

## THE EUROPEAN UNION VERSUS THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

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### Abstract

*The article is part of a comprehensive social, juridical and economic study that seeks to find solutions to the current geopolitical situation where the Russian Federation has expanded its territory using force without the consent of the Kiev government or EU member states on Crimea. This situation, in conjunction with the Syrian refugee crisis, with the political crisis on the government formation in Germany, with the Brexit, with the establishment of Austria's controversial government, the sanction of Poland by the Council of Europe and, last but not least, with the problems facing the formation of the new inland government may and should be analyzed together and is one of the purposes of this study, which will be partial analyzed and presented in this article. The author wishes to open a constructive scientific discussion with the academic bodies empowered to properly inform the civil society and not only without favoring any of the parties involved in this issue, namely: the EU states (Germany, Austria, Poland, and Italy) and the Russian Federation. The author presents the results obtained by the EU in conjunction with NATO's actions in Eastern Europe.*

**Keywords:** NATO, European Union, Treaty of Amsterdam, Poland, justice reform, Law and Justice party, the European commission, Article 7, Frans Timmermans, Donald Tusk, Jean Claude Juncker, Germany, Austria, Angela Merkel, Christian Democratic Union, Social Democratic Party, Sebastian Kurz, People's Party, Right Party of Liberty, Hungary, Warsaw, Italy, Italy Force, North League, Berlusconi, 5-Star Movement, Russian Federation, President Putin, Constitution, State Duma, Crisis, Crimea, Nuclear Weapons.

### 1. Introduction

The unprecedented peace and stability that Europe is crossing at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century is due to the existence of the European Union. It is the European Union which has generated not only a high level of economic development on the continent, but also a new approach to security, based on the peaceful settlement of disputes and on multilateral international cooperation through community institutions. Of course, the United States has played a crucial role in ensuring European security, both through its support for European integration and NATO's security engagement with Europe. In contrast to these positive developments in the west of the continent, in other parts of Europe, and especially in the Balkans, a series of crises emerged after 1990 in the context of the geopolitical resettlements that followed the end of the Cold War. An essential feature of these was that they often took place within and between states. However, the experience of the period 1990-2004 has shown that no state, not

even a superpower like the US, can approach global security issues by itself. Against this background, after 1990, and especially after 1998, the European Union has given new impetus to efforts to strengthen security and define the defense dimension at European level. The development of a common foreign and security policy also included the idea of defining a common defense policy explicitly mentioned in the Treaty of Amsterdam. At the same time, the European Union has been increasingly concerned about the completion of its internal institutional reforms, especially in the context of enlargement, as well as the finalization of the political debate on the future of Europe. Being a global economic actor, the EU participates fairly substantially on global security mechanisms, even if the concrete forms of such involvement are not yet clearly specified. As a result, international stability can now be conceived only by multi-level cooperation at the international community level, and especially through institutionalized dialogue, by increasing the involvement of large international organizations in defining world security. The globalization, manifested by the accentuation and liberalization of the global flows of goods, services, capital and information, has meant that internal and external risks can be mutually generated and reinforced. Against the background of an increase in the complexity and unpredictability of international threats, the improvement of the international security environment requires that internal crisis management measures be better coordinated and that the strategic information exchange between the involved states should take place in real time. As a result the state and its decisions are influencing directly the public and private sector, especially the business environment<sup>1</sup>. Since September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 and March 11<sup>th</sup> 2004, more than ever, the risks to the international security environment and first of all to the proliferation of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction are to be tackled through flexible cooperation, multilateral, balanced and consistent among states, including measures to phase out the causes of their production.

## 2. Political situation in EU

### 2.1. Political situation in Germany

For more than 100 days, Merkel has been trying to form a government - first with liberals and ecologists, now with social democrats. For her, there is no discussion of collaboration with the

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<sup>1</sup> Gruia George and Gruia George Cristian: „The role of state powers in the development of business environment”, *Perspectives of Business Law Journal*, [online], vol.2, no.1: 105-112

right-wing extremists in the ranks of the AfD party (Alternative for Germany). Uncertainties about the new governmental formula in Germany are coming to an end after the Social Democratic Party (SPD) approved the new government coalition agreement with the Christian Democrat Union, led by Angela Merkel. Two-thirds of the German Social Democrats voted for the agreement. SPD sources say most left-center members voted in favor of prolonging the coalition with the Christian Democrat Union. Out of over 366,000 SPD members casting their vote, over 66% voted for the new CDU agreement, which means continuing the big coalition between the two parties. The members of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) have been called to rule whether they support or not the prolongation of the coalition with Angela Merkel's party. The Christian-Democratic Union and the Social Democrat Party have concluded a new government agreement, negotiators agreeing on the division of key ministries, one of the last obstacles to the formation of the new government. Angela Merkel says the agreement provides the basis for "a good and stable government," while Martin Schulz thanked the Christian Democrats for accepting difficult compromises. Under the agreement, the SPD would lead six ministries, including Finance and Foreign Ministries. At the same time, the Christian-Democratic Union convenes the National Conference to approve the governmental agreement with the Social Democrats. This is one of the last obstacles to resolving the five-month political deadlock in Germany. The Christian Democrats' Conference takes place after the German Chancellor has announced who will be the members of the new cabinet. Merkel's ally, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer (AKK), general secretary of the party, will also vote. Kramp-Karrenbauer is seen as Merkel's successor. Being dubbed the "mini-Merkel," the 55-year-old prime minister of Saarland has visions similar to those of the Chancellor, but not entirely. It is often referred to as "AKK", and is similar to Merkel for both ideological and character-related reasons. "AKK" will follow Peter Tauber, 43, who resigned for health reasons, one of the critical voices in the CDU, after disappointing results from the latest legislation. Merkel's formation won the election, but with a low historical score of 32.9%. After being a 12-year chancellor and leader of the CDU for 18 years, Merkel's authority is declining in the party, and nominations for the new Cabinet come as an answer to the need for new people.

## 2.2. Political situation in Austria

The Austrian People's Party, headed by young Sebastian Kurz, ranked first in the general election in October 2017, with 31 per cent of voting options, following an anti-immigration and

right-wing program. At 31, Kurz became Chancellor and thus the youngest national leader in the world and in the history of Austria. The People's Party will ally with the Social Democrats or the Liberty Party (far-right). He's always a few steps in front of everyone: this is how the new Austrian chancellor likes to present himself. Angela Merkel, head of the government with the longest experience in the European Union, said that "the young political star did not become Chancellor only because of his almost bold self-confidence. Sebastian Kurz has an instinct for populism and is willing to ally with partners who scare others. Its coalition with the right-wing populist FPÖ, a front ally of the Front National Party in France, gives rise to emotions in Western chancelleries. "Kurz wants more regional decisions and is not willing to offset Brexit's effects for the EU by providing additional amounts from wealthy states such as Germany and Austria. In addition, the young chancellor criticized Merkel's position on the "distribution of refugees on quota basis" and pleads for "an end to the sanctions against Russia" imposed following the annexation of Crimea. At the same time, the Austrian official has re-interpreted his sympathy for Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and other eurosceptics with extremely tough positions against refugees as "building bridges." Since 2015, Kurz has been remarked in the relationship with our country, when he was a Foreign Minister, demanding a reform of the social systems in the European Union, being dissatisfied with the fact that the Austrian state pays a child allowance of 160 euros for the child of a Romanian who works in Austria, although in Romania this allowance is much lower. Kurz then explained that for two Romanian children, whose parents work in Austria, the Austrian state offers about 300 euros a month, and "the sum almost corresponds to an average salary in Romania". His proposal had no chance of winning in Government and Parliament, but the young Kurz did not give up on the idiom. Earlier this year, the Vienna press reported that Austria paid nearly 250 million euros in one year as allowances for the EU citizens working in the country, but left their families and / or children at home. Sebastian Kurz, along with Labor Minister Sophie Karmasin, drafted a bill to cut off these allowances from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2018, and adjust them according to the level of living in those countries. The goal is an annual savings of 100 million euros to the state budget of Austria. It remains to be seen if the new Chancellor will accomplish this desideratum, especially as he is in the governing alliance with the far right Liberty Party.

### 2.3. Poland sanctioned by the European Commission

Immediately after it came to power in the fall of 2015, the Law and Justice Party (PiS, conservative) who is governing and has a majority in the two chambers of the Warsaw legislature, initiated a series of judiciary reforms considered by the Commission European as a threat to the rule of law. The PiS justifies these reforms by the need to end a "caste" of magistrates, considered PiS heirs of the communist regime and many of them being corrupt. As a sign of protest, thousands of people went out on the streets repeatedly, demanding the cancellation of these changes along with notifying Bruxelles. In this regard, the Community Executive has launched an unprecedented procedure against Poland, which could lead to the suspension of Warsaw's right to vote in the EU. After months of warnings, the European Commission has launched a lawsuit against Poland that has not been used so far and can go as far as depriving that country of its voting rights within the European Union. In this regard, the EU executive has announced that it is triggering the activation procedure of Article 7 of the Treaty of the European Union, often qualified as the "nuclear option" among possible sanctions within the Union. "I have a hard heart to activate" this article, said Commission Vice-President Frans Timmermans. According to Timmermans, within two years, 13 new laws allowed the government to "significantly interfere" with the judiciary system, adding that Poland received a three-month deadline to respond to the reported concerns. However, the procedure initiated against Poland is complex. In the first instance, Article 7 allows the "establishment of a clear risk of serious breach" of EU values, including the rule of law, requiring the opinion of a qualified majority of 22 EU Member States. But possible sanctions, such as the withdrawal of voting rights, can only intervene in a second phase, which, in order to trigger, would require a unanimous vote of member states, except the one targeted. And unanimity does not seem possible. Hungary, has announced it will oppose vetoing the EU's action against Poland. Hungarian Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjen said that "Polish-Hungarian friendship and the Hungarian government's commitment to treaties force us to take an attitude in all the fora against the measure decided by the European Commission." Meanwhile, European Council's President Donald Tusk said that "Poland is perceived today as a force of disintegration in this part of Europe and that is why I think it is important to end the destruction (...) of Poland's reputation." In turn, European Commission's President Jean Claude Juncker stated that "we will not break all bridges with Poland" and "we are not in war with Poland," but that "it is a difficult day for Poland but also for the EU ". In the context of the EU being aware that a suspension of voting rights remains a

theoretical threat, Brussels is considering new instruments: the idea of making access to European structural funds conditional on respecting EU values and decisions is already being circulated. In a press release issued by Warsaw announced that he "regrets the European Commission launched the procedure provided for Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union", a decision which he considers "political and not legal." Also, Warsaw declares its willingness to inform the representatives of the Commission of the aspects of the legislative process aimed at reforming the judicial system in Poland. Polish Justice Minister Zbigniew Ziobro, in his turn, said he had "calmly" received the decision of the European Commission, stating that "Poland is a country that respects the rule of law" and that its country "will play a significant role in Europe and the European Union only if it has efficient and functional courts."

#### 2.4. Elections in Italy

The situation is worrying after the right-far right wing coalition ranks first on the legislatures recently held in Italy, but without the absolute majority, while the populist 5-star (M5S) movement became the first party in the country. But none can get the majority and the crisis deepens in the Peninsula. To make a fair analysis, the political crisis situation in Italy must be viewed from two perspectives: that of Italy's policy and from the perspective of the European Union. "From the point of view of Italian politics, a crisis that has the marks of a blockage has been reached. There are three large party groups or party coalitions at the moment who said they would not make alliance with each other and even if they would make the alliance we have no guarantee given their incompatibilities that these alliances will work. A solution to this blockage would be a government of technocrats chaired by the President of the Republic, which would have the task of keeping Italy in its current state and triggering early elections in one year. Such a solution, however, is an anti-democratic solution" the international policy analysts say. This government will have to lead Italy, and in a year to draft a new law so that general elections to be scheduled next year. But in fact this kind of solution is not democratic in the sense that it respects in a way what is happening in politics in Italy. If such a solution is taken, it means that any vote in a country of the European Union that is not convenient can be suspended and that would create a political reality unrelated to popular vote, which is not democratic. At this point, it is very hard to predict that any solution will lead to the expected results. Any groupings of two parties or groups of parties put together to make a coalition does not give any guarantee given the incompatibility

between them, and the technocrat solution is an anti-democratic solution. At the same time, a possible alliance between the far right North League, which took 18%, more than Berlusconi's party, Forza Italia, and the populists from the 5 Stars Movement would lead to a profoundly anti-European populist government in the the third economy of the European Union after the withdrawal of Great Britain. Regarding this, these parties declared through their leaders that a referendum is needed for Italy's exit from the EU, which in fact means a desire to bring Italy out of the European Union. At a time when in some important EU countries there is this conception of leaving the union, and Italy will be the third economy after Britain's outflow from the EU, the project risks not to be working. Here we do not refer to Austria - where it is a right-wing government and is a small state as a weight. We speak of Italy, which is the third country in the European Union. From this point of view, the project will be affected at the level of the functioning of Italy and of the European Union. At a political level, things are far more serious, because this political crisis has come to an important European Union state, and that means somewhere is wrong. This is a way of thinking about politics, especially since in Italy we have a spectacular comeback of Berlusconi, who has now become one of the most pro-European parties of Italy and which was until yesterday in the past. With regard to the Romanians in Italy, where more than 1.5 million people live, the pressure is huge. It will directly affect them, because Bucharest's policies to attract Romanians abroad are completely ineffective against the policies of extremist or populist parties. According to these aspects, the current EU policy will make migration within the Union increasingly difficult. All the policies of attracting Romanians who have gone abroad, declared by any government in Bucharest, are totally devoid of efficiency. Extremist or populist parties in Europe will send Romanian citizens back home. The public atmosphere that is created in these states will put pressure on Romanian citizens, not to return, but not to go to such proportions in different states as well. And Europe, through its populist tendencies to go to the far right or left, will make migration within Europe increasingly difficult. It is not about mass expulsions but about building an atmosphere that is becoming more and more unfavorable. This will be the policy that will stop the Romanians, and not only the Romanians, from leaving their country, but there aren't also any measures to favor those who return to the country.

### 3. The Russian Federation's policy towards the European Union

I will present the situation from the Russian Federation in the following points, due to facility of reading the presented study:

- The Russian Federation

The Russian Federation is a semi-presidential federal republic. In accordance with the Constitution, the President of Russia is the head of state, as well as a multi-party system with the executive power exercised by the government, led by the Prime Minister, who is appointed by the President, with Parliament's approval. Legislative power belongs to the two Chambers of the Russian Federation. A room is called the State Duma (Russian Duma), which is made up of 450 elected deputies for five years. The second room is called the Council of the Russian Federation (Russian Federation of Societies) consisting of 170 senators. Since gaining independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991, Russia faced serious problems in its efforts to build a political system to follow after nearly seventy-five years of Soviet domination. That conflict reached a climax in September and October 1993, when President Boris Yeltsin used military force to dissolve the parliament and demanded new legislative elections. This event marked the end of the first constitutional period in Russia. The current constitution of the Russian Federation was adopted by national referendum on 12 December 1993, replacing that of the Soviet period - the RSFS Constitution of 12 April 1978. This fundamental law was passed by popular vote after the constitutional crisis of 1993 was resolved by force.

- The History of Russian Constitutions

The first Russian Constitution was promulgated on April 23, 1906, on the eve of the opening of the first State Duma. The Constitution solemnly affirmed the emperor's emperor, including the Tsar's supremacy over the laws, the church, and the Duma. The new constitution defined the purpose and supremacy of the law on Russian subjects. It reconfirmed the granting of human rights as promised in the October Proclamation, making them subordinate to the rule of law. Define the composition and purpose of the State Council and the State Duma. The State Duma in the Russian Empire and the Russian Federation is the lower house of parliament. It is also the term that designates the advice of the boyars of the first Russian rulers – The Boyars' Duma, or city councils of the cities - Duma the City. The dummy name comes from the Russian word думать (dumat), "think". The existence of the Duma was interrupted by Peter the Great, who transferred his functions in 1711 to the Senate of Leadership. The conditions that a person has to fulfill to

become president are determined by the Russian Constitution. The president must be a Russian citizen (he may be naturalized), he must be at least 35 years old and must have lived in Russia for at least 10 years before the election<sup>2</sup>.

a) Period of 1993-1996

The struggle for power in post-Soviet Russia and the type of economic reform culminated in the political crisis and the bloodshed of autumn 1993. Yeltsin, who was the supporter of a radical reform, had to cope with the strong opposition of the parliament. Confronted with the outright opposition to his decrees and the possibility of making him accused, Yeltsin "dissolved" the Parliament on September 21, as the Russian Constitution did not give him such rights, and ordered the organization of new elections and a referendum approves a new fundamental law. A new constitution was approved by a referendum in December 1993, which turned Russia into a presidential republic. The new opportunities for enrichment offered by the Russian economy in the last decade of the 20th century and the first years of the 21st century have been exploited by a number of Russians: those in leading positions of Communist Party leadership and technocrats, heads of the KGB, Komsomol, leaders of major union enterprises, and others like them. Some of them secretly liquidated the accounts and assets of their organizations and transferred them to foreign banks, or turned them into investments in their own name. They have set up banks or businesses in the country, taking advantage of positions in the power structure to win government contracts, obtain cheap credit, and supply state-subsidized preferential prices as well as sell their products or services to over-valued prices. The privatization process has been affected by deep corruption right from the start. The Westerners were advising for a swift liquidation of the planned Soviet economy to make room for "market economy reforms," but were shortly disappointed with the emergence of the "oligarchs" and the huge power conquered by them. There have been voices who have called this wave of enrichment by fraud "nomenklaturist capitalism." If the oligarchs were at the top of the enrichment pyramid, drug traffickers and organized crime leaders - the powerful Russian Mafia - were at the base.

b) 1996 Presidential Election

At the start of the electoral campaign, it was thought that Yeltsin, who was recovering after a series of infractions and sometimes had a strange behavior, had little chance of being re-elected. At the beginning of the election campaign, Yeltsin's popularity was almost zero. Meanwhile, the

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<sup>2</sup> The New Columbia Encyclopedia, Col.Univ.Press, 1975.

Communist Party had gained a strong position in Parliament after the elections of 17 December 1995<sup>3</sup>, and its candidate, Ghennadi Ziuganov, enjoys strong support, especially in rural areas and small towns. Yeltsin changed his team of advisors, called his daughter Tatiana Diacenko to a key post and named Anatoli Ciubais as head of his electoral team. Ciubais, who was not only the head of the president's campaign, but had also been the architect of the privatization program, used his control of privatization as the main tool in the presidential campaign of reelection. In the spring of 1996, when the president's share of popularity was extremely low, Yeltsin and Ciubais recruited a team of leading Russian financiers and oligarchs from the press who funded the campaign with \$500 million, although legally the limit was only \$3 million. The same people provided Yeltsin with space for electoral advertising and favorable articles on all national televisions and newspapers. The image created by the press was that of a decisive choice between the reformist Yeltsin and Ziuganov, the adept of the "return to totalitarianism." The oligarchs have even made it clear that the country is threatened by civil war if the election is won by the communist candidate. The tactics of Yeltsin's team proved to be well-chosen. In the second round of the presidential election, Yeltsin won 53.8% of the votes, while Ziuganov only 40.3%, 5.9% of the votes were canceled. In August 1999, Yeltsin suddenly surrendered Prime Minister Sergei Stepașintot and proposed Vladimir Putin as prime minister. Yeltsin said he considers Putin his successor to the position of president of the country. After Putin's victory in the December 1999 parliamentary elections, Yeltsin was confident enough in his first minister to depart six months before his mandate on December 31. Putin thus became interim president, giving him the chance to become the candidate with the most chances of winning in the presidential election of 26 March 2000, which was won by Putin.

c) Putin administration, from 2000 to the present

In August 2000, the Russian K-141 Kursk submarine was damaged by an explosion of its own torpedo, an accident that caused it to sink into the waters of the Barents Sea. The Russian authorities organized an attempt to rescue the crew, but it was all in vain. This failure has severely criticized the government, military authorities, and President Putin personally. On October 23, 2002, the Chechen rebels took hostages to all the spectators and actors of a Moscow theater. More than 700 people were hostages in what was called the Hostage Crisis in the Moscow Theater. Three days after the start of the crisis, commandos of the Russian Special Forces invaded the building,

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<sup>3</sup> Horia C. Matei, Silviu Neguț, Ion Nicolae, 2011, *Enciclopedia statelor lumii*, ed. a IX-a, , Edit. Meronia, București

and the rebels were shot dead. After the end of the theater crisis, Putin renewed his promises of stunning Chechen insurrection. President Ahmad Kadirov, who had been elected eight months earlier in Russian-controlled elections, was assassinated in a bombing. The crisis of the hostages from the Beslan School followed, during which the Chechen rebels took over 1,300 hostages, especially children. Under these circumstances, in March 2004, popular support for the war in Chechnya fell to only 24%. As a result of the confrontation with the oligarchs, Putin's regime managed to take control of the most important means of mass information previously held by the richest Russians. Putin has reached the country's leadership at a favorable moment: after the devaluation of the 1998 ruble, which has increased demand for goods produced in the country, and in the context of rising oil prices. Thus, many Russians attribute to the president the merits of economic recovery, and Putin won the presidential election in 2004 without having a controversial candidate that would cause him serious problems. There are analysts who say that nowadays many Russians regret the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. In an election speech, Putin said that the dissolution of the Soviet Union is "a national tragedy on an enormous scale," of which "only elites or nationalists of the republics had gained."<sup>4</sup> In 2005, the Russian government replaced the subsidy system, still in force since Soviet times, to public transport, heating homes or other utilities for socially vulnerable groups with pecuniary payments. This reform, known as "monetization," was very unpopular, and caused a wave of demonstrations in various Russian cities. It was the first major manifestation of popular dissatisfaction since Putin came to power. Reforms have greatly reduced government confidence, but President Putin's popularity remained high. Putin's international prestige suffered an important blow to the West during the 2004 presidential election disputed talks in Ukraine. Putin visited Ukraine twice before the election to prove his support for the pro-victory candidate Victor Yanukovich, who fought the opposition candidate, Victor Yushchenko, a pro-Western liberal. Putin congratulated Yanukovich for the victory before announcing the official results and made statements against the recount of votes in the second round of voting won by Yanukovich under the assertions of defrauding the vote.

Finally we shall not forget about the Crimea crisis in 2014 started after President Viktor Yanukovich's departure from power, following the anti-government protests of 2013-2014. The triggering factor was the repeal of the law on languages with regional status through which several languages used in Ukraine, including Romanian, were removed from official use. The actors of the

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<sup>4</sup> Șerban Dragomirescu and Radu Săgeată, 2011, *Statele lumii contemporane*, Edit. Corint, București;

tensions are on the one hand the Russian-speaking groups wishing for Crimea to join Russia and, on the other hand, groups of Ukrainians and Crimean Tartars who support the Euromaidan movement. Integration of Crimea into the Russian Federation is the process of incorporating Crimea into Russia. The integration stipulated in Article 6 of the Crimean Arrangement Agreement with Russia will last until January 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. The integration of Crimea into Russia was organized and carried out quite quickly by the leadership of Russia. On March 27<sup>th</sup> Russian Education Minister Dmitry Livanov announced that all Crimean graduates will receive a Russian model attestation. During April, the Central Bank of the Russian Federation created the Crimean Bank in the region and passed the financial sphere from the Ukrainian administration to the Russian one, stopping the activity in the region of a number of Ukrainian banks. The official currency in the region became the Russian ruble. Since August 11, the Crimean civil status offices have been operating under Russian law, issuing Russian certificates. The vast majority of the international community did not recognize the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol as part of Russia. Many of the world's states have openly denounced the referendum and the annexation, and continue to regard Crimea as an administrative division of Ukraine. It should be noted, however, that some states have recognized the referendum and the remaining ones have kept their opinion neutral. Resolution 68/262 of the General Assembly of O.N.U. arguing that Crimea and Sevastopol remain part of Ukraine, gathered 100 votes for and 11 against, 58 others abstaining, and 24 out of 193 member states did not vote because of abstention. The 100 countries that voted in favor of Ukraine account for about 34% of the world's population, the 11 that were counter for about 4.5%, the 58 who abstained represent about 58%, and the 24 absences represent about 3.5%. On October 31<sup>st</sup> the Government of the Russian Federation established a free economic zone in Crimea.

#### 4. Conclusions

In Germany, the Christian-Democratic Union convened the National Conference, and approved the governing agreement with the Social Democrats, and the agreement, according to German officials, provides the basis for "a good and stable government".

The UCD National Conference will also vote for the appointment of Merkel's ally Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer (AKK) as party general secretary. Kramp-Karrenbauer is seen as Merkel's successor, dubbed the "mini-Merkel".

The Austrian People's Party, headed by young Sebastian Kurz, ranked first in the general election, following an anti-immigration and right-wing program.

At 31, Kurz became Chancellor and thus the youngest national leader in the world and in the history of Austria. The People's Party will ally with the Social Democrats or the Liberty Party (far-right).

Sebastian Kurz has an instinct for populism and is willing to ally with partners that scare others in the West.

Immediately after it came to power in the autumn of 2015, the Law and Justice Party (PiS, conservative), governed and majority in the two chambers of the Warsaw legislature, initiated a series of judiciary reforms considered by the Commission European as a threat to the rule of law.

As a protest against these, thousands of people went out on the streets repeatedly, demanding the cancellation of these changes along with Bruxelles notification.

The EU executive has announced that it is triggering the activation procedure of Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union, often qualified as the "nuclear option" among possible sanctions within the Union.

Hungary, has announced it will oppose vetoing the EU's action against Poland.

The situation in Italy is worrying when the right-far right wing coalition is in the first place in the recent legislative reforms, but without the absolute majority, while the populist 5-star (M5S) movement became the first party in the country. But none can get the majority and the crisis deepens in the Peninsula.

At this point in Italy there are three large party groups or party coalitions who have declared that they will not make alliance with each other and even if they make an alliance there is no guarantee given their incompatibilities that these alliances will work.

A solution to this blockage would be a government of technocrats chaired by the President of the Republic, which would have the task of keeping Italy in its current state and triggering early elections in one year.

With regard to the Romanians in Italy, where more than 1.5 million people live, the pressure is huge. It will directly affect them, because Bucharest's policies to attract Romanians abroad are completely ineffective against the policies of extremist or populist parties.

Vladimir Vladimirovici Putin is a Russian politician, a former member of the CPSU. He is currently the third president of the Russian Federation for the third time. He became interim

President of Russia on 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1999 after President Boris Yeltsin resigned and then won the presidential election in 2000. In 2004 he was re-elected for a second term, which lasted until May 7<sup>th</sup> 2008<sup>5</sup>. Because of the Constitutional limit, Putin was unable to run for a third consecutive presidential term in 2008, but after the victory of his successor, Dmitri Medvedev, in his presidential election, Putin was appointed by the prime minister of Russia. Putin held this position from May 8<sup>th</sup> 2008 to March 4<sup>th</sup> 2012. In 2012 he became president of the Russian Federation for another six years - following the amendment of the Constitution.

Prior to the presidential election on March 18, 2018, who will almost certainly bring the fourth presidential mandate, Vladimir Putin, in his speech on the state of the nation in front of the reunified parliamentary chambers, said that: Russia has developed a new range of nuclear weapons which are invincible and can not be intercepted by the enemy.

This was a message of patriotic pride, but analysts also notice it as "a very aggressive warning to those who do not regard Russia as a world super-power."

New nuclear systems - can not be intercepted, and a "new cruise missile can reach anywhere in the world. It flies at low altitude, is difficult to spot, and is invincible in front of any interception systems. "

Another feared weapon would be a long-range rocket launched from submarines that could target a nuclear warhead. And a number of states of the world are struggling to get this perfect weapon, "rocket-hypersonic".

Russia has developed these weapons in response to the US anti-missile shield, whose elements are also installed in Romania at Deveselu.

Western analysts appreciate Putin's speech as an "electoral campaign" for the patriotic pride of the Russians. It is a way of telling Europe, the United States, and somehow to the Russian population that the only language the West understands is the language of force. To conclude the political crisis on the government formation in Germany, with the Brexit, with the establishment of Austria's controversial government, the sanction of Poland by the Council of Europe and, last but not least, with the problems facing the formation of the new inland government and and must be analyzed together in order to see the overall picture and how the world leaders are changing Europe and the world and how the history repeats itself in the same manner as the economic crisis from 2008 can repeat itself in the few following years to come. The final conclusions each can

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<sup>5</sup> Cătălina Mărculeț and Ioan Mărculeț, „Marea Neagră în secolul al XX-lea și la începutul secolului al XXI-lea – o radiografie geopolitică și geoistorică”, *Geopolitica*, (2011), no. 39

draw and as stated above, the authors will use this initial analysis in its own project, but due to the limitations of the article only initial analysis was presented above.

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