

**MODERN DIMENSIONS  
IN  
EUROPEAN EDUCATION  
AND  
RESEARCH AREA**

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НА  
ЕВРОПЕЙСКОТО ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛНО  
И  
НАУЧНО ПРОСТРАНСТВО**

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# THE “THREE SEAS” INITIATIVE. PROJECT CONCEPT, REALIZATION AND MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

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**Abstract:** *In the last few years, the world economy has faced its worst ordeal since World War II. A number of countries have suffered heavy blows from crises of various kinds. Short- and long-term growth forecasts have been subject to an unusual degree of uncertainty. The deep recession, in turn, has not only caused long-term damage to investment, but has had and continues to have a negative impact on human capital. In order to overcome these and other emerging vulnerabilities in every area of the social sphere, there was an urgent need for action to strengthen the capacity of states and to address the insurmountable challenges of achieving sustainable growth and development of societies.*

*In this regard, to achieve economic convergence, improve the development of transport, digital and energy infrastructure and connectivity, as well as to achieve cooperation between the countries located in the region between the Baltic, Black and Adriatic Seas in 2015, at the state level, a project was launched and implemented, relying on the active partnership both with the European Commission and separately with Germany and the United States, called the Three Seas Initiative.*

**Keywords:** *Initiative, Three Seas, concept and media*

## Introduction

### ***Brief historical review***

The Three Seas initiative brings together 12 Member States of the European Union – Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.<sup>1</sup> The region covering the Member States of the Three Seas initiative is a geographical and economic border region of the European Union. Although each of these participating countries has its own different historical development, there is one thing in common that unites them. A factor that connects them to the time of the Iron Curtain and the consequences that countries continue to have from the division of the continent in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Recent history remembers this period, when the development, connections and natural progress of most countries in the Central and Eastern part of the continent were changed, and some of the consequences were expressed in the lack of modern infrastructure and connectivity, as well as lack of investment for their construction.

### ***Mission, concept, chronology and aims***

Broadly speaking, the planning and implementation of the Three Seas initiative aims to address the effects of the communist past of Central and Eastern European countries and their deficits. At the same time, the main idea here is to “hear” the growing problems and to attract investor interest in the development of Central and Eastern Europe.

In 2014, the idea of creating the Three Seas Initiative was born under this scheme.

It was originally presented as a report by the Atlantic Club and the Polish think tank Central Europe Energy Partners.<sup>2</sup>

The development of this ambitious project marked its real beginning in 2016. Then the Croatian city of Dubrovnik hosted the first high-level political and state summit, at which a Constituent Declaration was signed.

A second summit was held in 2017 in the Polish capital, Warsaw, with the participation of US President Donald Trump. At the same meeting, the business forum for the Three Seas initiative was established.

During the third presidential meeting held in Bucharest in 2018, a list of priority projects was presented and a letter of intent was signed to establish an Investment Fund.

The investment fund operates entirely on a commercial basis. It is registered under Luxembourg law as an alternative investment institution. The chronology of the summits takes us to 2019, when the Three Seas Investment Fund started with a start-up capital of EUR 500 million, and at the next fifth meeting, in 2020, US Secretary of State Mark Pompeo announced that the fund will be supported by \$ 1 billion in investments.<sup>3</sup>

To date, the chronology of the summits ends with the sixth consecutive annual summit, which took place in 2021 in Sofia, Bulgaria. Its host was the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Mr. Rumen Radev. In his address to the participants and guests, he pointed out that the Initiative has proven to be a platform for dialogue and promotion of economic development and he appreciated its latest results, namely investments in energy, transport and digitalization.<sup>4</sup>

Sharing the general opinion that the Three Seas is becoming increasingly important for building the future of the region and expressing its full support for the meeting, the presidents of Estonia Kersti Kalulaid, Latvia's Egils Levits and Poland's Andrzej Duda also took part in the summit, Slovenia's Borut Pahor, Germany's Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Greece's Katerina Sakelaropoulou, and Deputy Prime Minister for Investment and e-Government of Slovakia Veronika Remishova, Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Karel Havlicek, the Deputy Minister of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs of Austria Peter Launski-Tiedenthal, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Kristalina Georgieva, and the President of Lithuania Gitanas Nauseda joined in a video address.

US President Joe Biden also took part in the work of this meeting in Sofia through a video address. In it, he said that the region of Central and Eastern Europe has great potential for development and declared full support for achieving the goals of the Initiative.

### **Research, analysis and results**

#### ***Origin, formation and action of the media environment of the "Three Seas" Initiative***

It can definitely be said that in the general case the media environment of the "Three Seas" Initiative is adequate and relevant to its goals. At the dawn of its inception, the initiators of the Initiative have turned to media experts of world renown, who have developed a strategic media plan that takes into account and provides guidelines for overcoming all possible problems related to then and future coverage of the "Three Seas" Initiative.

If we are based solely on scientific postulates, we must recognize that this Initiative has many more goals than the proclaimed ones. It is not insignificant to note the claim of some political capacities from Western Europe that the "Three Seas" practically puts its member states even more strongly in the orbit of the United States. It also shows that through the Initiative, some countries are trying to solve their pressing internal political problems at the expense of the European Union. Of course, if an appropriate media environment is not created and if it is not maintained in an active state, these and similar other claims could gradually erode and torpedo the innovative political and economic technology called "Three Seas".

The media environment of the Three Seas Initiative plays several important roles:

In the first place, it appears in the role of its propagandist. Delicately and with professional skill, the media environment provides ample opportunities for accurate and detailed information about the official goals, concept and mission of the Initiative;

As an integrated set of Information collections, Information Technologies and Human Factor (interactions between people and equipment), the media environment constantly monitors the development of the Initiative, reflects its daily development, and sometimes appears as a positive corrective. [1]

Last but not least, the media environment acts as a barrier, a shield against all attempts to discredit the Three Seas Initiative.



The media environment of the Three Seas Initiative has been created professionally and is constantly in a state of reactive activity. It is built on a tiered basis, covering all possible conventional media, as well as electronic ones based on various Internet platforms. As for its topology, it can definitely be said that it is organized on the principle of TOP – DOWN. In case of accidental activation of the Environment, first of all the world media are activated with predominant coverage of the potential audience. Then the influential regional media came on the scene and finally, by virtue of certain and imposed (even by force) “rules”, the media of the Member States are activated.

### Conclusion

For its short existence of 6 years, the Three Seas Initiative has established itself as a valuable tool that achieves its goals and mission, arguing that, in addition, it strengthens cohesion and convergence in the European Union and improves security and resilience of the participating countries.<sup>5</sup> In the short term, it is expected to contribute to a transatlantic partnership and a faster economic recovery in the current recession.

In the framework of this research, we can make the following important summary: the strategic partnership and efforts between the Member States of the Initiative, as well as the European Union and the US, have the full potential to upgrade and modernize critical infrastructure links in the region.

Overcoming the current social, economic, political and military deficits and shortcomings will accelerate economic growth, integration and business contacts and improve the position of Member States to accelerate the attraction of foreign investment.

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### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mfa.bg/bg/3109>

<sup>2</sup> <https://bbr.bg/bg/three-se%D0%B0s/hronologiya/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://3siif.eu/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://nova.bg/news/view/2021/07/08/332902/%D1%82%D1%80%D0%B8-%D0%BC%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%B0-%D0%B1%D1%8A%D0%BB%D0%B3%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%8F-%D0%B5-%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%BD-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D1%88%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B0-%D1%81%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%89%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B2%D1%8A%D1%80%D1%85%D0%B0-%D0%B2%D0%B8%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BE/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mi.government.bg/bg/news/registration-for-the-three-seas-sofia-summit-and-business-forum-2021-4065.html>

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