the Nazis, and the USSR did nothing to protect it.⁵⁶ Therefore, the Intermarium project was not implemented. The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact had a great negative impact on the fate of the Slavic nations. He led to the fact that many anti-Nazi forces in Eastern and Central Europe were disappointed and disoriented.

As a matter of fact, under this treaty, the Soviet Union not only given Slavic nations to Nazi Germany, but also made a lot to weaken their struggle with the aggressor.

It was this pact that led to the outbreak of the Second World War. This was due to the fact that after its signing it was essentially impossible to conclude agreements that would restrain the aggression of Germany, and which would be based on real conditions. The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact contributed to the disintegration of the balance of powers.⁵⁷

Despite the conclusion of a non-aggression treaty between the USSR and Germany, Germany violated it after 22 months, which led to the beginning of the war between Nazi Germany and the USSR. This shifted the epicenter of hostilities to Russia and diverted German political activity from problems in Eastern Europe.

The Polish government in exile demanded the creation of a new organization of Central and Eastern Europe after the war, “a solidarity group of Slavic countries” that could protect themselves from Germany and Russia”. This line of thinking is confirmed by the negotiations of the Polish-Czechoslovak Federation, initiated by Vladislav Sikorski and Edward Beneš.⁵⁸

⁵⁶R. Muellerson: “Soviet-German Treaties 1939 in the Field of International Relations”. *International Historic Journal*, vol. 11, September-October, 2000.

⁵⁷A. Pronin: “Soviet-German Treaties 1939: Prerequisites and Consequences”. *Questions of History*, vol. 12, 2006.

⁵⁸Stephen D. Krasner, “Compromising Westphalia,” *International Security*, Vol.XX, (Winter 1995).

The fact is that the idea of Central and Eastern Europe inspired the idea of freedom both during and after the war. In 1946, in Rome, the international federation of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe was created as a temporary replacement for the Intermarium concept.⁵⁹

Federalism, regardless of its real possibilities, became an important stream of post-war émigré thought, especially in its democratic circles. The only thing is that, firstly, it was firmly inscribed in the concepts of Central and Eastern Europe, and secondly, it initiated a discourse about the new Polish geopolitics. The intellectual basis of federalism was the work of Oscar Chaletsky, „The Limits and Divisions of European History”.⁶⁰ This eminent historian and émigré thinker came up with his own vision of Europe as a continent consisting of four sub-regions: Western Europe, Central-Western Europe (with Germany as the center), Central-Eastern Europe, and Eastern Europe. Poland, Greece, Finland, the Balkan states entered the central-eastern regions. In another statement, he stressed that this space is “between Sweden, Germany, Italy, on the one hand, with Turkey and Russia, on the other”.⁶¹

After the "fourth" division of Poland by the Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union in 1939, the Intermarium project made a second chance in Polish political exile. The Polish People's Party, led by Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, who headed the government in exile in London since 1943, put forward the demand of “Poland of the Three Seas”. Poland from Oder to Dniester, from Baltic to Adriatic Sea and from Danube to Black Sea”.⁶² Prior to this, in September 1942, another newspaper of this party, „Polak“, justified the demand for Polish access to the Black Sea, stating that in

⁵⁹Robert Keohane and Lisa Martin, “The Promise of Institutional Theory,” *International Security*, Volume XX, (Summer 1995): p. 42.

⁶⁰John Mearsheimer, “The False Promise of International Institutions,” *International Security*, Volume XIX, (Winter 1994).

⁶¹William Rees-Mogg, “Break out from Brussels,” *London Times*, June 5, 2005.

⁶²Dusan Sidjanski: “The Federal Future of Europe: From the European Community to the European Union”. University of Michigan Press, 2000.

this way “our old trade route to the Arab world would return to us”.⁶³ But in fact, according to Troebst, the geopolitical Polish Intermarium established British post-war planning, which stipulated that confederation agreements should be signed by various London governments. The idea was to create a union of states that would be resistant to future interventions of Moscow - a plan that failed because of the veto of the Soviet ally.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, Troebst states, the Polish government in exile succeeded in gaining the attention of other expelled politicians from Eastern Central Europe for the idea of “Intermarium” as a label for confederation schemes. Until 1952, the “Federal Clubs of Central and Eastern Europe” in London, Rome, Paris, Brussels and Jerusalem published the “Intermarium Bulletin”, in which a confederation of all states of the region was chosen.⁶⁵ However, with the creation of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) in 1949 and the Warsaw Pact in 1955 — two alternatives to the Intermarium — the Polish conservative concept “Intermarium” lost its meaning.

Overall, the historical events that acted as the factors for the repeated possibility of implementing the Intermarium concept in the political space of Eastern Europe, were reviewed. In this part, more attention was paid to those historical events that took place in the interwar period and indirectly promoted the political leaders of that time to reflect on the need to find a form of political alliances that would protect the interests of small states in Eastern Europe, their sovereignty and territorial integrity, and ignoring their national interests in favor of political decisions of more powerful neighbors. The study made it possible to clearly determine which political forces of that time were crucial and how they were used to influence the aspirations of Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Baltic countries and the Balkans to unite them in a political union to protect their interests.

⁶³Piotr Cieplucha.

⁶⁴Stefan Troebst.

⁶⁵Stefan Troebst.

Based on a study of the historical background of the 1930-1942 for the implementation of the concept of the Intermarium, the following reasons can be noted that contributed to its political revival and also simultaneously identified the reasons why this concept could not be implemented at that time. Among the main reasons for which political thought in the 1930s reverted to the concept of the Three Seas are the following:

1. After the Nazis came to power in Germany, the level of the military threat in Europe sharply increased, and now it was not limited to the threat from Bolshevik Russia. Proposals for the creation of military alliances of different formats that would have to counter the threat from Germany were developed. And such alliances were created, but they were not capable of action due to internal contradictions between the member states. A stronger incentive was needed for the unification of the Polish government as well, and a renewed Intermarium concept for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe was proposed.

2. Despite the weakness of Poland's position and fragmentation in political relations with the Baltic countries, the Czech Republic, Romania and Hungary, these countries constituted a kind of cordon in the way of the advancement of communist ideology by the USSR. Such a situation suited the countries of Western Europe quite well, and if not for the threat from Nazi Germany, an alliance of these powers could well have been a viable political decision.

Of the main reasons why the implementation of the Intermarium project did not take place was the immaturity of the Polish political circles regarding the formation of a political platform for uniting the partner countries for the new Intermarium and failure to determine its main tasks and functions. The mere consent of Poland to participate in the division of Czechoslovakia speaks about the priority of its policy in relation to small territorial gains at the expense of building a global platform for the voluntary unification of the countries of Eastern and Central Europe.

The same policy towards Lithuania and Latvia has brought its negative results when building the concept of the Intermarium.

The second important factor that influenced the failure of the Intermarium concept was the passive reaction of the strongest countries of Western Europe to the aggression from Nazi Germany, their rejection of the military alliance with the USSR against Germany and the political decision aimed at satisfying German territorial claims to Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, Latvia. Therefore, this decision pushed the USSR to the signing of the Molotov – Ribbentrop non-aggression pact with Germany and made it possible to sacrifice small states in favor of reducing tensions between both Germany and the USSR. Neither France nor Great Britain was interested in the Intermarium, as an active alliance of states on the territory of Eastern and Central Europe, they were playing their political game towards Germany, trying to redirect its aggression to the east.

The maximum that they could be interested in was a shield in the form of Poland, which would separate Germany and Russia, and did not allow them to unite, under any pretext.

Nevertheless, the very fact that Germany and the USSR in 1938-1940 divided the Intermarium, emphasizes the importance of the Intermarium region as a barrier between two aggressive and influential powers in Europe in general.

2.3 Intermarium in contemporary politics

This part of my work will examine contemporary political trends that have a direct impact on the political situation in Eastern Europe. The interest is caused by the fact that in the political circles of Eastern European countries the idea of developing an updated version of the concept of the Intermarium and the possibility of its implementation as a viable project begins to be discussed. By the end of the year 2004, Poland and the Baltic countries had already achieved their goal of full

membership in the EU and NATO, and the EU was preparing to introduce its Eastern Partnership program, aimed at strengthening relations with countries such as Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova. At the same time, the unfolding global financial crisis has demonstrated that existing blocs based in Brussels or Moscow may not have solutions to emerging problems, and new tactics are needed to solve modern problems. Then the idea of the Intermarium was presented as a mobilizing factor for the creation of new associations of states. One of them was the idea of uniting the region around key liberal, political and economic values. The representative of this trend was the Baltic Black Sea Union (BBSU), which was founded in Riga in late 2008. At about the same time, the idea of Intermarium was revived in a version closer to that originally formulated by Piłsudski himself: more nationalistic, conservative and obviously anti-communist, and where Poland would be recognized as a country that largely determined the unique character of the region. The idea, as well as the opinion that the foreign policy of the United States should contribute to the consolidation of Intermarium as a geopolitical bloc, was strongly argued by the Polish-American historian Marek Jan Chodakiewicz in his book “Intermarium: The land between the Black and Baltic Seas”, as well as by George Friedman, who also discussed Intermarium in the context of the future of the region⁶⁶.

Therefore, the Three Seas Initiative, proposed as one of the possible options for regional groupings, and at the same time as a natural continuation, refinement and improvement of the original concept of the Intermarium, was actively discussed among contemporary world politicians and scholars at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly 2016 in New York.

Today, the proposed form for consideration of the “Initiative of the Three Seas” as an informal cooperation platform includes 12 member states of the European Union between the Baltic, Adriatic and Black Seas: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and

⁶⁶Matthew Kott. “A far right hijack of Intermarium”. *New Eastern Europe* 2. pp. 25-30.

Slovenia. Thus, it is necessary to mention that the declaration on the creation of the Three Seas Initiative was signed in 2016.

The priority of the project is the formation of the infrastructural and economic unity of mainly Eastern European states on the North-South axis. The relevance of the political project of the Three Seas Initiative is confirmed by the next Bucharest summit held in August 2018. The presidents of Croatia (Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovich), Poland (Andrzej Duda) and Austria (Alexander van der Bellen) take part in the summit.

“The initiative of the Three Seas can help strengthening the unity of the European Union. We welcome the participation in the summit of our partners from the United States, namely, leaders of American companies interested in deepening economic partnership with Europe” - announced Romanian President Klaus Johannis in his address to the summit participants.⁶⁷

Within the framework of the Summit of the Three Seas Initiative, in which representatives of 12 states took part, issues of energy integration, interaction in the development of agriculture and tourism, development of the digital economy, introduction of innovative technologies and development of entrepreneurship among young people were considered.

It is important to note that, as mentioned above, the political project of the Three Seas Initiative will be introduced to other countries in the region who share its ideas and principles and want to participate in the project in the future. This is confirmed by the participation of the Moldovan delegation led by Minister of Economy and Infrastructure Kiril Gaburich at the 2018 summit. The geopolitical status of the summit and US interest in it should also be noted, since the President of the United States Donald Trump addressed the forum participants a special speech.⁶⁸

⁶⁷“The Three Seas Initiative summit has started in Bucharest”. Ukrinform.ua, 18.09. 2018

⁶⁸Ukrinform.ua

It should be noted that this is not the first address of the President of US to the countries participating in the Three Seas Initiative summit. In 2017, President Donald Trump participated in the summit of the Three Seas Initiative in Warsaw.

The main topic of Trump's address relates to the transformation and rebuilding of the infrastructure of the entire region, which will be supported by the US.⁶⁹

As can be noted, the project of the Three Seas Initiative is already now a stumbling block for the interests of Russia and US in the struggle for the energy market of Europe. Since the ambiguous interest of US in the European energy markets was announced by President Trump on the one hand, and Russia's interest in implementing the Nord Stream-2 project on the other creates certain conditions for the conflict, both in the economic and political spheres of influence in Eastern Europe. We are exploring the prehistory of the revival of the idea of the Intermarium as the modern interpretation of the Three Seas Initiative in the current political situation.

In 2015, shortly after his election, the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda, stated that he sees one of his main goals in foreign policy as the implementation of the idea of the "Union of the Three Seas" - the Baltic Sea, Black Sea and Adriatic Sea. Many analysts believe that this again was the same Pilsudski concept based on Polish historical experience, but in the summer of 2016 a forum called "Strengthening Europe: connecting the North and the South" was held in Dubrovnik, where the Declaration of the Three Seas Initiative was signed.

The Duda initiative is continued in the actions of the President of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic, who spoke in favor of creating an alliance and supported Poland. The participants of this project were Poland, Croatia, Bulgaria, Hungary,

⁶⁹ Remarks by President Trump at the Three Seas Initiative Summit, the Royal Castle, Warsaw, Poland. July 6, 2017.

Austria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic. Estonia and Albania were also interested in this kind of cooperation.

This initiative involves the interaction of states primarily in economic and energy spheres - for example, it is planned to build interconnecting gas pipelines, which as a result will help the participating countries to weaken their own dependence on Russian gas, which, as a result, should lead to a general recovery of the economies of states. The focus is also on cooperation in infrastructure development, agriculture and tourism.

In addition to participating states, representatives of Montenegro, the partially recognized Republic of Kosovo, Turkey, the United States and China, were invited to the first program forum of the Adriatic-Baltic-Black Sea Initiative. This unification caused a revival of interest from China: representatives of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs considered this project quite compatible with the concept of “cooperation in the three port zones”, agreeing with an emphasis on the economy, while the US representatives spoke more about geopolitics and the energy aspect hybrid security threat in Europe.⁷⁰

However, with the signing of the declaration, everything has just begun: Poland and Croatia continue to play the leading role in the union. At the end of March 2017, a top official meeting was held between representatives of the Czech Republic and Croatia, where they discussed cooperation between the two countries in the framework of the objectives of the already existing project of the Adriatic-Baltic-Black Sea Initiative.

On 13-14 June 2017, the meeting of the Presidents of Croatia and Poland was held, during which the concept of the further development of economy of the Three Seas Initiative was discussed. Zagreb initially became a platform for these

⁷⁰Maria Kurchenko: “The Three Seas Initiative: A new chance for Eastern Europe?”. Hvylya.net, 12.07.2017

discussions, which allows to assume that Croatia is extremely interested in maintaining its leadership in the alliance.

However, as Kurchenko mentions, Poland is not going to give them up so easily: after all, the Zagreb agenda was not only traditional topics within economic cooperation, but also the Wroclaw GlobalForum, which was supposed to be a platform for discussing further initiatives within the Union of the Three Seas and the summit moved to Warsaw⁷¹.

During his speech in Warsaw at the summit of the Three Seas Initiative in 2017, Donald Trump spoke about the initiative to reduce energy dependence on the Russian Federation in Europe in a very positive way, while remaining a businessman in his approval: the US President stated, that the US is ready to provide full support to ensure the sovereignty and security of countries that will participate in the Three Seas Initiative.⁷²

Today, with some corrections, it can be quite definitely said that the Three Seas Initiative is becoming a new geopolitical reality, which in one way or another will be recognized in Moscow, Brussels and Berlin. To understand this, it is enough to begin by comparing the cornerstone circumstances and the formal results of the first and second summits of the “Initiative of the Three Seas” at the highest level.

At the initiation summit in Dubrovnik (Croatia), in August 2016, representatives of 12 countries which participate in the initiative gathered, but only six of them were represented at the level of heads of state: except Duda and Grabar-Kitarovic, the forum included the presidents of Bulgaria, Hungary, Lithuania and Slovenia. The remaining six countries (Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Estonia and Latvia) were limited to participation at the level of ministers or

⁷¹M. Kurchenko.

⁷²Remarks by President Trump at the Three Seas Initiative Summit.

deputy ministers. Representatives of the USA, China and Turkey were invited as observers.⁷³

The formal result of the forum in Dubrovnik was the signing of a Joint Statement, in which the main objective of the “Three Seas Initiative” project was formulated in a somewhat veiled way: to eliminate the economic gap between the “east and west of the EU” in a fairly short time.

It should be noted that the total GDP of the 12 countries participating in the Three Seas Initiative is about 10% of the total EU GDP, and the average GDP per capita does not reach 70% of the EU average (about 60% without Austria and the Czech Republic). Poland's economy accounts for about a quarter of the German economy. Over the past five years, these figures have not changed.⁷⁴

The second summit of the “Three Seas Initiative”, which was held in Warsaw on July 6-7, 2017, significantly differed from the first. First of all, during the year between the two events, the level of confidence in the Polish-Croatian initiative has increased significantly. Not six, but ten heads of member states arrived in the capital of Poland (Austria and the Czech Republic again decided to abstain, limiting themselves to purely symbolic participation). But, the most important of them was the President of the United States who emphasized the business component of the “Three Seas Initiative” project.

Rakitin notes that within the framework of the initiative, it is planned to implement 157 various business projects in the field of infrastructure, transport, energy, communications and information technologies totaling about 50 billion USA dollars. It is likely that these figures are based on certain calculations, that every large project is always somehow connected with dozens of smaller ones. Nevertheless, the

⁷³Alexander Rakitin: “Three Seas Initiative – condition and perspectives: information and analytical paper”. Ukrainian Institute for Analysis and Management of Policy. 10.08.2017.

⁷⁴A. Rakitin

main essence of the “Three Seas Initiative” today consists of three large-scale projects, on which, perhaps, the rest will be based:

- the North-South gas transmission corridor, which intends to connect the Swinoujscie (Poland) and Krk (Croatia) LNG terminals, the first of which is already in operation, and the second is planned to be launched before the end of 2019;
- the main gas pipeline from the Black Sea coast of Bulgaria to the Austrian gas distribution hub Baumgarten through the territory of Romania and Hungary;
- Trans-Carpathian highway “Via Carpathia”, which stretches from Klaipeda (Lithuania) to Thessaloniki (Greece).⁷⁵

The main interest of the USA is also aimed onto consolidation in the European gas market as an exporter. At present, the American gas market share in Europe is purely symbolic: at the level of tenths of a percent of the total import of natural gas to the EU (against the background of 30-35% of the Russian share). But in the next five years, this figure may change drastically and reach at least 5-7%.⁷⁶

The export of American LNG to Europe began in February 2016. Over the past year, US exporters managed to supply the European market with a little more than 500 million cubic meters of gas, which accounted for 0.2% of total gas imports in the EU countries and about 3% of imports of liquefied gas.⁷⁷

Therefore, the Three Seas Initiative plays a key role. To begin with, the planned total capacity of the Polish and Croatian LNG terminals should reach 12.5 billion cubic meters by the beginning of the next decade, in addition to the operating

⁷⁵A. Rakitin

⁷⁶A. Rakitin.

⁷⁷A. Rakitin.

floating terminal in Lithuanian Klaipeda (3 billion m³) and terminal in Estonia (up to 4 billion m³ after 2022).⁷⁸

The probability that a large portion of these facilities will be loaded with American LNG has increased, especially after Trump's statement in Warsaw: "We intend to simplify the conditions for LNG supplies to countries of Eastern and Central Europe for our companies."⁷⁹

While exploring the economic component of the "Three Seas Initiative" project, it should be noted that from January 1, 2018 a long-term contract between the Polish company PGNiG and the Qatar gas company Qatargas enters into force providing for the delivery of 2.9 billion cubic meters of gas to Poland every year.⁸⁰

As can be seen from the aforementioned, on the one hand, America is deliberately moving to the European energy market and, first of all, its interests are aimed at the countries of Eastern Europe as potential buyers of American energy resources. On the other hand, however, the Eastern European states react differently to the change of gas suppliers in the region. At the Warsaw Summit of the Three Seas Initiative, opinions on this issue were divided among the participating states. If Poland, Croatia and the Baltic States definitely support the proposals of the President of the US regarding the supply of US energy resources, the rest of the states do not want to unilaterally terminate their contracts with Russian Gazprom. Rakitin mentions, for example, that literally on the day of Trump's arrival in Warsaw (July 5, 2017) in Budapest with the head of Gazprom, Alexander Miller, documents are signed to buy Hungary's gas from the Turkish Stream gas pipeline after 2019. Bulgaria plans to do the same, which is seriously determined to build a gas hub near Varna by 2022 and absolutely does not take into account the possibility of

⁷⁸A. Rakitin.

⁷⁹Remarks by President Trump at the Three Seas Initiative Summit.

⁸⁰A. Rakitin.

implementing this project without Russia. The already mentioned Austria and the Czech Republic, whose dependence on Russian gas is more than 75%, are also cautious about a possible change in the gas supplier.⁸¹

Based on these statements, it is worth noting that each of the countries of potential participants of the Three Seas Initiative definitely has its own interest in participating in this project.⁸²

In our study of the modern assessment of the prerequisites for the implementation of the Three Seas Initiative, we will rely on the facts that contribute to the integration of countries into this project and take into account their interests to the maximum.

Firstly, since the launch of the Initiative of the Three Seas, the founders stated: the idea of the project is neither a direct counteraction to Russia nor the implementation of the ideas of the Intermarium. The main goal is to improve living standards in the countries of the region, to establish an infrastructure link between the South and North of Europe, and energy cooperation.

Secondly, even if the Baltic states, Poland and Romania, who are most at risk of being influenced by Russia, tried to add to the political nature of the economic nature of the country, their positions could always be counterbalanced by Austria, Hungary and the Czech Republic, where Russia is not perceived as an enemy. At the same time, these states have a significant impact due to their geographical location. Without their participation, the Three Seas Initiative will lose the middle link, and therefore the meaning.

Thirdly, at the moment of the idea of the Intermarium, the unity of the states in the region was a significant component in the deterrence of Russia, but unlike those times, the unity of the EU and NATO is more important for the states of the Three

⁸¹A. Rakitin.

⁸²Aleksander Kwiatek. "Zachyd porwany" Milana Kundery a polska myśl europejska w przełomowej dekadzie lat osiemdziesiątych XX wieku". Studia Śląskie, pp. 25-50.

Seas Initiative region. They rely heavily on stronger and richer allies rather than on their own unity.

Therefore, each player pursued their interests here. For Croatia and Poland, this made it possible to raise the idea of supplying liquefied natural gas to Europe from USA through the terminals in the Poland and Croatia at the regional level. For Hungary, participation in any regional initiatives is a safety factor for isolation from the Orbán's government conflict with Brussels and the uncertain position of its political force, Fides, in the heart of the European People's Party. For Romania, the very fact of the summit in Bucharest in 2018 was a demonstration of regional ambitions for Bucharest in the Black Sea waters. In the end, it was important for all the states in the region to draw attention to the Three Seas Initiative from large and influential international players who could help in the implementation of high-value projects. And this whole initiative seems to be gradually reaching its pivotal point of being implemented⁸³.

In addition, it is necessary to pinpoint overall economic benefits for the countries of the region with the successful implementation of the project. Since the geographical position of the region makes it a link between the east in the form of actively developing China and Western EU countries which are ready to consume Chinese products, then, from the mediation between China and the Asian republics on the one hand and the EU on the other hand, the Intermarium states will be able to obtain their own benefits. In addition, the very existence of active trade routes will already be a good incentive, as the development of the transport network entails infrastructure development, and then the domino effect is already triggered when qualitative changes in one area lead to improvements in the other. Moreover, few will want to spoil relations with the countries that will actually depend on Euro-Asian trade: China is the second trade partner of the EU after the USA, and it accounts for 14% of the EU's total commodity turnover (only 1% less than the US) . Therefore,

⁸³Sergiy Gerasymchuk: "Three Seas Etude with Russian Notes: Against Whom Acts The Three Seas Initiative?". Segodnya.ua. 26.09.2018.

the control of the "new silk road" will to some extent become a guarantee of inviolability and stable development of the Three Seas Initiative⁸⁴.

According to the research methodology I have chosen, it is necessary to consider all the factors that could influence the implementation of the Three Seas Initiative project. And since we examined the influence of economic factors above, the factor of security and defense capability of the countries participating in this project should be considered in more detail. At the same time, it should be taken into account that all previous initiatives to create the Intermarium were based precisely on the need to resist external aggression. We will consider contemporary political events that might have affected security in the region of Eastern and Central Europe in recent years.

Instability on the world arena, which no international organization and no influential state can handle at the moment, prompts the search for alternative ways of protection at all levels - economic, military, information, etc. In a situation where the world security system failed to prevent a military conflict in Europe, the need to create local security units became apparent. Both Poland and the Baltic States openly regard the Russian Federation as an enemy and an invader state which is constantly threatening the territorial integrity and sovereignty of neighboring countries.

The failure of the EU, NATO and the United States to prevent the annexation of Crimea by Russia, followed up by the armed conflict in Donbass forced the ruling circles in Poland and its neighboring countries to more carefully examine alternative models for regional cooperation, in particular, with regard to collective security.⁸⁵

The basis for joining for the protection and security of the region is present, despite the fact that the project is aimed at strengthening the interaction between these states, intensifying economic and infrastructural cooperation, ensuring mutual

⁸⁴Andriy Bondarenko: "Intermarium: Is globalization crisis already in Europe?". Commons.com.ua. 25.05.2016.

⁸⁵M. Kott.

support of the member states on the international arena, providing mutual security guarantees. Creation of a union in the region of geopolitical importance would ensure the formation of a belt between Western Europe and Russia. Obviously, the newly created Intermarium would claim to be an independent player in the region and stay remote from Russia. However, one should pay attention to the comments of Yuri Voytsitsky, a member of the Council on Issues of History and Cultural Heritage of Vinnytsya, a member of the Board of the Poles Union of Ukraine, editor of the "Polish Words":

“Several states, washed by the Black and Baltic Seas, united by economic and military interests, are the axis of deterrence of the Russian invasion of Europe. But if you count the total number of tanks, aircraft, manpower in all countries of the Baltic-Black Sea basin, you will see that it does not even make up half of the amount of military equipment in the Russian Federation, that is, the chances of defeating the enemy from the East, relying solely on our own resources, are very small”⁸⁶.

Therefore, political analysts see no prospects in such a military alliance, if only because its format does not meet today's requirements. The Three Seas Initiative project cannot claim the status of a new military-political bloc.

The only alternative in this case is that the Project of the Three Seas Initiative may be open to the participation of other countries in the region and conclude agreements with them for cooperation. Therefore, such alliance as LITPOLUKRBRIG (Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade) with participation of Ukraine in is possible, however, Ukraine is not a participant of the project of the Three Seas Initiative.

The joint Polish-Ukrainian-Lithuanian military forces will have 380 thousand personnel, which, for example, exceeds the number of personnel in France, Germany

⁸⁶Alexander Nikonorov: “What are the perspectives of Intermarium project in Ukraine?”. dn.depo.ua. 08.03.2017.

or the United Kingdom. Also, the experience of military cooperation will be useful - Polish and Lithuanian officers will help to rebuild and reform the Ukrainian army according to the highest European and NATO standards, while from the Ukrainian Armed Forces they will be able to take on the experience of real military operations, which is largely lacking in European armies. An example of cooperation in this area is the creation in 2014 of LITPOLUKRBRIG - the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade, whose purpose is to engage in peacekeeping operations. Deepening of integration in the military sphere can be a good incentive to establish wider cooperation in other areas as well.⁸⁷

Based on the aforementioned, it can be considered that the defense mission of the Three Seas Initiative project is not very promising and was not originally planned in this format since all the participating countries are members of NATO and, accordingly, their security will be provided directly by this military bloc.

Another important factor that affects the implementation of the Three Seas Initiative is the attitude of direct external partners in the region, like the EU and other political international forces such as the United States and Russia who are the influential players in the Three Seas Initiative region.

The European Union, as the most influential partner for the countries of the region, does not always unequivocally relate to the creation of the Three Seas Project. Consider what factors may influence the attitude to the project on the part of the EU and what interests the parties pursue. It should be noted right away that most of the countries that are part of the Three Seas Initiative Project are the recent members of the EU and their economies are largely dependent on assistance from the European Union. For example, the same Poland as the most ardent supporter of the Three Seas Initiative has a certain dependence on the EU despite some political differences.

⁸⁷<http://litpolukrbrig.wp.mil.pl/en/91.html>.

Thus, the dissatisfaction of the population, which leads to the strengthening of eurosceptic attitudes in Poland, is due to excessive pressure and interference in internal affairs by the most influential institutions and EU member states, particularly Germany. The imposition of interests (as in a case of the reception of refugees from the Middle East and Africa or openly criticizing the actions of the Polish authorities) is not something new in the European Union. Such realities, on the one hand, make us think about the formation of new unions. On the other hand, it should be noted that over the past ten years, Poland has received the most funds from the EU through programs of various funds, therefore, it is unlikely that the desire to get out of control of the European Union will be realized, as it will mean a loss of a significant amount of funding.⁸⁸

The attitude to the project of the Three Seas Initiative on the part of the leading EU states can be expressed in a simple and understandable formula: “yes to the economy, but no to politics”. The construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline and related infrastructure projects are only welcomed by Belgium and Germany as an element of the implementation of the European energy security strategy: the more reception points of imported gas and various interconnections, the lesser are chances to get into an energy crisis in the event of any issues associated with gas supply or gas transit. Thus the construction of the additional gas pipeline is not only welcome, but also supported financially through the EU collective funds. For example, EUR 102 million has already been allocated from the EU budget for the construction of an LNG terminal in Croatia (more than 20% of the estimated project cost).⁸⁹

Regarding the security of the region, unlike the Intermarium states, which are interested in stopping the Russia's hybrid warfare and trying to get out of being the economic periphery of the EU, Western European countries are attracted by the policy of protecting the identity and ethnic and cultural values of Central and Eastern

⁸⁸ A. Bondarenko.

⁸⁹ A. Bondarenko.

Europe, hence Intermarium is important for them as a springboard for a creation of the pan-European environment.⁹⁰

The political component of the relationship between the EU and the Three Seas Initiative is reduced to the interests of the countries of Western Europe in retaining control over the Eastern Europe. Germany and France will be afraid of a new strong opponent within the European space, claiming one of the leading roles. It complicates the tension in the relations between Germany and Poland as a result of the "refugee crisis" and the firm desire of the latter to pursue its own policy (the conflict between Poland and the EU about free media regulation policy). Strengthening Poland and possibly other Eastern European countries through the further expansion of the Three Seas Initiative will mean the emergence of a new formation with strong nationalist sentiment and a tendency towards political decisions that may somewhat not fit into the overall EU conjuncture.⁹¹

The next active player at the Three Seas Initiative summit will be the United States. Firstly, this is due to the fact that all three potential members of the Three Seas Initiative traditionally built more than just a partnership with America. The close economic ties, and also within the framework of NATO's military cooperation, make it possible to call the participants of the Three Seas Initiative not only partners but also allies of the US.

Such relationships are particularly relevant today, when the EU is trying to gradually move from the American "guardianship" and to pursue a completely independent policy, acting as a separate center of influence, rather than acting in the EU-US symbiosis. Losing influence in Europe, America will be interested in the emergence of a new strong player who can simultaneously represent the American interests in the EU and will withhold growing ambitions of leaders of European

⁹⁰ Olena Semenyaka: "Third Way "and Pan-Europe: what does new and right the" new right " have?". Pokrov.world. 17.05.2017.

⁹¹ A. Bondarenko.

countries. On the other hand, the Three Seas Initiative will act as a deterrent force against another enemy of US - Russia, forming a strong belt on its western frontiers.⁹²

US activity is seen in their actions on the European energy market and in active participation in the summits of the Three Seas Initiative project. US Secretary of Energy Rick Perry, on behalf of Washington, is trying to convince Europe of the need to diversify sources of energy supplies. With words about the need for such diversification Perry spoke before, and on Tuesday he confirmed this point of view at the summit of the Initiative of the Three Seas in Bucharest.

“Energy security is equivalent to national security,” Perry said in his speech at the summit. According to the US official, “there is great security in the energy diversification,” with the fact that now the countries of Central and Eastern Europe “face problems related to the sole supplier of gas and Russia's aggressive position.”

Rick Perry also announced the US desire to work closely with European countries and the European Commission in the framework of the Transatlantic Energy Partnership. The US Secretary of Energy was supported by representatives of Poland and Romania, who spoke at the summit.⁹³

Russia will definitely oppose the Intermarium and will spare no effort to prevent the cooperation of Poland and the Baltic States with other countries in the region. It is easy to predict statements about another "anti-Russian conspiracy", as these countries characterize confrontational relations with the Russian Federation. The Baltic-Black Sea axis will permanently cut off Russia from its few allies in Europe, as well as put the Russian-European trade routes under the direct control of the Three Seas Initiative. Cooperation in the military sphere will provide better conditions for protection and will help to prevent Russia's military intervention and pro-Russian sentiment in the region. As a result, there is no reason to expect anything

⁹² S. Gerasymchuk.

⁹³ Danylo Galperovich: “The US and Russia compete for Europe's energy supply”. Voice of America. 19.09.2018.

good from such an alliance, which means that it will try to prevent its formation by all means.⁹⁴

On the other hand, the active interest in the Three Seas Initiative is expressed by the United States with its program of an alternative energy supply to Europe. Such actions conducted by the United States endanger the Russian gas supply project to Europe and, accordingly, reduce Russia's ability to influence the situation in the Eastern European region.

Brian Whitmore, head of the Russian program at the Center for European Policy Analysis in Washington, points out in an interview for Voice of America that security considerations really need to be better understood by Europeans when assessing risks from the construction of Nord Stream-2:

“This gas pipeline is dangerous because it creates a situation where majority of European states can largely depend on a single gas supplier. Since Russia has used energy as a means of geopolitical pressure in the past, Nord Stream-2 will make Europe more vulnerable to blackmail from Moscow. It also undermines competition in the European energy market, which in a strictly economic sense is bad for energy consumers”.⁹⁵

However, this statement indicates the extraordinary influence of external forces on the potential for the emergence of the Three Seas Initiative. Big players are trying to control the smaller countries in the region. A particular threat is manifested by Russia. With the support of the United States, such an alliance will have to pay its loyalty and actually subjugate its foreign policy to Washington. As you can see, the political side of the creation of the Intermarium highlights the dangerous tendency of modern international relations when the world's key players seek to fully control any

⁹⁴S. Gerasymchuk.

⁹⁵D. Galperovich.

world processes and influence the decision-making process, both on regional and international levels.

Exploring the Intermarium in its modern interpretation, as a project of the Three Seas Initiative, we will focus on those political and economic events in the modern political arena that made it possible to revive the Intermarium as a political project that has prospects for implementation taking into account modern realities. Moreover it is necessary to discuss the reasons which can interfere with its realization today.

Therefore, the reasons why modern politicians turned to the updated version of the previously failed Intermarium project can be highlighted:

1. The 2008 financial crisis intensified the contrast between the economies of states that are members of the European Union. The economic downturn in Greece, Italy and Spain demanded additional EU resources to support the economies of these countries. At the same time, the countries of the former socialist bloc joined the European Union at the early 2000s, which had weak economies and needed constant funding from the European Union. Under these conditions, the question arose about the possibility of attracting outside investors who, thanks to joint projects, could invest resources in the economies of those EU states that needed infrastructure development, transport and energy. The most suitable for this role were the countries of Eastern and Central Europe, which had been previously part of the socialist bloc and after the collapse of the USSR, had been accepted into the European Union and became members of NATO. Therefore, the idea of the “Three Seas Initiative” project as an association of 12 states of Central and Eastern Europe, was reimplemented in 2016 and is designed to improve coordination in the politics and economics of the states of the former socialist camp. In addition to Austria, all the other countries of the “Three Seas Initiative” joined the European Union after 2004. Not only the leading countries of the European Union are ready to invest, but also the USA and China. This approach makes it possible to globalize the project and satisfy the

economic interests of the United States, China and the EU in terms of strengthening the economic potential of the region, to develop new energy markets and build related infrastructure, to establish trade routes. The fact that the countries participating in the Three Seas Initiative are members of NATO guarantees the security of investment projects.

2. The second significant reason why interest in the Intermarium project was renewed is the resumption of the military threat from Russia. After Euromaidan events in Ukraine, Russia began to gradually lose influence in the region and as a result, Russia provoked a military conflict in the Donbass, which affected the security of the states in the region. Subsequently, the countries that spoke out against the Russian aggression also became objects of Russia's aggression. Moreover, Russia took advantage of its dominant position in the natural gas supply market to put pressure on the European Union and provoked concern from the European Union over its energy security. Such actions on the part of Russia forced EU politicians to look for alternative approaches for energy supply to Europe and, therefore, proposals from the United States about the possibility of supplying liquefied gas to Europe were considered with great interest. Accordingly, the project of the Three Seas Initiative was proposed as an opportunity to build a European energy system along the North-South axis as opposed to the existing East-West system with Russia's participation in it.

“As more LNG from the US enters the market, a clearer alternative to Russian gas will emerge. This will take time, as infrastructure is needed to maintain the LNG terminals. In the short term, due to the cost of shipping and the creation of this infrastructure, this makes US LNG more expensive. But it will become more and more competitive. In the medium term, because of LNG, the conditions will change, and a more flexible and dynamic global natural gas market will emerge that does not depend on pipeline routes and long-term bilateral contracts”.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ A. Rakitin.

“In the long term, this will reduce Russia's ability to use energy as a geopolitical weapon. With projects such as Nord Stream-2, Russia is playing by the rules of the twentieth century on the energy market of the twenty-first century. But in the short term, this pipeline remains a danger to Europe, ”concludes Brian Whitmore.⁹⁷

The military activity of Russia, its participation in armed conflicts in the Donbass and Syria, as well as threats towards Lithuania and Poland in addition to cyber attacks on state institutions of European countries and the United States, played a significant role. Therefore, an alliance of states that geographically separate Russia from Western Europe and at the same time are members of one military bloc, will create a single defense line in the event of direct aggression from Russia or act as a deterrent when a military threat arises, both to these countries and the European Union in general.

3. It should not be omitted that in the twenty-first century the processes of globalization of the world economy have intensified and new players have appeared, for example, China, whose interests include establishing safe and convenient ways of supplying its goods to Europe. And, accordingly, the countries of Eastern Europe will be the connecting link through which cargo traffic from China to Europe will be sent, therefore its security and developed logistics infrastructure will be attractive to China. The same can be said about the United States. Therefore, if the Three Seas Initiative project is implemented, it will find active investors from these countries. Europe, too, will not stay aside from prospective investment projects. For example, Germany is ready not only to defend the construction of Nord Stream-2, but also to receive gas from the United States: by the end of 2018, it will be decided in which German city the construction of a terminal for liquefied natural gas will begin. This was announced by the German Federal Minister of Economics and Energy, Peter

⁹⁷ A. Rakitin.

Altmaier, after a recent meeting with Maros Šefčovič, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for European energy.⁹⁸

Thus, the “Initiative of the Three Seas” from the standpoint of contemporary politics can be evaluated as a fairly promising project that takes into account the interests of both its direct participants and their potential partners.

But despite the above advantages, the project of the Three Seas Initiative has certain difficulties for its implementation.

1. The greatest problem may be the achievement of the necessary political unity within a group of 12 countries participating in the Three Seas Initiative. Disagreements in the approaches to major international and regional problems, including the policy towards Russia and issues of national energy security, will remain a serious deterrent to the accelerated development of the project.

2. While attracting third-party investors and partners for the project, the risk of a possible influence of large international players, such as the United States and China, on project participants increases, especially when taking into account the interdependence of European states, including potential members of the Three Seas Initiative project from the European Union. This will not allow the project to turn into an independent political association capable of speaking for itself on the world political arena. Such an approach may not satisfy the ambitions of Poland and Romania, which aspire to influence the region and do not always share EU positions on political issues (for example, dissatisfaction with EU migration policies).

3. The project of the Three Seas Initiative does not have a clear strategy for other countries in the region that are not members of the EU and NATO (Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Georgia). But without these countries, the project has no prospects for further development, both economically and politically, since many issues of

⁹⁸ A. Rakitin.

creating trade and logistics infrastructure, as well as eliminating the military threat from Russia cannot be fully resolved without the participation of these states.

These factors may have a negative impact on the project implementation in general and on some of its participants in particular, therefore in the next section of my work I will explore in more detail the prospects for participation in the project by each of the participating countries to determine the most likely number of countries that will be able to participate in project and their optimal amount for its successful implementation.

2.4 Summary of Chapter 2

In chapter 2 two cases were investigated in which historical factors were considered, which were prerequisites for the emergence of the Intermarium idea. We will compare these factors with each other and with modern political realities.

1. In the first and second cases which have studied historical factors, the main reason for the introduction of the Intermarium was the political and economic weakness of the small states of Eastern Europe, who could not independently resist aggression in the first case by Bolshevik Russia in the second case of Nazi Germany and the USSR. It was the military threats that indirectly prompted political leaders of the time to reflect on the need to find a form of political alliance that would protect the interests of small states in Eastern Europe, their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In the current situation, the creation of a military alliance faded into the obscurity since this issue was resolved by the participation of the countries of the Three Seas Initiative project in NATO. But the fact of the military threat from Russia is also present in modern politics. And although the nature of the threats has changed somewhat in accordance with the constant cyberattacks on modern media and social networks by Russia, it is still aimed at tricking Europe into thinking that energy dependence on Russia is the one and only option to avoid energy crisis in EU.

Therefore, the Three Seas Initiative is designed to resolve the issue of the EU energy security on the one hand and the military security of Eastern European countries bordering Russia on the other.

2. The second factor that could positively influence the implementation of the Intermarium project in past historical periods was the progressive desire of Polish politicians to unite the countries of the region on a deeper than just military cooperation basis. They sought to build a federal structure that could act as a single force in the political arena and jointly develop their economic potential.

The basis on which countries unite in the Three Seas Initiative is to participate in global energy and logistics projects that are designed to improve and develop the infrastructure of these countries and attract new investments in their economies.

3. In the current situation, for the first time in the implementation of the Intermarium concept, the possibility of attracting external investors who are interested in the project and its existence in the future is being considered. Such forces are the United States and China, which are strong players in the modern political arena and their interest in the project has a positive effect on the possibility of its implementation in the future.

If we consider the reasons for which Intermarium was not implemented in the past, the main one is that the project did not find support from Western European countries that were not interested in appearing on the political arena of a new strong player and therefore pursued exclusively their interests while playing political games with potential opponents of countries that could form the basis for the creation of the Intermarium. In the modern political environment, there is no such confrontation, since all the countries participating in the Intermarium are members of the EU. In addition, Western European countries are also interested in the economic growth of the countries participating in the Three Seas Initiative and are willing to invest some of its projects, as this will strengthen their energy security. And despite the fact that

the tandem of Russia and Germany continues to consider joint projects indirectly, this does not exclude the possibility of creating the Three Seas Initiative in a purely economic format. For example, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas, who also spoke in Bucharest, said that the Nord Stream-2 gas pipeline, which the United States opposes, is of a purely economic nature, and political moments can be omitted in debates.⁹⁹

In general, the following can be summarized: if the project of the Three Seas Initiative does not seek to go beyond the purely economic basis of cooperation with a focus on energy and infrastructure, and also does not accept new countries that are not in the European Union as full participants, then the implementation of this concept in the current political situation is promising.

⁹⁹ A. Rakitin.

3. Case Studies of Potential Member States of the Intermarium

3.1 Case Study: Poland

Poland is the most active promoter of the ideas of the Intermarium. This is the predominant state where scientists and politicians are actively working to develop the key positions of the Intermarium. Basing on historical experience and taking into account contemporary situation in the political space of Europe, it is Polish politicians who lobby for the idea of the Intermarium, as one of the options for a political solution to Russia's confrontation. This part of my research will look at political and social trends in Poland, as well as foreign policy towards the United States and Russia in order to form an independent opinion about the potential of Poland to become a member of the Intermarium. Information for the study will be taken from the official websites of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland as well as other official sources designed to publish information about the political and social processes in the country and the definition of its geopolitical policy.

3.1.1 Membership in EU

Poland's pro-European policy is characterized by its participation in political, economic and military alliances with European countries. Poland during 10 years of membership in the European Union (from 2004-2014) has received 101,3 billion euros of assistance under programs aimed at improving the standard of living and competitiveness of the Polish economy. This is evidenced by the data of the Ministry of Finance of Poland. During the same time, Poland paid EUR 33,3 billion to the EU joint budget.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰Poland for 10 years has received more than 100 billion euros of financial aid from the EU. UNIAN Information Agency. June 30, 2014.

For comparison, from 2014 the Poland was granted 8,9 billion euros, taking into account the contribution of 2,4 billion euros from their side to the EU budget.¹⁰¹

Poland as a country of the European Union is one of the largest recipients of European aid among the rest of the EU countries. It is known that by 2020, another 20 billion euros will be issued from the EU budget to support programs aimed at improving the quality and standard of living, as well as the competitiveness of the economy. However, the subsidies after 2020 both to Poland and the Baltic States end there, according to the agreements of the European Union. The EU's annual aid to Poland is estimated at about 11 billion euros. The size of these subsidies depends on the gross domestic product of the country, as well as on the specific needs of any of the sectors of the economy.¹⁰²

Poland's accession to the EU has guaranteed its energy security, thanks to the supply of energy to Poland, as well as the direct opportunity to seek help from the Union, according to the conditions for joining the European Union. In addition, the country was given the opportunity to implement the latest liquefied gas technology, which, in turn, significantly reduced the country's need for gas imports, especially from Russia.¹⁰³

All of the aforementioned factors contributed to economic growth in Poland, and by the end of 2018, the sum of all goods and services produced in the European Union (GDP), adjusted for inflation, increased by 2,2%.

Accordingly, the main export and import partners in 2017 for Poland were mainly EU countries, such as Germany, France, Netherlands and Czech Republic.¹⁰⁴

With regard to the participation of Poland in military alliances together with the EU countries, Poland is a constant member of NATO.

¹⁰¹Poland in EU. Gopolsha.com. December 2, 2018.

¹⁰²Poland in EU.

¹⁰³Poland in EU.

¹⁰⁴Poland. The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency. February 14, 2019.

The main directions of Polish foreign policy stem from the republic's membership in the EU and NATO, Kaczynski said.

“Our foreign policy is based on two foundations - NATO and the EU”, he said.

According to Kaczynski, when it comes to NATO, it is a matter of military security. “Here we have achieved great success. We can say that after all these years, since 1999 (when Poland joined NATO). We have become a full member, 99% full member of the alliance. Foreign troops, but friendly, allied, including American, are present on our territory”, the politician added.¹⁰⁵

The positive perception of the European Union as an ally and partner by the Polish population will be investigated by me by monitoring public documents, in which the point of view of the population as a result of official sociological research is laid out. Similarly, the negative perception of the European Union by the population will be investigated.

According to the results of opinion polls, the majority of the Polish population considered the decision on Poland's accession to the European Union to be a significant factor in the country's return to Europe. During the 2003 referendum, 77,4% of those who voted supported the integration of the Republic of Poland in the European Union and only 22,5% opposed the adoption of this decision. In the winter of 2008, according to the survey, only 5% of Poles did not approve of Poland's accession to the EU, and already over 80% of the population expressed a positive opinion on this matter. The Poles approvingly approached the development of their economy thanks to the substantial financial support of the European Union, as well as the country's integration into the single European market. In addition, the Poles had positively perceived the accession of Poland to the Schengen zone, which provided the opportunity for free movement to study or work in Europe. This led to enormous

¹⁰⁵Kaczynski: Poland is not obliged to accept migrants. TASS Information Agency. July 1, 2017.

changes in the Polish labor market, as well as the strengthening of the role of Poland in the international arena.¹⁰⁶

As a matter of fact, Poland has quite high aspirations to lead Europe by promoting a bigger and more forward-looking Union able to compete in global affairs politically, culturally and economically. Their ambition will, however, be confronted with the objective limitations of the Polish state. Though it is one of the EU's fastest-growing economies, it is also still one of the bloc's poorest nations. Its economy is being reshaped from one based on heavy-industry production and agricultural goods to one focusing on services and new technologies. Its new industrial and technological bases are being constructed as we write, and as the basic infrastructure – motorways, railways and airports – is developed in parallel to the new sites. This work in progress aims to multiply growth in the future, but in the short term there will be some delays and plenty of room for frustration.¹⁰⁷

In terms of Poland-EU energy security, Kaczynski pointed out that Poland has also achieved significant success in this area. “We have a gas port (in Świnoujście), there are first supplies, also American ones, Poland is also close to signing an agreement on the construction of the Baltic Pipe gas pipeline, which should connect the republic with the Norwegian shelf through Denmark and the bottom Baltic Sea. It will be in the year 2022. From this point of view, we must be safe,” he concluded.¹⁰⁸

The study shows that the factors that determine Poland's policy towards the EU have a positive direction and allow to draw conclusions about the pro-European orientation of Poland's policy.

Despite the positive tendencies of the EU's perception on the part of the Polish population, there are certain differences in political relations between the EU and

¹⁰⁶Poland in EU.

¹⁰⁷Piotr Maciej Kaczynski: “Poland in EU: The Centre of Europe”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland.

¹⁰⁸“Kaczynski: Poland is not obliged to accept migrants”. TASS Information Agency. July 1, 2017.

Poland, which have sharply deteriorated in recent years and have a wide resonance in Polish society.

Firstly, the European Commission opened a second investigation against Poland regarding the Polish judicial reform - this time because of the law on the Supreme Court, which comes into force on July 3. Brussels believes that the ruling party undermines the independence of the judiciary, and in theory it threatens Poland with a deprivation of the right to vote and EU subsidies.¹⁰⁹

The second disagreement between the EU and Poland arose over the resettlement of migrants from Asian countries. In the fall of 2015, the EU countries decided to resettle over their territory 160 thousand of the refugees from Africa who were at that time in Greece and Italy. Quotas were distributed in proportion to the population of the rest of the EU countries and a number of other factors. Poland then pledged to accept 7,000 people, but a few months after the Yaroslav Kaczynski's party, "Law and Justice", came to power, Warsaw revised its position, refusing to place refugees on its territory.

In response to the refusal to accept migrants by EU quotas, the European Commission began on June 13 the official procedure for eliminating violations against Poland, as well as Hungary and the Czech Republic. The result of this procedure can be large monetary fines for violating countries. As the most severe punishment, these states may be deprived of their right to vote in the EU Council.

In addition, the current Ukrainian crisis has confirmed the uselessness of the EU as a security structure and crisis response center. The problem lies not in the structure of the European Union and its procedures, but in the lack of willingness in European societies to pay for a serious foreign policy at the supranational level. Therefore, Poland and East-Central Europe are interested in the presence of the United States in the region. Experience shows that the degree of such presence is inversely

¹⁰⁹The European Union opened a new case against Poland. It can be deprived of EU subsidies. BBC Russia. July 3, 2018.

proportional to American satisfaction with Russia's policy (the “reset” in US-Russian relations announced by Barack Obama reduced the influence of Washington in this part of the world after 2008, and the attack on Crimea and Donbass in 2014 strengthened it).¹¹⁰

Thus, the priorities of the Polish policy are gradually changing and there are trends aimed at moving away from the EU and the vector of priorities is turning towards the USA, which are interested in a promising political partner who has influence in the politics of the Eastern European region and is ready for broad political and economic cooperation.

3.1.2 Membership in NATO

Since Poland is a member of NATO, it is NATO that determines the military strategy regarding the reaction of Poland to Russia's aggression.

For over two decades, NATO has striven to build a partnership with Russia through the mechanism of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). Russia's recent activities and policies have reduced stability and security, increased unpredictability, and changed the security environment. While NATO stands by its international commitments, Russia has breached the values, principles and commitments which underpin the NATO-Russia relationship, as outlined in the 1997 Basic Document of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, and 2002 Rome Declaration, broken the trust at the core of cooperation, and challenged the fundamental principles of the global and Euro-Atlantic security architecture.

Polish government stated that Russia's destabilizing actions and policies include: the ongoing illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea, which we do not and will not recognize and which we call on Russia to reverse; the violation of sovereign borders by force; the deliberate destabilization of eastern Ukraine; large-scale snap exercises

¹¹⁰Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski, Zbigniew Rau: “Polish foreign policy: nothing about us without us”. Rzeczpospolita. August 8, 2015.

contrary to the spirit of the Vienna Document, and provocative military activities near NATO borders, including in the Baltic and Black Sea regions and the Eastern Mediterranean; its irresponsible and aggressive nuclear rhetoric, military concept and underlying posture; and its repeated violations of NATO Allied airspace.¹¹¹

3.1.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

In order to determine the influence of US geopolitics on Poland, as well as the attitude of Poland to the United States, mutual political agreements, economic contracts, as well as joint political forums, congresses and, contracts between US and Poland will be studied.

Undoubtedly, one of the most important joint alliances in which Poland and the United States both participate is NATO.

According to the majority of Poles, our membership in NATO has direct impact on the improvement of our country's security (70%). Similarly, two-thirds of Poles have a positive opinion about NATO's activities aimed at peace keeping and armed conflict prevention over the last couple of years.¹¹²

Poland's membership in the world's strongest military alliance gave Poland not only security guarantees provided under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, but also increased the position of Poland on the international stage. The necessity of adapting to NATO standards and the participation of Polish troops in missions, exercises and training with soldiers from other NATO member countries allowed our Armed Forces to achieve a high level of interoperability (ability to operate jointly) with other allied armies. Our contribution and involvement in NATO operations and activities made Poland a reliable partner for both our allies and third countries.¹¹³

¹¹¹New NATO Strategic Concept. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland.

¹¹²Poland in NATO. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland.

¹¹³New NATO Strategic Concept.

As can be seen from the table, the number of criteria that determine the positive factors for the participation of Poland in the Intermarium project prevails over the number of factors that characterize the trends unfavorable for the country's participation in the Intermarium project.

Based on the conducted research, we will complete a summary table of criteria that will allow us to understand the current political situation, which will help promote Poland to participate in the political alliance Intermarium.

3.1.4 Bilateral Cooperation with Russia

The next stage of this study is the analysis of the attitude of Poland to Russia's foreign policy, as well as the assessment of Russia's influence on Poland's policy, both domestic and foreign. Hence, the current political and economic, as well as any other agreements between Poland and Russia will be examined, which may affect their foreign policy towards each other.

Since 2013 relations between or countries have lost their dynamics. The basis thereof was different attitude towards the architecture of the European security, controversies regarding the role and position of the countries of the Central Europe, as well as the energy security. Differences between Poland and Russia have been exposed to the biggest extend after Russian aggression in Ukraine. Poland, fulfilling joint EU policy, limited its political contacts with Moscow – at the same time we've kept open different channels of dialogue and technical cooperation.¹¹⁴

Moreover, Polish-Russian relations are still being overshadowed by unsolved crucial problems of political and historical nature. We are awaiting full implementation of the announcements of Russian highest authorities concerning open cooperation on investigation of the plane crash at Smolensk, handing over of the wreck of the Tu-154 M, or construction of the monument of victims at the place of the tragedy.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴New NATO Strategic Concept.

¹¹⁵New NATO Strategic Concept.

The main instrument of interstate cooperation in the trade and economic field is the Russian-Polish Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation, established in accordance with the intergovernmental agreement on economic cooperation from November 2, 2004.

Within the framework of the Commission, six working groups were formed: on trade and investment, on cooperation in the fuel and energy complex, on cooperation in the field of tourism, on military-technical cooperation, on cooperation in the agrarian sector, and on customs affairs.

As can be seen from the study, despite the rather extensive experience of cooperation in the post-Soviet space, Poland in its foreign policy is sensitive to the slightest manifestations of aggression from Russia towards the countries of the region. Therefore, after the events in Ukraine in 2014 and the annexation of Crimea by Russia, Poland took steps to enhance its security and sees Russia as a possible military threat to Poland.

3.2 Case Study: Slovakia

Slovakia is considered to be one of the potential participants in the Intermarium project. Its geographical location predetermines the interest of the supporters of the Intermarium project as an Eastern European country whose political and economic interests are directed towards development and stability in the region. Individually or in cooperation with other countries and international organizations, they protect and defend freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter and other norms of international law.

3.2.1 Membership in EU

The first is worth noting that Slovakia is a member of the European Union and NATO. Accordingly, Slovakia shares the policy and strategy of these unions and accordingly declares this in its security policy for 2019.

The Slovak Republic will support the development of EU-NATO cooperation in the field of security and defense so that the efforts of both organizations to contribute to maintaining security and stability in Europe to the maximum. A strong EU Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) also helps to strengthen transatlantic relations. In 2018, its strengthening has been fundamentally advanced, notably by launching the implementation of permanent structured defense cooperation (PESCO) and military capability building. EU Members, including the Slovak Republic, have committed themselves to providing increased contributions to civilian missions and reviewing national decision-making procedures, where appropriate, in order to support the deployment of personnel to missions. SR will be in year 2019, also as a member of PESCO, to continue strengthening CSDP, national capabilities and meeting the set goals.¹¹⁶

Among the internal factors that may affect the decision on the participation of Slovakia in the Intermarium project will be primarily the disagreement of Slovakia with the EU migration policy:

“We clearly presented our willingness to participate in all forms of solidarity, with the exception of mandatory quotas, where our position without changes. The priority of the SR in the year 2019 will find a common solution that will not motivate third-country nationals to go along dangerous and illegal routes in the EU”¹¹⁷.

As for defining the interest of Slovakia to promising economic projects outside the EU and the openness of the country to participate in political projects such as Intermarium, the position of Slovakia on this issue was clearly defined in Bucharest at the 3rd Summit of the Three Seas Initiative. Slovakia sees this summit as a platform for pragmatic collaboration on specific technical projects (especially in the

¹¹⁶Evaluation of foreign and European policy priorities of the Slovak Republic in 2018 and their focus on 2019. Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic. February, 2019 p.9.

¹¹⁷Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic. p.7.

field of infrastructure). The Slovak Republic believes that this initiative should simply be an addition to the already existing EU tools and policies¹¹⁸.

3.2.2 Membership in NATO

By joining NATO, the Slovak Republic became part of a collective defense and security system as a pillar of transatlantic security and stability, and its security is also guaranteed by allied commitments.

In this situation, Slovak foreign policy is aware of the need for a strong defense of multilateralism, the strengthening of EU unity, the transatlantic link and cooperation in NATO and the promotion of stability and prosperity in the immediate and wider neighborhood of Slovakia. There is also a growing need to face disinformation and activities that challenge this direction of Slovakia. At the center of attention of the Slovak foreign policy is also adequate care for our citizens and compatriots abroad, active promotion of the economic interests of the state, including the support of business activities abroad, opening access to foreign markets or creating conditions for a higher inflow of foreign investment in Slovakia. An integral part of this effort is the uniform presentation of the Slovak Republic abroad. Our contribution to international development and humanitarian aid is an expression of Slovakia's competence in developed countries. By carrying out an active foreign policy, the Slovak Republic will strive to influence international development in favor of the interests of our country and its citizens.¹¹⁹

Based on the aforementioned, it can be noted that an external factor that may influence the decision of Slovakia regarding its participation in the Intermarium, namely, the security factor is completely determined by the participation of Slovakia in NATO, which in its turn is one of the guarantors of the security of the Intermarium project itself.

¹¹⁸Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic. p.23.

¹¹⁹Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, p.3.

The security of the Slovak Republic is based on Slovakia's membership in the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO), which has no significant alternative in the field of security and defense of the Slovak Republic.

Transatlantic relations play, given the general security dimension of Prosperity and common values, an irreplaceable place, although they were in the r. 2018 marked differences in finding solutions to some problems in the global environment. Therefore, Slovakia considers it necessary to continue the transatlantic dialogue on topics in which it is possible to achieve more general than unilateral steps. An integral part of the transatlantic partnership also implies a greater responsibility of European countries for European and transatlantic security. Against this background, Slovakia sees the strengthening of security capabilities and protection through European initiatives.¹²⁰

The North Atlantic Alliance is a transatlantic union and the potential of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the strategic interests of the Slovak Republic. The NATO summit in July 2018 strengthened the unity and solidarity of the Allies, who confirmed their readiness to share responsibility for membership in the Alliance, including investment in defense and fulfillment of commitments from summits from Wales and Warsaw. In terms of conclusions, the NATO Summit was created by the Slovak Republic in 2018 and created the prerequisites for accelerating its achievement.¹²¹

3.2.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

Another of the external factors that determine the possibility of Slovakia's participation in the Intermarium is the prospect of cooperation with the United States, and this not only affects cooperation in the field of security, but also participation in economic projects. According to the policy chosen for 2019, the Slovak Foreign

¹²⁰Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic p.10.

¹²¹Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic p. 9.

Ministry notes that the interests of the USA have long overtaken many areas, and although the tools for advancing interests may not coincide, we usually agree on the definition of risks. Therefore, the efforts of the Slovak Republic are still aimed at maintaining a close transatlantic and at the same time it did not create opportunities for invading the interests of outside players.¹²²

The purpose of the SR is to focus the transatlantic dialogue on issues of common interest. This is confirmed not only by the activities of the Slovak armed forces within the framework of NATO missions, but also by the strengthening of development cooperation, the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic and the United States Development Agency (USAID) in November 2018.¹²³

However, bilateral relations between the Slovak Republic and our two transatlantic allies are much broader and include not only security and defense and political relations, but also trade, investment, energy security, innovation, science and education.

For example during the Three Seas Initiative summit in 2016, the United States announced the creation of a Partnership for Transatlantic Energy Cooperation. The main goal of the partnership is to increase energy security in the transatlantic space, integrate electricity and natural gas transmission systems, open markets and remove trade barriers with energy, promote new infrastructure investments and strive for better energy efficiency. In accordance with the EU, the SR will seek to take the initiative into account of the EU energy and climate objectives by 2030.¹²⁴

Based on the above, it can be concluded that despite the openness to mutual cooperation, Slovakia, unlike Poland, does not predict participation in major

¹²²Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic p. 10.

¹²³Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic. p. 29.

¹²⁴Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic. p.23.

economic projects jointly with the United States and is limited to projects in the framework of defense and security.

3.2.4 Bilateral Cooperation with Russia

An important factor of the participation of the country in the Intermarium project is its assessment of Russia's policy and prospects for cooperation with Russia. Here, as the research shows, the policy of Slovakia has a bilateral focus.

As a member of the EU and NATO, Slovakia supports the policy of security and sanctions against Russia's aggression in Ukraine, and takes part in sanctions aimed at Russia. So the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs declares that in response to the actions of Russia, the Slovak Republic supported the continuation of NATO's policy towards Russia.

Meanwhile, Slovakia's foreign policy will continue to comply with the five EU guidelines. In this context, the Slovak Republic supports the development of results-oriented bilateral relations.¹²⁵

The second part of Slovakia's political strategy towards Russia is based on an important economic agreement with Russia regarding gas transit from Russia to Europe through Slovakia.

The main criteria for the development of Slovakia's relations with Russia are economic and energy interests. This was stated by the Slovak Foreign Minister Miroslav Laichak in an interview published by the website of the Bratislava newspaper Pravda.

“The main components of Slovak-Russian relations are economy and energy. After the introduction of anti-Russian sanctions, a dramatic drop in interaction occurred, but last year mutual trade increased by 22%”.¹²⁶

¹²⁵Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic.

¹²⁶Slovak Foreign Minister said that economy and energy dominate relations with Russia. TASS Information Agency. October 11, 2018.

Slovakia is concerned about plans to implement the Nord Stream-2 gas pipeline. “We feel geopolitics in it and do not want it to mean weakening of the energy security and independence of the EU. For Slovakia, it is vital that the transit of Russian gas through our and Ukrainian territories is preserved,” the minister noted.

“We know why the European Union imposed sanctions. We know what the conditions are for them to cease to operate. Slovakia is a loyal state of the European Union. We perceive sanctions as a political tool, and not as a policy itself”, the minister said.¹²⁷

Russian politicians are closely monitoring the situation in Slovakia and the corresponding statements in the press by Russian expert Dmitri Abzalov confirm this interest:

“I must say that the North Stream-2 project is seriously worrying Bratislava, which runs the risk of losing transit revenues. Recently, negotiations are underway with the Slovak side, as well as with the Czech Republic, so that they can also connect to the project and receive gas bypassing Ukraine. Accordingly, the US is doing everything to bring pro-American politicians to power in Slovakia,” the expert said.¹²⁸

Slovakia is interested in developing balanced relations with Russia and, depending on further developments, overcoming objectively defined boundaries of cooperation with Russia. This will have both intentions the main influence of the progress on the decision frozen, the ongoing conflicts that they can have a positive effect on both lines of Slovak foreign policy efforts.¹²⁹

In conclusion, in the Intermarium project, Slovakia is attracted solely by the economic component of the project and the prospect of infrastructure development in the region by attracting investment from the United States and other interested

¹²⁷TASS Information Agency.

¹²⁸Nadezhda Alexeeva: “Part of a large political mosaic”: how the change of prime minister of Slovakia can be associated with the “Nord Stream – 2”. Russia Today. March 23, 2018.

¹²⁹Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic. p.18.

partner countries. The prospect of creating an alliance against opposing Russian aggression on the Intermarium platform is not a priority for Slovakia.

3.3 Case Study: Czech Republic

The research on the potential participation of the Czech Republic in the Intermarium project will be conducted by consideration of the external and internal criteria, which were selected as crucial for the full-scale participation of the state in the Intermarium.

3.3.1 Membership in EU

As for European security strategy, the Czech Republic as a EU member fully shares the union's strategy, which was confirmed on February 16-17, 2019 by the Czech Foreign Minister Tomáš Petříček who represented the Czech Republic at the Munich Security Conference, where he spoke about the future of the EU and European security: "We supported European defense projects led by constant structured cooperation. We will always insist on complementing NATO's European security projects. Expanding cooperation between the EU and NATO is a permanent priority of Czech foreign policy", said Czech Minister Tomáš Petříček.¹³⁰

As for the factor which characterizes the existence of disagreements between the current EU policy and the Czech Republic, the main thing is the Czech Republic's disagreement with the EU migration policy. According to the quotas developed in the EU, Prague should allow more than 2,6 thousand migrants to enter during this year. The Czech Republic has so far taken only 12 people. The head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the state Milan Chovanec said that the country is not going to host more refugees. And he noted that Prague would prefer to pay fines to Brussels than to open the doors for the influx of forced migrants.¹³¹

¹³⁰"Minister Petříček attended the Munich Security Conference". Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. February 17, 2019.

¹³¹"The Czech Republic and Slovakia are choosing sanctions instead of migrants". Rambler.ru. April 20, 2017.

It can be concluded that the Czech Republic does not yet show a deep interest in participating in the Intermarium project so far, at least, there are no clear prospects for the introduction and financing of its economic component. This is also evidenced by the weak participation of the Czech Republic in the previewed projects in the framework of the Intermarium published on the official Intermarium website.¹³²

3.3.2 Membership in NATO

One of the external criteria is the participation of the Czech Republic in the EU and NATO. According to the official security policy which is published on the website of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic has updated the information on security measures and strategies for the year 2019.

By joining NATO, the Czech Republic has become a solid part of the strongest military and defense organization in the world and has reached a state where the security of the country is best ensured in the history of Czech Republic. The Czech Republic is a reliable ally in accordance with NATO membership commitments.

The Czech Republic supports the alliance of defense and deterrence policy, which is based on a balanced combination of nuclear and conventional capabilities to counter current and future threats. The Czech Republic is also responsible for joint responsibility for security in the Euro-Atlantic region through a more equitable distribution of collective defense spending. In this sphere, Czech Republic pledged to gradually increase its own defense spending to 1.4% of GDP by 2020¹³³.

The Czech Republic supports the development of NATO partnerships with third countries and international organizations on the basis of reciprocity, mutual benefit and pragmatism. With regard to new security challenges, in particular the use of the so-called hybrid war in the neighborhood of the Alliance, the country is in favor of closer cooperation between NATO and the European Union.

¹³²Three Seas Initiative List of Priority Interconnection Projects.

¹³³Czech Republic and NATO. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic supports the further development of the alliance's capabilities in the area of so-called new threats (for example, energy and cyber security, the fight against terrorism). Czech Republic believes that the development of the capabilities of the Alliance is a key threat to the so-called hybrid attack, which is the integrated organized use of military, militarized and non-military methods.¹³⁴

3.3.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

Regarding the factor that characterizes the relationship of the Czech Republic and the United States, the Czech experts' research papers will be cited, where they analyze the possible development of relations between the United States and the Czech Republic in their studies.

First of all, the Czech Republic cooperates with the USA in the framework of security programs that are conducted and financed by the USA through NATO. The Czech Republic is a participant in defense projects and, accordingly, predicts defense spending. According to Bokša and Kufčák,

“even if all NATO members of Europe were to fulfill their commitment and spent 2% of their defense on defense by 2024, many would still be largely dependent on the US, especially for the military and other so-called strategic enablers (such as in-flight refueling). Put simply, spending 2% of GDP at national level would still not provide European states with military capability for some capacities without a US contribution”.¹³⁵

Therefore, there are no particularly global political and economic projects between the USA and the Czech Republic, but the policy of President Donald Trump is disturbed by the Czech business elites who trade with the United States. Therefore,

¹³⁴Czech Republic and NATO. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic.

¹³⁵Michal Bokša, Jakub Kufčák: “Building EU defense capabilities and dividing lines within NATO”. Association for International Questions. December 2018.

in order to establish closer contacts between the countries, appropriate diplomatic steps have been taken by Czech and American politicians.

Czech Foreign Minister Tomáš Petříček met with Foreign Secretary Mike Pompeo during his visit to the United States of America. During the talks, the heads of diplomacy discussed Czech-American relations, cyber security, mutual trade relations and the situation in Afghanistan and Syria. The meeting of Tomáš Petříček with the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo testifies to the revival of relations since the last official meeting of the foreign ministers of both countries, which took place over 6 years ago.

“At the meeting, we talked with Minister Pompeo about the excellent level of Czech-American relations. Both our countries face a number of foreign policy and security issues that need to be addressed jointly at both the bilateral and NATO levels. Our goal is to increase defense spending with other NATO countries to 2% of GDP”, said Petříček after the meeting.¹³⁶

The subject of negotiations between Czech and American diplomats was cooperation in the field of cyber security in connection with the firm position of the Czech Republic on the protection of the most important state infrastructure and mutual economic relations. “I expressed concern about possible protectionist measures by the US administration. Trade between Europe and the United States should benefit both sides. Establishing customs and other barriers is not a solution. For example, customs duties on car imports and auto parts will adversely affect the Czech economy. Mutual trade and investment are growing between our countries. By the way, Czech companies in the USA have created about 7,000 workplaces, US are among the largest investors in the Czech Republic. Governments should support this trend with all their might”, said Minister Petříček.¹³⁷

¹³⁶“Minister Tomáš Petříček negotiated with United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. February 23, 2019.

¹³⁷“Minister Tomáš Petříček negotiated with United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. February 23, 2019.

Thus, the United States is interested in gaining confidence from Czech politicians, and above all this concerns the prospects for US investment in economic and infrastructure projects in the Czech Republic. Such interest can be considered in the framework of the prospects for the implementation of the economic and investment component of the Intermarium project. The Czech Republic has not yet officially expressed its plans to participate in the Intermarium project, but its diplomats attended all the summits held within the framework of the Intermarium project. Accordingly, it is the US investment in economic and infrastructure projects within the Intermarium that may be attractive to the Czech Republic. The United States, for its part, actively seeks to prove its interest in mutually beneficial cooperation in opposition to Russian projects.

3.3.4 Bilateral Cooperation with Russia

Regarding the external factor that characterizes the attitude of the Czech Republic to the policy of Russia and threats from its side, it is possible to rely on the following statements.

Czech-Russian relations have undergone a dynamic development over the past period, which included both elements of cooperation, especially in economic terms, as well as signs of severe political discrepancies. The Czech government decided to provide political and diplomatic support to Britain and expel three Russian diplomats from its territory in protest against the poisoning of former agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter with neuroparalytic gas.¹³⁸

As the result, the political strategy of the Czech Republic regarding Russia and its aggressive behavior completely coincides with the policy and interpretation of such a policy by the EU countries.

¹³⁸Vít Borčány, Vít Dostál: “Agenda for Czech Foreign Policy 2018”. Association for International Questions (AMO) 2018. ISBN 978-80-87092-56-9, p.41.

Regarding economic projects related to Russia, the Czech Republic sees economic opportunities in Russia, although the Russian market remains very unpredictable, and the Czech Republic has several bad debts previously supported by the Czech Export Bank and provided with an export guarantee and insurance companies (EGAP). According to EGAP, Russia remains the largest country with total outstanding receivables. This issue was considered in April 2017 also by the Czech-Russian intergovernmental commission on economic, industrial and scientific-technical cooperation, but without much progress.¹³⁹

It should also be mentioned that the Czech Republic is one of major transporter states of Russian gas to Europe and in 2016 Czech gas transmission companies, together with Russian Gazprom, opened a new gas storage facility, Dambořice, which indicates the interests of the Czech Republic in cooperation with Russia in economic projects.¹⁴⁰

Furthermore, the Czech Republic's loyalty to Russia, can be confirmed by statements on the website of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The task of Czech diplomacy is still to convincingly explain the attitude of the Czech Republic to the Eastern Partnership and Russia, thereby strengthening the common Euro-Atlantic position while taking into account economic interests in partnership with Russia.¹⁴¹

3.4 Case Study: Slovenia

Slovenia is a Central European country and enjoys historical, political and cultural ties to the other countries in the region. Furthermore, Slovenia is closely connected to this region in economic and transport terms. Central European countries are marked by their political stability, security, ambitious economic policy, and a

¹³⁹V. Borčany, V. Dostál. p. 41.

¹⁴⁰Gazpromexport partners

¹⁴¹V. Borčany, V. Dostál. p. 44.

relatively high level of purchasing power, which affirms their political and economic importance to Slovenia. Its status as a Central European country provides Slovenia with many opportunities, which it will seek to seize more actively.

3.4.1 Membership in EU

Slovenia will strengthen its political cooperation with all Central European countries, notably Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland. Slovenia's geopolitical situation makes it only natural for the country to cooperate with the Visegrád Group with a view to strengthening cooperation on the economy, transport (in particular, to establish a rail connection between the port of Koper and Central Europe) and energy between the Baltic and the Adriatic.¹⁴²

Exploring the criteria according to the chosen methodology, requires consideration of an importance of the EU and NATO in the political strategy of Slovenia. According to the country's political objectives for 2018, this is:

- the security of the Republic of Slovenia: peace, security and political stability in the neighborhood, Europe and beyond;
- the prosperity of the Republic of Slovenia and its nationals;
- effective bilateral relations: good neighborly relations and enhanced relations with partners in the European Union and other key political and economic partners;
- a positive image and the visibility of the Republic of Slovenia as a successful member of the European Union;
- the positioning of the Republic of Slovenia at the center of a deepened and widened European Union, with a strong foreign and security policy, which is able to promote the interests of its member states as a key global player;
- a consolidated multilateral system based on an effective United Nations, the sovereign equality of states, collective security, the peaceful resolution of disputes,

¹⁴²“Slovenia: Safe, Successful, Globally Respected: The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia”. Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ljubljana 2015p. 17.

the self-determination of peoples, high human rights standards, a powerful role of international law, intensified international development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, and sustainable development;

– the visibility of Slovenia's excellence in culture, science and education at the international level; the preservation and development of Slovenian minorities in neighboring countries and Slovenian communities around the world; the promotion of the Slovenian language in neighboring countries, in the European Union and around the world.¹⁴³

Hence, Slovenia positions itself as a crossroad of the European transport and infrastructure network and wants to expand these areas using the prospects for the development of its port of Koper by participating in political alliances that may be attractive to investors. Among the priority areas for the development of Slovenia are: support for the integration of the Republic of Slovenia into the European transport and energy networks, with due regard for its geographical position; strengthening political and economic ties at the national and regional levels in the Alpine-Adriatic-Danube region, with the countries of Central Europe and Central Europe integration; support for the expansion of trade and the strong presence of Slovenian companies in the European Union member states and third markets; foreign direct investment has increased; promotion of Koper as the leading North Adriatic and Central European port in connection with the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor.¹⁴⁴

Regarding the factor that characterizes the attitude of Slovenia towards the EU's migration policy, Slovenia, for its part, complied with all the decisions taken by the EU towards the countries of the Union that hosted Syrian refugees. The only point

¹⁴³Declaration of Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia (DeZPRS-1). Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

¹⁴⁴Declaration of Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia (DeZPRS-1). Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

was that the new government of Slovenia, elected in June 2018, raised the issue of closing the borders of Slovenia for refugees.¹⁴⁵

In summary, Slovenia positions itself as an integral part of the EU and supports its foreign and security policy.

3.4.2 Membership in NATO

Slovenia's vital national interest lies in the existence, sovereignty, territorial integrity of the country and the political independence of NATO - the pillar of national and transatlantic security. It was its commitment to collective defense that made Slovenia, by its own will, become a member of NATO alliance. Despite the rapidly changing security environment and limited National resources, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization remains the most effective and efficient system for ensuring Slovenia's national security. NATO membership provides security for Slovenia to an extent that Slovenia cannot achieve, even if it multiplies defense funds several times, as the state cannot cope with many new problems on its own. The changing security environment in Europe and the Middle East goes beyond the long-term need for democratic states to form a defensive alliance and for Slovenia as a NATO member country to participate in global and regional security by fulfilling its obligations and sharing the burden in the Alliance. Slovenia makes an important contribution to the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean, as well as to post-conflict rehabilitation and civil protection.

Slovenia's foreign policy is aimed to raise awareness of the role and importance of NATO, demonstrate the Alliance's participation in protecting common values and strengthening public confidence.

Slovenia is a reliable member of NATO and will continue to fulfill its obligations to NATO. It will actively support NATO's capacity building efforts to protect NATO member countries, including Slovenia itself, from new threats, and this will be involved in strengthening the traditional capabilities of collective defense.

¹⁴⁵“Slovenia has joined the list of “enemies of Brussels”. Tsargrad.tv. June 4, 2018.

This will promote unity within the Alliance and solidarity between its allies, especially with those who believe that Slovenia will call for increased cooperation with other international organizations, and he will continue to actively participate in the implementation of NATO's open door policy and strongly support the expansion of NATO to countries that meet the conditions and whose membership will be beneficial to the Alliance. Finally, Slovenia will continue to advocate the importance of political dialogue, respect for fundamental values and principles.¹⁴⁶

The strategic interests of Slovenia are to ensure security and stability throughout the world, but especially in Europe; maintain good bilateral relations; strengthen the European Union and ensure that NATO plays a global strategic role; to achieve sustainable development of the country; achieve economic and general prosperity of the country and its people; maintain the status of a country as a crossroads European transport network; ensure energy, resource and food security of the country; fight extremism, terrorism and organized crime; build a strong civil society and ensure effective law and order, good governance and social cohesion.¹⁴⁷

Overall, the NATO membership is not indifferent to Slovenia and may allow to achieve goals of the security policy of Slovenia.

3.4.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

Accordingly, a factor characterizing the relationship between Slovenia and the USA was considered. This information was obtained from the analysis of the strategy of Slovenia for 2019, presented on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia.

Europe, with Slovenia as part of it, and the United States are linked by a common core of value, the roots of civilization, security, and economic interests. Again, due to changes in environmental safety, European security issues should be

¹⁴⁶Declaration of Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia

¹⁴⁷“Slovenia: Safe, Successful, Globally Respected: The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia”. Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ljubljana 2015p. 17.

brought to the attention of the United States. In spite of this, Slovenia believes that relations with the United States are of crucial strategic importance.

Slovenia and the United States maintain close relations established through NATO and Slovenia by immigrants and thanks to successful cooperation in the field of defense and nuclear energy. This and the current global position of the United States requires that a new and close political dialogue between Slovenia and the United States as well as economic and scientific technical capabilities should be used more effectively. Therefore, Slovenia is therefore in favor of negotiations on establishing a transatlantic trade and investment partnership between the European Union and the United States that takes account of the interests and specifics of the Union and its Member States. Furthermore, economic diplomacy will provide support to Slovenian companies wishing to seize the opportunities opened up by the partnership.¹⁴⁸

Therefore, the United States and Slovenia mainly link relations within the framework of NATO and security strategies. At the same time, Slovenia is ready to consider joint economic projects, including participation in the Via Carpathia project, within the framework of the Intermarium, as evidenced by the application for the project, which was announced on the Intermarium website.¹⁴⁹

3.4.4 Bilateral Cooperation with Russia

Regarding the study of the factor that characterizes the relationship of Slovenia and Russia, the website of the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides complete information on this issue.

Russia is an important market for Slovenia, which seeks opportunities for cooperation in the field of tourism, agriculture, as well as culture and education, especially in the linguistic and technical fields. Moreover, Slovenia serves a major

¹⁴⁸“Slovenia: Safe, Successful, Globally Respected: The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia”. p. 18.

¹⁴⁹Three Seas Initiative List of Priority Interconnection Projects.

transporter of Russian gas to Europe via the “Brotherhood” gas pipeline.¹⁵⁰ Slovenia will therefore make long-term efforts within the European Union to encourage Russia to join the circle of common European values in order to create a long-term EU-Russia partnership that strengthens Europe’s global reputation. In addition, Slovenia will call on players in the post-Soviet space to cooperate, showing respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries in the region.¹⁵¹

In addition, on February 21, 2019, The State Secretary Simona Leskovar talked to Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Alexander Grushko at political consultations. Consultations are part of the regular dialogue between Slovenia and the Russian Federation and are consistent with the Plan of working consultations between foreign ministries. On this occasion, a consultation plan for 2019 was signed.¹⁵²

In general, Secretary of State Leskovar and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Grushko rated bilateral relations as good and friendly. For Slovenia, the Russian Federation remains an important economic partner both in terms of exports and in terms of the cost of direct Slovenian investments abroad and in tourism, with the result that in 2018 we witnessed the growth of trade between countries. The Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation plays an important role in improving economic cooperation.¹⁵³

3.5 Case Study: Hungary

3.5.1 Membership in EU

¹⁵⁰<http://www.gazpromexport.ru/partners/slovenia/>

¹⁵¹“Slovenia: Safe, Successful, Globally Respected: The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia”. p.16.

¹⁵²“Political Consultation of State Secretary Simone Leskovar with Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Alexander Grushko”. Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. February 21, 2019.

¹⁵³“Political Consultation of State Secretary Simone Leskovar with Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Alexander Grushko”.

Despite the fact that Hungary is a member of the EU and supports all democratic policies pursued by the EU, it does not agree with the EU migration policy and this is confirmed by the Conference in Istanbul on February 20, 2019.

“It became clear that there are two completely different worldviews and perceptions of migration”, said Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto in Istanbul after the 6th Ministerial Meeting of the Budapest Process on February 20, 2019.¹⁵⁴

Peter Szijjarto explained that Central European unity was again noticeable, and that, apart from the four Vishegrád countries, Austria and Italy did not sign the Istanbul Declaration and the corresponding action plan:

“These countries do not agree at all that the migration processes should be good and inspire them”, he said. “Migration poses new and extraordinary dangers for Europe. The events in the Western Balkans in recent weeks are alarming after they captured terrorists from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Northern Macedonia, who fought in the Middle East as members of the Islamic State's jihadi organization”, Szijjarto said.¹⁵⁵

3.5.2 Membership in NATO

It should be noted that Hungary is actively participating in the summits of the Three Seas Initiative (Intermarium) with interest. Hungary evaluates Intermarium as a platform for the implementation of promising economic projects aimed at expanding Europe's energy independence from Russian gas, as well as strengthening the region's transport infrastructure. As emphasized by the Hungarian analysts of the Three Seas Initiative, signed on August 25, 2016, is clearly aimed at strengthening the role of Central and Eastern Europe within the EU. In addition, to emphasize the importance of North-South cooperation with traditional West-East cooperation.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴“There are two worldviews about migration”. Website of the Hungarian Government. February 20, 2019.

¹⁵⁵“There are two worldviews about migration”. Website of the Hungarian Government. February 20, 2019.

¹⁵⁶“Orbán misses Trump?”. Népszava. July 5, 2017.

However, Hungary's cooperation with China or Russia does not affect the country's authority as an ally in NATO. Szijjarto said that Central Europe is unilaterally dependent on Russia in terms of energy supplies, although "Hungary did everything it could" to buy gas from other sources.¹⁵⁷

Thus, Hungary sees its role in building a unified gas transmission system on the Intermarium platform and is ready for further expansion of cooperation in the framework of the Intermarium project.

As Hungarian analysts noted: "The important part was the transfer of the so-called connecting link to the western corner of Poland and in Świnoujście, a few weeks ago the LNG terminal, the first American liquefied ship, was built. In addition to Świnoujście, another LNG terminal for Krk Island in Croatia will be another key element of the "energy corridor". If this were done, and several more wires were connected, the region could at any time replace the current Russian source with American, Qatari or, possibly, Algerian liquefied gas".¹⁵⁸

3.5.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

Exploring the factor that characterizes the relationship between Hungary and the United States, the statements of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary.

Hungarian Minister Peter Szijjarto stressed at a joint press conference with Mike Pompeo that the economic and defensive basis of bilateral relations existed in previous years, but since the Republican administration took office, political relations have also begun to improve rapidly, as evidenced by the current visit US foreign affairs minister.

He explained that this is due to the fact that the Hungarian government and the Trump administration have a similar approach to a number of common political and

¹⁵⁷"The political pillar of Hungarian-American relations is being rebuilt". Website of the Hungarian Government. February 12, 2019.

¹⁵⁸Kósa András: "Berlin, Brussels and Moscow are both concerned about the Three Seas". Magyar Nemzet. July 14, 2017.

international issues. Thus, both of them pursue a patriotic policy in which national interests are first, and consider that one of the main duties of the state is to ensure the safety of its citizens. Minister Peter Szijjarto said: “Hungary is a reliable defense and military ally. They are also negotiating important procurement, and they will soon turn to the Defense Committee for preliminary negotiations on a medium-range air defense system”, he said.¹⁵⁹

Peter Szijjarto noted that he asked his American counterpart to make a decision on Exxon Mobil as soon as possible and start gas production in Romania, as this would allow Hungary to advance in diversifying gas purchases. He noted that the United States is the second largest investor in Hungary.¹⁶⁰

The visit of the US Secretary of State to Budapest indicates that the political pillar of the Hungarian-American system of relations will be restructured, said Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto.

According to him, one of the main topics of negotiations with Mike Pompeo was defense cooperation between the two countries, the framework of which was enshrined in the outdated agreement signed in 1997. They agreed on the need to extend it.¹⁶¹

3.5.4 Perception of Russia as an Aggressor

Regarding cooperation with Hungary with Russia, it can be stated that Hungary is also a transit country for Russian gas and is energy dependent on Russia. But as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary noted, Hungary is looking for ways to get gas in addition to Gazprom ones, including the purchase of liquefied gas from Qatar or its transfer via the South Stream.

¹⁵⁹“Hungarian-American political relations are improving”. Website of the Hungarian Government. February 11, 2019.

¹⁶⁰Website of the Hungarian Government.

¹⁶¹“Hungarian-American political relations are improving”. Website of the Hungarian Government. February 11, 2019.

But cooperation between Hungary and Russia is not limited to gas supplies, in addition to gas control, Russia managed to conclude a contract with Hungary for 12 billion euros in 2017 for the construction of new power units for the Paksz nuclear power plant. Under this contract, Russia provided a loan of 10 billion euros, and Rosatom became the exclusive contractor in exchange for its technology, nuclear fuel and the construction of a temporary storage facility for nuclear waste.¹⁶²

Therefore, it can be stated that Hungary actively cooperates with Russia and its policy is aimed at active cooperation in the field of energy, which, in turn, negatively affects the participation of Hungary's potential participation in the Intermarium project, at least in terms of building new gas supply infrastructure.

3.6 Case Study: Romania

Romania, like other potential member states in the Intermarium project, is positioning itself as a country that shares the principles and policies of the EU.

3.6.1 Membership in EU

At the regional and subregional levels, the environment in which Romania protects and promotes its values, principles and interests is at a new stage of reconfiguration. The current security dynamics can directly or indirectly affect both the security situation in Romania and the security of its citizens. Regional cooperation by strengthening the eastern dimensions and the southern neighborhood policy of the European Union is becoming increasingly important.¹⁶³

Therefore, Romania participated in the EU Summit on Migration Policy in 2018 and fully shared the views of the participants and the concept of solving the problem with migrants adopted at this summit. "Romania is currently quite well and successfully involved in managing the migration flow," said Johannis. "It must be

¹⁶²Kirill Shamiev: "Hungarian-Russian relations in the era of (after) Putin". Riddle.io. December 19, 2018.

¹⁶³National Defense Strategy for the Period 2015 - 2019 . A Strong Romania in Europe and the World. Romania Presidential Administration. Bucharest, 2015, p. 13.

admitted that Romania is not a destination for migrants, but a transit country. The number of migrants who cross Romania is reasonable and controlled for us. Until so far we have not had any problems with managing the migration flow, and I think this will continue this way”.¹⁶⁴

Romania is deeply committed to the European project, fighting for a strong and cohesive Union, hence, the Three Seas Initiative is considered by Bucharest only on the basis of these coordinates. The Member States, with the exception of Austria, share the tragedy of the traumatic communist experiment and the difficulties of the transition period and are still far from the level of development achieved by the rest of the Union. Therefore, cooperation is becoming an indispensable condition for reducing gaps and, ultimately, strengthening the European Union itself. It is worth noting that this vision is similar to the views of other capitals of Central and Eastern Europe. It is no coincidence, for example, that during the meeting of the President of Romania, Klaus Iohannis, and the President of the Republic of Croatia, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic, the views on the Three Seas Initiative completely coincided.¹⁶⁵

A separate problem is, as stated by the head of the Romanian state on January 23, 2018, “the selection of priority projects that have an impact on the region, promoting integration, especially in the north-south, but not only in the areas of transport, in digital form or by stimulating the economies of the participating States”.¹⁶⁶ Obviously, each Member State has its own agenda, dictated by its interests and development needs. Based on this, it can track the implementation of a particular program that may have more or less relevance for the region.

Romania, for example, is interested in successful completion of the construction of the BRUA gas pipeline, also supported by the European Commission. It will energetically connect Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria, connecting the

¹⁶⁴The President of Romania made a statement on the new EU agreement on migrants. *Segodnya.ua*. June 29, 2018.

¹⁶⁵Alexandru Purcarus: “The Bucharest Summit of the Three Seas Initiative”. *Contributors.ro*. April 5, 2018.

¹⁶⁶A. Purcarus.

south to the TAP gas pipeline (which will transport Azeri gas from the Caspian Sea) and to gas nodes in the center of Europe,. Therefore, it is desirable to diversify European sources of gas supplies, transport to the Central European markets of Caspian gas reserves and security of gas supplies to Romania.¹⁶⁷

In the field of transport infrastructure, several countries of Central and Eastern Europe, including Romania, intend to build together a transport axis, which is going to connect the Baltic Sea with the Mediterranean Sea, Lithuania, Greece and Bulgaria. The road project Via Carpathia has already received the support of seven countries - Lithuania, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Romania, Ukraine and Turkey - which have signed a joint declaration.¹⁶⁸

3.6.2 Membership in NATO

According to the national security strategy of Romania, the main guarantor of Romania's security is the North Atlantic Alliance, and the transatlantic relationship is a strategic element which ensures coherence and consistency of NATO actions.¹⁶⁹

Romania joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 2004 and established itself as a reliable ally of the United States and NATO. The country continues to improve its capabilities for NATO and multinational operations and has repeatedly deployed forces and assets in support of general national security interests, including significant contributions from troops, equipment and other assistance to Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Kosovo. The headquarters of the NATO multinational division in the southeast, the fully operational NATO command and control unit in the region and the NATO forces integration unit are located in Romania. At the July

¹⁶⁷A. Purcarus.

¹⁶⁸“Highway from Rzeszów to Budapest – Via Carpathia under construction”. Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. 28 June 2017.

¹⁶⁹National Defense Strategy for the Period 2015 - 2019. A Strong Romania in Europe and the World. Romania Presidential Administration. Bucharest, 2015, p. 12.

summit in Warsaw in 2016, Romania pledged to accept the NATO Multinational Brigade, which is to become fully operational in the fall of 2018.¹⁷⁰

Romania is adopting a key element of the US European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), which is currently operational and was adopted as part of the NATO missile defense at the NATO summit in Warsaw in July 2016. In 2011, the two countries signed an agreement on missile defense¹⁷¹.

3.6.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

While exploring the criteria for cooperation between the United States and Romania several positive trends can be noted, especially in the field of strengthening security.

For example, in 2011, the United States and Romania issued the “Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership between the United States of America and Romania in the 21st Century”. Both countries have identified key areas for greater cooperation, focusing on our political rights protection cooperation, trade and investment opportunities, and energy security. In 2018, two countries reaffirmed their commitment to a strategic partnership. The United States and Romania are mutually committed to supporting human rights, the rule of law, peace, and freedom for all. Both countries are linked to each other by a multitude of connections between people in business, art, scholarships and many other exchanges. Romania’s assistance in expanding cooperation between its Black Sea neighbors in the areas of defense, law enforcement, energy, economic development and the environment complements the United States. The goal of increasing stability in this sensitive and important region.

US security assistance helps Romania complete military modernization, improving compatibility with the US. and NATO forces and their capabilities for

¹⁷⁰Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs Fact Sheet. US Department of State. July 16, 2018.

¹⁷¹Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs Fact Sheet. US Department of State. July 16, 2018.

expeditionary deployment in support of NATO's collective defense and coalition operations with the United States.¹⁷²

Therefore, in addition to the collective funds provided by the European Commission for the enforcement of development programs in Romania, President Johannis insisted on a commemorative meeting on January 23, 2018 devoted to “more active economic participation of the United States in the region, which, along with increased participation in insurance, will allow European security to help strengthen transatlantic relations”.¹⁷³

3.6.4 Bilateral Cooperation with Russia

Regarding the factor that characterizes the relations of Romania with Russia, then there is a rather clear position on the part of Romania, which sees Russia as a threat and is not in a hurry to establish closer contacts.

Promoting friendship and mutual respect with the Russian Federation, Romania's largest neighbor state from the eastern neighborhood, is important for regional stability in South-Eastern Europe. From our point of view, the political evolution of the bilateral dialogue should take into account regional events. We look at relations with the Russian Federation in a broad sense, in accordance with the positions of both parties and elements of mutual interest. We want to establish a Romanian-Russian dialogue in a constructive, modern and balanced manner in accordance with the realities of the 21st century with the aim of pragmatic, predictable and future-oriented cooperation.¹⁷⁴

The main player in the European and Euro-Atlantic is the Russian Federation. Its actions in the Black Sea region, violation of international law, international order doubt, the preservation of frozen conflicts and the annexation of crime have drawn the attention of NATO to both the fulfillment of its main mission and the collective

¹⁷²Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs Fact Sheet.

¹⁷³A. Purcarus.

¹⁷⁴Regional cooperation with Russian Federation. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Romania.

defense and validity of security agreements concluded with Russia at the end of the twentieth century. The architecture of European security is increasingly threatened by ongoing conflicts and conflicts in the immediate vicinity, in the east and in the south, capable of directly or indirectly affecting the national security interests of Romania.¹⁷⁵

Romanian-Russian relations, according to Diaconescu, the former Minister of foreign affairs of Romania, are experiencing a difficult moment when it is necessary to show respect for the security interests of both parties. “Tensions in bilateral relations arose in particular after a series of public statements by Moscow, calling into question the fundamental strategic choice of Romania. From statements regarding the antimissile shield or the territorial integrity of the Romanian state to the recent threats against Romania,” he said, apparently referring to recent statements by the Russian side that Romania after deploying the US anti-missile defense system on its territory is a threat to the Russian Federation.¹⁷⁶

In order to avoid energy dependence on Russia, Romania actively participates in the Intermarium project, which can change the structure of energy supplies to Eastern Europe and disrupt the already existing energy corridors with Russia's participation.

In conclusion, the study revealed the main criteria for which it can be assumed that Romania is interested in the implementation of the Intermarium project and has certain incentives to participate in it.

3.7 Case Study: Bulgaria

Bulgaria is another state of Eastern Europe which participates in the Intermarium summits and strives to become a potential member state.

¹⁷⁵National Defense Strategy for the Period 2015 - 2019. A Strong Romania in Europe and the World. Romania Presidential Administration. Bucharest, 2015, p. 12.

¹⁷⁶“Romania: Russian Foreign Ministry “signals a thaw”, Bucharest wants “respect”. Regnum Information Agency. February 28, 2017.

3.7.1 Membership in EU

Currently, the Republic of Bulgaria participates in the implementation of the common security and defense policy of the European Union through the single European security and defense system within the EU and NATO. Bulgaria is developing a national capacity to participate in a common foreign and security policy of the EU, including in crisis operations and missions. Republic Bulgaria will strengthen its contribution and responsibility in the EU enlargement policy. Within the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy Republic Bulgaria will seek a balanced approach towards the EU's eastern and southern neighbors, which strengthens its position factor of global security.

Strategic goal is strengthening the unity of the Euro-Atlantic community and promoting its leading role in security in Europe and the world. Transatlantic relations of the Republic of Bulgaria are developing in harmonious and balanced way in order to achieve foreign policy priorities and security.¹⁷⁷

However, there is some discontent on the part of Bulgaria regarding its membership in the EU.

The prime example is presented by the statement of Bulgarian Foreign Minister Ekaterina Zakhariyeva, who demanded that European officials take Bulgaria to Schengen by the end of this year. "The doors in Schengen remain closed, despite all positive actions and assessments". The European Commission emphasizes that Bulgaria fulfills all the technical conditions for joining the Schengen. However, Germany and France constantly express their "doubts" about the reception of Bulgaria and Romania.¹⁷⁸

3.7.2 Membership in NATO

¹⁷⁷Updated National Security Strategy for the Republic of Bulgaria. Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Bulgaria. March 14, 2018. p. 24.

¹⁷⁸Pyotr Petrov: "In Bulgaria, dissatisfaction with the behavior of the EU and the USA has increased". Military Review. February 25, 2018.

Bulgaria considers membership in NATO as a key element of a national security policy. In its security policy for 2019, Bulgaria has defined the main directions and priorities that are aimed at close cooperation with the countries of the EU and NATO, to protect the principles of democracy and preserve stability and security in the region.

Therefore, the National Security Strategy of Bulgaria determines the following national interests, which are considered as vital:

- favorable and predictable security environment;
- effective functioning of Bulgarian institutions together with the institutions of the EU and NATO

achieve our collective security and improve its condition through compatibility development;

- maintaining good neighborly relations and ensuring regional security; stability;
- Enhancing the participation of NATO and the EU in security policies and mechanisms in the EU.

The Black Sea region and the continuation of the integration processes of the countries of the region,

who set their respective goals in the European and Euro-Atlantic structures;

- Further stabilization and full inclusion in the Euro-Atlantic and Baltic states of the European political and economic space of the Western countries Balkans;
- development of regional cooperation in the Danube region and strengthening of the active role of the Republic of Bulgaria in the bilateral and multilateral framework in support of peace and security in the area and the implementation;

economic programs and infrastructure projects with regional and pan-European importance in the context of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region;

- Ensuring energy security by diversifying types of energy, sources and routes of energy supply and other strategic raw materials;
- ensuring economic, financial and social stability and economic prosperity.¹⁷⁹

The country's foreign policy is aimed at ensuring the security of the country, the state and its citizens in accordance with national and international interests. The Republic of Bulgaria adheres to the principles and objectives of the UN Charter and supports efforts to reform the organization to strengthen the UN and its ability to achieve his goals.

Membership of the Republic of Bulgaria in NATO is a strategic choice and one of the main guarantees of our national security. The Republic of Bulgaria is committed to strengthening and promoting the role of NATO in the implementation of its policy operational responsibilities.

3.7.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

As for the factor that characterizes the attitude of the United States towards Bulgaria, the prospects are not yet visible. And the interests of the countries are limited exclusively to the security sphere.

For example, in November 2018, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo held a meeting with Bulgarian Foreign Minister Ekaterina Zakhariyeva, during which the parties noted the importance of maintaining Western sanctions against Russia: “They discussed the significance of relations between the US and Bulgaria, Bulgaria’s plans to modernize its air force, as well as diversification of energy resources as a priority issue of European energy security,” the statement says.¹⁸⁰

3.7.4 Bilateral Cooperation with Russia

¹⁷⁹Updated National Security Strategy for the Republic of Bulgaria. Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Bulgaria. March 14, 2018. p. 4.

¹⁸⁰“Pompeo discussed sanctions against Russia with Bulgarian Foreign Minister”. Russia Today. November 6, 2018.

Regarding the factor that characterizes the relations of Bulgaria and Russia, the Bulgarian government no longer considers Russia's foreign policy as a threat to the country, as follows from the draft report of the Cabinet of Ministers on the state of national security for 2017, which was submitted to the National Assembly.¹⁸¹

Moreover, in May 21, 2018 Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dmitri Medvedev met with Bulgarian President Rumen Radev. During the meeting, Dmitri Medvedev noted that the Russian and Bulgarian peoples are historically linked by many years of friendly relations. He expressed the hope that common cultural roots and bilateral cooperation will be reflected in the trade and economic field and will become an incentive for an increase in trade turnover between the countries: “The task of our colleagues who deal with these issues in the Government, and indeed our task, is to give greater, better dynamics to this kind of cooperation”, the Prime Minister declared.¹⁸²

In turn, Rumen Radev said that he considers Russia as a reliable strategic partner in the field of energy. He said that the Belene NPP project, which implies Russian participation, was resumed in Bulgaria. The head of Bulgaria also noted that relations between Bulgaria and Russia are based not only on economic interest, but are penetrated by deep historical and spiritual ties.

“Russia has always been an important trade and economic partner. The exchange of goods amounted to 3.6 billion euros over the past year - this is a very good figure, but it does not reach the previous results and does not meet our capabilities”, the President of Bulgaria emphasized.¹⁸³

¹⁸¹“Bulgaria excluded Russia from the list of threats to national security”. Regnum Information Agency. July 25, 2018.

¹⁸²“Russia and Bulgaria discussed the implementation of joint projects in industry and other areas”. Rambler.ru. May 21, 2018.

¹⁸³“Russia and Bulgaria discussed the implementation of joint projects in industry and other areas”. Rambler.ru. May 21, 2018.

Regarding the potential participation of Bulgaria in the Intermarium project, it can be noted that in the long term, the ideas of the Intermarium correspond to Bulgaria's aspiration to diversify European energy markets, as well as to its desire to increase the infrastructure potential of the Balkan region. Bulgaria took part in the summits that were held within the framework of the Intermarium project and announced its participation in the forthcoming Three Seas Initiative projects.¹⁸⁴

3.8 Case Study: Croatia

3.8.1 Membership in EU

As a member of European Union since 2013, membership in the EU for Croatia is a prospect for the stable development of the country's economy and the opportunity to develop promising sectors for further prosperity. Croatia is beneficial to participate in the EU and, accordingly, in joint political and economic processes. Moreover, Croatia has recently joined the European Union and immediately after the official accession to the EU, Croatia received financial assistance from European funds in the amount of 800,16 million euros to stabilize the economic situation in the first year of EU membership.¹⁸⁵

The only moment when Croatia showed its disagreement with the EU policy is the refusal to sign the World Pact on Migration. On October 31, 2018, the Austrian authorities announced their refusal to sign the World Pact on Migration, thus becoming the first Western European state not to support the UN Covenant. In early November, the governments of Croatia, Poland and the Czech Republic reported their doubts about the signing of the document.

3.8.2 Membership in NATO

¹⁸⁴Three Seas Initiative List of Priority Interconnection Projects.

¹⁸⁵Olga Trofimova: "Accession of Croatia to the European Union". Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations. July 2, 2013.

Regarding Croatia's membership in NATO, US acknowledges importance of Croatia membership in NATO as well as its key role in stabilizing the Balkan region. According to the statement made by Robert Kohorst, the US ambassador in Croatia: "We want to support our partners and goals around the world, but our partners need to invest more in defense and be more financially responsible. Croatia does this by acknowledging its commitments", said Kohorst.

As another important chapter in bilateral relations, he mentioned the modernization of military equipment, so that Croatia would replace the old Soviet weapons and even come closer to NATO standards. Therefore, I have to show respect for Croatia as an American partner, and we forget about many of our partners and share common commitments in NATO, both countries agree that threat to one member pose a threat to all of us. Therefore, Croatia better than the majority understands the importance of a strong partnership" the ambassador said in his speech¹⁸⁶.

Reflecting on the important role of Croatia in stabilizing the region, he recalled that quite a conflict had occurred in south-eastern Europe.

"We know that ethnic tensions and regional disputes can cause new conflicts with great consequences, and not only for Europe. We see Croatia as an important player in resolving major disputes in the region, "said Kohorst and in this context stressed the importance of developing relations between Croatia and Serbia¹⁸⁷.

In conclusion, there are quite attractive prospects for Croatia to participate in the diversification of the European energy market in order to reduce Europe's dependence on Russian gas. The development of the seaport zone will make it possible to develop alternative routes for gas supply to Europe and participate in the projects of the Intermarium for the formation of new gas transits into Europe.

3.8.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

¹⁸⁶“US Ambassador: Relations between Croatia and the United States are excellent”. N1. November 8, 2018.

¹⁸⁷“US Ambassador: Relations between Croatia and the United States are excellent”. N1. November 8, 2018.

According to the US ambassador to Croatia, the relations between the United States and Croatia have a positive trend and, although so far they are more focused on strengthening security strategies, there is also an interest in economic and military projects:

“Croatia and the United States have excellent relations, Croatia’s interests and our priorities are very closely related, and we have a lot in common when it comes to security, economic growth and regional cooperation,” the ambassador said.¹⁸⁸

Speaking about economic issues, the US ambassador to Croatia said that it was especially important to help Croatia become a regional leader in the field of energy, improve the business climate and carry out the necessary economic reforms and, ultimately, help conclude an agreement on avoidance of double taxation.

“I want to help Croatia use its potential to become an energy hub for Europe - this is a top priority for the United States. Croatia’s geographical location and its relationship with its neighbors make Croatia an entry point for importing natural gas,” the ambassador said.¹⁸⁹

He said that the Croatian government is progressing in the implementation of the LNG terminal on Krk, which will provide Croatia and the region with additional gas import opportunities.

“The construction of the terminal at Krk has the full support of President Donald Trump,” said Cohorst.¹⁹⁰

In any case, due to the construction of the LNG terminal at Krk, which will be connected to the already built terminal in Poland, an alternative to the Moscow-Berlin gas shaft will be created, because during the construction of the new Russian pipeline, Nord Stream 2, Germany will become the main Russian gas distributor in Europe and will create a kind of Russian-German monopoly on the supply of natural

¹⁸⁸N1.

¹⁸⁹N1.

¹⁹⁰N1.

gas. The construction of LNG terminals at Krk will lead to diversification of energy supply and will become an alternative to the Russian-German monopoly. The United States strongly supports the LNG terminal in Krk. Croatia may have several economic benefits under the Three Seas Initiative.

Similarly, Croatia is building a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal in Krk (Adriatic Sea), with a throughput capacity of over 2 billion cubic meters of gas per year. It should be noted that he also enjoys the help of the EU, Brussels contributes 101.4 million euros, which is about 30% of the estimated value of the work.¹⁹¹

3.8.4 Bilateral Cooperation with Russia

As for the issue of relations between Croatia and Russia, there was not much progress here. Russian-Croatian relations from the very beginning, since the establishment of independence, did not go very well. It was not so dramatic, but it never went up. In Croatia, without any influence, Russia is perceived as a "defender of the Serbs".¹⁹²

However, economy relations between two states are still a priority for Croatia. It is estimated that Croatia bought gas from Russia for almost 600 million euros per year. This is a significant part of the total trade turnover between Russia and Croatia. Recently, Russia's ambassador to Croatia, Anvar Azimov, said that his goal was to increase trade turnover to 3 billion Euros per year from the current 2.1 billion Euros, which means that new export contracts can be concluded in this huge market, as well as new investments.¹⁹³

Furthermore, according to statistics from the Croatian National Bank, which monitors foreign direct investment, Russians will invest 411 million euros in Croatia

¹⁹¹Davor Dijanovic: "Thanks to Kolinda, after Tuđman Croatia has again foreign policy". Direktno.hr. July 9, 2017.

¹⁹²Vlado Vurušić: "Russian Analysts: "It can even be said that Russia has reacted more acutely to the decision of the Republic of Croatia to expel diplomats than to decisions of larger states". Jutarnji Vijesti. April 1, 2018.

¹⁹³Maria Grigoryan: "The role of Russian business in the development of the Croatian economy". Russia Beyond. February 18, 2019.

by the end of September 2018, but this is only a small part of the assets owned by Russians or Russian companies. In Croatia, the fact is that most of these investments are not included in these statistics. Many investments are made through the creation of companies in Croatia, as well as through contracts and financing.¹⁹⁴

Croats are also investing in Russia, and today almost 140 million consumers in the market have reached almost one hundred million euros. The main exporter is the pharmaceutical industry, which is not subject to sanctions. AD Plastik also operates in Russia, which has two plants in Russia.¹⁹⁵

3.9 Case Study: Estonia

3.9.1 Membership in EU

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs creates and develops opportunities for acting in the interests of Estonia in the international environment. The most effective way to do this is to promote a policy that allows the European Union and NATO to prepare and, if necessary, intervene in unwanted events. It also requires Estonia's readiness to promote NATO and the EU's ability to be active at the international level. Therefore, Estonia supports the constant strengthening of foreign and security policy of the European Union, common security and defense policy. Participation in the implementation of the new EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy in order to meet the interests of Estonia and improve the security of the citizens of the EU and the member states. Development of Estonian and European crisis management capabilities. Ensure close contact with EU institutions, including the EU External Action Service, to best protect Estonia's interests.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴Russia Beyond.

¹⁹⁵Russia Beyond.

¹⁹⁶Foreign Ministry Development Plan 2017-2020. Republic of Estonia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. April 29, 2016.

In addition to the aforementioned, Estonia is interested in participating in the project of the Three Seas Initiative.

Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid attended the 2017 Three Seas Initiative summit in Warsaw and met with US President Donald Trump in Warsaw at the Eastern and Central European summit to discuss energy issues, transatlantic cooperation and security issues in the region.

President Kaljulaid stressed the importance of cybersecurity in her speech, which was made during the discussion of the heads of state. She stressed that although all countries have their own interests, we are still connected with each other, despite the size of our countries. “The European Union and the United States together will form a global power with greater force,” said President Kaljulaid. She added that this is what makes close cooperation with NATO, where the United States plays a leading role, so important.¹⁹⁷

“Each country plays a certain role in this cooperation, and Estonia fulfilled its role. Yes, we know that we contribute 2% to our defense spending, but our contribution to cyber security is probably even more important. People and businesses have long moved into the cyberspace, and governments should not be one of the last to take this step. Today, Estonia is the only digital society in the world that demonstrates that, despite its size, all democratic countries can make their contribution to us more and more mutually beneficial. Both in the physical sense and in cyberspace, "the head of state added.¹⁹⁸

3.9.2 Membership in NATO

Estonia has been a member of NATO since 2004. Membership in this collective defense organization strengthens the military security of Estonia, allows for

¹⁹⁷President Kaljulaid at meeting with Trump: “The contribution of countries does not depend on their size”. President of the Republic of Estonia Website. July 6, 2017.

¹⁹⁸President of the Republic of Estonia Website.

the most appropriate provision of defense for the Estonian state, and also provides an opportunity to effectively participate in international security cooperation. Active NATO membership is a long-term strategic priority of the security and defense policy of Estonia. Like other NATO member countries, Estonia is constantly developing and continuously improving mobile armed forces, as well as increasing its contribution to international peacekeeping operations. The NATO Cyber Defense Competence Center is located in Tallinn, which currently unites eight countries. Estonia is actively involved in updating the strategic concept of NATO, and consistently supports the open-door policy of NATO.

Since the security threats to Estonia stem largely from the globalization process, Estonia highly appreciates the effectiveness of the dialogue and cooperation in the framework of various NATO partnership programs. Especially important for Estonia are the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the NATO-Ukraine Commission, the NATO-Georgia Commission, the NATO-Russia Council, which contribute to a better understanding of the objectives pursued by NATO and favor closer cooperation of countries in various operations.¹⁹⁹

3.9.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

When considering the criteria for interaction between Estonia and the United States, active cooperation in the field of security and NATO programs can be noted.

In the defense policy and military matters, the United States is one of the most important partners of Estonia. Bilateral US defense cooperation covers many different areas, from joint participation in operations to training and procurement projects.

The United States has contributed financially to the development of Estonia's defense forces, with wider foreign assistance programs (FMF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET), with annual allocations of tens of millions of dollars. The FMF is an annual distribution program that will be decided by the US

¹⁹⁹Estonian Security Policy. Republic of Estonia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. October 9, 2014.

Congress to provide allies with assistance and loans for the acquisition of products, services and training for the US defense industry. Within the framework of the IMET program, representatives of defense structures both in educational institutions in the United States and in Estonia are given different types of training and education. Estonia focused on the vocational and technical training of junior officers and the training of middle and senior managers. In addition, specialized courses on military police, pioneers, intelligence, communications, logistics and air forces were adopted within IMET.²⁰⁰

The United States is an important economic partner of Estonia. The global work of American companies and the growing number of international supply chains often means that, for example, the end user of an electronic component or device in a European country may be in the United States. Therefore, the success of the export sector often depends on the situation in the US economy.

In the bilateral trade relations, the US share is increasing every year after the restoration of Estonia's independence.

Direct investments of the USA into Estonia were formed on December 31, 2017. At the end of the year, the Group invested € 276 million, representing 1.4% of direct investment in Estonia.²⁰¹

3.9.4 Bilateral Cooperation with Russia

Bilateral communication between Estonia and the Russian Federation, through diplomatic contacts and the technical level between officials and experts, is primarily aimed at solving practical issues. Estonia, like the European Union as a whole, has limited political relations with Russia since 2014 due to Russia's aggression in Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol. In the short term, the main objective of the bilateral relations is to secure border agreements and further delineate the border.

²⁰⁰Estonia-US bilateral relations. Republic of Estonia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. April 9, 2018.

²⁰¹Estonia-US bilateral relations.

By signing the 2014 Border Agreements, it was agreed that parliaments will ratify the border agreements in parallel. On November 25, 2015, Estonia completed the first reading of the bill on the ratification of the border agreements and was waiting for the steps taken by Russia. The bill is in the work of the Russian State Duma, but it is unknown when this ratification will be continued.²⁰²

Economic relations and trade between Estonia and Russia are affected by economic sanctions imposed by the EU on the territory of Russia from 2014 and Russian counter-laws. Russia continues to be an important economic partner of Estonia, but the economic situation and economic sanctions of the Republic of Uzbekistan have reduced trade volumes. In recent years, Russia has fallen out of the first five trading partners of Estonia, to which it constantly belonged.²⁰³

3. 10 Case Study: Latvia

This part of the research will examine political and social trends in Latvia, as well as foreign policy towards the United States and Russia in order to form an independent opinion on the Latvia's prospects to become a member of the Intermarium.

3.10.1 Membership in EU

The pro-European policy of Latvia is characterized by its participation in political, economic and military alliances with the EU countries. To date, changes in the security environment have forced Latvia and other European countries to pay increased attention to security policies and to strengthen defense at the national and international levels. Membership in NATO and the European Union plays a crucial role in Latvia's security policy, and Latvia actively participates in these organizations and on a bilateral basis with its allies in order to strengthen their own security and the security of the surrounding region.

²⁰²Estonia-Russia bilateral relations. Republic of Estonia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. May 18, 2018.

²⁰³Estonia-Russia bilateral relations.

3.10.2 Membership in NATO

Latvia is one of the six members of the Alliance in which NATO response forces (NRF) were created, and these units, if needed, would play an important role in facilitating the rapid deployment of military forces and ensuring that such forces can effectively work on land, at sea and in the air of Latvia.²⁰⁴

Latvia is also actively involved in the efforts of NATO and the EU to find the most effective solutions to countering hybrid threats, including in the information space. In order to make a concrete contribution to the development of NATO's capabilities in the information space and its analysis, Latvia has created the NATO Center for Advanced Technology Communication.²⁰⁵

Like any other modern democracy, Latvia is also concerned about the dangers posed by globalization and processes in an international security environment. Therefore, the security policy of Latvia is based on active multilateral and bilateral cooperation and participation in international organizations - the European Union and NATO.²⁰⁶

3.10.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

In the context of the EU's trade relations with the US, Latvia stood up for the strengthening of the transatlantic link and supported close cooperation with the US on resolving trade issues in line with an agreement achieved during the meeting between European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and US President Donald Trump on 25 July 2018.²⁰⁷

The President of Latvia acknowledged that the participation of the President of the United States at the Three Seas Initiative summit confirmed the interest of the

²⁰⁴Latvia's Security Policy. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. May 20, 2016.

²⁰⁵Latvia's Security Policy. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. May 20, 2016.

²⁰⁶Directions of Security Policy. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. May 18, 2016.

²⁰⁷"EU trade ministers focus on WTO modernisation and EU-US trade relations". Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. November 10, 2018.

United States in finding new opportunities for cooperation with the European Union (EU) in the field of economy, transport and energy, which corresponds to the ongoing active political dialogue of the EU -USA.

“Latvia and Europe consider the initiative to export natural gas from the USA to Europe significant, because we are interested in diversifying the sources of energy supply. In addition to economic benefits, cooperation with the United States can help increase the region’s resilience to various current security challenges, such as strengthening Europe’s energy security. We view US participation in the Adriatic Sea, Baltic and Black Seas Initiatives as positive and complementary to the EU-implemented policies and support programs that promote infrastructure development, building interconnections, cross-border cooperation in a wide range of areas”, said Raymond Vejonis.²⁰⁸

Speaking to the participants of the “Three Seas” Initiative Summit, the President of Latvia noted the importance of a unified approach to funding the European Union (EU) and the EU in attracting private investment for the development of regional infrastructure projects. Together with other countries in the region, Latvia is currently implementing an ambitious railway project Rail Baltica. Latvia is also interested in accelerating the synchronization of gas and electricity connections between the Baltic countries and other EU member states.²⁰⁹

3.10.4 Bilateral Cooperation with Russia

After analyzing relations between Latvia and Russia, it can be noted that Latvia perceives a threat from Russia and condemns it. Latvia’s security policy mentioned above and its participation in NATO shows the country's readiness to resist threats and participate in sanctions against the aggressor. The Latvian Ambassador to Russia, Riekstins, clearly defined the priorities and policies of Latvia towards Russia.

²⁰⁸“President of Latvia at the summit of the Three Seas Initiative: the United States reaffirms its strong support for European security”. President of Latvia Website. July 6, 2017.

²⁰⁹President of Latvia Website.

He acknowledged that there are many issues of interest to Latvia, adding that initially his priority will be issues agreed at the meeting of the Latvian-Russian intergovernmental commission. The ambassador also stressed that the topic of the annexation of Crimea by Russia could not be avoided in the future. One can see that Russia is trying to convince Western society that “this has been done, and there is nothing more to return to this question,” but Western society cannot accept this.²¹⁰

He also noted that Russia is a very serious player in the world, our largest neighbor, as well as in the top five leaders of foreign trade relations of Latvia. The ambassador noted that last year Russian exports of goods to Latvia amounted to about one billion euros, and Latvia exported goods worth about 700 million euros to a neighboring country. “Russian tourists are also the second largest tourist group in Latvia”, said Riekstins.²¹¹

As a result, the following can be noted: Latvia perceives and condemns the Russian threat, but as Russia is a strategic neighbor and partner in economic projects, Latvia has reduced but not broke off relations with Russia and will maintain them in the future. US priority partners for Latvia in the area of enhancing security and partnerships within NATO. Latvia welcomes the draft initiative of the Three Seas and is ready to participate in projects that will coincide with the national interests of Latvia.

3.11 Case Study: Lithuania

3.11.1 Membership in EU

Lithuania as one of the post-Soviet countries adapts to the EU economic space with great difficulty. Therefore, it received economic support from the EU countries. After Lithuania joined the EU, Lithuania received 36 billion euros of financial support. Efficient use of EU funds led to faster economic growth and workplace

²¹⁰“Ambassador: Relations between Latvia and Russia are not easy, but contact points will be sought”.
Diena.lv. August 18, 2017.

²¹¹Diena.lv.

creation: by the time of Lithuania's accession to EU, its GDP was 46% of EU average. In 2011, this gap decreased to 62%, and in 2014 it was 75% EU of average.

Currently, about 80% of foreign direct investment in Lithuania comes from EU member states. EU structural funds help to quickly overcome economic difficulties, reduce unemployment in Lithuania. According to public polls, every second resident of Lithuania personally supported the EU Structural Funds and highly appreciates it as a long-term investment in the future of Lithuania.²¹²

The European Commission approved the so-called Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan, which aims to create a single energy market by eliminating the energy isolation of the Baltic States. The financing of regional energy projects of major importance for Lithuania is planned: Visagino NPP, connection of electricity to Poland and Sweden, regional terminal of liquefied natural gas, underground gas storage, gas connections between Lithuania and Poland.²¹³

3.11.2 Membership in NATO

Such an approach on the part of the EU created opportunities for the development of Lithuania's energy independence, which also contributed to the strengthening of its security. Lithuania is a member of NATO. NATO membership is called vital for Lithuania, therefore:

- In the light of the challenges facing the security of the region and in keeping with the commitment of Lithuania as a member of NATO, no later than 2018; we will allocate 2 percent of GDP to national defense funding;

- Considering the principle of collective defense as the main guarantor of Lithuania's security, we will seek permanent allies for Lithuania. In Lithuania, we will provide the necessary infrastructure, host country support conditions, and NATO

²¹²Lithuania's EU membership. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania. March 27, 2018.

²¹³Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania.

policy - a number of decisions that would guarantee a quick and adequate response from the Alliance to potential threats;

- We will work closely with the Baltic States, Poland, the USA, Western and Northern European countries and NATO partners to develop common capabilities in defense planning, high-capacity and capacity building;

- We will pay an attention both to our own ability to defend our territory independently and with the Allied forces, and to our ability to respond quickly to security challenges with other allies. We will strive to ensure a balanced contribution to the Alliance's overall defensive potential and contribute to efforts to expand peace and stability beyond the Alliance by engaging in operations with allies and partners, thus contributing to our strengthening of the country's armed forces. The professionalism of soldiers will be enhanced by training soldiers together with EU and NATO countries, national and international exercises.²¹⁴

On January 17, 2017, The Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Lithuania Member State is also a threat to Lithuania's national security. Lithuania is a member of the EU and US military presence in Europe and the region. The NATO dimension of NATO's Alliance for NATO's Alliance of Allies in the United States. Lithuania bases its national policy on the values that unite NATO and the EU. The Euro-Atlantic community is one of the most important nations of the European Union.²¹⁵

Lithuania participated in the NATO summit in Warsaw in 2016. The key issues were strengthening Alliance defense and deterrence and developing stability in NATO's neighborhood. Alliance members agreed that NATO's usual practical cooperation with Russia remains suspended. Russian aggression against Ukraine, reducing risks and incidents and increasing military transparency remain on the

²¹⁴The Seim of the Republic of Lithuania Decree no. XIII-82 "On the Program of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania". The Seim of the Republic of Lithuania. December 13, 2016.

²¹⁵Lithuania's Membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania. March 13, 2019.

agenda of this political dialogue. At the same time, defense and deterrence will continue to be strengthened in the most vulnerable wing of the Alliance.²¹⁶

3.11.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

As for Lithuania-US relations, Lithuania is planning long-term strategic relations with the United States of America:

- We will seek to strengthen transatlantic relations by all means, and to further tighten relations between Europe and the United States of America. It is necessary to ensure that the permanent forces of the USA and other NATO members are permanently deployed in Lithuania and other Central European countries.

- Our strategic interest is to ensure that the growing threat from the South does not diminish NATO's focus on the eastern Euro-Atlantic states.

Strategic cooperation with the US will be expanded and intensified, especially in the areas of energy, economy, research and military security. This is one of the most important challenges for the coming political period, which needs to be exploited on the basis of both personal diplomacy and intergovernmental cooperation and on other grounds.²¹⁷

Strategic cooperation with the United States will be expanded and intensified, in particular in the fields of energy, economics, research and military security. This is one of the most important tasks of the next political period, which should be used to maximize the use of both personal diplomacy and intergovernmental cooperation and other foundations. “We will set ambitious goals, actively developing the work already begun to attract investment in US multinational corporations in Lithuania. We will try to strengthen the potential of the agency for attracting investment and synergy with

²¹⁶Lithuania's Membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania. March 13, 2019.

²¹⁷The Seim of the Republic of Lithuania Decree no. XIII-82 “On the Program of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania”.

the Lithuanian diplomatic corps. We will actively promote the growth of trade with the United States, paying particular attention to Lithuanian exports”.²¹⁸

As it can be seen from the conducted research, the policy of Lithuania has a pro-European orientation and interest is shown in prospective cooperation with the USA, both in the area of enhancing security and in the field of economic and investment projects.

3.11.4 Bilateral Cooperation with Russia

Lithuania’s approach to strengthen security is defined by the recognition of Russia as an aggressor. However, it should not be forgotten that, despite 25 years of diplomatic relations, the demarcation of the Lithuanian-Russian border was carried out only in April 2018. On April 26, 2018 the border demarcation process was fully completed. It was noted that the fence is being built to prevent smuggling and protect against illegal migration.²¹⁹

Lithuania is persistently seeking the application of the strictest possible pack of sanctions of political and economic impact against Russia, actively lobbying to strengthen the NATO presence on its territory and in the Baltic States as a whole.

The policy towards Russia is to urge this important Lithuanian neighbour to renounce the use of force, military aggression and other unlawful actions in international politics, returning respect for international law and principles, as well as repair the damage caused to the international security architecture and its neighbouring countries, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the internal policy of consistent implementation of democracy and the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

²¹⁸The Seim of the Republic of Lithuania Decree no. XIII-82 “On the Program of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania”.

²¹⁹“Lithuania and Russia complete border demarcation”. Interfax. May 4, 2018.

What aggressive measures Russia has been doing in the Euro-Atlantic neighborhood of Lithuania have been revealed and made public: attempts to influence the internal processes of Western democracies, the use of a chemical weapon against a former Russian intelligence officer, aggressive cyber-operations conducted both from Russia and Europe.²²⁰

3.12 Case Study: Austria

3.12.1 Membership in EU

Austria is one of the most sustainable states in central Europe. Austria is one of the leaders among the EU countries in quality of life. Its share in the industrial production of the European Union is 2,5%. The transformation of the EU into a system of supranational institutions led to the fact that the Austrian Parliament and the institutions of social partnership lost some of their functions, since they were transferred to Brussels. Therefore, Austria's foreign policy is conducted within the framework of the European Consensus.

Nevertheless, the only moment when Austria showed its disagreement with the EU policy is the refusal to sign the World Pact on Migration. On October 31, 2018, the Austrian authorities announced their refusal to sign the World Pact on Migration, thus becoming the first Western European state, which did not support the UN Covenant. In early November 2018, the governments of Croatia, Poland and the Czech Republic reported their doubts about the signing of the document.²²¹

3.12.2 Membership in NATO

Currently, Austria is not a member of the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization. The reason for the Austria's absence among NATO members, in the late 1990s, many Austrian politicians raised the question of the abolition of neutrality and the

²²⁰Evaluation of Threats to National Security 2019. p.4.

²²¹Irina Ruchkina: "The Czech Republic will not sign the UN Migration Agreement". Radio Praha Russian Agency. November 14, 2018.

expediency of the country's membership in NATO, but the population of the country and the opposition parties were skeptical of these ideas. At present, official Vienna assumes that neutrality should not be a fixed institution, but should be adapted to changing conditions, however, the federal constitutional law by which Austria declared “its permanent neutrality of its own accord“, and undertook not to join any military alliance was adopted by the National Council on 26 October 1955.²²²

3.12.3 Bilateral Cooperation with the US

After examining the factor characterizing the relationship between the United States and Austria, we note the following:

The US Department of State has published a strategy for developing relations with Austria. The document emphasizes the need to resist the growing influence of Russia and China in the country. The United States plans to strengthen economic and military cooperation with Austria, as well as offer it alternative sources of gas in order to suppress competition in the market. “The prevalence of Russia on the Austrian and regional natural gas markets, which has intensified over the past few years, remains a significant challenge. Accordingly, we will seek long-term efforts to promote alternative sources of gas supplies for the regional gas distribution center in Austria, ”the document says.²²³

Austria is interested in participating in some of the Intermarium projects and is taking part in the Three Seas Initiative summits.

Federal President Alexander van der Bellen supports the project for the development of regional cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe. And he took part in the Three Seas summit in Bucharest in 2018.

“This is a tool inside the [European] Union,” said Federal President Alexander Van der Bellen. “The attempt to create an energy political counterbalance to

²²²1955 – State Treaty and Neutrality”. Republic of Austria Parliament. May 19, 2018.

²²³“US plans to fight the “dominance” of Russian gas in Austria”. Rambler Finance. November 19, 2018.

dependence on Russia, of course, attracts the US, and from the Austrian point of view I watch it with interest - I can only say that Austria has kept good relationship with Russia, with Gazprom, for 50 years, and we had no problems".²²⁴

"Diversification of energy sources, is just like diversification of energy routes," said Alexander Van der Bellen. "There is a large gas pipeline project from Romania to Austria, the so-called BRUA project, in which we naturally show great interest." In the future, it will be used to supply natural gas to consumers in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria. During the construction of the pipeline, the Three Seas Initiative can be of decisive assistance.²²⁵

As you can see, Austria perceives the Intermarium project as an economic project that may be of interest to Austria as a cool gas transit country to Western Europe but not as a full-fledged project to form new gas supplies to replace Russian gas. Overall, Austria does not perceive Russia as a threat to its security.

3.12.4 Bilateral Cooperation with Russia

Austria has fairly long and stable relations with Russia and is one of the transit countries for Russian gas to Western Europe.

In particular, Federal President Alexander van der Bellen emphasizes at a joint press conference with President Vladimir Putin that good bilateral relations between Russia and Austria have a long tradition. Vladimir Putin and Alexander Van der Bellen mentioned the reason for the visit of the Russian president: the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Agreement on energy supplies between Austria and the Soviet Union. It is a fact that the EU receives gas from Russia. "Recently, some American politicians have warned that the EU's dependence on Russia in this regard is too great, ignoring the fact that the price of US liquefied gas is two or three times

²²⁴“Alexander Van der Bellen: “Three Seas Initiative is a welcome platform for the EU”. Bundespräsident Alexander van der Bellen Webseite. September 17, 2018.

²²⁵ Bundespräsident Alexander van der Bellen Webseite.

higher." From an economic point of view, changing the gas supplier does not make much sense.²²⁶

3.13 Summary of Chapter 3

As shown by the results of a study conducted in chapter 3 and presented in Table 2, eleven of the 12 potential participants are members of NATO and receive support from NATO projects through the United States.

²²⁶“One thing is clear: peace in Europe is only possible with Russia”. Bundespräsident Alexander van der Bellen Webseite.

Factors which influence participation in Intermarium		Poland	Czech Republic	Slovakia	Hungary	Slovenia	Croatia	Romania	Bulgaria	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania	Austria
Internal	Presence of discrepancies with current EU policy	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+
	Bilateral cooperation with the United States	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-
	Presence of political will to create new alliances to diversify the energy market and develop the region	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
External	Membership in EU	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Participation in NATO, cooperation with the United States within the framework of NATO	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
	Perception of Russia as an aggressor and a tendency to reduce cooperation with it.	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	-

Table 2: Factors which affect the prospects of participation in Intermarium (complete). Source: author

In addition, the US has serious interests in this region. On the one hand, the Americans have become one of the largest exporters of liquefied gas. The main purpose of building the Polish LNG terminal was to get American gas. In the future,

it is planned to receive 70 billion cubic meters of liquefied natural gas per year. If this is done, then Gazprom can be forced out of the region, and Russia and even Ukraine can transport American gas through Poland. Not surprisingly, the US administration also sees political opportunities in the gas business. It is no secret that this is not a single trade, but a means of political pressure on Russia in the future.²²⁷

The study also showed (see Table 2) that all twelve countries participating in the project are ready to diversify the energy system and are open to participation in projects to create alternative North-South energy cooperation, since the intention to create the Swinoujscie-Krk gas corridor plays a key role in the Polish-Croatian initiative. The first terminal for the reception and storage of liquefied gas was built in the Polish port with the arrival of Qatari and American gas. If we consider the Baltic Pipe project planned for the Polish-Danish joint production, then the German-Russian Nord Stream II will clearly receive an alternative.

But in addition to participation in projects, there are other factors that influenced participation of countries in the Intermarium, and among them are such factors as the perception of the threat from Russia, the presence of disagreements with EU policies. All of these factors influence the decisions of countries to join the Intermarium project.

The research of the factor which evaluates the disagreement between the EU policies and the countries of the Intermarium participants shows that five countries actively expressed their disagreement with the EU policy concerning the distribution of migrants. This indicates that despite the membership in the EU, these countries are ready to jointly oppose the EU policy, which in their opinion harms the national interests of the country. This approach shows that these countries are ready to consider the priority of regional policies on controversial issues over the generally accepted EU policies. Accordingly, these countries may be interested in creating a regional grouping of countries that will represent the policies of the region as

²²⁷ Mitrovits Miklos.

opposed to the western wing of the EU represented by stronger countries, Germany, France and Spain. In addition, those countries in the region that received assistance from the EU (Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Romania) for the development of the economy and infrastructure will stop receiving it after 2020 and are now actively looking for investors for further development of the region.

Regarding the factor that characterizes the relationship between the Intermarium countries and the United States other than NATO, the result of the study here shows how willing the countries are to work with the United States as a potential investor for Intermarium projects. As can be seen from Table 2, eight countries had experience of attracting investments from the United States to form new opportunities for the energy market and are ready to cooperate in the future or are considering opportunities to attract investments from the United States. This approach shows positive trends for the implementation of economic projects that can be implemented in the initiative of the Three Seas. For its part, the United States is taking decisive steps aimed at expanding political and economic relations with the mills of Intermarine (Czech Republic, Bulgaria), who are not yet ready to actively cooperate with the United States as a potential investor, but are ready for possible EU investments. This alignment of economic and political trends makes it possible to consider Intermarium as a completely viable project that is loyal to a wide range of investment projects for the development of the region.

This is also evidenced by the factor characterizing the desire and willingness of countries to participate in projects aimed at developing the infrastructure of the region and diversifying the European energy market in order to create corridors of gas supplies alternative to Russian Gazprom. This position is reflected in the planned prospects for the development of the countries of the region in the coming years.

A positive factor is the membership of all countries in the EU, this factor provides a guarantee that countries unite on democratic and equal grounds and no country will claim to be a leader in the region and the Intermarine to the detriment of

the interests of other participants. Also, participation in the EU will be a guarantee that the Intermarium will not be perceived as a political union and an instrument of influence on the political balance of power in world geopolitics.

The factor determining the participation of countries in NATO (except Austria) guarantees their security and cohesion in front of possible threats. In addition, the countries have experience of working with the US in the framework of NATO defense projects, which contributes to a positive perception of the United States as a potential investor in the Intermarium. In addition, the Intermarium itself is not perceived as an association of countries for a military or defensive alliance against a specific aggressor with the same association of interests under the auspices of NATO gives confidence in strengthening the security of the region.

The most controversial in the study was the factor of perceiving Russia as an aggressor. Not all countries are ready to recognize Russian aggression and, although all countries participate in EU sanctions against Russia, they are in favor of reducing them (Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia). These countries closely link their economic projects with Russia in particular in terms of energy and are the main transit countries for Russian gas to Europe. Therefore, based on this factor, it can be noted that Intermarium cannot be a viable project if it develops the concept of countering the Russian threat or other initiatives of a military-political nature. With the same it should be noted that despite the disagreements over the Russian threat, the countries of the region are ready to accept alternative projects for the development of the infrastructure of the region and to attract investors from both the United States and European countries (Germany, Switzerland) in the framework of the Intermarium, while not refusing from projects with the participation of Russia in the interests of exclusively their own country.

Conclusions

This work was designed to answer the questions that were stated at the beginning of this study, which was carried out according to the methodology described in the work above. It should be noted that during the study, the author clearly followed the chosen methodology and conducted a comparative analysis of two cases that revealed the historical and political background of the emergence of the Intermarium project in the early twentieth century and its subsequent interpretation during the twentieth century and in the present-day politics. The work was designed to answer such questions:

- What concepts of Intermarium that were formed in the past are still relevant in modern geopolitical conditions?
- What political conditions make the country to become a potential member of the Intermarium?
- What is the minimum number of countries enough for membership in the "Intermarium" to ensure its effective activities in the political arena?

In the second section of the work, a comparison was made of historical events that were criteria for determining the factors that contributed to the birth of the Intermarium project and made its implementation impossible in the past. Modern political and economic factors that are occurring in Eastern Europe and influenced the revival of the idea of the Intermarium project in the modern political environment were also considered. A comparative analysis of historical and contemporary factors that influence the Intermarium project has also been carried out. This approach to the study provides an opportunity to answer the questions above. In a separate study, it was considered what causes and factors influence the choice of each of the countries that are potential participants in the Intermarium project, agree on participation in it and what their minimum number is necessary for the Intermarium project to be implemented as an independent and viable project. This study was carried out for

each country, and the criteria that influenced the decision of the country to participate in the Intermarium project were considered, and in this case what political or economic issue would be I the country's priorities. The results of the study are presented in a summary table of Table 2, which indicates the criteria that affect the potential ability of a country to become involved in the modern Intermarium project (the Three Seas Initiative). If the factor is positive for a country, then the probability of its participation in the project increases with the increase of such positive criteria. If the factor is not acceptable for a country, then the likelihood of its participation in the Intermarium project decreases. When answering research questions, the author will refer to the results given in the table.

To begin, let us return to the historical events of the project Intermarium. which were analyzed in section 2 of this paper. Recall that the prerequisites for political and economic cooperation between the countries of the Adriatic, Baltic and Black Sea regions have arisen many times in history. The idea of uniting the whole region into a federation was proposed by Poland. At the beginning of the twentieth century after the First World War and the revolution in Russia, the Polish leader Jozef Pilsudski believed that regional cooperation should be based on the former Polish-Lithuanian state, which could balance the rapprochement between Bolshevik Russia and Germany. The idea is that the cooperation partners will be restored Poland, the Baltic countries, Belarus, Ukraine, and other nations that gained independence after the collapse of Russia will be Poland. In addition to them, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, the Balkan countries would take part in the project.

In particular, Mitrovits Miklos in his work "Three seas - the future of Eastern Central Europe?" states that the most important novelty of Pilsudski's idea was that he imagined cooperation in Central Europe with the participation of independent sovereign states, in contrast to previous centuries, when these peoples could live only with the suppression of one of the neighboring empires. On the other hand, this

would balance former West-East dependency relationships with North-South cooperation.²²⁸

The idea of the Intermarium was dictated by the goal of securing Poland and the Baltic countries from the Russian Bolshevik aggression. And also to strengthen the independence of the young powers of Ukraine and Belarus, who tried to gain independence after the collapse of the Russian Empire and needed economic and military support.

But unfortunately the political events of that time, namely the aggression by Bolshevik Russia, the passivity of France and Great Britain in relation to the Russian aggression and the political weakness of the Baltic countries that gained independence, Czechoslovakia's distrust of Polish domination in such an alliance did not allow the Intermarium project to materialize.

The idea came only in an updated form in the late thirties. According to Jozef Beck, the new Polish-Hungarian-Romanian alliance could become a new Intermarium cooperation, open to Scandinavia and the Balkans. And pursued primarily the goal of security from Nazi Germany and Bolshevik Russia. However, Beck's policy had many flaws. On the one hand, the Polish-Lithuanian conflict has not yet been resolved, but on the other hand, the Hungarian-Romanian relations are becoming more intense. Ultimately, it was also against all of Czechoslovakia.²²⁹

By March 1939, after the collapse of Czechoslovakia, a common Polish-Hungarian-Romanian border was established, the whole region was already under strong German domination. Subsequently, Germany and the Soviet Union divided Poland and the idea of the Intermarium became impossible.

²²⁸ Mitrovits Miklos: "Three seas - the future of Eastern Central Europe?"-Publications LXI. Élet és Irodalom. July 7, 2017.

²²⁹ Mitrovits Miklos

However, the Intermarium concept lives in contemporary Polish geopolitical thinking. According to Miklos, the reason for this is that Poland feels a constant threat from the Russian state.²³⁰

As the research shows, in former historical periods, the birth and restoration of the Intermarium idea was associated with a high level of aggression on the part of Russia and a passive opposition to it from the countries of Western Europe, the low economic potential of the countries of Eastern Europe and the Baltic States, their mutual internal contradictions and instability in accepting political and strategic decisions. And in the current political environment, the factor of perceiving Russia as an aggressor still plays an important role for participation in the Intermarium project.

The idea of the Intermarium finally became a coordinated action in August 2016 when, at the initiative of the heads of state of Poland and Croatia, at the initiative of the heads of state of Poland and Croatia in the three Baltic states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the Three Seas initiative was convened, which currently consists of twelve countries.

The idea of creating a joint economic space, which was also present in the previous concepts of the Intermarium, addressed the first place to the political reality of the modern world, besides the military threats, also economic threats such as energy dependence on one supplier in particular Russia, which uses its advantages for political pressure. Also, the novelty of modern aggression has become a hybrid war where a significant role is played by the information, economic and cybernetic component. To counter such aggression, high technologies are needed that require certain costs, which is not always within the strength of one country. For example, the restructuring of the energy system for gas transit requires tremendous efforts on the part of all transit participants and gas consumers. It will also be costly to build a common infrastructure and communications. As we see, the question of the current concepts of past Intermarium projects that are relevant for the current political

²³⁰ Mitrovits Miklos.

situation remains the same security, but in the modern conditions this concept is not limited only to security from military threat, but has an economic and social component.

Such an approach shows that the initiative of the three seas in modern interpretation is not geopolitical, it has purely economic goals. Of course, they do not exclude each other, and even pragmatic cooperation in the field of economics, security and infrastructure will become the basis for creating an extensive regional alliance.

The Dubrovnik summit indicated that it was an informal platform for providing political support to the countries of the region in implementing macro-regional and cross-border projects of strategic importance in the energy sector, transport, digital communications and, in any case, in the economic sphere. So, as Miklos mentions, it is the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans who would like them to have closer infrastructure and economic ties than they are today.²³¹

The Three Seas initiative would be successful if the cooperation allowed this region to increase its competitiveness, if its integration facilitated its accession to the center.

The initiative is also necessary - one of the strong arguments of the Poles - because in the next EU budget there will be much less money for the states of Central Europe and much more for the countries of the Western Balkans. The whole region would have to take this opportunity and attract investors from outside, for the development of the region. And the United States is very suitable for the role of such an investor. At the same time, the decision of countries to participate in the Intermarium project and attract the United States as an investor can include such criteria as reducing EU funding, dissatisfaction with the EU migration policy, and

²³¹ Mitrovits Miklos.

helping to modernize military technologies within NATO projects to counter cyber attacks from Russia.

Summing up the study, we can summarize the following: the project of the Three Seas Initiative (Intermarium) can be an appealing project in this political and economic situation in Eastern Europe, if its main priorities are the economic development of the region, strengthening its infrastructure and diversifying the European energy market. Hence the answer to the question about the number of countries required for the implementation of the project of the Three Seas Initiative (Intermarium). As the study showed, if the Intermarium project is not limited to any investment project, but will be a large complex of projects designed for a long term and with the prospect of further development of the region open for third-party investments, then its full implementation requires the participation of all twelve countries of the region. Such a number of countries is determined by projects in which they are ready to participate and without their participation these projects are not feasible.

Otherwise, the initiative of the Three Seas will turn into a short-term economic project deployed under one particular investor, without prospects for further independent influence on the problems of the region, or it will be a continuation of the already existing associations of the countries of the region like the Visegrad Four, but in an expanded version.

Overall, the Three Seas Initiative (Intermarium) in the current political situation has prospects for implementation and may become in the future the basis for strengthening the economies of Eastern Europe, developing the infrastructure of the region, becoming an alternative to the Nord Stream-2 project and eventually joining such global transport projects like the silk road.

List of References

- “1955 – State Treaty and Neutrality”. Republic of Austria Parliament. May 19, 2018.
<<https://www.parlament.gv.at/ENGL/PERK/HIS/REP2/1955/index.shtml>>
- “Alexander Van der Bellen: “Three Seas Initiative is a welcome platform for the EU”. Bundespräsident Alexander van der Bellen Webseite. September 17, 2018. <<https://www.bundespraesident.at/aktuelles/detail/news/drei-meere-initiative-2018/>>.
- Alexeeva, Nadezhda. “Part of a large political mosaic”: how the change of prime minister of Slovakia can be associated with the “Nord Stream – 2”. *Russia Today*. March 23, 2018. <<https://russian.rt.com/world/article/495074-slovakia-fico-kiska-pravitelstvo>>.
- “Ambassador: Relations between Latvia and Russia are not easy, but contact points will be sought”. *Diena.lv*. August 18, 2017.
<<https://www.diena.lv/raksts/latvija/viedokli/vestnieks-latvijas-un-krievijas-attiecibas-nav-vienkarsas-tomer-tiks-mekleti-saskarsmes-punkti-14178650>>.
- Anderson, Edgar. “Toward the Baltic Union: The Initial Phase”. *Lithuanian Quarterly Journal of Arts and Sciences* Volume 14, no.1 – Spring 1968.
<http://www.lituanus.org/1968/68_1_02Anderson.html>.
- Bartoszewicz, Henryk. “Dyplomacja Polska Wobec Koncepcji Międzymorza w latach 1918-1926” in „Międzymorze: Nadzieje i ograniczenia w polityce II Rzeczypospolitej”. Studium Europy Wschodniej, Uniwersytet Warszawski 2016.
- Bondarenko, Andriy. “Intermarium: Is globalization crisis already in Europe?”. *Commons.com.ua*. May 25, 2016. <<https://commons.com.ua/ru/intermarium-kriza-globalizatsiyi-vzhe-v-yevropi>>.
- “Bulgaria excluded Russia from the list of threats to national security”. *Regnum*. July 25, 2018. <<https://regnum.ru/news/2453940.html>>.
- Charaszkiwicz, Edmund. “Przebudowa wschodu Europy (*The Restructuring of Eastern Europe*)”. Niepodległość (Independence), London, 1955. pp.125–67.

- Cieplucha, Piotr. “*Prometeizm i Koncepcja Międzymorza w Praktyce Polityczno-Prawnej Oraz Dyplomacji II Rzeczypospolitej*”. *Studia Prawno-Ekonomiczne*, t. XCIII, 2014. ISSN 0081-6841. pp. 39-55.
- “Czech Republic and NATO”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. Accessed February 5, 2019. <https://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/zahranicni_vztahy/bezpecnostni_politika/nato/priority_cr_v_nato.html>.
- Declaration of Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia (DeZPRS-1). Unofficial Translation. Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. July 10, 2015. <http://www.mzz.gov.si/fileadmin/pageuploads/Zakonodaja_in_dokumenti/dokumenti/DECLARATION_ON_FOREIGN_POLICY_-_FINAL.pdf>.
- Decree no. XIII-82 “On the Program of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania”. Register of Legal Acts. The Seim of the Republic of Lithuania. December 13, 2016. <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/en/legalAct/ed6be240c12511e6bcd2d69186780352#part_f6da53cc1eae4ba4a1769958ce725246>.
- Dijanovic, Davor. “Thanks to Kolinda, after Tuđman Croatia has again foreign policy”. *Direktno*. July 9, 2017. <<https://direktno.hr/kolumne/zahvaljujuci-kolindi-hrvatska-nakon-tudmana-opet-ima-vanjsku-politiku-91337/>>.
- “Directions of Security Policy”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. May 18, 2016. <<https://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/policy/security-policy/directions-of-security-policy>>.
- “Estonia-Russia bilateral relations”. Republic of Estonia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. May 18, 2018. <<https://vm.ee/et/riigid/venemaa?display=relations>>.
- “Estonia-US bilateral relations”. Republic of Estonia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. April 9, 2018. <<https://vm.ee/et/riigid/ameerika-uhendriigid?display=relations>>.
- Estonian Security Policy. Republic of Estonia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. October 9, 2014. <<https://vm.ee/ru/politika-bezopasnosti-estonii>>.
- “EU trade ministers focus on WTO modernization and EU-US trade relations”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. November 10, 2018. <<https://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/news/latest-news/61742-eu-trade-ministers-focus-on-wto-modernisation-and-eu-us-trade-relations>>.

- “Evaluation of foreign and European policy priorities of the Slovak Republic in 2018 and their focus on 2019”. Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic. February, 2019, p.9.
- “Evaluation of Threats to National Security 2019”. The State Security Department of the Republic of Lithuania. The Second Department of Operational Services to the Ministry of Security of Lithuania, Vilnius 2019.
<<https://www.vsd.lt/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2019-Gresmes-internetui-LT.pdf>>.
- Foreign Ministry Development Plan 2017-2020. Republic of Estonia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. April 29, 2016. <<https://vm.ee/et/valisministeeriumi-arengukava-2017-2020>>.
- Forum “Strengthening Europe: Connecting North and South”. Croatia, Dubrovnik, 2016.
- Galperovich, Danylo. “The US and Russia compete for Europe's energy supply”. *Voice of America*. September 19, 2018. <<https://www.golos-ameriki.ru/a/us-russia-europe-energy-competition/4577838.html>>.
- “Gazprom exopt partners. Czech Republic”. Accessed February 9, 2019.
<<http://www.gazpromexport.ru/partners/czech/>>.
- “Gazprom exopt partners. Slovenia”. Accessed February 19, 2019.
<<http://www.gazpromexport.ru/partners/slovenia/>>.
- Gerasymchuk, Sergiy. “Three Seas Etude with Russian Notes: Against Whom Acts The Three Seas Initiative?”. *Segodnya.ua*, September 26, 2018.
<<https://www.segodnya.ua/opinion/gerasymchukcolumn/trimorskiy-etyud-z-rosyskimi-shtrihami-proti-kogo-druzhat-derzhavi-ncativi-troh-morv-1174061.html>>.
- Grigoryan, Maria. “The role of Russian business in the development of the Croatian economy”. *Russia Beyond*. February 18, 2019.
<<https://hr.rbth.com/economics/83851-uloga-ruskog-biznisa-u-razvoju-hrvatskog-gospodarstva>>.
- “Highway from Rzeszów to Budapest – Via Carpathia under construction”. Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. 28 June 2017.
<<http://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm8.nsf/v4Komunikat.xsp?documentId=CBCE79C441AF78DAC125814D003D8B93&lang=EN>>.
- Hromenko, S. “Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. When Wikipedia is wrong”. , vol 3. Historic Truth, 10 January, 2014.

- “Hungarian-American political relations are improving”. Website of the Hungarian Government. February 11, 2019. <<http://www.kormany.hu/hu/kulgaszdasagi-es-kulugyminiszterium/hirek/javulnak-a-magyar-amerikai-politikai-kapcsolatok>>.
- Igor Zagrebelny. “Direct Turn to “National Modern” and Perspectives of Intermarium”. *National Correspondent*, July 12, 2017. <<http://nackor.org/index.php?/ukr/kerovaniy-povorot-do-nacional-nogo-modernu-i-perspektivi-mizhmor-ya>>.
- “Intermarium is going to the summit - a project that will cease Russian aggression”. *From.ua*. June 12, 2017. <<http://from-ua.com/news/407924-na-sammit-sobiraetsya-mezhdumore-proekt-kotorii-postavit-na-rossii-krest.html>>.
- Kaczynski, Piotr Maciej. “Poland in EU: The Centre of Europe”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland. Accessed January 28, 2019. <https://www.msz.gov.pl/en/p/msz_en/foreign_policy/europe/european_union/poland_in_eu/centre_of_europe/centre_of_europe>
- “Kaczynski: Poland is not obliged to accept migrants”. *TASS Information Agency*. July 1, 2017. <<https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/4380555>>.
- Konrat, Marek. “Trzecia Europa”. *Polska Koncepcja Międzymorza (1937-1938)*”, in “*Międzymorze: Nadzieje i ograniczenia w polityce II Rzeczypospolitej*”. Studium Europy Wschodniej, Uniwersytet Warszawski 2016.
- Kósa, András. “Berlin, Brussels and Moscow are both concerned about the Three Seas”. *Magyar Nemzet*. July 14, 2017. <<https://magyarnemzet.hu/archivum/kulfold-archivum/berlin-brusszel-es-moszkva-egyszerre-aggodik-a-harom-tenger-miatt-3889423/>>.
- Kott, Matthew. “A far right hijack of Intermarium”. *New Eastern Europe*, Issue No:2. pp.25-30. June 20, 2017. <<https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=535478>>.
- Krasner D. Stephen. “Compromising Westphalia,” *International Security*, Vol.XX, (Winter 1995).
- Kurchenko, Maria. “The Three Seas Initiative: A new chance for Eastern Europe?”. *Hvylya.net*, July 12, 2017. <<http://hvylya.net/analytics/geopolitics/initsiativa-treh-morey-novyiy-shans-dlya-vostochnoy-evropyi.html>>.

- Kwiatek, Aleksander. "Zachyd porwany" Milana Kundery a polska myśl europejska w przełomowej dekadzie lat osiemdziesiątych XX wieku". *Studia Śląskie*, Issue No:75, pp. 25-50.
- Latvia's Security Policy. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. May 20, 2016. <<https://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/policy/security-policy/latvia-s-security-policy>>.
- "Lithuania and Russia complete border demarcation". *Interfax*. May 4, 2018. <<https://www.interfax.ru/world/611343>>.
- Lithuania's EU membership". Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania. March 27, 2018. <<http://urm.lt/default/lt/uzsienio-politika/uzsienio-politikos-prioritetai/lietuva-europos-sajungoje/lietuvos-naryste-es>>.
- "Lithuania's Membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)". Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania. March 13, 2019. <<http://urm.lt/default/lt/uzsienio-politika/uzsienio-politikos-prioritetai/lietuvos-saugumo-politika/nato>>.
- "Litpolukrbrig history: From an idea to the creation". Litpolukrbrig. Accessed July 25, 2018. <<http://litpolukrbrig.wp.mil.pl/en/91.html>>.
- Marich, Leo. "Cultural Threats to the Intermarium States and how to overcome them. Croatian Perspective". *National Correspondent*, September 26, 2016. <<http://nackor.org/index.php?/ukr/kul-turni-zagrozi-derzhavam-intermariumu-ta-yak-ih-poboroti-horvats-ka-perspektiva>>.
- Martynyuk, Vitaliy. "The Three Seas Initiative: what can Ukraine contribute and what it can receive". *Yevropeiska Pravda*, September 2, 2016. <<https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/rus/experts/2016/09/2/7054023/>>.
- Maslak, Oleksandr. "Intermarium – between project and reality". *Banderivets.org*, August 14, 2015. <<http://banderivets.org.ua/mizh-mor-ya-mizh-proektom-ta-realnistyu.html>>.
- Mearsheimer, John. "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security*, Volume XIX, (Winter 1994).
- Mertsalov, A., Semyryaga, M. "*Secrets of Stalin's Diplomacy*". Moscow, 1992.
- Michal Bokša and Jakub Kufčák: "Building EU defense capabilities and dividing lines within NATO". *Association for International Questions (AMO)*. December 2018. <<https://www.amo.cz/wp->

content/uploads/2018/12/AMO_Budovani-obrannych-kapacit-EU-a-delicii-linie-uvnitr-NATO_1.pdf>.

Miklos, Mitrovits. “Three seas - the future of Eastern Central Europe?”. *Élet és Irodalom*. July 7, 2017. <<https://www.es.hu/cikk/2017-07-07/mitrovits-miklos/harom-tenger-kelet-kozep-europa-jovoje.html>>.

“Minister Petříček attended the Munich Security Conference”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. February 17, 2019.

<https://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/udalosti_a_media/tiskove_zpravy/ministr_petrick_se_zucastnil_mnichovske.html>.

“Minister Tomáš Petříček negotiated with United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. February 23, 2019.

<https://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/udalosti_a_media/tiskove_zpravy/ministr_tomas_petrick_jednal_s_sefem.html>.

Mróz, A. „*Historic prerequisites of the Eastern European Policy in Poland. Conditions, Concepts*”. Central European University 2009, pp.20-29.

Muellerson, R. “Soviet-German Treaties 1939 in the Field of International Relations”. *International Historic Journal*, vol. 11, September-October, 2000.

“National Defense Strategy for the Period 2015 - 2019. A Strong Romania in Europe and the World”. Romania Presidential Administration. Bucharest, 2015.

<https://www.presidency.ro/files/userfiles/Strategia_Nationala_de_Aparare_a_Tarii_1.pdf>.

“New NATO Strategic Concept”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland. Accessed January 21, 2019.

<https://www.msz.gov.pl/en/p/msz_en/foreign_policy/security_policy/nato/new_nato_strategic_concept/>.

Nikonorov, Alexander. “What are the perspectives of Intermarium project in Ukraine?”. *dn.depo.ua*. March 08, 2017. <<https://dn.depo.ua/rus/dn/yaki-perspektivi-maye-proekt-mizhmor-ya-v-ukrayini-20170307532548>>.

Nowak, Andrzej. “*Polska, Rosja i Ukraina: Strategiczny Trójkąt Koncepcji Józefa Piłsudskiego w Latach 1918-1920*” in „*Międzymorze: Nadzieje i ograniczenia w polityce II Rzeczypospolitej*”. Studium Europy Wschodniej, Uniwersytet Warszawski 2016.

“One thing is clear: peace in Europe is only possible with Russia”.

Bundespräsident Alexander van der Bellen Official Website. June 5, 2018.

<<https://www.bundespraesident.at/aktuelles/detail/news/eines-ist-klar-frieden-in-europa-ist-nur-mit-russland-moeglich/>>.

“Orbán misses Trump?”. *Népszava*. July 5, 2017.

<https://nepszava.hu/1133884_orban-kihagyja-trumpot>.

Peganov, A. “Czechoslovak crisis 1938-1939. Mutual Bindings of the Unpretentious Domestic and Political Conjuncture and Problems of National Minorities”. *International Relations: History And Modern Aspects, Theories And Research Practices*, vol. 2, p. 91-109. Moscow-Stavropol, 2011.

Petrov, Pyotr. “In Bulgaria, dissatisfaction with the behavior of the EU and the USA has increased”. *Military Review*. February 25, 2018.

<<https://topwar.ru/136645-v-bolgarii-usililos-nedovolstvo-ot-povedeniya-es-i-ssha.html>>.

Pokrovska, I.S. “*Munich Treaty 1938*”. Ukrainian Diplomatic Encyclopedia in 2 vol. Kiev, Knowledge of Ukraine, 2004— vol. 2— 812p. ISBN 966-316-045-4.

“Poland and new military alliance against Russia in Central and Eastern Europe”. *Eurasia Daily*. June 24, 2016.

<<https://eadaily.com/en/news/2016/06/24/poland-and-new-military-alliance-against-russia-in-central-and-eastern-europe>>.

“Poland for 10 years has received more than 100 billion euros of financial aid from the EU”. *UNIAN Information Agency*. June 30, 2014.

<<https://www.unian.net/economics/finance/934342-polsha-za-10-let-poluchila-ot-es-bolee-100-mlrd-evro-pomoschi.html>>.

“Poland in EU”. *Gopolsha.com*. December 2, 2018. <<https://gopolsha.com/polsha-v-evrosoyuze/>>.

“Poland in NATO”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland. Accessed February 2, 2019.

<https://www.msz.gov.pl/en/p/msz_en/foreign_policy/nato_2016/poland_in_nato/>.

“Poland. The World Factbook”. *Central Intelligence Agency*. February 14, 2019.

<<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/pl.html>>.

- Polishchuk, Oleg. “Polish roads. Why Warsaw has not learned lessons from the defeats of the first and second Rzeczpospolita”. *Delovaya Stolitsa*, December 3, 2016. <<http://www.dsnews.ua/world/polskie-grabli-pochemu-varshava-ne-vynesla-uroki-iz-porazheniy-29112016220000>>.
- “Political Consultation of State Secretary Simone Leskovar with Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Alexander Grushko”. Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. February 21, 2019. <http://www.mzz.gov.si/si/medijsko_sredisce/novica/40958/>.
- “Pompeo discussed sanctions against Russia with Bulgarian Foreign Minister”. *Russia Today*. November 6, 2018. <<https://russian.rt.com/world/news/570791-pompeo-sankcii-rossiya>>.
- “President Kaljulaid at meeting with Trump: “The contribution of countries does not depend on their size”. President of the Republic of Estonia Website. July 6, 2017. <<https://president.ee/en/meedia/press-releases/13449-president-kaljulaid-at-meeting-with-trump-the-contribution-of-countries-does-not-depend-on-their-size/index.html>>
- “President of Latvia at the summit of the Three Seas Initiative: the United States reaffirms its strong support for European security”. President of Latvia Website. July 6, 2017. <<https://www.president.lv/en/news/news/president-of-latvia-at-the-summit-of-the-three-seas-initiative-the-united-states-reaffirms-its-strong-support-for-european-security-25066>>.
- Pronin, A. “Soviet-German Treaties 1939: Prerequisites and Consequences”. *Questions of History*, vol. 12, 2006.
- Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski and Zbigniew Rau. “Polish foreign policy: nothing about us without us”. *Rzeczpospolita*. August 8, 2015. <<https://www.rp.pl/Publicystyka/308099882-Polska-polityka-zagraniczna-Nic-o-nas-bez-nas.html>>.
- Purcarus, Alexandru. “The Bucharest Summit of the Three Seas Initiative”. *Contributors*. April 5, 2018. <<http://www.contributors.ro/global-europa/summitul-de-la-bucure%C8%99ti-al-ini%C8%9Biativei-celor-trei-mari>>.
- Rakitin, Alexander. “Three Seas Initiative – condition and perspectives: information and analytical paper”. *Ukrainian Institute for Analysis and Management of Policy*. August 10, 2017. June 12, 2018. <<https://uiamp.org.ua/isl/iniciativa-tryoh-morey-sostoyanie-i-perspektivy-informacionno-analiticheskaya-spravka>>.

- Rees-Mogg, William. "Break out from Brussels" *London Times*, June 5, 2005.
- "Regional cooperation with Russian Federation". Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Romania. Accessed March 1, 2019. <<https://www.mae.ro/en/node/2107>>.
- Remarks by President Trump at the Three Seas Initiative Summit, the Royal Castle, Warsaw, Poland. July 6, 2017. <<https://ru.usembassy.gov/remarks-president-trump-three-seas-initiative-summit>>.
- Robert Keohane and Lisa Martin, "The Promise of Institutional Theory," *International Security*, Volume XX, (Summer 1995). p. 42.
- "Romania: Russian Foreign Ministry "signals a thaw", Bucharest wants "respect". *Regnum*. February 28, 2017. <<https://regnum.ru/news/2243794.html>>.
- Ruchkina, Irina. "The Czech Republic will not sign the UN Migration Agreement". *Radio Praha*. November 14, 2018. <<https://www.radio.cz/ru/rubrika/radiogazeta/chexiya-ne-podpishet-migracionnoe-soglashenie-oon>>.
- "Russia and Bulgaria discussed the implementation of joint projects in industry and other areas". *Rambler*. May 21, 2018. <https://weekend.rambler.ru/people/39901219-rossiya-i-bolgariya-obsudili-realizatsiyu-sovmestnyh-proektov-v-promyshlennosti-i-drugih-oblastyah/?utm_source=copylink>.
- Semenyaka, Olena. "Third Way and Pan-Europe: what do new and right the " new right " have?". *Pokrov*. May 17, 2017. <<http://pokrov.world/archives/1455>>.
- Semyryaga, M.. "Baltic States Join USSR". *International Life*, vol. 2, 1990.
- Sevostyanov, G., Havkin, B. "Official Soviet Documents of Soviet-German Treaties 1939". *New and Contemporary History*, vol. 1, 1993.
- Shamiev, Kirill. "Hungarian-Russian relations in the era of (after) Putin". *Riddle.io*. December 19, 2018. <<https://www.ridl.io/ru/vengersko-rossijskie-otnosheniya-v-jepo/>>.
- Shara, Anatoliy. "Historian Henrik Meinander: Russians are Unlikely to Agree to Fight in the Third World; The Finnish Historian Advised Ukraine to Act More Cunningly". *Apostrophe.ua*, December 11, 2016. <<https://apostrophe.ua/ua/article/world/europe/2016-12-11/istorik-genrik-meynander-rossiyane-vryad-li-soglyasyatsya-voevat-v-tretye-mirovoy/8679>>.

- Shemshuchenko, Y.S. "England-Germany Declaration". Judicial Encyclopedia: [in 6 vol.]. Kiev, Ukrainian Encyclopedia, 1998. Vol. 1. 672p.: ISBN 966-7492-00-X
- Sidjanski, Dusan. "The Federal Future of Europe: From the European Community to the European Union". University of Michigan Press, 2000.
- "Slovak Foreign Minister said that economy and energy dominate relations with Russia". *TASS Information Agency*. October 11, 2018. <<https://tass.ru/ekonomika/5660737>>.
- "Slovenia has joined the list of "enemies of Brussels". *Tsargrad.tv*. June 4, 2018. <https://tsargrad.tv/articles/slovenija-popolnila-spisok-vragov-brjusselja_136918>.
- "Slovenia: Safe, Successful, Globally Respected: The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia". Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ljubljana 2015. p.17. <http://www.mzz.gov.si/fileadmin/pageuploads/Zakonodaja_in_dokumenti/dokumenti/strategija_ZP_ang.pdf>.
- Gulevich, Vladislav. "Three Seas Initiative- an American "Fence" between Russia and Europe". *Strategic Culture Fund*. September 12, 2016. <<https://www.fondsk.ru/news/2016/09/12/troemore-amerikanskij-zabor-mezhdu-rossiej-i-evropoj-42456.html>>.
- "The Czech Republic and Slovakia are choosing sanctions instead of migrants". *Rambler.ru*. April 20, 2017. <https://news.rambler.ru/world/36629073/?utm_content=rnews&utm_medium=read_more&utm_source=copylink>.
- "The European Union opened a new case against Poland. It can be deprived of EU subsidies". *BBC Russia*. July 3, 2018. <<https://www.bbc.com/russian/news-44689604>>.
- "The political pillar of Hungarian-American relations is being rebuilt". Website of the Hungarian Government. February 12, 2019. <<http://www.kormany.hu/hu/kulgazdasagi-es-kulugyminiszterium/hirek/ujraepul-a-magyar-amerikai-kapcsolatok-politikai-pillere>>.
- "The President of Romania made a statement on the new EU agreement on migrants". *Segodnya.ua*. June 29, 2018. <<https://www.segodnya.ua/world/europe/prezident-rumynii-sdelal-zayavlenie-po-novomu-soglasheniyu-es-o-migrantah-1150832.html>>.

- “The Three Seas Initiative summit has started in Bucharest”. *Ukrinform*. September 18, 2018. <<https://www.ukrinform.ru/rubric-world/2539891-v-buhareste-startoval-sammit-iniciativy-treh-morej.html>>.
- “There are two worldviews about migration”. Website of the Hungarian Government. February 20, 2019. <<http://www.kormany.hu/hu/kulgazdasagi-es-kulugyminiszterium/hirek/ket-vilagnezet-letezik-a-migracioval-kapcsolatban>>.
- “Three Seas Initiative List of Priority Interconnection Projects”. Three Seas Initiative. Accessed February 13, 2019. <http://three-seas.eu/press-releases/>
- Troebst, Stefan. “Intermarium and “Wedding to the Sea”: Politics of History and Mental Mapping in East Central Europe”. *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire*, no.10:2 2010, pp. 293-321. <<https://doi.org/10.1080/1350748032000140813>>.
- Trofimova, Olga. “Accession of Croatia to the European Union”. Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations. July 2, 2013. <http://old.imemo.ru/ru/publ/comments/2013/comm_2013_014.pdf>.
- Umland, Andreas. “How to Solve Ukraine’s Security Dilemma: The Case for a New Security Pact between the Baltic and Black Seas”. Atlantic Council, April 12, 2016. <<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/how-to-solve-ukraine-s-security-dilemma>>.
- United Nations. Resolutions and Decisions adopted by the General Assembly during its seventieth session. Volume III December 24, 2015 – September 13, 2016. General Assembly Official Records. Seventieth Session Supplement No. 49, 2016.
- Updated National Security Strategy for the Republic of Bulgaria. Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Bulgaria. March 14, 2018. <https://www.mod.bg/bg/doc/cooperation/20181005_Akt_strateg_NS_RB.pdf>.
- “US Ambassador: Relations between Croatia and the United States are excellent”. *NI*. November 8, 2018. <<http://hr.n1info.com/Vijesti/a346184/Americki-veleposlanik-Kohorst-kaze-da-su-odnosi-Hrvatske-i-SAD-a-izvrsni.html>>.

- “US plans to fight the “dominance” of Russian gas in Austria”. *Rambler Finance*. November 19, 2018. <<https://finance.rambler.ru/economics/41289706-ssha-planiruyut-borotsya-s-rossiyskim-gazom-v-avstrii/>>.
- “US Relations with Romania”. Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs Fact Sheet. US Department of State. July 16, 2018. <<https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35722.htm>>.
- Van Evera, Stephen. “*Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*”. Cornell University Press 1997. ISBN 0-8014-8457-X.
- Vít Borčány and Vít Dostál: “Agenda for Czech Foreign Policy 2018”. *Association for International Questions (AMO)*. Praha 2018. ISBN 978-80-87092-56-9, p.41. <http://www.amo.cz/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Agenda_2018.pdf>.
- Voskresensky, A.D. “Political comparativism as a part of the discourse of the world complex regional studies: general laws and specificity of their transformation in the East”. *Vostok*, no.2, 1995.
- Vurušić, Vlado. “Russian Analysts: “It can even be said that Russia has reacted more acutely to the decision of the Republic of Croatia to expel diplomats than to decisions of larger states”. *Jutarnji Vijesti*. April 1, 2018. <<https://www.jutarnji.hr/vijesti/svijet/vodeci-ruski-analiticari-za-jutarnji-moze-se-cak-reci-da-je-rusija-bolnije-reagirala-na-odluku-rh-o-protjerivanju-diplomata-nego-na-odluke-velikih/7195218/>>.