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“EASTERN PARTNERSHIP” PROGRAM OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND A NEW PHASE OF EASTWARD EXPANSION

The main reasons for the emergence of the “Eastern Partnership” program are the need to develop economic and trade relations with the countries of the South Caucasus, the important role of improving the transit routes and sources of energy supplies to the EU, ensuring security and stability, illegal immigration, and cross-border crime. there was a struggle. One of the main reasons was the activation of Russia’s foreign policy in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. In Brussels, they believe that the Eastern Partnership program would lead these countries to direct their policies towards the EU in the future.

In July 2010, the partners who signed the “Prague Declaration” began to implement 4 directions of cooperation with the European Union: democratization, economic integration, energy cooperation and people-to people communication. “Eastern Partnership” program was supposed to result in closer cooperation between the partner countries. The realization of the goals set within the framework of the ST program is possible through bilateral and multilateral cooperation. The line of multilateral cooperation envisages such a framework where the countries included in the CS solve problems as a group. The multi-stakeholder cooperation line supports the achievement of the goals set for the ST project through four political (thematic) platforms and a number of leading initiatives.

Azerbaijan’s participation in the EP program was an attempt to achieve progress in resolving the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. Nevertheless, none of the EU’s tasks in resolving the conflict were properly resolved. The settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is one of the priorities for Armenia. Representatives of the illegal criminal regime of Nagorno-Karabakh receive visas to European countries. This intolerable situation must be prevented. The resolution of this conflict would allow the EU to simultaneously take over comprehensive cooperation projects involving Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. There are a number of problems that prevent the EU from implementing an active policy in this direction.

The resolution of this conflict would allow the EU to simultaneously take over comprehensive cooperation projects involving Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. While the EP program is a priority for Poland and Sweden, on the contrary, it is not a priority for other member countries. It is this policy that has had a negative impact on the prospects and attractiveness of the EP program.

Key words: “Eastern Partnership”, implementation, South Caucasus, region, foreign policy.

Introduction. In essence, the European Union’s Eastern Partnership (EaP) initiative, which appeared as a logical continuation of the ACP (*ACP full form is Assistant Commissioner of Police*), was put forward by Poland and Sweden in May 2009. The CS initiative includes the strengthening of the existing cooperation with the EU countries of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, referred to as “eastern partners” within the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy, from both sides and continuing in a multilateral format. This initiative was launched with the adoption of a joint declaration at the first summit held in Prague on May 7, 2009.

The pretext for the implementation of the program was the Russia-Ukraine “gas” wars and Russia forcing Georgia to peace in August 2008.

The main reasons for the emergence of the “Eastern Partnership” program are the need to develop economic and trade relations with the countries of the South Caucasus, the important role of improving the transit routes and sources of energy supplies to the EU, ensuring security and stability, illegal immigration, and cross-border crime. there was a struggle. One of the main reasons was the activation of Russia’s foreign policy in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus [4]. In Brussels, they believe that the Eastern Partnership program would lead these countries to direct their policies towards the EU in the future.

From the new neighborhood to the Eastern partnership. In July 2010, the partners who signed the “Prague Declaration” began to implement 4 directions of cooperation with the European Union: democratization, economic integration, energy

cooperation and people-to-people communication [6, p. 101].

Researchers associate the emergence of the “Eastern Partnership” program with the coordination of the European neighborhood policy [5, p. 383].

Unlike the “New Neighborhood Program”, the “Eastern Partnership” set specific goals. Thus, this program was supposed to result in closer cooperation between the partner countries. Countries included in the program were also expected to accelerate reforms, end trade restrictions, simplify the visa regime, and further develop energy cooperation.

The initiative to create an alliance for the Mediterranean basin was put forward in 2007 by French President Nicolas Sarkozy, who saw the future of Europe in the south. In this regard, the first steps were taken in July 2008 in the direction of the differentiation of the European neighborhood policy in the field of policy activation related to the “Barcelona process” [8].

Despite the highly anticipated content of the program, the South Caucasus states took a rather pragmatic approach to Brussels’ new initiative. For the South Caucasus, participation in the “Eastern Partnership” program meant, according to the researchers, an opportunity to receive further exports and economic income (additional investments) from the European Union [7, p. 135].

The EP (“Eastern Partnership”) program would lead to the conclusion of new framework agreements between the eastern neighbors. Based on these agreements, free trade zones would be created between the neighbors. In the course of cooperation, the EP program, which envisages the implementation of multilateral measures, envisaged the sharing of the positive experience of the EU among the partner countries. Within the framework of the EP program, which can play an important role in the sustainable development of Azerbaijan’s economy, it was planned to allocate funds from 400 million to 600 million euros to Azerbaijan until 2013.

The following measures were planned to be implemented in the partner countries within the framework of the EP program.

- Conclusion of the association agreement with the program participant states;
- Creation of a free trade zone;
- First simplification of the visa regime between those countries and the EU, and finally its complete cancellation;
- To achieve institutional development in partner countries.

The creation of free trade zones should be the basis for the development of the common internal market, similar to the existing “European economic

space” with Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein. This requires the harmonization of the legislation of the partner countries with the European legislation. 6 existing initiatives in the EP program give it an additional incentive. These initiatives are as follows.

- Integrated border management. ISO (International Standardization Organization) assists partners in adopting positive practices in accordance with EU standards;

- Small and medium business mechanism. In partner countries, advice and technical assistance are provided for improving the business environment, improving the regulatory legal framework for small and medium-sized businesses;

- Regional electricity markets, efficient use of energy. Here the goal is to achieve integration of the energy markets of the countries included in the EP – Eastern partnership program and to strengthen the security of energy supply;

- Multifaceted development of energy supply. The aim here is to strengthen cooperation between producers, consumers and operators to ensure reliable energy supply with Europe and partner countries;

- Prevention, preparedness and response to natural and man-made disasters. The aim of this initiative is to build disaster management capacity at the local, regional and national levels to prevent the effects of natural disasters and climate change;

- Environmental management. The aim of this initiative is to promote environmental protection and consider the issue of climate change [2].

The realization of the goals set within the framework of the EP program is possible through bilateral and multilateral cooperation. The line of multilateral cooperation envisages such a framework where the countries included in the CS solve problems as a group. The multi-stakeholder cooperation line supports the achievement of the goals set for the EP project through four political (thematic) platforms and a number of leading initiatives.

These platforms include representatives of government institutions, parliament, civil society, international organizations (OSCE, Council of Europe), international financial institutions and the private sector.

- Democracy, good governance and stability. Through this platform, democratic and economic reforms that involve the development of stable democratic laws and efficient state structures in partner countries are discussed.

- Economic integration and adaptation to EU policy.

The main goal of this platform is the creation of a free trade zone between the EU and the partner countries included in the EP program.

– Energy security. The platform envisages energy supply and energy security of partner countries. Within the framework of the platform to prevent energy crises that may affect the EU and partner countries, the EU Energy Security Correspondents' Network, Gas Coordination Group, Oil.

“Partnership and Cooperation Agreement” signed between the EU and the South Caucasus on November 26, 1996 in Brussels.

Expanding dialogue on the Supply Chain and energy security, preparedness for possible energy crises is discussed.

– Relationships between people. This platform, where the main focus is on young people, is intended to expand relations between the citizens of the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries. This includes cooperation in the field of information development, culture, science and education.

– Meetings of high-level officials. Here, visits of high-ranking officials to the CIS countries are envisaged several times a year. The purpose of these visits is to review the progress made.

The accepted project does not leave the framework of AQS and, as European officials noted, without setting special financial requirements, it was valued as “pouring old wine into new fur” under the name of “Eastern cooperation” [10].

There will be practical support for the countries of the Central African Republic and the preparation of a complex program involving legal development. This program will lead to the strengthening of the institutional development of the partner countries. 173 million euros have been allocated for the implementation of the complex program. The European Investment Bank has created an investment vehicle for projects within the framework of ST [Eastern Partners Tasility, 1.5 billion euros] [5, p. 97].

AQTA information center has developed a dictionary that explains the terms used within the framework of the general directorate for foreign relations (RELIX) ST program. This dictionary was compiled in 8 languages, including Azerbaijani, and consisted of six pages, and was called the dictionary of terms of the Eastern Partnership. The aim of the publication was to bring the EU and the six Eastern partners closer together.

On September 30, 2011, the “Eastern Partnership” summit was held in Warsaw and the President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, participated in it. The purpose of the Warsaw summit was to further develop various aspects of the cooperation of countries included in the Eastern Partnership program with Europe.

On December 27–28, 2013, the next summit of the countries participating in the Eastern Partnership program was held in Vilnius. The summit was dedicated to the implementation status and future tasks of the program. The summit was attended by leaders and other persons, representatives of the economic and business structures of the EU members and participants of the ST program. Speaking at the summit, EU Commissioner for Enlargement and Economic Cooperation, Stefan Füle, said that the Vilnius summit is an important stage in the development of the CS program. He indicated that the European Commission allocated 2.5 billion euros to partner countries within the framework of the ST program. Continuing his opinion, he stated that in the partner countries, gross domestic product increased by 57%, investments increased by 61%, and export products increased by 65%, respectively.

On the eve of the summit, the Deputy MFA of Azerbaijan expressed his dissatisfaction with the bilateral cooperation relations with the Union within the framework of the current program and stated that the “Eastern Partnership” program had a geographical, political and economic framework that was not officially defined from the very beginning. We do not consider it right to be selected as one of the simple and post-Soviet republics within this program. Because among the countries involved in the program, there are states with different opportunities, resources, starting positions and goals. Therefore, it is not a very right decision to put us in some general framework. He stated that relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union should not be based on a general regional approach. We have always expected a different attitude towards Azerbaijan as a partner country from the European Union. In other areas, our relations should be at the level of extended dialogue, which was defined by the memorandum of understanding on strategic partnership in the field of energy, which we signed with the Union in 2006. Especially if we take into account that there is such experience in the field of energy partnership, this experience can be used in economy, transport-communication, transit, cultural-information, etc. can be spread to wider areas including [6, p. 101].

The European Union pays special attention to the further development of cooperation within the “Eastern Partnership” program of the post-Soviet republics – Ukraine, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Armenia. This is proved by the opinions of the two major European heads of state, who are considered the main driving force of the organization to which the union gives financial

importance – German Chancellor A. Merkel and French President F. Hollande – addressed to President Ilham Aliyev on the occasion of his victory in the 2013 presidential elections. Both of them, including US President B. Obama, called on President Ilham Aliyev to deepen the cooperation of his country with the European Union within the framework of the “Eastern Partnership” program, to use the potential of the alliance and to provide all-round support for the future rapprochement between Azerbaijan and the European Union.

On the eve of the summit, Russia, in its turn, tried to influence the cooperation of the post-Soviet republics with the EU. Starting from a few months ago, he used pressure methods to prevent those states, including Ukraine and Azerbaijan, from signing the Association Agreement with the EU.

Features of the implementation of the Eastern Partnership in the South Caucasus. The realization of the Eastern Partnership program in the South Caucasus was conditioned by the characteristics of the states here.

Azerbaijan joined the Eastern Partnership program at the summit held in Prague in 2009 [3, p. 249].

Azerbaijan's participation in the EP program was an attempt to achieve progress in resolving the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. Nevertheless, none of the EU's tasks in resolving the conflict were properly resolved [4]. When the EU did not play an important role, it did not participate in the framework of the EP program. However, the undesirability of the Armenian lobby in the EU and the strengthening of Russia's position in Armenia for Brussels remains a problem for Baku. The policy of increasing its importance remains important for Azerbaijan, not only for European countries, but for the entire Western world as a whole. The activity of relations between the EU and Azerbaijan in the field of energy system can be linked to the framework of the EP. Brussels is interested in Azerbaijan's energy system being closely connected with the EU system, and envisages internal European legislation [2]. However, while maintaining its multi-vector policy, Azerbaijan is trying to develop projects that strengthen its position and strengthen its economy. In principle, development in the field of democratization and human rights, which are considered as priorities of the State Council, is progressing, even if it is little. In the socio-economic sphere, there are no serious successes as a result of the relations of the EP framework. Thus, the strong economic development of Azerbaijan was determined only by its income in the field of oil and gas. A serious imbalance remains in Azerbaijan's foreign trade. Azerbaijan is not a member of the WTO, so access to the common market of the EU is not expected

in the near future. This may be of interest in terms of visa liberalization in Azerbaijan. Brussels uses this topic for its own political purposes. One of the reasons preventing the realization of joint venture in Azerbaijan is the diversity of interests of the partners. The EU is interested in a strategic partnership with a country with transit links and rich energy resources. A different aspect of Azerbaijan's compliance with these criteria is that Baku is trying to implement an independent and multi-vector policy. In turn, Azerbaijan needs the EU's support in recovering its ancient lands, Nagorno-Karabakh. However, from a political point of view, Brussels cannot take Baku's side openly. This is the position of Armenia against the interests of Azerbaijan in the South Caucasus game [6, p. 91].

The settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is one of the priorities for Armenia. The resolution of this conflict would allow the EU to simultaneously take over comprehensive cooperation projects involving Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. There are a number of problems that prevent the EU from implementing an active policy in this direction.

- Uncompromising conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia on the issue of the status of Nagorno-Karabakh.

- Conflict of interests of Russia, EU, USA, Turkey, Iran.

- Economic problems of the EU.

- Inadequacy of a properly developed program for conflict resolution.

- The lack of unity within the EU leads to the confusion of the priorities of the member states, as a result of which it is difficult to develop a unified foreign policy.

This problem may have attracted less attention, but its consequences are slowing down the development of the ST program in general. From the point of view of stabilization of the situation around Nagorno-Karabakh, participation in the ST program is not important for both Azerbaijan and Armenia. On April 24, 2014, the President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, who participated in the summit held in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, within the framework of the EU's Cooperation Program, once again emphasized Armenia's aggressive policy at the summit. Speaking at the summit, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan slandered Turkey and blamed Ankara for not opening the border with Armenia. Reacting decisively to this, President Ilham Aliyev stated that in response to the aggressive policy of Armenia, Turkey closed the border between Armenia and Turkey in 1993. The international community came to the conclusion blaming Azerbaijan: Why are sanctions not applied against Armenia? Why are Armenian

representatives not denied the right to vote in the Council of Europe? They have encroached on the territory of another country, violate international rights, grossly violate the resolutions of the UN Security Council, but they do not face any sanctions. Representatives of the illegal criminal regime of Nagorno-Karabakh receive visas to European countries. This intolerable situation must be prevented [1].

The parties seek to cooperate in other aspects of security. First of all, we are talking about organized crime. Despite the fact that neither incentives nor sanctions were provided by the European Union in this area, a positive quality was achieved as a result of joint interests in the improvement of conditions. Armenia actively participates in the "Complex Border Management" initiative implemented within the framework of the Cooperation Agreement. There was no unequivocal achievement of European diplomacy in the sphere of energy supply. Brussels could not reach an agreement with Yerevan regarding the decommissioning of the NPP in Medsamor, as Armenia depends on the electricity from this station. The EU cannot offer an alternative to it. Due to the current political conditions in the region, Armenia's participation in large energy projects as a transitional country is not yet convincing. The problems of Armenia and the EU in the field of democratization did not give the expected results. According to European officials, the process of democratization is noticeably delayed here. As a result of the consultative and technical assistance of the EU, progress is observed in the socio-economic field. An agreement is expected to be initialed between the two countries, one of the articles of which provides for the establishment of a free trade zone.

The state of security and stability in the country changed slightly during the period of implementation of the State Treaty in Georgia. The Geneva negotiations on the settlement of the 2008 conflict did not yield results. Illegal migration, drug addiction and criminality are accompanied by worsening of the situation in the country. The main reason for this was that the EU and the USA were supported by the Georgian regime, so they turned a blind eye to Saakashvili's authoritarian regime. The weakness of relations with Russia did not allow us to use its help in the fight against crime and terrorism.

In the field of energy, Georgia is strengthening its role in the field of energy (BTC, Baku-Subsa, BTE)

and transport (TRACECA) as an important transit link. However, Georgia could strengthen its position even more if it cooperated with Russia in the construction of the north-south transport highway and oil and gas transmission. Although Tbilisi receives significant investments in its economy in exchange for energy projects, it cannot use this in its foreign policy as a transitional country. So it is more oriented to the west. Georgia has done many things in the field of democratization, as shown in the statistical reports of EU representatives and various independent international organizations. The fight against corruption, protection of human rights, reforms in the judicial system were examples of this. Despite this, M. Saakashvili's regime is often criticized for suppressing the opposition and developing civil society. Russia is interested in deep democratization in Georgia. Thus, the strengthening of civil society and business institutions will allow those who are interested in the normalization of relations with Russia to speak their words.

In the socio-economic sphere, despite the West's help to Georgia with grants and cheap loans, it remains difficult. Georgia created favorable conditions for business development. Considering the problems in the world economy, the EU will not make special efforts to improve the situation of its ally. Georgia suffered serious economic losses because it refused to cooperate with Russia. Waiting for the initialization of the new agreement, Georgia hopes to enter the common market and liberalize the visa regime.

Conclusions. Considering the above, we conclude that the Eastern Partnership today is characterized by low efficiency and not high intensity in the countries of the South Caucasus. Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the European Union cannot agree on the same level in the realization of the "Eastern Partnership". This different level showed itself in the pandemic situation.

According to Amanda Paul, senior analyst of the European Policy Center, there is no similar position among the EU member states regarding the "Eastern Partnership" program.

While the ST program is a priority for Poland and Sweden, on the contrary, it is not a priority for other member countries. It is this policy that has had a negative impact on the prospects and attractiveness of the ST program.

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Гаджисва Х.З. ПРОГРАМА «СХІДНЕ ПАРТНЕРСТВО» ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОГО СОЮЗУ ЯК НОВИЙ ЕТАП У РОЗШИРЕННІ ЄС

Основними причинами прийняття програми «Східне Партнерство» є важливість розвитку торговельно-економічних відносин з країнами Південного Кавказу, важлива роль транзитних шляхів та джерел забезпечення ЄС енергією, їхня безпека та стабільність, боротьба з нелегальною міграцією та транскордонною злочинністю. А також однією з основних причин була активізація Російської зовнішньої політики у напрямку Східної Європи та Південного Кавказу. У Брюсселі вважають, що програма «СП» у майбутньому допоможе державам цього регіону направити свою зовнішню політику у бік ЄС.

Починаючи з липня 2010 року партнери, які підписали «Празьку Декларацію», розпочали роботу з Європейським Союзом щодо реалізації чотирьох напрямків співпраці – демократизації, економічної інтеграції, енергетичної співпраці та контактів між людьми. Мається на увазі, що програма «ВП» має ще більше зблизити співпрацю-партнерів.

Реалізація цілей зазначених у програмі «СП» надає можливість двостороннього та багатостороннього співробітництва. Багатостороння співпраця дає можливість державам, що входять до «СП», вирішувати проблеми спільно. Політика багатостороннього співробітництва сприяла реалізації цілей, зазначених у проекті «СП» шляхом на основі чотирьох платформ. Головною метою участі Азербайджану у програмі «СП» було досягнення вирішення Нагірно-Карабахського конфлікту. Незважаючи на це, ЄС не виконав жодного з прийнятих на себе зобов'язань. Вирішення Нагірно-Карабахського конфлікту є одним із пріоритетних цілей також і для Вірменії. Але члени злочинного режиму так званої Карабахської республіки без проблем отримували візи до Європейських країн.

Вирішення цього конфлікту сприяло б ЄС мати перевагу у вирішенні проектів багатосторонньої співпраці, в яких беруть участь Азербайджан, Грузія та Вірменія.

Слід зазначити, що з Польщі та Швеції програма «СП» є значною, а інших країн членів ЄС вважається пріоритетом. Саме така політика негативно вплинула на перспективу та привабливість програми «СП».

Ключові слова: «Східне партнерство», реалізація, Південний Кавказ, регіон, зовнішня політика.