

Some considerations on the EU Danube Strategy and the Black Sea Region

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Abstract

The Danube strategy can only constitute a step forward regarding the stated intentions, via the Black Sea Synergy program of the European Union towards the boosting of economic development, democratic governance, security etc., in the Black Sea region. Even more, this implies the warranty of sustainable development considering that the purposes of the Danube strategy call for more effective transports and environmental protection. First of all, the advantages for the Black Sea area derive from the complexity and large scale of the strategy plan for the Danube, which implies a surface of over 800.000 km², a population of over 100 million inhabitants, 10 European countries and 4 European capitals. Although this time, because of the ongoing economic crisis, the European Commission has declared its full support for this cause while unable to cover any of its expenses, we should not forget that the idea of this project has been derived from the success of another macro region project, the Baltic Sea strategy. This model mainly implies the possibility of real benefits for the countries which are included in the Danube strategy and which are also near the Black Sea: Romania, Bulgaria, and, in a broader perspective, Moldova as well as Ukraine. The detailing of this feature is the main objective of the current paper, an objective which, we trust, can be accomplished by the careful extrapolation of the advantages offered by past macro region projects of the European Union, and the theoretical approach of their implementation in the regional context of the Black Sea. The method used is the analysis of official EU Inforegio documents, but the current article also relies on the recent literature on this subject.

Key words: Danube Strategy, Black Sea, European Union, Territorial Cooperation, Macro Region, Sustainable Development

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1. Introduction

Along with the recent evolution of the Danube Strategy as a plan and considering its soon to come official start, a multitude of questions have been addressed by the civil society. In this research I try to cover only one of them: what is the impact of the Danube Strategy for the Black Sea Region?

Answering this question is important because the Danube Strategy can only constitute a step forward regarding the stated intentions, via the Black Sea Synergy program of the European Union towards the boosting of economic development, democratic governance, security etc., in the Black Sea region. Even more, this implies the warranty of sustainable development considering that the purposes of the Danube strategy call for more effective transport and environmental protection. First of all, the advantages for the Black Sea area derive from the complexity and large scale of the strategy plan for the Danube, which implies a surface of over 800.000 km², a population of over 100 million inhabitants, 10 European countries and 4 European capitals. Although this time, because of the ongoing economic crisis, the European Commission has declared its full support for this cause while unable to cover any of its expenses, we should not forget that the idea of this project has been derived from the success of another macro region project, the Baltic Sea strategy.

In answering the question of the impact of the Danube Strategy for the Black Sea region I will first offer an outline of the Strategy, while in assessing its importance I will try to prove that the Danube Strategy brings clear advantages and benefits to the Black Sea region. This model mainly implies the possibility of real benefits for the countries which are included in the Danube strategy and which are also near the Black Sea: Romania, Bulgaria, and, in a larger vision, Moldova as well as Ukraine. The detailing of this feature is the main objective of the current paper, an objective which, we trust, can complementarily be accomplished also by the careful extrapolation of the advantages offered to other regional cooperation projects at the Black Sea.

The already existing specialized literature has not yet covered the question that I will answer here, and I take this fact as encouragement. In my research I will mainly use official European Union documents, statistics from distinguished international institutions and of course I will consult the recent works of scholars regarding the subject as well as the opinions expressed by journalists in the press.

2. An Outline of the Danube Strategy Project

Although forms of cooperation already exist between the states along the Danube river (namely the Working Community of the Danube Regions, the Danube Commission on Transport Issues or the green International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River - ICPDR), the European Union has

recently chosen to enhance cooperation in this area through a more extensive EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR), as Pop (2009) shows.

The Danube Strategy represents a planned internal strategy of the European Union which also includes non-member riverside states. These states are: Germany (specifically Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria lands), Austria, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova. This totals an area of more or less 800.000 square kilometers, and a population of almost 100 millions inhabitants, both meaning very important portions of Europe as a whole (also 2,083 millions \$ as GDP, as compared to the 16,447 millions \$ GDP of the EU).¹

This strategy has been officially called for since 19 June 2009, when the Brussels European Council (2010) invited “the Commission to present an EU strategy for the Danube region before the end of 2010” (p. 13). The European Commission is sustaining this policy via a Territorial Cooperation approach. It is very important to note that for the 2007-2013 time span, almost half of the Territorial Cooperation programmes are focused on the Danube Area, as the EC Inforegio (2010h) discloses. Of these 41 Danube European Territorial Cooperation programmes, 18 are Cross-border, 7 are transnational, 13 are IPA CBC (Instrument for Pre-Accession Cross-Border Cooperation) and 3 are ENPI CBC (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument Cross-Border Cooperation).

The next step was taken on 25 February 2010 when the governments of Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia have officially welcomed “the decision of the European Council taken at its meeting on June 17-18, 2009, to invite the Commission to prepare an EU Strategy on the Danube region before the end of 2010” (EC Inforegio, 2010d, p. 1). The same document is “emphasizing that the Danube Region Strategy will serve the goal of increasing prosperity, security and peace for the people living there, especially through enhancing cross-border, trans-regional and trans-national cooperation and coordination” (*Ibid.*). It must also be noted that, on the same occasion, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, and Ukraine were invited to adhere to the project.

Furthermore, Gordon Bajnai (the PM of Hungary) also invited Poland to join discussions as “she plays an exceptionally important role in the preparation of the next EU mid-term budget” (EC Inforegio, 2010j, p. 2), and as it is already a member of the Baltic Sea Region Strategy. This is a clear example that previous experience is treasured for the purpose of a solid Danube Strategy project.

¹ Nominal GDP, according to 2009 data provided by the International Monetary Fund (2010).

An important step for the outlining of its policy fields and for the whole project was the “Consultation on the EU Strategy for the Danube Region”. This stage lasted from 2 February 2010 to 12 April, a period during which 101 stakeholders² (regional and local authorities of the Member States, Inter-Governmental and Non-Governmental institutions, public organizations and the civil society etc) made their contributions (EC Inforegio, 2010b). Meanwhile, important conferences regarding the EU Strategy for the Danube Region were also held in Austria and Slovakia (Conference on the EU Strategy for the Danube Region: Transport, energy and environmental issues, Vienna-Bratislava, 19/21 April 2010), Bulgaria (Conference on the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Ruse, 10/11 May 2010) and Romania where a “Conference on the EU Strategy for the Danube Region” took place in Constanța during 9/11 June 2010 (*Ibid.*).

These conferences outlined almost all the important aspects of the EUSDR: setting a framework of the policy and explaining why it is needed; its emphasis on environment, transport and energy; the means of the EUSDR implementation and monitoring (macro-regional mechanisms and structures), which resources need to be mobilized (finances are to be drawn from national funds, regional funds and also EU funds, which means the European Regional Development Fund, cohesion Funds and Instrument of Pre-Accession funds, as it is shown by the EC Inforegio (2010f), capacity building and institutional cooperation and the priority actions of the EUSDR including socio-economic, human and institutional development (EC Inforegio, 2010e).

Regarding the policy fields, the two layers of the Danube Strategy are integration and focus. This means that the Danube Strategy will integrate different policy areas, creating ties between them for the purpose of efficiency, but the Strategy will also distinctly focus on specific relevant problems of the entire Danube area (*Ibid.*).

The schedule sets the final communication and action plan to be delivered by the end of the current year, while in 2011, under the Hungarian EU presidency, the participating states will have to officially offer their endorsement for the EUSDR.

3. The EUSDR and the Black Sea Region Cooperation Projects

Now that the stages of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) have been presented, for the purpose of this paper it is recommendable to review them while having in mind the peculiarities of the Black Sea region. But this is not the only method of revealing the impact of the EUSDR for the Black Sea region, because as we will see in in this section of the

² The list of stakeholders taking part in the consultation can be accessed on-line at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/consultation/danube/doc/stakeholders_draft.doc.

paper, advantages can also be found when reconsidering past and ongoing projects in the Black Sea-Danube region.

We have seen how forms of cooperation in the Danube region existed far before the planning of the EUSDR policy. This is also the case when considering the Danube - Black Sea area. Moreover, the main actor involved in these (mainly economic) projects³ is also the European Union. Since 2001, the European Commission adopted a Communication on environmental cooperation in the Danube – Black Sea region (see EU Pressroom, 2001). In this communication it is stressed how the “very acute problems” of the Danube – Black Sea region, already considered, nota bene, “*an axis of increasing geo-political importance* (emphasis mine) in the enlarging European Union”, have “to be tackled through a joint effort, conducted at regional level” (*Ibid*, p. 1).

The aspects detailed above are again brought forth in another Communication of the European Commission on environmental cooperation in the Danube – Black Sea region this time in 2005.⁴ Two years later, in 2007, the European Commission formed the “Black Sea Synergy” programme in order to stimulate democratic and economic reforms, support stability and promote development, focus on practical projects in areas of common concern, respond to opportunities and challenges through coordinated action in a regional framework and develop a climate more helpful to the solving of conflicts in the region (EC External Relations, 2010). The same document also makes references to energy, transport and environment, the three most important targets of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

Regarding energy, the Black Sea region is acknowledged as a strategically important one for energy supply security⁵ (COM, 2007, pp. 4-5). Via Black Sea Synergy, the EU aims to improve “dialogue on energy security” (*Ibid.*, p. 5) and “to provide a *clear, transparent and non-discriminatory framework*, in line with the *EU aquis*, for energy production, transport and transit” (*Ibid.*).

In the field of transport, the Commission draws attention to the necessity of developing transport infrastructure between the Union and non-member states in the Black Sea region. An objective like this is complementary to the EU Strategy for the Danube Region because the EU member states at the Black Sea

³ Most projects have been developed also under the aegis of the EU, specifically under either the Danube River Protection Convention (DRPC – implemented by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River) or the Black Sea Convention (under the Black Sea Commission). Also see information provided by the EC Environment (2010).

⁴ Specifically, it is shown that 3 main environmental problems are: the discharge of waste water, the over-exploitation of surface and groundwater and lastly the eutrophication (over-enrichment of the water with organic matter, because of the discharge of agricultural nutrients). See COM (2001).

⁵ Also Çelikpala (2010) assessed the importance of transforming the Black Sea “competitive security environment into one that fosters and strengthens regional cooperation” (p. 17), which is, by proximity, also an aim of the EUSDR.

are Romania and Bulgaria, countries which also share the Danube as a common border for 471 kilometres. Furthermore, the same Communication of the EU Commission on the Black Sea Synergy calls for the full exploitation of “*the advantages offered by short sea shipping and inland waterways, notably the Danube*” (*Ibid.*, p. 5-6), while also expressing its intention to promote safety of water, air and road transport and for “longer-term development of national emissions-trading schemes” (*Ibid.*), for a greener Europe. This is especially important for Romania, as the length of the Danube on its territory is 1075 kilometres from Baziaş to Sulina in the Danube Delta.

The Danube Delta is also an important piece in the environmental well-being of the Black Sea. Even this summer the overflowing of the Danube into the sea because of rain and floods has caused the partial desalination of the Black Sea, which in turn led to ecological imbalances. On the Romanian shore of the Black Sea the result was the death of many salt water species, which also affected seaside resorts (see Demir, 2010, and other press articles). This makes for a perfect example on how the development of environmental strategies in the Danube region can directly affect the ecosystem of the Black Sea region, and it also shows how a policy field reverberates in other fields.

Other environmental problems which the EU Commission wishes to solve in the Black Sea region via Black Sea Synergy are related to the better implementation of multilateral environment treaties, which is a field where a successful Danube Strategy could clear the problems for at least the Western half of the Black Sea.

Besides these 3 central purposes of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (energy, transport, environment), there are also other ones which could provide advantages for the Black Sea Synergy or other development projects: fisheries, maritime policy, trade, improvement of security and solving “frozen conflicts” and educational and research networks. That is because, for example, the enormous experience of the EU in fishing policy could easily help the Black Sea region countries, while the possible appeasement of the conflict in Transnistria (Trans-Dniestr) in a EUSDR project would seriously improve security⁶ in the entire Black Sea region.

Even as we consider other ongoing sustainable development⁷ projects at the Black Sea,⁸ the EU is also determined to strengthen its presence in the region

⁶ For security paradoxes in the Black Sea region see Tryantaphyllou (2009). One of these paradoxes refers to the fact that cooperation takes place rather reluctantly in the Black Sea Region. Considering this, I believe that the success of the Danube Strategy would also account for improved cooperation, at least in the North-Western part of the Black Sea. Also see Manoli (2010) and Aydin (2005).

⁷ For more on sustainable development see the excellent report edited by Levin & Clark (2010).

⁸ Another notable organization is the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC - <http://www.bsec-organization.org>, founded in 1992). This project was followed by the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB, founded in 1997). Other institutions which support development in

by the Strategy for the Danube Region. Taken as a whole, the Danube and the Black Sea constitute the largest non-oceanic body of water in Europe, and therefore it is adequate that no effort should be spared for its development.

Among the territorial cooperation plans of the EU Commission for 2007-2011, as we have seen, there are 3 ENPI CBC plans (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument Cross-Border Cooperation). For the purpose of the present paper it is important to detail on one of them, specifically the Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme (BSBJOP). Its aim is to “contribute to a stronger and sustainable economic and social development of the regions of the Black Sea Basin” (Black Sea CBC, 2009a).

There are 3 main purposes of this programme and these are “supporting cross border partnerships for economic and social development based on common resources”, “sharing resources and competencies for environmental protection and conservation” and “supporting cultural and educational networks for the establishment of a common cultural environment in the Basin” (Black Sea CBC, 2009b). We can observe that these fields match the objectives of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, thus the improvement it would bring to the Danube – Black Sea area would also matter for the BSBJOP countries and regions.

4. Where the EUSDR meets the Black Sea Region

On a smaller scale, by mentioning the “Danube – Black Sea” area I am especially referring to the regions of Romania, Bulgaria, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine: Severoiztochen (Bulgaria), Sud-Est (Romania), the whole Republic of Moldova and Odessa (Ukraine). The above-mentioned countries are the Black Sea countries⁹ involved in the European Union Strategy for the Danube Area (of the 14 countries in total). Together, the regions constitute the north-western half of the Black Sea shore, totalling a population of almost 10 million inhabitants (total population of the Black Sea region: 66,742,520) on a territory of appreciatively 116,604 square kilometres (total surface of the Black Sea basin: 776,697 square kilometres).

the Black Sea area are the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS, since 1998) and, more recently, the Black Sea Forum for Partnership and Dialogue (BSF, 2006). Even though I have outlined the benefits of the Danube Strategy especially in relation with the Black Sea Synergy, they would certainly help these other development plans.

⁹ The whole Black Sea Region consists of the above mentioned regions plus Nykolayev (Ukraine), Kherson (Ukraine), Crimean (Ukraine), Zaporozhye (Ukraine), Donetsk (Ukraine), Georgia, Armenia – Hajastan, Azerbaijan, and the regions Trabzon (Turkey), Samsun (Turkey), Kastamonu (Turkey), Zonguldak (Turkey), Kocaeli (Turkey), Istanbul (Turkey), Tekirdag (Turkey), Yugoiztochen (Bulgaria), Rostovskaya (Russian Federation), Krasnodarsky Kray (Russian Federation) and Republica Adygeya (Russian Federation). These are the seaside administrative divisions of the Black Sea countries plus countries included for their strategic importance in the area (e.g. Georgia).

The economic situation of these countries is worse than that of their more Western neighbours in the Danube area, but, with few exceptions, it does not vary much from that of the countries on the South-Eastern shore of the Black Sea. It is beyond doubt that a more developed Western shore of the Black Sea means more stability in the area and better (financial) implication of these countries in the projects concerning the whole Black Sea region.¹⁰

As I have mentioned the Black Sea states that would benefit most from the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, an interesting approach would be to analyse their position towards this policy. This would also enable the current research to highlight clear examples of the ways in which governments would take advantage of the newly revealed opportunities.

Starting with Romania, one notices that, having mentioned earlier that it would be one of the greatest Black Sea beneficiaries of the EUSDR (as a country where the Danube runs for more than 1000 kilometers and both as a founder of the Black Sea Forum.), according to the official declaration of MAE (2010), this country also aims to maintain itself as one of the initiators of the EUSDR. It is further outlined that an important contribution to Romanian participation would come from its County and local administration offices, which are to be informed by the decentralization agencies of the government on the opportunities offered (*Ibid.*). Romania's statement also reminds how the states and regions along the river Danube are surely to benefit from the possibility of directly accessing the Black Sea. It is further outlined how a perfectly navigable Danube¹¹ would also mean a step forward for the Black Sea Synergy programme, which aims to better connect the EU with the Trans-Caucasus area and Central Asia (EC Inforegio, 2010i, p. 5). It is specifically mentioned that since there are ports on the Danube in Romania in many cities and towns¹², and since these establishments are connected to national or European roads and railways¹³, they have the potential

¹⁰ See Gavras (2010).

¹¹ EC Inforegio (2010i, p. 6) illustrates the 3 ways in which ships on the Danube can reach the Black Sea:

- The Sulina Channel, 175km in length, where ships up to 25,000 tdw can navigate (taking in consideration the minimum level of water of 7,23m during minimum sailing levels);
- The Danube – Black Sea Canal, between Constanța Sud Harbour and Agigea at km 0, and connecting after 64 km with the Danube, at Cernavodă. It is also connected with the Poarta Albă – Midia – Năvodari Canal.
- The Poarta Albă – Midia – Năvodari Canal, 27,5 km long, is tributary to the Danube – Black Sea Channel, starting from Poarta Albă.

¹² From Brăila upstream there are ports in Moldova Veche, Orșova, Drobeta Turnu Severin, Calafat, Bechet, Turnu Măgurele, Zimnicea, Giurgiu, Oltenița, Călărași, Cernavodă (*Ibid.*, p. 8-9).

¹³ "There are: road transportation corridors, out of which 261 km of highway, around 6,650 km national roads, around 14,850 km of county roads, 6 TEN-T Corridors (totaling up to around 1,650 km) and railway transport corridors: TEN-T (totaling around 1,000 km), electric power railways (totaling up to around 1,225 km), and non-electric power railways (totaling up to around 3,700 km)". Source: *Ibid.*, p. 9.

of becoming multimodal transport hubs (*Ibid.*), which would also be beneficial to the trade in the Black Sea.

Another clear example of how the EUSDR would help the Black Sea region in the declarations of the Romanian government resides in the propositions regarding the environment. The future Danube Delta International Research Centre is also meant to develop knowledge and simulate processes regarding the Danube Delta – Black Sea interface phenomena, “including the potential risks for this area and their impact on the regional socio-economic activities” (*Ibid.*, p. 26).

The Bulgarian government also presents a very positive opinion towards the benefits of a EU Danube Strategy for the Black Sea Region (EC Inforegio, 2010a). Consequently, one highlighted aspect is that of the possibility of obtaining advantages for increasing connectivity between macro-regions such as the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea, or the EU and the Near East (*Ibid.*, p. 8).

It is also the case of Ukraine to show itself confident of the benefits of the EUSDR for the Black Sea region (EC Inforegio, 2010k). In its official position, it is remarkable that the Ukrainian government advises on the “restoration and protection of the resources of the unique hydrobionts¹⁴ of the Danube River and the north-western part of the Black Sea” (*Ibid.*, p. 5) by creating capacities for the artificial growth of marine life forms, developing a joint data collection regarding the status of hydrobionts reserves in Danube as well as the Black Sea and finally implementing new technologies of aquaculture in order to help the regeneration of various important species (*Ibid.*, pp. 5-6). The same opinion is shared by the Bavarian government, which further outlines that the EUSDR should also have the sub-goal of preserving “the Danube as a natural resource and ecological bridge between the Black Forest and the Black Sea” (Bayerische Staatsregierung, 2009, p. 6).

Even more, for the EUSDR, the Federal Environment Ministry of Germany (2010, p. 1) has proposed a project for “Trans-boundary risk management in the Danube Delta” together with Romania, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine for the prevention and management of industrial accidental pollution. This would mean investments of over 700,000 Euros for the environmental preservation of the Danube Delta, and consequently, for the protection of Western Black Sea ecosystem.

In the same spirit, the position of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs & Federal Chancellery (2010) of Austria mentions (even from the first phrase in the chapter regarding the importance of Danube navigation), the fact that the Danube is essentially a connector of the North Sea and the Black Sea (*Ibid.*, p. 4). Furthermore, it is shown that for the establishment of multimodal transport nodes on the Danube, “timetables of train,

¹⁴ Hydrobionts are different living organisms (animals, plants, bacteria) which live in water.

bus, and ship should be adjusted, taking into consideration also the needs of biking or hiking travellers” (*Ibid.*, p. 53). Moreover, “the integration of the Danube and the Black Sea into a «synergised» cruise ship destination would establish a link between the EUSDR and the EU Black Sea Synergy” (*Ibid.*). The same official stand of Austria regarding the EUSDR also provides the example of the Pan European Corridor IV (connecting the Danube space to the Black Sea in two points)¹⁵ as a successful initiative (*Ibid.*, p. 15).

But the same document also reminds of the need of improving “cultural life & cultural development” in the area. It is further shown that such a project would be similar to the current European Capital of Culture, although in a “less institutionalized concept and venue”, such as the case of the FLOW (Festival of Conversation for Culture and Science), launched by the Austrian Ministry of European and International Affairs in 2008. The next edition of FLOW is to be held in Chişinău (Republic of Moldova) in September 2010, and will bring together “young creative protagonists from ten countries of the Danube and Black Sea region, as driving forces able to enhance the role of the arts, culture and science in economic and social development, thus fostering mobility and exchange of best practice and expertise” (*Ibid.*, p. 50). This example is one of the best ones in favour of the cultural benefits of the Danube Strategy for the Black Sea region.

And finally, regarding the important field of energy security, the Slovenian government has expressed the need for the EUSDR to help constructing gas and oil infrastructures in the area, notably the South Stream Pipeline and the Pan-European Oil Pipeline (PEOP), which “are of vital importance, both for the Danube countries themselves and their connections with other macro-regions (Western Europe, Black Sea)” (EC Inforegio, 2010, pp. 5-6). This means that energy, also one of the three important aims of the EUSDR, is surely bound to provide benefits for the Black Sea region, as the two areas are undoubtedly connected regarding this domain and others, as I have tried to prove in the above research.

5. Conclusions

The present paper has provided a documented answer to an important question regarding a recent European wide (both EU and non-EU) project: what would be the impact of the Danube Strategy for the Black Sea region?

¹⁵ Linking “Dresden/Nürnberg (Germany), via Praha (Czech Republic), Wien (Austria)/Bratislava (Slovakia), Budapest (Hungary) to Romania. In Romania Corridor IV divides into two branches. The northern branch runs from Arad via Bucureşti to Constanţa at the Black Sea, the southern branch from Arad via Craiova to Sofia (Bulgaria) and divides again. One branch running further to Thessaloniki (Greece) and the other to Istanbul (Turkey)”.

In providing the answer, I have introduced an outline of the Danube Strategy. Then, considering the current frame of international cooperation projects surrounding the Black Sea region and for better clarity, I divided my response in two sections: one dealing with the benefits of the EUSDR for these projects, and the other one showing where exactly the EUSDR meets the Black Sea area in its own sum of projects.

Drawing from the legislation and project analysed above, my findings are that, considering the actors involved in the EUSDR and its proposed projects, it is a macro-regional cooperation strategy which, in its entire major (energy, transport, and environment) as well as secondary (culture, science, knowledge etc.) goals, will provide notable benefits for the Black Sea region.

Even as these findings are entirely positive, I would concentrate future research on how the EUSDR could avoid duplicating other cooperation projects in the Black Sea area¹⁶, while of course still being able to offer its full benefits to them and to the whole region. The EUSDR should only concentrate on covering the gaps in other cooperation projects at the Black Sea region as a whole, but without diminishing its assistance for its participant countries from the Black Sea. Furthermore, successful cooperation between Romania, Bulgaria, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine inside a strong EUSDR would serve as an example and encouragement, and provide a solid basis for the Black Sea region cooperation.

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¹⁶ This is warned against in the first official position of the German Federal Government.

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