EUROPEANIZATION IN EASTERN EUROPE. CASE STUDY: ROMANIA

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Abstract: In 2004, only eight of the tenth Eastern European countries were invited to join the European Union. The other two countries, which their accession process was delayed, were Romania and Bulgaria. According to the European Commission the conditionality principle and the Copenhagen criteria were not fulfilled. The article is based on the case study of Romania and it aims at analyzing and discussing the issue of Europeanization in a post-communist country. The research method used is the case study approach, due to the possibility of using both qualitative and quantitative data combined with the content analysis method. This integrating evidence would give the reader the opportunity to evaluate and interpret in his own perception the Romanian case. The writer has the task to offer some guidelines to follow easier and to answer the why and the how questions.

Despite its European integration, Romania still has problems with its process of Europeanization, even after six years of European Union membership. The issue of Europeanization will be discussed further on in this article, as it was influenced by different factors, like slow transition and a superficial democratization. We would be analyzing the impact of Europeanization in the post- communist Romania, thus the objective of this article is to open a new discussion about the type of Europeanization present in Romania, the opportunity to observe that the process is still ongoing and it can leave place for different interpretations.

Keywords: Europeanization, EU, Eastern Europe, European membership, European integration.

I. Introduction

After decades of communist oppression and censorship, the countries from the ex-communist bloc reoriented themselves towards the Western values, more exactly to the European Union. The European Union represented the gateway to free market, free movement of persons and other advantages, which were forbidden to the Eastern European countries. The newly formed democracies were lagging behind the Western countries, but they had a desire to struggle and to find their way back to the old continent. After the 1989 revolutions, the ten countries which are now members of the European Union passed through difficult times and the burden was even heavier, because they had to prove that they are willing and capable to win the European Union membership. The time, that followed the 1989 revolutions, was a time of transition, which for most of the former communist countries meant institutional reforms, fragile democracies and international support (Jefrries, 2007).

The aim of this article is to present and analyze the process of Europeanization in Eastern Europe, because it is very interesting to relate the process of Europeanization with the process of European integration. Both of these concepts are considered to be basic conditions

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for a country to be perceived as a suitable candidate for the European Union. In order to better understand what happened in the Eastern Europe, we chose a country representative, which can be discussed upon Europeanization. The country fitting the profile is Romania, the seventh largest country in the European Union in terms of population. Romania's modern history comprises its struggle with one of the harshest communist regime in the region and its effort to overcome it and become an EU member. The case of Romania is very peculiar, because the communist regime was considered to be a *sultaneistic* type of regime, due to the dictator's preference Nicolae Ceauşescu for the personality cult and for appointing his relatives in important offices, even though they did not have the necessary training. This type of cast communism was only in Romania and lasted until 1989, when Romania became the only country in Eastern Europe turning its revolution into bloodshed. The other revolutions meant negotiations, between the dissidents and the rulers, which overturned the regime. In the meantime, in Romania people were dying in the street being shot by the communist army, while Ceauşescu was trying to leave the country. As it was expected this blood bath did not finish by putting an end to the most destructive regime Romania had, but it opened the path for a group of people coming to power and showing the people what they wanted to believe: that they are free and they got rid of Ceauşescu, who was executed together with his wife on the 25th of December 1989 (Stepan & Linz, 1996). Moreover, Romania faced an unfinished transition and a bumpy Europeanization, which made of Romania, the subject of concern in the European Union prior and after accession.

This article analyses the steps of Europeanization in Romania and it discusses the progress made, but also what still needs to be improved. Its purpose is to provide the reader with a short insight about Romania, a theoretical framework to establish the foundation of the article, the discussion about Europeanization and the conclusion, which resides from our findings.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theory section provides the reader with relevant information about the concept of Europeanization, which sometimes can be confusing, due to the fact that it can be taken separately from the concept of European integration. There are several European countries which are not members of the EU, but they adopted into their national systems, European policies and the European institutional framework, meaning that the Europeanization model can be singularized (Brunk, 1997). However, our case study presents the path and the mechanism of Europeanization in an Eastern European country, where European integration concept had strong ties with the process of the ongoing Europeanization. Therefore, along the article it will be discussed the importance of the European integration as a milestone for Europeanization.

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2.1. Europeanization

The overview of Europeanization leaves place for many interpretations, due to the amount of definitions and shared opinions. Nevertheless, we should make a distinction between European integration and Europeanization. Thereby, the meaning of Europeanization could be seen as a consequence of European integration, because it emerged in the context of European Union politics, as a wide and unexplored area. The concept of Europeanization came as a benchmark of a process of European integration. It comes up as a plus for the new country, which wants to join the EU and its development span is wider than the one of European integration. The conditions, which a member state has to fulfill, represent the path to European integration and the following reforms represent the Europeanization of a country (Olsen, 2002). To a certain extent, Europeanization could be independently taken from European integration in the case of countries, which want to embrace the European values and principles, but not necessarily to apply for EU membership. In our case we treat Europeanization dependent on European integration, being important to present the link, between these two important concepts. Thus, we need to connect European integration concept with Europeanization.

Therefore, *Europeanization* represents the transformation of the nation state and of the policy domains, but it could be seen as juxtaposition with globalization, also. Some scholars like Thomas Risse, Maria Cowles and James Caporaso identify this concept as *"the emergence and the development at the European level of distinct structures of governance.[…]"*(Börzel & Risse, 2000, p. 3). They claim, that the concept of Europeanization, once being enclosed in the domestic policies it changes the national system structure, because the dynamic of a newly member state or candidate changes.

The Europeanization concept is often confused with European integration, but they concern two different aspects. When the Europeanization concept has been discussed, the distinction is made between the countries, which are not part of the European Union can also be part of the Europeanization process, because Europeanization refers to the embracement of the European values, European identity and their promotion in its new members and also in potential and candidate countries. Radaelli regards Europeanization as a "*process of (a) construction (b) diffusion and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs* (Radaelli, 2004). As Radaelli points out the Europeanization process is multi-faceted. It embraces every part of a state's system and its wide meaning could be used as a progress tool at the national and sub-national level. The national authorities have the duty to use it to reconstruct the post-communist state structure and how the things really work.

Europeanization is more connected to the idea of enlargement from a time span perspective, because the new member states have to adapt their legislation, institutional and political change according to the European Union's requirements. Howell defined the concept of Europeanization as the process of "downloading" European Union by acquiring the EU directives, values, policies, institutional changes into the domestic realm. Furthermore, defining Europeanization as a concept of uploading the norms, rules and policy transfer from a supranational level to the domestic level could mean a horizontal and a vertical way of transferring power (Cowless, Caporaso, & Risse, 2001, p. 5).

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Caporaso and Risse offered several definitions for the "concept stretching" of Europeanization, because its broad spectrum makes it difficult to be de facto defined. Europeanization, according to the concept stretching view it could be analyzed as a set of institutional rules. The reason for doing this is that as a concept as well as a theory, Europeanization includes top-down and bottom up perspectives, which makes it the core of European Studies. The top-down approach has the role of a pressure mechanism, towards the member states, which are constrained to enforce in their domestic policies the Union's policies. The bottom-up approach of Europeanization resides on reform implementation at the domestic level finishing it at the same domestic level, but having as an independent variable the European policies. This view does not imply the attainment of the European policies per se at the national level.

There are two ways in approaching the conceptualization of Europeanization from the bottom up or the top-down perspective. The bottom up perspective conceptualizes the idea, that the national actors are the shapers and the takers of the EU policies, which have a major role in strengthening the administrative capacity of a member state. On the other hand, the top-down approach analyzes the impact of the European regulations and norms on the domestic policies of the member state (Böerzel, 2003).

When we refer to Europeanization we refer to an issue or a problem, that should be explained (*explanandum*) and not an issue that represents the solution (*explanans*) (Nugent, 2010). These two variables comprise the definition of what Europeanization is; showing a multidisciplinary perspective of this concept. It comes naturally to see Europeanization as the concept, which should be explained and understood due to its various interpretations and functions. However, Europeanization could be also defined as the impact of the EU policies and institutions procedures on the domestic level, meaning that, Europeanization acts like a guardian of how the future member states should inflict in their legislation, policy-making and decision process the requirements imposed by the European Union. Nugent touched this point in stating, that the Europeanization should not be seen as the solution for all the problems of newly democratic state, but it should be seen as a tool for development and improvement, a mechanism for accession.

2.2. European Integration

As we debated in the previous subchapter, the connection between Europeanization and European Integration is highly important in our case, not only because they can be path-dependent, but also because integration could behave as an independent variable too as it is presented here. As it was aforementioned, Europeanization comprises and affects only the institutional framework, whereas integration embeds the reformation of all the institutional and social strata of a state, starting from economic integration until political integration. Integration is a general concept which could be seen as a method of combining a part of an unified whole, a dynamic process of change. According to the definition given by the Oxford English Dictionary, integration is a broad concept. Several definitions define it as *"the state of becoming integrated, the bringing of people of different racial or ethnic groups into unrestricted and equal association, as in society, or an organization* (The Oxford English Dictionary). This serves as the background definition for what was about to be established on the oldest continent, Europe.

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The Second World War destroyed and segregated Europe, but in the same time the idea of integration was born-the idea of Europe is very old and last for centuries. The main goal of the European Coal and Steel Community was to unite people with different identities and religions to face together a new war threat. The leaders of the founding countries wanted a community, which could be seen as a fearful international actor from an economic and political point of view. Providing that, the idea of an European Union was born with the Coal and Steel Community being the first attempt of the six founder countries to find a common purpose.

"*The European Union was seen as a regional state, as a superpower, as a civilian, as a normative power, as a soft power and as a metro-sexual power as well*" (Rumford, 2009). This quote comprises the complete description of what the European Union really has become and puts an emphasis on the concept of European integration. You cannot have a superpower without people feeling integrated into a community, which offers them protection and economic stability. Thereby, integration is a broad term; we can extract from it several types of integration: religious, political, economic, ethnic and European. In this sense, we acknowledge that European integration emphasizes more types of integration into one, being based on cooperation, economic and political stability. According to the Oxford dictionary definition, *"European integration is the process of political, legal, economic integration of states and in the present day, European integration has primarily come about through the European Union and the Council of Europe* (The Oxford English Dictionary).

The European integration is often associated with the intensely institutionalized form of cooperation found in Western Europe after 1951.Thus, the historical roots of the European integration were developed in the Western democratic capitalist affair, but the true European integration process began in 2004, when the Eastern Enlargement took place. According to the writing of Lindberg, European integration is a process involving identity-building or identity-formation comprising regionalism and inter-regionalism, also seen as an alert and multidisciplinary process (Lindberg, 1963). Thus, the concept of European integration could be explained as a measure of giving up national sovereignty to the supranational power, in this case the European Union by the member states. Ernest Haas defined European integration as the process "*whereby political actors are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new center […The European Union]"* (Haas, 1958). The definition given by Haas involved the social meaning of the process, but also the political aspect, when it comes to the emergence of new supra state institutions, which should have a higher authority or be part of the direct decision of the state's affairs (Wiener & Diez, 2009). Keeping in mind all the interpretations and definition given to the concept of European integration debated from different angles, it is reasonable to observe, that a specific definition was given by every school of thought, which dealt with the aspect of integration theories.

Another linkage between the concept of Europeanization and European integration is the idea of seeing European integration as the result of the integration theories; as a mean of creation of the political institutions to which the member states could join (Wiener & Diez, 2009, p. 3). Börzel defined the idea of integration as the "*the transfer or evolution of responsibilities, competencies and decision-making from state to European level*" (Börzel & Risse, 2000).

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Other scholars, such as Boucher perceived European integration as the process of enlargement, where the member states share the democratic principles, human rights values, democratic institutions and the promotion of the rule of law, while Majone defined integration as a "*two fold process*" with partial involvement of the nation states (Habermas, 1999). For Habermas, European integration consisted of political and economic integration being considered the political end goal, because it represented a political stake for the diplomats. He also associated the European integration with the development of a post-national form of social policy as a crucial component of future solidarity construction (Habermas, 1999).

Duverger acknowledged European integration as a process dominating today's collective and personal memories in Europe, making reference to the developments and the results of the Second World War. Janssens acknowledged integration as "a process" which can be regarded as an attempt to found a policy that is in many ways unprecedented in scope and ambition (Wiener & Diez, 2009). Brunk defined European integration as a process of interconnectedness between the domestic policies of the member states without the influence of the diplomats. In his view European integration refers to the principle of mutual recognition, which means that the member states involved allows one state to regulate the laws of another one (Brunk, 1997).

In the context of European integration, integration has two different perceptions as being positive or negative integration. When we discuss *positive integration* the emphasis is put on the way the EU policies are the model for how the state should reform its policies and when we emphasize *negative integration* we look at the other side of the coin (Radaelli, 2004, p. 12). Hence the difference between positive and negative integration refers to the pressure of the process of adapting the policies, a feasible example being the countries from the Eastern bloc, which adopted the positive type of integration, due to an international pressure regulating their domestic policies according to the European norms. Negative integration leaves the member states the power to decide whether they regulate their domestic policies according to EU or not. Here, we assume that the decision is made at the domestic level involving only the national actors. The positive and negative integration represent the decision-making process of how domestic policies are regulated, whether EU is involved or not, showing more the character of European integration and not its type (Habermas, 1999).

Either negative or positive in terms of integration's character, we ought to develop the discussion about the type of integration, which contributed to the development of the EU. In this sense, we speak about the economic one, the judicial integration and the political integration. When we further discuss the Romanian case, the emphasis is on the political and judicial integration in the context of a former socialist country.

Political integration had various interpretations, but the most accurate ones defined it as a *"condition"* or as a *"process*". The core of political integration seen as a condition is of a "*security-community […] a group of people which has become integrated having attained within a territory a sense of community*" (Lindberg, 1963, p. 154). The condition involves some integrated states, which have to be united to prevent a war or to protect their people. Defining political integration as a condition was often criticized, because it conceptualizes a general approach towards the factors, which influenced integration. In our case, we take political integration as a process, because it refers to the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community. According to the definition Haas gave, the process of political

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integration is amalgamated in the process of European integration. Once a country becomes a member state, the political actors give and share competencies from national to supranational level. The political actors do not represent only the national interest of their citizens but the European interest of the European citizens. This was one of the primary goals of the European Union, to create a political force, which could enhance the European security and endorse economic development.

Concluding the chapter about Europeanization and European integration, we acknowledge that both Europeanization and European integration weigh a considerable part of the decision to become a member in the European Union. Both of them have to be interconnected at the national level of a member state, especially in the case of the new member states. Their importance grew together with the Eastern Enlargement. Hence, the Europeanization was often associated with the Eastern Enlargement, because ten post-socialist countries expressed their willingness to join the European Union.

3. Case study: Romania

This part of the article represents an objective overview of the case study. It is structured to describe and to provide information about the problematic transition of the country, the misconduct of the political class and the first shy attempts of Romania to face its policies towards the West. As it is well known and debated, Romania was one of the countries from the former Soviet bloc, which encountered the most problematic and controversial accession to the European Union.

3.1.Romania – The burden of becoming an EU member

Romania is a country geographically located in the Central Eastern Europe and in the Northern part of the Balkan Peninsula, being considered both Eastern European and Balkan country. Romania had a very interesting history, but the most relevant and representative years for our subject of interest are the communist years. The Romanian communist years are different, than in the other Eastern European countries, due to the brutality of the regime. The relevance of the communist regime is given by the idea, that this deep rooted regime affected the country's process of democratization. The Romanian society has still an altered mentality, which has its reminiscences in the communist time. Although progress has been made, the functionality of democracy is still questioned. Though, Romania faced 45 years of communism and ended the regime in 1989 by having a bloody revolution, the totalitarian influences did not end up here.

In our foray through Romania's way to the European Union accession, it is important to mention sovietization, a concept which refers to the influence of Russia (USSR) in their attempt to convert Romania to be annexed into the Soviet Bloc. The purpose of sovietization was to oblige the countries from Eastern Europe to adopt and implement the Russian political model and the Russian way of life, the Russian culture, basically ripping the country from its own identity and transferring massive Russian influence in all spheres, instead. The Soviet model was present in the first part of the Romania communist regime in the first dictatorship of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej.

The *sovietization* was done in Romania in a more brutal way than in other countries from the Eastern and the Central Eastern Europe. In Romania, the Communist Party tried to

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subordinate every field of the Romanian society. The first step of introducing soviet influence was the adoption of a new constitution in 1948, which had as a pattern the 1936 Soviet Constitution and the Soviet-based judicial system. All these changes made by the communist system downgraded Romania in its relation with the West. Before communism Romania was considered one of the most modern and prosperous country in Europe. It had commercial relations with Germany, Austria, France and UK, being considered the granary of Europe (Deletant, 1999).

Integration might increase democratic stability in Central Eastern European countries, but could also decrease the responsiveness of the domestic actors; hence accession into European Union provides political stability. The principle of democratic conditionality is convergent with the concept of Europeanization, especially in former communist countries. Europeanization in the context of Eastern enlargement is defined as a policy of integration, and as a policy of democratization. In the case of Romania the democratization was attained from a bottom-up perspective due to the '89 Revolution. After 1990, the democratization continued from a top-down perspective due to the reformation of the political class. After the fall of communism, the emergence of the first Romanian Constitution was the first attempt towards a democratic regime. It was designed under the auspices of Ion Iliescu, a very controversial political figure, former communist acolyte, who was the President of Romania for a decade. He was the founder of FSN (National Salvation Front), a party which had its root in the former PCR-Romanian Communist Party (Jefrries, 2007).

There were voices, declaring that Romania is not ready for the 2007 accession, but the procedural formalities had been made and the deadline had to be respected, because the European Union is a credible actor and Romania represented a geopolitical interest, hence the help in Kosovo war. However, Romania is still one of the laggards of the candidate countries concerning implementation of the aquis, the twinning mechanism and reform of the political class, absorbtion of the pre-accession funds (PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD) and later on the structural funds. The considerations about Romania as being one of the weakest reformated state in terms of judiciary and political class was determined by the harsh communist regime, which affected the country more than four decades. One cannot say that the transition in Romania was easy. The rough communist regime based on repression and censorship affected the lives of the Romanians and their trust in the state apparatus and institutions (Editorial, 2012).

3.2. The Romanian Europeanization

One refers to Europeanization as the European Union impact concerning European set of policies, institutions and values incorporated at the domestic level. In the case of Romania, the process of Europeanization was changed to a process of *Euro-Balkanism,* where Romania absorbed the laws, the values and the procedures imposed by the EU but only at a declaratory, superficial level (Gallagher, 2009). Tom Gallagher in his foray through Romanian politics and history made an analysis of one of the most problematic member for the European Union due to its social, political and economic backwardness which took out Romania from the other eight communist countries, which joined the EU in 2004.

The country was perceived as an “exotic” state orientated towards an Eastern and neo-communist policy due to its no signs of modernization until the first alternation of power in

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1996. Then the first steps to a real transition were made. Bearing in mind the late process of modernization, the acceptance of Romania in the enlargement process was not concrete because in comparison with the other CEE countries its performances were lower than average. As presented by numerous scholars and political analysts' one can affirm that Romania's enlargement was a masquerade. Why is that? The answer is related to weak performances in economy, social backwardness and lack of political will, lack of political capacity and corruption of the judicial system (Pridham, 2007). One thing is clear regarding Romania's accession to the European Union is that the country was no ready for such an important and responsible change.

The Romanian elite were not ready to give up their legitimacy and sovereignty to Brussels and to comply with the European rules and values. Actually, the problem of the elite was their rhetorical action followed by a non-compliance with the facts. They were declaring and promising the sea and the sand to the European officials and to the Romanian people too, but in in real facts no rhetoric was seen. In order to start describing and analyzing the path of Romania to the EU membership is at outmost importance to start with the reason behind this problematic accession. First of all, the acceptance of the Central Eastern European countries was a great challenge for the European Union due to the problems residing in these countries and their compliance to achieve the European norms (Grabbe, 2004). Romania signed the first Association agreement in February 1993 in comparison with Poland and Hungary which signed it in 1991. 1993 was the year of the Council of Europe membership which was again delayed due to the minority issue in the state. These were the first steps towards EU, but they happened later than normal because after the 1989 revolution the transitional process was not smoothly, but on the contrary (Gallagher, 2005).

As in the case of Romania being the forth country accepted to start negotiations with the EU in 1993, one of the reasons was the help offered by the country in the Kosovo war and the geopolitical advantage of Romania, country situated in the Balkans. A secure area in the Balkans represented an asset for the European Union, which did not want to confront itself with the inability of solving another Balkan imbroglio like the division of Yugoslavia. Therefore Romania represented a closing gate, a security pawn for the Union. The Romanian officials realized that this could be interpreted as the weak point of the Union and they only could take advantage of the matter. They knew that the strategic position of Romania could bring the ticket to European Union and the urge to implement reforms had a low impact on the elite, because if it is another way easier the Romanian elite is ready to accept it (Papadimitriou & Gateva, 2009).

Since 1993 the European Union sent a permanent delegation to Bucharest to ensure the start for reforms, the implementing of Copenhagen criteria and the conditionality principle. One other element, which contributed to the changing view towards Romania was the credit given to it by NATO. Romania was the only former Soviet country which joined the organization in the Partnership for Peace agreement in 1991. This peace agreement with NATO represented for the Bucharest officials a milestone in achieving integration, because the conditions for being NATO member were not as strict as for the European Union. The NATO recognition turned Romania into a potential candidate country for the EU membership, because it offered credibility on the international stage for the Romanian state. It showed Romania's incentive to become an active and reliable ally. The Romanian officials urged by

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the Brussels officials to respect Copenhagen criteria signed the Snagov agreement in 1997 for finding an integration strategy concerning of a national plan for preparation of the state to meet the accession criteria by the year 2000. The set of measures, that the Bucharest officials were urged to take referred to the principle of conditionality imposed by the European Union and the values imposed by the Copenhagen Council. These were protection of the minority rights, which in the Romanian case was the Hungarian minority, democratic values, rule of law and liberalization of the market economy (Noutcheva& Bechev, 2008).

In the context of Europeanisation, the enlargement plays an important role, especially when we analyse the post-socialist countries, in our case Romania. Alina Mungiu Pippidi states that "*Enlargement is a process of Europeanization of contries invited to join Europe, Europeanization being defined as harmonization of their legislation with the European one and implementation of the European common legal acquis"* (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2007, p. 40).

Taking this statement into account we cannot notice, why Romania was invited to join the EU in the context of being a semi-consolidated democracy with a lot of work to do in the judiciary and in the fight against corruption. This is a proove that widening integration is not a good idea. The Copenhagen criteria are just some general guidelines of how it is supposed to be and that enlargement criteria should have been set out for every country in particular. The European Union closed their eyes and accepted Romania and Bulgaria without considering the possibility of postponing once more their indicative date. Why this did not happen? Let us see the European Union as a the most ambitious political project , which did not want to loose its credibility on an international level after the big event of the first eastern enlargement. They thought, that the membership of Romania will burden even more the political class and that they will action consequently. They will have the revelation, that something needs to be changed, but the things are totally different. After five years in the European Union, Romania is still the most problematic member state with infringements of the rule of law, inefficient fight against corruption and abuse of power. Was this a sign of enlargement fatigue? Rather it was a sign of end of the journey (Epstein & Sedelmeier, 2008).

The Romanian officials set the EU membership as the main goal. They did not think of the future, what will Romania do as a member state, because accountability rises after a country joins. You need to acustom the population with the accession schock and to continue the reforms that were pressured to be taken before (Phinnemore, 2010). The goal is not the accession, the goal is that Romania to be part of a deep integration process not just of a wide one, but apparently the politicians did not understand the real purpose of the Europeanization. However, Europeanization did not bring democracy ,but it brought three important steps in consolidating it such as the freedom of the media, failed electoral process and effective governance (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2007, p. 46).

Mungiu emphasizes the idea, that the biggest problem in Romania is the failure of governace. Failure of governance means corruption and the EU wishes for clean and effective administrations of the candidate countries able and willing to absorb EU funds to proove that the country is performant enough in terms of administration and legislation. Governance innefficiency is the curse of a troubled political culture and history in Romania. Mungiu highlights, that the populist groups have gained more and more support, because of the high level of poverty in the region, political instability, the cleavage between the electorates in

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terms of choosing their politicians determins political crisis and miscooperation among the elites considered to be the fingerprints of a "bad" transition (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2007).

To prove empirically the instutional weakness and the superficiality of implementing the integration reform, the designed table aims at showing the differences between the Central Eastern European countries. The countries, which joined in the first Eastern enlargement wavein 2004 have an overall better score than Romania.

In the Freedom House, Nations in Transit report for the 2004 Eastern enlargement the indicators used are the democracy score, the independence of judiciary, the level of corruption and the score of governance (Freedom House Report, 2004). The indicators are from 1 to 7, 1 being the most positive and 7 the most negative.

2004 Eastern Enlargement	Democracy score	Judiciary	Corruption	Governance
Czech Republic	2,33	2,50	3,50	2,25
Estonia	1,92	1,75	2,50	2,25
Hungary	1,96	1,75	2,75	2,50
Latvia	2,17	2,00	3,50	2,25
Lithuania	2,13	1,75	3,50	2.50
Poland	1,75	1,50	2,50	2,00
Slovakia	2,08	2,00	3,25	2,25
Slovenia	1,75	1,75	2,00	2,00
Bulgaria	3,25	3,25	4,25	3,50
Romania	**3,58**	**4,25**	**4,50**	**3,75**

2007 Enlargement	Democracy Score	Judiciary	Corruption	Governance
Bulgaria	2,89	2,75	3,75	3,00
Romania	**3,29**	**3,75**	**4,00**	**3,50**

These data from both tables represent some indicators ,which assess the level of democratisation and modernisation of the newest members of the European Union in comparison with the score of Romania concerning the 2004 failure of accession and the year 2007. According to the data collected by Freedom house the average score of democracy in the eight post socialist countries is 2.011, which fits the score of 3,00 imposed by the European Commission for membership in the EU in accordance with the framework of the Copenhagen criteria. The eight countries managed to undergo transition and to achieve democratisation. The main prerequisite for an efficient democratisation is the independence of the judicial system.

Here, the average score is 1,87 points out ,that the post socialit countries made real progress in the field of justice and home affairs concluding the importance of an independent justice. An independent justice ensures a functional market economy, low corruption rate and

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good governance. The average scores for quality of governance (2,25) and corruption (2,93) indicate that the eight countries which joined the EU in 2004 fullfiled the political and legal criteria imposed by the commission. In comparison with the eight CEEcs the scores registered by Bulgaria and Romania are worse than the average Eastern European. In 2004 Romania and Bulgaria had a 3,58 respectively 3,25 democracy score, when the average is 2,01 emphasizing that the two countries were not ready to become EU members no matter the European pressure imposed or their struggle for reforms.

The negative democracy score demonstrates that democratization was superficial and not effective. These low indicators show the sluggish and ineffective transition in both Romania and Bulgaria, though we can observe a slight difference between Romania and Bulgaria, Bulgaria registering overall better scores. Romania had to make urgent reforms in the field of anti-corruption policies and in the judicial system. The negative progress in comparison with the other former socialist countries delayed Romania's entry. However, the value of the indicators from 2007 in relation with the values from 2004 has not improved considerably. For example, Romania had the lowest democracy score (2,29) in comparison with the average score of 2004 enlargement which was around 2,89 (Freedom House Report, 2004).

The results of the Freedom House research have proved empirically the superficial reforms at the domestic level. The post-accession conditionalities refer to constant monitoring of the judiciary and the public administration reform. An independent judiciary guarantees a functional democracy. A free justice protects the rule of law and the separation of powers. A famous Romanian Journalist wrote in one his studies about Romania, that both the European Union and Ceausescu had great ambitions for Romania but no institutional means to implement them (Munteanu, 2010).

In 2009 according to an EU barometer, more than 62% of the Romanian citizens had a very good opinion about the European Union and more than 39% thought that joining the EU meant better living standards and mobility within the European space. Overall results have showed that the Romanian think, that the EU has a beneficial impact on Romania (Eurobarometer, 2009).

Besides, the Freedom House reports we analyzed the data presented in the Corruption Perception Index issued by Transparency International. The reports used by Freedom House represent the mere evolution of Romania since its accession in 2004 was denied. The Corruption Perception Index country report calculates the democracy score and the separation of powers and the other indicators of governance. The calculations made by Transparency International measured and identified the problems of Romania prior and post accession. To compare the relevant data between both reports we will compare the democracy score and the level of corruption as being two main indicators for Europeanization. The data from the Transformation Index are from 2012 to acknowledge if the values of the indicators modified.

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CEE Countries	Democracy Score	Corruption
Czech Republic	2,18	49/100
Estonia	1,93	64/100
Hungary	2,86	55/100
Latvia	2,20	49/100
Lithuania	2,18	54/100
Poland	2,14	58/100
Slovakia	2,50	46/100
Slovenia	2,50	61/100
Bulgaria	3,14	41/100
Romania	**3,43**	**44/100**

Romania confronted itself with a democratic crisis in the summer of 2012. The political changes, which were made by the new government, determined the European Union to perceive Romania as an unreliable member with democratic deficiencies. Nevertheless, the international pressure, urged the national authorities to find an appropriate solution for solving the internal issues and start rebuilding Romania's international credibility. As we can observe from the data collected and analyzed by Transparency International, the things did not change much since Romania became a member of the European Union. The data is calculated according to the 2012 indicators and when referring to the corruption perception indicator the ranking is made from 1 to 100, where 100 represents the least corrupted country and 1 the most corrupted state. Regarding the table, we notice that Romania has the lowest corruption indicator and the lowest democracy score, in comparison with the other Eastern European countries (Transparency, 2012).

The numbers show us, that the process of Europeanization was slowed down or it progressed very slowly, because in 2012, Romania has a negative overall score in comparison with the other countries, which joined in 2004. For the Romanian state, the Europeanization represented a way to accelerate the reforms, but with a broken state apparatus. If there is no political will, there is no political capacity too.

4. Conclusions

Therefore, political will is the main trigger for European integration and Pridham identifies four forms of motivation behind the integration strategy. 1. the historical imperative used as a tool to get rid of the past using integration; 2. the democratic requirement-integration used to help consolidation of democracy; 3. the security imperative and 4. the economic or modernizing imperative, where integration serves as a tool to enhance economic performance and welfare (Pridham, 2007, p. 243). In connection with the types of motivation aforementioned, Romania follows all the aforementioned motivations with an emphasis on the historical imperative and modernizing imperative, even if the focus should be on the democratic requirement as the first determinant of the other motivations. Romania should have started with the consolidation of democracy as the main determinant especially in relation with the EU conditionality principle. In the context of interstate bargaining, Romania speculated its way in the European Union.

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Romania is considered one of the poorest member and one of the most corrupted countries of the European Union (Transparency, 2012). These are proved empirical facts, which could not be contradicted by the Romanian political stage. Despite these negative sides of the Europeanization, Romania made progress too. Romania is one of the few countries from the European Union, which adopted efficient minorities strategies and one of the countries which has a very well organized transplant policy, better than all other EU countries (Ghinea & Stefan, 2011). However, the transition period meant the beginning of the Europeanization, but in the Romanian political context this was a mistake, because the country was not ready to face Europeanization, because the transition from a totalitarian regime to a democratic one was not proper. The politicians perceived the transition period as the gateway to the European Union, without thinking that some national institutional reforms ought to be realized. Yet, the country was not ready to adopt the conditions imposed by the European Union. The conditions referred to an effective Anti-Corruption Strategy, the adoption of the European regulations into the national legislation, improvement of the mechanism of accessing the European structural funds, respecting the judicial system without being politicized, a free press and of course an economic market. Romania failed to implement them de facto, because the 2012 political crisis revealed a major democratic backsliding. The undemocratic measures taken by the new government just to annoy more the political opponents and the outrageous nationalistic statements made the European Union to delay Schengen accession. Romania fulfills the technical conditions, but it does not fulfill the political ones. In this realm, European integration failed, because the political integration is an ongoing struggle for power and influence. Although, the civil society developed more and became a more appreciated voice, that endorses Europeanization and tries to advocate for the implementation of the European policies in the economic and political fields, gaps still exist (News, 2012).

This was one of the reasons, why Romania was perceived as a difficult candidate country and further on as a problematic member. Due to this unfinished transition, the Europeanization was at some levels superficial and the implementation of the policies, rather chaotic. Another problem to point out is that level of corruption determined a slow and superficial Europeanization. The politicians were not so willing to place the Romanian state ahead their personal interest.

The Romanian state still has unsolved issues that have to put into place. The Europeanization process existed, but when we compare Romania with the other CEE countries, the difference is noticeable, especially in the field of judiciary and corruption. The lack of consistency of the democratization process and the sloppy transition turned Romania in a dysfunctional state with a rather sluggish process of Europeanization. In 2007, when becoming a member, Romania accepted all the conditions imposed by the European Union just to sign the accession treaty faster without weighting the conditions. The Romanian authorities perceived the European Union as an authority and not as a partner to work together with. This assessment slowed even more the process of Europeanization, because the Romanian authorities waited for European guidance and rules to comply with, without realizing that they know best the insights of Romania.

Without no doubt, Romania suffered the most from the atrocities of the communist regime, a regime that infiltrated in every part of the Romanian society, but one thing that the Romanian people had was enthusiasm. The enthusiasm that everything will work out for the

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better and they saw in the European Union just an opportunity. Romania's peculiarity makes from it a very interesting case and its pattern could be further analyzed in following its track for monitoring corruption and also for the idea that maybe Romania is still in a process of Europeanization, because to a certain extent Europeanization resembles sovietization and the past influences still bring unwanted results.

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