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Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey

Current Political and Security Issues in the Black Sea Region

Özgür Özdamar

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History: The Last Two Decades (1)

- End of Cold War and USSR: The great transformation
- New littoral states: Ukraine, Georgia
- New independent states: Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Albania, Serbia
- Transformation of Romania, Bulgaria

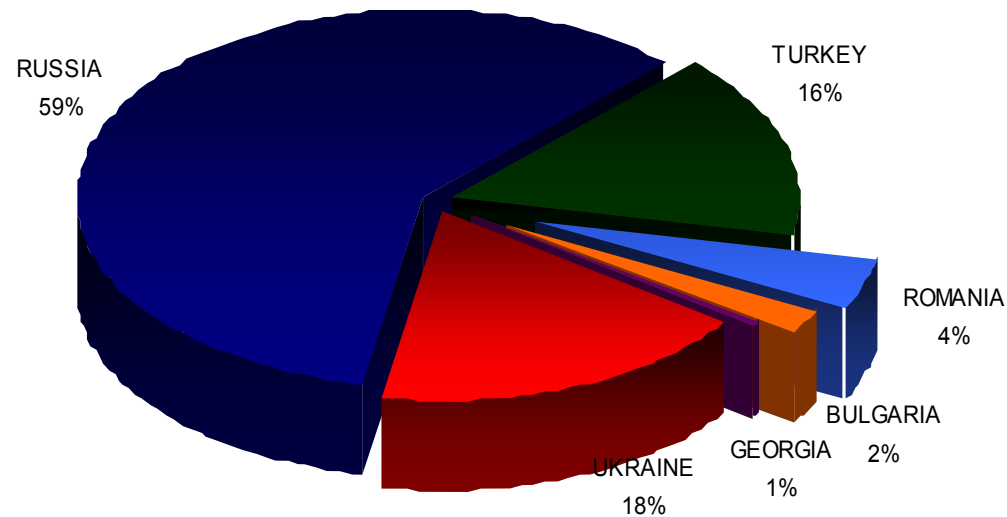
History: The Last Two Decades (2)

- Russian Federation's coastline reduced
- First multilateral cooperation scheme: BSEC
- Black Sea:
 - ➔ For the first time not under the control of a great power
 - ➔ Open to international influences
- Post 9-11 security concerns: increased interest, rivalry for influence in the region

Security Issues in the Region

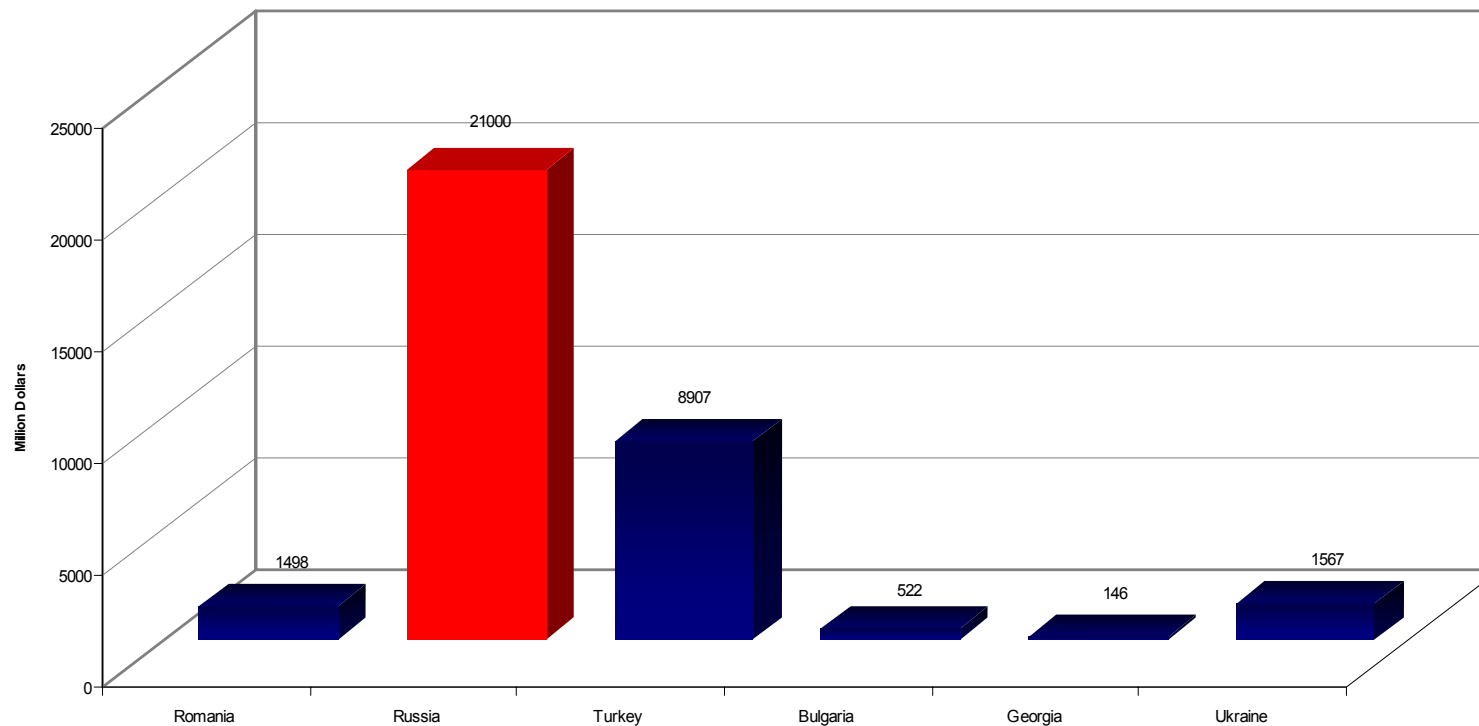
- Military security: no direct threats, some risks

A Comparison of Composite National Capabilities in the Black Sea



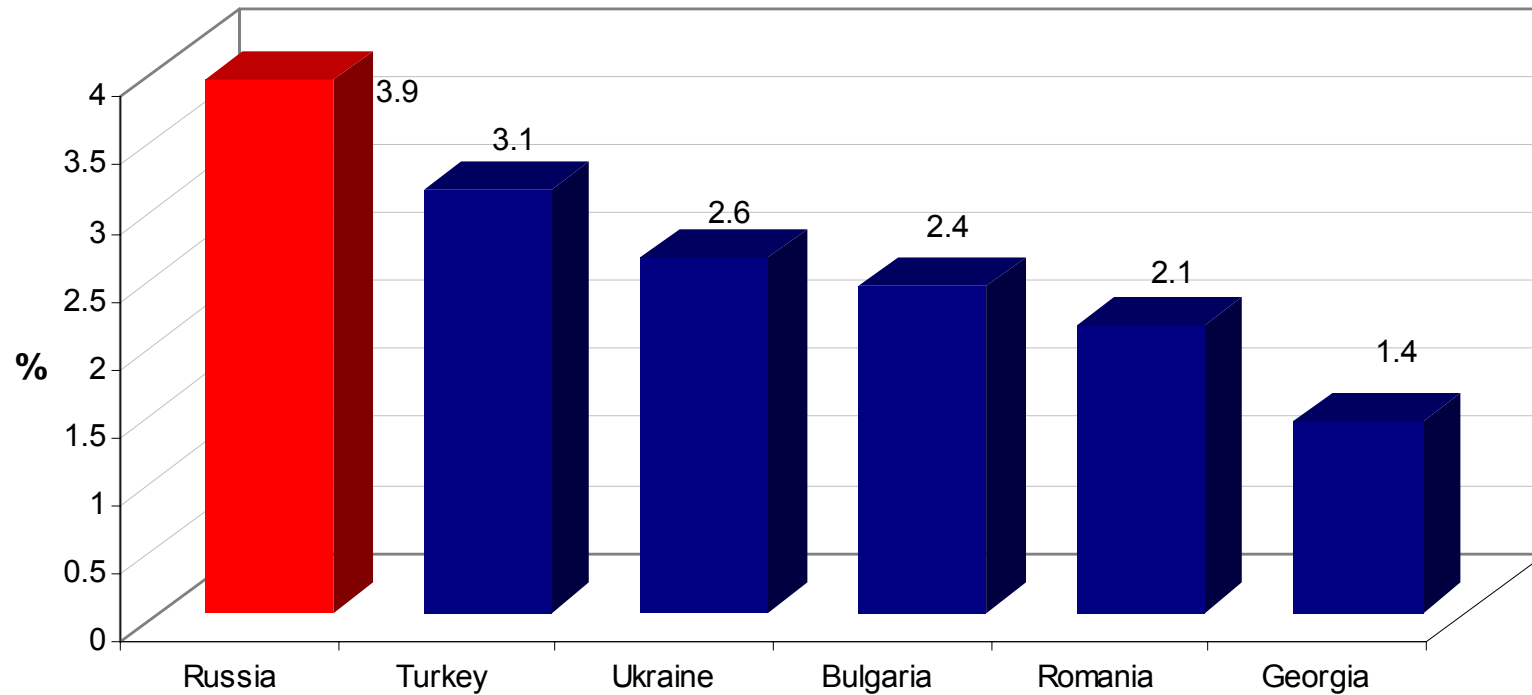
Military Balance (1)

Military Expenditure by Countries in the Black Sea (2005)



Military Balance (2)

Military Expenditure as Percentage of GDP (2004)



Security Issues in the Region

- Soft Security: Human and drug trafficking
- Spread of WMDs
- Terrorism
- Frozen conflicts
- Energy security
- Environmental issues

Actors: Russia

■ Interests

- Regime stability in CIS regardless of other concerns
- Protect and expand Russian influence

■ Approach

- Prevention of “unfriendly” regimes
- Promote Russian interests in cooperation with governments, opposition, civil society and NGOs in the region

■ Problems and Rivals

- Transatlantic influence
- NATO, US security installments

Actors: United States

■ Interests

- EU and NATO enlargements should spread over to eastern BS
- Strategic asset for control of the Greater ME
- Energy security, BS as a transport corridor, alternative to RF

■ Approach

- Spread of democratic regimes
- NATO penetration to the region
- Support EuroAtlantic institutions

■ Problems and Rivals

- Russian opposition
- Difficulties in drawing Turkish support

Actors: The EU

■ Interests

- Energy security
- Stability and democratization of the regional actors
- Prevention of asymmetric threats from the region

■ Approach

- Regional policy: Black Sea Synergy
- EuroAtlantic institutions
- Support civil society, democratic forces

■ Problems and Rivals

- Russian opposition to the EU and NATO initiatives
- Lack of experience, long-term planning and interest for the BS

Actors: Turkey

■ Interests

- Promote regional cooperation in political and security matters
- Protecting the integrity of the maritime security domain
- Inclusion of all littorals to security arrangements

■ Approach

- Regional policy: promotion of BSEC and EU regional policy (Multilateralism)
- Regional security institutions: BLACKSEAFOR, BS Harmony
- Maintaining the balance of power

■ Problems and Rivals

- Possible revision of Montreaux convention perceived as a threat
- Political and security initiatives against or excluding Russia
- Transatlantic push

Actors: Romania

■ Interests

- Opposition to Turkish-Russian influence
- Balancing Russian influence on Transnistria and maritime security

■ Approach

- Inviting US Navy to the region
- Initiating new regional organizations : the Black Sea Forum

■ Problems and Rivals

- Russia and Turkey
- Cannot draw support from Bulgaria, Greece and the EU

Conclusion

- Black Sea is as important as never before for both economic and political reasons
- It is open to influences from both East and West
- Existing cooperation schemes should be developed
- Relationship between transatlantic and regional actors will be decisive in determining the future of the region
- Revisionist initiatives should be dealt with caution to prevent the region from becoming a stage of great power rivalry
- EU's regional policies and soft power approach and Turkish initiatives could be useful in containing political and security risks in the region.

Questions (1)

1. What policy areas do you expect to be points of contention between global and regional powers in the region?
2. Can the NATO enlargement and Russia's regional policy be reconciled?
3. Do you think the existing capacities of the security institutions in the region are adequate to cover new asymmetric risks?
4. What are the opportunities and risks related to energy security in the region? Can Russian monopoly on gas transportation be overcome?

Questions (2)

5. What are the shortcomings and successes of the BSEC so far? Are political conflicts in the region obstacles to the success of the organization?
6. What can be the possible implications of the U.S and EU's observer status to the BSEC? With the U.S and EU's involvement, should BSEC further engage into political and security domains?
7. What future agenda for the BSEC? What are the priority areas for BSEC's restructuring?
8. What are the possible implications of the recently adopted 'Black Sea Synergy' of the EU?