

How can Romania use public diplomacy in order to improve the image of the European Union in the Republic of Moldova?

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Executive summary

The dissertation at hand intends to analyze how public diplomacy can be used by Romania to improve the image of the European Union in the Republic of Moldova. Romania represents the biggest ally of the Republic of Moldova due to the historical, cultural and linguistic bonds between them. The disappointment generated by the pro-EU government from the Republic of Moldova led to the negative perception of the EU in the Republic of Moldova and to the rise of the pro-Russia parties. Although the EU has been a helpful partner for the Republic of Moldova, the Moldovans prefer closer relations with Russia. The methods that were used in gathering data to answer the central question of this dissertation were desk research and semi-structured interview.

The result of the dissertation is that the current public diplomacy strategy of Romania is lacking several important aspects. There are no planned strategic messages in it while the activities laid out in the reports are not effective at communicating with the Moldovan audience because most of them take place in Romania, and not in the Republic of Moldova. The dissertation found that Romania works with NGOs through the Mobility Fund, a project that distributes small grants to joint projects of organizations from both Romania and the Republic of Moldova that aim to achieve change in areas such as European integration, administration reform or good governance. Another result is that Romania conducts its cultural diplomacy through the Romanian Cultural and its activity consistent, as between August 2016 and January 2017, it organized 57 cultural events in Chisinau.

The conclusion of the dissertation is that in order to efficiently use public diplomacy, Romania should develop a long term strategy that includes planned strategic messages that will be propagated through events organized by the Romanian embassy at Chisinau. Moreover, Romania should play a facilitator role and pursue Moldovan NGOs to form a network that will push for the European integration of the Republic of Moldova increase the financial support granted through the Mobility Fund. As well, the Romanian Cultural Institute should continue its consistent activity and involve in its events artists that come from other EU Member States.

1. Introduction

In 2010, a coalition of parties that argued that the Republic of Moldova should pursue stronger ties with the European Union (EU), managed to win enough mandates in the Parliament to form a government in the Republic of Moldova. Although the new Pro-EU Moldovan government managed to sign an Association Agreement with the EU (European Commission, 2014, p. 1), their campaign promises from 2010 came short, as they were more interested in advancing their own interests than implementing policies to improve the lives of the Moldovan people (Kostanyan, 2016, p. 3). In 2016 the credibility of the pro-EU political parties collapsed due to political and corruption scandals, and due to their failure to modernize the country (Lupușor, et al., 2016, p. 36).

Instead of criticizing the government for not implementing reforms, the EU chose to ignore the misdeeds of the declared pro-EU politicians and continued to send impressive amounts of funds intended for noble goals such as eradicating poverty, consolidating democracy and improving the governance model from Chisinau (Kostanyan, 2016, p. 3)

Since the parliamentary elections from 2014, the popularity of the political parties that aim for stronger ties between the Republic of Moldova and Russia grew every year. Therefore, at the 2016 presidential elections, Igor Dodon, president of the Party of Socialist of the Republic of Moldova, became the new president of the Republic of Moldova (Alegerile Președintelui Republicii Moldova din 30 octombrie și 13 noiembrie 2016).

Romania is the most important ally of the Republic of Moldova due to their cultural, historic and linguistic bonds. Romania is considered the lawyer of the Republic of Moldova in the EU while Klaus Iohannis, the Romanian president, declared that the integration of the Republic of Moldova in the EU is a national project of Romania (Gabriel Mares, interview, 16 February 2017); (Revista 22, 2014).

This dissertation aims to analyze how public diplomacy can improve the image of the EU in the Republic of Moldova in order to positively change the perceptions

and attitudes of the ordinary Moldovan towards the integration of their country in the EU.

Public diplomacy represents the process in which the government of a state directly communicates with the citizens of a foreign country in order to change perceptions and attitudes. Public diplomacy was an important asset of various governments during the Cold War, but after USSR collapsed and the Iron Curtain fell, its importance as a tool diminished. However, after the attack of 9/11 took place, governments realized how important is to communicate with the people of another country in order to present them with a different point of view (Leonard, Stead, Smewing; 2002; p. 2).

This dissertation will first introduce the reader with background information, in order to make him understand the current political situation, why the integration of the Republic of Moldova is failing, and why Romania is such an important ally for the Republic of Moldova. Second, it will offer a theoretical framework of public diplomacy and two of its subsets, NGO diplomacy and cultural diplomacy. Third, it will take the theoretical framework from the literature review and apply it to the current Romanian communication strategy towards the Republic of Moldova. Finally, recommendations will be made and a conclusion will be drawn.

2. Methodology

The main objective of this dissertation is to analyse how Romania can improve the image of the EU in the Republic of Moldova by using public diplomacy, after opinion polls showed that only around 36-38% of the Moldovan population prefers to integrate in the EU while 52% wants to join Russia's Eurasian Union (IPP, 2016 78, 80). In order to continue the integration of the Republic of Moldova in the European Union, a process that began in 2014 when the Association Agreement was signed, the perception of EU integration must positively change. In order to answer the central question, qualitative methods were used to obtain both primary and secondary data. The main reason why qualitative methods were used is because through them more detailed information can be obtained. For example, in an interview with an expert, the researcher can ask him detailed questions and obtain detailed information. One-on-one interview was used to obtain primary data while desk research obtained both secondary data (books, academic reports) and primary data (governmental documents, opinion polls).

One-on-one interviews is one method that was used for the collection of primary data. The reason why this method was used is because interviews can obtain in-depth information and interesting insights. The type of interview that was conducted was a semi-structured one (Academy of European Studies, p. 91-92). This setting implies that the researcher maintains the control over the direction of the interview by using a prepared list of questions and provides to the interviewee the possibility to discuss in detail. The main advantage of this method is that the researcher can obtain both additional detailed information and insights and the information he is after (Academy of European Studies, p. 91-92). The person that was interviewed for this dissertation was Gabriel Mares, the prime-collaborator diplomat at the Romanian embassy from The Netherlands from the political section. The reason why the researcher of the dissertation contacted him is because he is a Romanian diplomat with expertise and knowledge in the field that could provide information that otherwise could not be obtain with desk research. The biggest difficulty in writing this dissertation was finding experts that were willing to accept to be interviewed. There were many experts and academics that

were contacted and invited for an interview however all of them except Mr Mares declined due to tight schedule or lack of knowledge on the issue.

Desk research represents the process of obtaining information from existing sources and it was used mainly in writing the Literature Review (Academy of European Studies, p. 29-30). Through desk research was obtained academic sources (academic reports, journals and books), news articles and governmental data. First, academic sources were the main type of source that was consulted in writing this dissertation because they are reliable, as they are written by academics and experts from organizations such as the "Foreign Policy Office", "European Centre for Public Policy", or from "Expert Group". The reason why respectable academic journals and reports were chosen as the main type of source for this dissertation is because they are written by experts and because they are peer reviewed by other researchers (Academy of European Studies, p. 53).

The second type of source that was used are news articles from respectable newspapers and media outlets from Romania: Financial Newspaper (Ziarul Financiar), AgerPress or Gândul. This type of sources was used due to their reliable reporting of events relevant to the topic of this dissertation (Academy of European Studies, p. 53). Third, governmental documents were also obtained through desk research and they represent an important source of reliable information because they are primary detailed data that come directly from the actors involved in the dissertation (the Romanian government, the Moldovan government, and from the European Council) and that were not interpreted by other researchers or experts.

In order to avoid biases, this dissertation aimed to obtain a diversity of views on the topic of the dissertation therefore it consulted sources written by authors that have different identities and cultural backgrounds: Romanian, Moldovan or from other European countries.

In writing this dissertation ethical considerations were taken. Full consent was taken from the participant of the interview and he was informed about his rights during the interview such as no recording of the interview, the right to remain anonymous or that the interview can be stopped at any moment he wishes.

This methodology was written by using the information provided by the manuals of the module "Introduction to Research Skills" and "Advanced Research Skills" from the faculty of European Studies, The Hague University.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Background Information

In order to have a full understanding of the thesis, this chapter will introduce the reader to important aspects such as: the importance of EU integration for the Republic of Moldova, the complicated and tumultuous political atmosphere of the Republic of Moldova, the failing EU integration of the Republic of Moldova, and the special relations between Romania and the Republic of Moldova.

Why is it important for Republic of Moldova to integrate in the European Union?

Although it is not clear when the Republic of Moldova will obtain EU membership, an important step for the Republic of Moldova's EU integration took place in 2014, when the two entities signed an Association Agreement (European Commission, 2014, p. 1). According to a press release from the EU Commission (2016):

"The Association Agreement (AA) aims to deepen political and economic relations between the EU and the Republic of Moldova. The Agreement offers Moldova a framework for boosting trade and economic growth through improved access to the EU market for its products and services and by comprehensively approximating its trade-related laws and regulations to Union standards." (p. 1).

Through the AA, the Republic of Moldova can implement reforms in cooperation with the EU in key fields such as justice and law enforcement, public governance, consumer protection, economic recovery and growth, and in core sectors such as transport, environmental protection, energy, industrial development, protection, education, youth and culture and social development (European Commission; 2014; page 1).

Besides the reforms, one of the biggest advantages of the AA is the establishment of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) between the Republic of Moldova and the EU. The DCFTA is an arrangement between the two entities that will improve trade relationship by opening their markets to each other (ZLSAC UE-Republica Moldova, p. 3).

According to a paper released by the Moldovan Ministry of Economy before signing the AA (Ministerul Economiei, 2011, page 4), where it compared the benefits of the DCFTA with the benefits of an association with the Eurasian Union, the DCFTA could bring numerous benefits to the economy. According to the document, 75 million EUR can be added to the national income in the short term while in the long term the amount could rise to 142 million EUR. Moreover, this increase can lead to the growth of the gross domestic product by 5,4% in the long term. Another benefit of the DCFTA is that it will consolidate the trade between the Republic of Moldova and the EU, which can increase the Moldovan exports by 15-16% and the imports by 6-8%. Additionally, the wages can increase by 3,1% on the short term, and 4,8% on the long term. Meanwhile it was projected that the prices could go down by 1% in the short term and by 1,3% in the long term. Other benefits mentioned in the document are the liberalization of the service market, and the improvement of the safety of the products (Ministerul Economiei, 2011, page 4).

Expert Grup, a Moldovan NGO with economic expertise, argued as well in favor for the DCFTA. In a similar document about the advantages and disadvantages of associating with the EU or with the Eurasian Custom Union, the conclusion was that the most advantageous choice for the country would be the association with the EU (DCFTA) (Expert Grup, 2013).

Why is the Republic of Moldova's EU integration falling apart?

After the political turmoil from 2009-2010, marked by a violent riot, by four failed attempts to elect a president which led to re-runs of the parliamentary elections, a new government was finally elected. The Alliance for European Integration (AEI), a coalition of parties with the purpose of bringing Republic of Moldova closer to the European Union, managed to win enough mandates to form a government. AEI

was composed out of three parties: The Democratic Liberal Party of Moldova, the Democratic Party of Moldova and the Liberal Party, and their electoral platform proposed accession of Republic of Moldova to the EU. Moreover, these three parties proposed the implementation of a set of reforms to modernize the country (Informații generale despre alegerile parlamentare anticipate 2010 în Moldova, n.d.).

Lupușor, Cenușă and Romaniuc argue (2013, 40-41) that although some reforms were initiated in the beginning and the relation with the EU was strengthened, the rule of the AEI government was marked by political infighting between members of the coalition and corruption (Lupușor, Fala, Cenușă, Morcotilo; 2014; pages 45). Instead of working as a coalition in order to implement reforms, the AEI elite was more interested in gaining benefits for themselves. In 2013, due to the tense relations between the members, AEI broke and a new coalition was made between the DLPM and the DPM, namely Pro-European Coalition.

Lupușor, et al (2015, p. 42-43) argue that even if the Republic of Moldova's relation with the EU was consolidated after the Association Agreement was signed, the Moldovans were disappointed by the weak results, by the ties between oligarchs and politicians and by the political scandals. Therefore, in the 2014 parliamentary elections, although the declared Pro-EU parties managed to gain enough seats to form a majority, their result was much lower than the result from the previous election. Meanwhile, the parties that argued for closer ties with Russia instead of the EU, such as the Party of Socialists of Republic of Moldova and Our Party, became much stronger (Lupușor, et al, 2015, p. 42).

At the end of 2014, one of the biggest corruption scandals in post-communist Republic of Moldova broke. The scandal started when the Central Bank of Moldova discovered that the biggest three banks from the Republic of Moldova, granted one billion euro in loans, equivalent to 15% of the Moldovan economy. The beneficiaries of these loans are still unknown and the authorities cannot find the money (Traci, 2015). Following this scandal an investigation was conducted, and Illan Schor, an oligarch, was identified as being one of the key figures in this transaction. Following Schor's self-denunciation, the former prime minister Vlad Filat was arrested for being involved (Litra, 2016).

The impact of this theft on the political scene was significant. As the Moldovan economy worsened and the state's budget was close to bankruptcy, 10,000 Moldovans protested the theft. New parties emerged such as "Dignity and Truth party" (DTP) led by Andrei Nastase, and "Action and Solidarity party" (ASP) led by Maia Sandu, former economist and former ministry of education, while the credibility of the declared Pro-EU parties crumbled. The banking scandal occupied most of 2015's political discussion (Chiroiu, Cojocaru; 2015).

After the Republic of Moldova's Constitutional Court ruled to restore to the citizens the right to directly elect the president (between 2000 and 2016, the election of a president was done by the Parliament), presidential elections were scheduled to be held in 2016. The winner of the elections was Igor Dodon, while Maia Sandu came in second. Igor Dodon is a former economist and leader of the Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova, a party that argues for stronger ties with Russia and the Eurasian Union and that wants to pull the Republic of Moldova out of the Association Agreement (Manga, Cojocaru; 2016).

The presidential elections represented the final nail in the coffin of the pro-EU parties, as two of them did not even participate in the election (the DPM and the DLPM) and the candidate from LP gained only 1,8% of the vote. Although DPM and LP still have a majority in the Parliament after 57 MPs from other parties moved to DPM, in a barometer conducted in April 2016, the combined share of popularity of the two parties was only 4,8% (Alegerile Președintelui Republicii Moldova din 30 octombrie și 13 noiembrie 2016).

The EU suffered considerable loss of popularity, as an opinion poll from October shows that only 38% of Moldovans support integration in the EU while 52% prefer to integrate in the Eurasian Union (IPP, p. 78,80). Kostanyan (2016, p. 3) argues that this development is due to the failure of the Moldovan self-serving elite that called themselves pro-European to modernize the country and due to the EU's lack of involvement. Instead of criticizing the lack of will of the declared pro-EU governments to fully implement reforms, the EU remained silent while sending impressive amount of funds (between 2007-2013, 482 million EUR were granted) to a government with weak results. Those funds were supposed to go to policies that aimed to reduce poverty, to consolidate the democratic institutions, rule of law and good governance (Kostanyan, 2016, page 3).

Kostanyan argues (2016, p. 3) that the EU ignored the lack of commitment to implement reforms, and falsely presented Republic of Moldova's integration as a "success story", or as "the poster child" and the "front-runner" of the Eastern Partnership. The political elite from Chisinau used the statements made by Brussels to gain political capital home, which eventually led to the association of them with the EU. Therefore, the misdeeds and failures of the declared pro-European politicians were attributed also to the EU.

The EU finally changed its position on 15 February 2016 when the Council made a list of demands for the government of the Republic of Moldova. First, it demanded the acceleration of implementation of the Association Agenda, second it called the government to priorities reforms aimed at addressing the politicization of state institutions and systemic corruption, and third it criticized the lack of independence of the judicial bodies (Council of the European Union, 2016).

Relations between Romania and Republic of Moldova

Since the fall of the USSR, Romania's relations with the Republic of Moldova, had a privileged, special character, deriving from national history, language, culture, and community of people.

Calus (2015, p. 9) argues that the main reason why Romania is interested in the Republic of Moldova is due the very strong cultural and historical ties with it. The Republic of Moldova was part of Romania for 70 years, from 1860 when Romania unified, until 1940 when Republic of Moldova was annexed by the USSR following the Ribbentrop-Molotov treaty while the predominant language in both states is the Romanian language. Gabriel Mares, diplomat at the Romanian embassy in the Netherlands, argues as well in the interview that the main reasons for the special relation between the two states represents the historical, cultural and linguistic bonds (Gabriel Mares, interview, 16 February 2017).

Calus argues (2015, p. 35) that Romania's goals towards the Republic of Moldova has always been to support its integration in western organizations such the EU, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Council of Europe or the World Trade Organization, and these objectives have remained constant regardless

of which party was in government or who was the president. By using its EU membership status, Romania has been a strong supporter of the Republic of Moldova's integration in the European Union and has provided support in all integration stages. Gabriel Mares argues as well in the interview that Romania is the biggest ally of the Republic of Moldova in the EU, and argued that Romania is considered as Moldova's lawyer in the EU because it is protecting its interests as well (Gabriel Mares, interview, 16 February 2017).

In a state visit to the Republic of Moldova, Klaus Iohannis, the president of Romania, declared that the integration of the Republic of Moldova in the EU will be a national project of Romania (Revista 22, 2014).

Moreover, Romania is an opponent to the Moldovan integration within organizations promoted by Russia. Romania was and is a vocal critic of the idea of the Republic of Moldova joining the Eurasian Union (Calus, 2015, page 35).

Romania is not only the biggest supporter of the Republic of Moldova's integration in the EU, but also the biggest trade partner. According to the National Bureau of Statistics from the Republic of Moldova, between January and September 2016 the trade volume between the two states was 751,1 million USD in which exports amounted 355,7 mil USD while imports amounted 395,4 million USD (Ambasada Republicii Moldova în România, n.d.).

In addition, the Romanian government sends to the Republic of Moldova funds to run development programs. For example, in 2015 Romania granted to the Republic of Moldova 37 million EUR to finance projects to reduce poverty, improve the living conditions and to support the democratic transition (RoAid, n.d.).

3.2. Public Diplomacy

This chapter will explain what public diplomacy is, why it is likely to improve the image of the EU in the Republic of Moldova, what it can achieve, Leonard, Stead, Smewing's the three dimensions of public diplomacy model, why coordination of the relevant institutions and agencies is important. Moreover, the chapter will discuss the two types of public diplomacy: cooperative and competitive.

Why is Public Diplomacy likely to improve the image of the EU in the Republic of Moldova?

According to Paul Sharp (2005), "public diplomacy is the process by which direct relations are pursued with a country's people to advance the interests and extend the values of those being represented" (p. 106).

Moreover, according to the European Commission (2013):

"Public diplomacy deals with the influence of public attitudes. It seeks to promote EU interests by understanding, informing and influencing. It means clearly explaining the EU's goals, policies and activities and fostering understanding of these goals through dialogue with individual citizens, groups, institutions and the media" (p. 13).

Former US diplomat Christopher Ross argues (as cited in Leonard, Stead, Smewing; 2002) that public diplomacy is the public face of traditional diplomacy, and that these two must be coordinated. He argues that the main difference between traditional diplomacy and public diplomacy is that the former communicates with the government of a foreign country while the later aims to communicate directly with its citizens (p. 12). While critics would argue that public diplomacy is government propaganda, actually what public diplomacy aims to do is to present a different point view, to understand the needs and culture other nations, correct misconceptions and to build long term relationships (Leonard, Stead, Smewing; 2002; p. 8). The premise of public diplomacy is that the image

and reputation of a country can influence the success of its foreign policy goals (Leonard, Stead, Smewing; 2002; p. 9).

Although the EU granted 482 million EUR to the Republic of Moldova between 2007-2013, due to the silence of the EU to the misdeeds and lack of will of the pro-EU government from Chisinau to implement reforms, ordinary Moldovans prefer integration into the Eurasian Union, rather than in the EU (Kostanyan, 2013, p. 3). According to a poll made in October 2016 by the Institute for Public Policy, a Moldovan NGO (2016), only 38 per cent of the Moldovan population would vote for joining the European Union, while 37 per cent would vote against and 15 per cent of the voters are undecided (p. 78). While, when the Moldovan citizens were asked if they would vote for joining the Eurasian Union, 52,8 per cent would vote for joining, while 23,7 per cent would vote against and 15,3 per cent are undecided (IPP, 2016, p. 78).

Joseph Nye, an American academic, argues (as cited in Leonard, Stead, Smewing; 2002; page 4) that the power of attraction (soft power) is an important complement to the traditional forms of power such as military or economic (hard power). He argues that soft power can set the agenda in a way that shapes the preferences of others because it can convince other states to follow and agree with norms, values and institutions. Public diplomacy is a key instrument of soft power and this was recognized during the Cold War, when the United States of America used public diplomacy to win the hearts and minds of the people that lived under communism (Melissen; 2005; page 4). The US government communicated to them the importance and benefits of democratic values through media channels such as Radio Free Europe and Voice of America, or by distributing *Amerika*, a magazine that promoted American culture, works of Soviet dissents or translated English language classics (Schneider; 2005; pages 151, 152).

However, if public diplomacy is not consistent with the foreign policy or military actions of the state then its credibility and efficiency are affected. For example, the US actions and military presence in the Middle East have made its public diplomacy irrelevant. It does not matter if the US government spends resources in creating television ads in Indonesia about the happy lives of Muslims in America, if this image is contradicted by the foreign policy of the government in the Middle East (Melissen; 2005; p. 7).

The Three Dimensions of Public Diplomacy

Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002; p. 10, 11) have an interesting theory about public diplomacy. They argue that public diplomacy is not a one-dimensional process, but a process that is conducted at three dimensions: news management, strategic communication and relationship building. This section will explain Leonard, Stead, Smewing's model of public diplomacy. Each dimension is linked to a different time-frame, as news management deals with daily news or issues while relation building can take years. In addition, the nature of the strategic messages of public diplomacy can be categorized in political and military, economic, social and cultural. The choice of the nature of messages must be based on the context of the targeted country: for example, in the case of the UK, in Pakistan political messages will matter more while in Zimbabwe, cultural messages about British diversity make more sense as it will counter allegation of racist imperialism.

News Management is the first dimension of public dimension and represents the management of communication of the day by day issues and communicating the stance of the government on these issues. Leonard, Stead, Smewing argue that news stories and the reaction of the public authorities to them can affect the image of the country. Even domestic stories, such as Le Pen's success in the French election in 2002 when he reached the second round or the release of the British Crime Survey that led to erroneous stories such as "Crime in London worse than in New York", can have an impact on the foreign policy of the country (Leonard, Stead, Smewing; 2002; p. 12, 13).

Strategic Communications is the second dimension of the public diplomacy, and represents the management of perceptions of the country as a whole and what strategic messages should be used in order to promote the county. Sir Michael Butler argues (as cited in Leonard, Stead, Smewing, 2002) that the perception of a country shapes its diplomatic environment, and every attempt made to communicate with other countries will be viewed with suspicion. The US is in this situation as according to a White House official: "We haven't made any attempts to communicate with ordinary Arabs unless we are bombing them or imposing sanctions on them – I wouldn't like us if I were them" (p. 14).

Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002, p. 15) argue that strategic communication is more like political campaigns, as it sets a number of messages and propagate them through a series of activities and events that are planned for a period of time. Chris Powell, the chairman of the advertising company BMP DDB, argues (as cited in Leonard, Stead, Smewing, 2002) that there should not be many strategic messages, only a few or just one. He argues that people are exposed to many strategic messages every day and in order to penetrate and reach the targeted audience it must be done through repetition and imagination (p. 15). Moreover, he argues that one difference between diplomacy and advertising is that in the later, a considerable amount of time and work goes into preparation such as transforming ideas into very simple concepts and then repeating the strategic message over and over again (Leonard, Stead, Smewing, 2002, p. 15).

However, Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002) argue there is one danger that could jeopardize the strategic messages. There is the danger of the institutions and agencies of a country to disseminate contrasting messages. For example, if the British Council would promote the UK as a multi-ethnic, modern and creative nation while the British Tourist Authority would present the UK in the tone of national stereotypes, history and ceremony then the targeted audiences would receive discordant messages that would affect the efficiency of public diplomacy. (p. 16).

An example of strategic communication tools is events. Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002) argue that an example of good event management was displayed by the British embassy when after the September 11th attacks, it organized the festival "UK with NY". The main message behind this event was to transmit a strong message of British solidarity in difficult times for the American people (p. 119). According to Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002), this event was successful in transmitting that however the reason it worked was as well Tony Blair's position on US foreign policy in contrast with the critical attitude of the other European countries (p. 119). As well, Leonard, Stead, Smewing argue that Norway is another state that used events to disseminate strategic messages in the United States through events, as it used to organize the annual Norwegian Christmas tree illumination and the Norwegian Run in the Central park, where around 5,000 people attended (p. 127)

The third dimension of public dimension is relationship building, and implies the development of lasting relationships with key actors from a country such as business people, politicians, special advisers, academics. According to Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002), methods of relationship building are scholarships, trainings, exchanges, conferences, seminars, giving people access to media channels or building virtual and real networks. This process is very different from strategic messages because it involves genuine communication at a personal level that gives people the image of the whole country.

According to Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002):

“Relationship building aims at creating a common analysis of issues and giving people a clearer idea of the motivations and factors affecting their actions so that by the time they come to discussing individual issues a lot of the background work has been done already. It is important not just to develop relationships but to ensure that the experiences which people take away are positive and that there is follow-up afterwards” (p. 18).

Studies of the British Tourist Authority argue that people who visited the UK left with a positive view of the country. Joseph Nye argues (as quoted in Leonard, Stead, Smewing, 2002; p. 19) that people who visit and live in country will not necessarily change their views, however they will receive a broader and more complex image of the country and its values.

Cooperation vs Competition

Cooperative public diplomacy argues that countries that share the same values and interests in a particular country or region should not conduct public diplomacy only by themselves. A more effective solution is if public diplomacy would be conducted by multiple states that share the same values and interests in a particular region or country (Leonard, Smewing, Stead, 2002, p. 23). The advantages of cooperative public diplomacy are that states can combine their resources and coordinate their activities and efforts towards a common purpose (Hocking, 2008, p. 66). According to Melissen (2005, p. 12), the Ottawa Convention in 1997 and the establishment of the International Criminal Court are

the most prominent examples where it was demonstrated the efficiency of cooperation between states and NGOs to mobilize the public opinion.

Henrikson (2006, p. 5) argues that states can cooperate also with companies. For example, after the earthquake in Kashmir, Pakistan, the US government convinced a number of American business to form the "Partnership for Disaster Relief" in order to help the Pakistani people (Henrikson, 2006, p. 5).

Competitive public diplomacy argues for competition for image between states in a region or in a country. However, there are examples that proved that competitive public diplomacy is counterproductive. For example, Robert Templer, former director of International Crisis Group's Asia Program, argues (as cited in Leonard, Stead, Smewing, 2002, p. 25) that the rebuilding of Afghanistan showed a "conspicuous failure of public diplomacy". He argues that the states involved in the rebuilding of Afghanistan were focused of promoting their country image by offering aid and assistance to the Afghan citizens. This competition between Western states had negative effects on the authority and legitimacy of the Afghan government (Leonard, Stead, Smewing, 2002, p. 25).

Coordination

According to Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002, p. 11) an important aspect of public diplomacy is that the institutions, agencies and officials involved in diplomacy must be coordinated in order to execute public diplomacy in an efficient way. Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002, p. 11) argue that although each governmental bodies have their own priorities and objectives, in order to execute public diplomacy efficiently, they must work together when appropriate and any communication gaps between them must be eliminated.

In a report about the strategy of the US regarding public diplomacy, the Government Accountability Office (2005; p. 4) argued that coordinating efforts towards public diplomacy is crucial for the sake of both short term and long term goals. In the same report, Defense Science Board (as cited in GAO; 2005; p. 4) argued that the coordinated dissemination of information is crucial for the US as its interests and policies might be misunderstood by the world.

In a report about EU's public diplomacy, Duke and Courtier (2011; p. 7) argue that in order for public diplomacy to be effective there must be a clear internal consensus on which strategic messages should be propagated, on fundamental aims of the EU's external action, and on the role that the EU should play.

A good example of coordination between agencies and organizations is Norway's "Team Norway", a network formed from Embassies, Chambers of Commerce, the Norwegian Export Council, the Norwegian Tourist Board, the Norwegian Seafood Export Council and the Norwegian Information Office from the US (Leonard, Stead, Smewing; 2002; p. 87). The organizations in this network share information between each other and although each has its own targets, they work together when it is appropriate. (Leonard, Stead, Smewing; 2002; p. 87).

3.3. Subsets of Public Diplomacy

NGO diplomacy

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are “institutionalized groupings of people and resources, often from multiple societies, operating outside the direct authority of any particular government or collection of governments” (Suri, 223, p. 223).

NGOs collaborate with various international actors, such as states, international organizations, or multinational corporations, and their purpose is to influence the decisions and activities of these actors (Pease, 2012, p. 35). The purposes or issues that the NGOs want to tackle can be various: human rights (Amnesty), social welfare (Doctor Without Borders), environmental awareness (Greenpeace), promoting social justice or they might be professional organizations such as International Chamber of Commerce. The financial resources of the NGOs usually come from private sources, such as donations or membership dues (Pease, 2012, p. 35).

Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002, p. 56) argue that is beneficial for governments to incorporate NGOs in their public diplomacy strategy because they enjoy three qualities that are hard to find at other stakeholders: credibility, network of contacts (experts, politicians, other NGOs) and expertise.

The two main methods that are used by NGOs to influence the activities of the international actors are the following: direct lobbying and indirect lobbying (Pease, 2012, p. 36). On the one side, direct lobbying involves contacting officials and their staff members to convince them to persuade particular policies or initiatives. On the other side, indirect lobbying aims to shape or mobilize public opinion through techniques such as advertising or grassroots campaigns (Pease, 2012, p. 36).

Pease (2012, p. 36) argues that NGOs have three main roles. The first one is issue advocacy and gathering and sharing information with states, international organizations or multinational corporations. NGOs are gathering information by

having people on the ground that are directly involved with a problem or by hiring highly qualified individuals who are experts in their fields that write academic papers such as articles, studies, analyzes, surveys Pease (2012, p. 36).

The second role of an NGO is to implement policies of states and international organizations. For example, social welfare NGOs might work with international actors in order to deliver humanitarian assistance to victims of conflict, war, natural disasters, or civil disorder. However, there can be consequences and controversies that come with the implementation of some types of policies. For example, NGOs that are involved in implementing policies regarding women reproductive rights, might be opposed by religious groups in both develop or developing countries. As well, some may accuse NGOs that monitor human rights of not respecting the sovereignty of their country (Pease, 2012, p. 36-37).

The third role of NGOs is to engage in private interactions that bring together individuals and groups. In order to do this, NGOs can organize conferences that encourage the exchanges of ideas and knowledge or they organize student exchanges programs (Pease, 2012, p. 37). Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002, p. 56) argue that because of these private interaction, NGOs can get in touch with experts, politicians and activists, and are able to use these contacts to pursue changes in policies.

Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002, p. 57) argue that while working with NGOs governments should bear in mind that they have their own agenda and objectives. Moreover, governments must accept that they do not have and should not have control over NGOs, and that they might deviate sometimes from the "party line" (Leonard, Stead, Smewing (2002, p. 57).

One example that proves that NGO diplomacy can be successful is the international campaign led by the Canadian government to ban the use of landmines. Baxter and Bishop (p. 93) argue that the landmine ban was unique because compared with other treaties that limited arms, this one was driven largely by non-states actors, such as NGOs. Due to the lack of interest showed by the principal powers (USA, Russia, China, UK, France) in leading a humanitarian campaign to ban landmines, Canada, a middle-size power, took the lead (Baxter and Bishop, p. 86). In order to push the landmine ban on the agenda of the international community, the Canadian government forged

partnerships with NGOs and with other like-minded states, such as Norway (Baxter, Bishop, p. 96).

According to Baxter and Bishop (p. 94)., the approach that was taken by Canada was interesting: it conducted its public diplomacy through a network of NGOs, that pressured foreign governments and public opinion about the importance of banning landmines at the grassroots level. Meanwhile, Canada pressured other governments as well, but by employing traditional diplomatic channels such as communication between diplomats or governmental officials (Baxter, Bishop, p. 94). The strategy was a success, as the international community was convinced by the serious humanitarian problems that landmines pose and 121 states signed the Ottawa Treaty in 1997 that banned the use of landmines (Baxter, Bishop, p. 97).

A second example that demonstrates the efficiency of NGO diplomacy is the National Convention for European integration of the Republic of Moldova (in Romanian: Convenția Națională pentru integrarea europeană a Republicii Moldova). According to Racheru, Pădureanu, Grămadă (2015, p. 24) the role of this network was to pursue dialogue exchanges between the government, NGOs, public local authorities, professional associations and the church in order to offer expertise and recommendations regarding the European integration of the Republic of Moldova.

According to Racheru, Pădureanu, Grămadă (2015, p. 24) this network was formed at the initiative of the Association for Foreign Policy from Slovakia after a similar model was implemented in Slovakia before it joined the EU. Both the NGOs and the government authorities described the platform as a success because of three reasons (Racheru, Pădureanu, Grămadă, 2015, p. 24). First, personal relationships were established between the Moldovan diplomats and the NGOs. Second, high ranked diplomats participated in the dialogue regarding the European integration of the Republic of Moldova. And third, the civil society became more informed, due to the new communication channels (Racheru, Pădureanu, Grămadă, 2015, p. 24).

However, according to Chiriac and Țugui, a significant challenge for the Moldovan NGOs is the lack of sources for funding. According to a report, the activities, projects and development of the Moldovan NGOs are financed by around 80-90%

by external donors, the EU and the USA being the main sources (Chiriac, Ţugui; 2014; p. 4). Most of these are granted to the big Moldovan NGOs while the smaller ones remain unfunded. Most of the funding comes from outside of the Republic of Moldova because there is a lack of government programmes and initiatives to financially support the activity of NGOs (Chiriac, Ţugui; 2014; p. 4).

A second challenge for the Moldovan NGOs is the difficulty of making networks. According to a report of Popa and Iaţco (p. 8) about the consolidation of the Moldova NGO community, the following roadblocks are preventing NGOs from forming efficient networks:

- Competition for limited funds. Due to the lack of options for financing, NGOs that are part of a network, are competing for resources against each other. This competition affects the relations and communication between them.
- Unclear division of tasks in the network: general assembly, secretary or permanent office.
- Weak involvement of some organizations. In some networks, there are even 50% of the members that are not involved in the activities of the network. One explanation can be modest motivation and not being aware of the common interests, both being cause by weak organizational management.
- Fluctuation of members that is caused by the dissolution of NGOs that are part of the network. The dissolutions of NGOs can be attributed to the limited access to financial sources and weak organizational management.
- Passive involvement of the authorities. Although the collaboration with the state officials has positively developed, all the initiatives for collaboration belong to the NGOs, while the state representatives have a more passive role.

(Popa and Iaţco, p. 8).

Cultural Diplomacy

According to Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, culture represents:

“the shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. These shared patterns identify the members of a culture group while also distinguishing those of another group” (What is culture? n.d.).

Cultural diplomacy represents the deployment of a country’s culture in support of its foreign policy objectives (Gienow-Hecht, 2013, p. 3). Like public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy is a process that involves government communication with the audience of another country, only that the diplomats use their country’s culture to indirectly influence foreign governments attitudes and perceptions of their country (Gienow-Hecht, 2013, p. 3). Dragulescu (2003, p. 1) argues that artistic representations and cultural expressions are good reflections and bearer of messages about a society and the people belonging to it.

According to the Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (as cited in Diplomacy Report of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy Cultural diplomacy, 2005) the founding document of US cultural diplomacy, the aim of cultural diplomacy is:

“to enable the Government of the United States to promote a better understanding of the United States in other countries and to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries” p. 7).

Moreover, The US State Department argued in 1959 (as cited in Gienow-Hecht, Donfried, 2013, p. 13) that the aim of cultural diplomacy is to make “direct and enduring contact between the people of other nations” (p. 13) in order to create an international climate of understanding and trust where official relations between states can operate.

Cultural diplomacy is often confused with another concept: cultural relations. However, according to Richard Arndt, former cultural diplomat, (as cited in Gienow-Hecht, Donfried, 2013, p. 14) there is a clear difference between cultural relations and cultural diplomacy. He argues (as cited in Gienow-Hecht, Donfried, 2013, that:

“cultural relations grow naturally and organically, without government intervention—the transactions of trade and tourism, student flows, communications, book circulation, migration, media access, intermarriage—millions of daily cross-cultural encounters” (p. 14).

While cultural diplomacy, Arndt argues (as cited in Gienow-Hecht, Donfried, 2013, p. 14) that it involves diplomats employing and encouraging cultural exchanges between countries in the support of the foreign objectives of their nation. Moreover, Manuela Aguilar argued (as cited in Gienow-Hecht, Donfried, 2013) that another difference between cultural diplomacy and cultural relations is that the former is part of diplomacy because it involves designing policies to improve the attitudes of foreign publics.

According to the Diplomacy Report of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy Cultural diplomacy by the US Department of State (2005, p. 1-2), cultural diplomacy can achieve the following results:

- Can demonstrate the values and interests of a country and counterbalances hatred and misconceptions.
- Contributes to the creation of a foundation of trust with other people, that will help the government to build political, economic, and military agreements.
- Can educate the own national public about the values and sensitivities of other societies.
- Creates relationships with foreign societies that will last regardless of the changes in government.
- Can reach to important actors of other societies, who cannot be reached through traditional embassy capabilities.
- Can serve as a rapprochement tool with states where diplomatic relations have been strained or are absent.

(Diplomacy Report of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy Cultural diplomacy, 2005, p. 1-2)

The Cold War can be considered as one of the best examples where cultural diplomacy was employed by the biggest international actors to combat each other's ideology and influence around the world and contains various lessons for today's challenges in cultural diplomacy (Schneider, 2005, p. 151). According to Schneider (2005, p. 151), the American government orchestrated through its institutions and agencies, such as the State Department and even the CIA, massive dissemination of American culture and information towards the USSR and in the other communist regimes. During the Cold War, the US government used cultural programs such as: exchanges between intellectuals, artists and writers from both parts of the Iron Curtain and radio programming, such as Radio Free Europe (Schneider, 2005, p. 151)

Schneider argues (2005, p. 152) that exchanges between artists, writers and intellectuals from America and the USSR appealed to the Russian respect for cultural expression and eventually led them to question aspects of the Soviet and American society. For example, Norman Cousins, American journalist, essayist, and liberal critic, argued that Soviet writers were very surprised to find out that the Americans writers and artists were not punished for criticizing the US government, and that it was more likely for American governmental officials to be sanctioned for complaining about the criticism from civil society. According to Schneider (2005, p. 152), other American writers declared that the Soviet intellectuals, artists, writers and students, understood from the exchanges with the American ones that the "free world" was not just a political slogan. These programs helped dissidents such as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn to have access to commentary and literature from the West and to prohibited works of other Soviet dissidents (Schneider, 2005, p. 152).

Gienow-Hecht and Donfried (2013, p. 25) argue that in order for cultural diplomacy to work and to be efficient, there has to be distance between the cultural agent and the government. As it is argued above, if the messages are perceived to come from a foreign government or as they have behind an economic and political agenda, they will attract distrust from the targeted audience. Therefore, in order to receive better receptions from the targeted audiences, governments must work in partnership with private organizations and

civil society in order to implement cultural diplomacy programs (Gienow-Hecht and Donfried, 2013, p. 25).

Moreover, Gienow-Hecht and Donfried (2013, p. 25) argue that the more interactive are the exchanges and dialogue between the cultural agents and the recipient of the cultural programs, the more sustainable and successful the result of the cultural diplomacy will be. The former statement is sustained as well by Gifford Malone, former Deputy Assistant and Associate Director of the United States Information Agency (2008), who argued (as cited in Appel, Irony, Schmerz, Ziv, 2008, 9) that cultural diplomacy is a two-way communication process, because it includes both the promotion of the national values and image to foreign publics and the understanding of other's values and culture.

4. Analysis

This chapter will analyze how Romania is currently using public diplomacy and its subsets, cultural diplomacy and NGO diplomacy, towards the Republic of Moldova based on the theory and examples presented in the literature review and how effective they are to improve the image of the European Union. Then, recommendations will be made on how to improve the current methods and which other tools should be employed.

Public Diplomacy

This part of the dissertation will look at the annual reports of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs between 2013 and 2015 (the annual report of the year 2016 has not been released yet) and analyze Romania's public diplomacy strategy and how much it focuses on the Republic of Moldova.

The 2013 Annual Report of the Ministry Foreign Affairs (MFA) offers a small section about public diplomacy, as it is only one-page long. The section starts by mentioning that due to budget constraints for public diplomacy, the MFA employed different activities, as the resources were not sufficient to sustain activities that could had greater impacts. In 2013, the Romanian public diplomacy focused mainly on creating editorial content (special edition books and guides for diplomats), consolidate the relationship with the academic community from Romania, granted training courses to young foreign diplomats, granted scholarships to foreign students in Romania UNESCO (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013). Furthermore, it organized the annual reunion of the Romanian diplomats, organizing the MFA Cup (a sport event between diplomats) and open days' event at the headquarters of MFA, where 650 people visited it. Other activities included: the organizations of conferences in Romania that promoted projects financed with European funds, and the promotion of Romania within UNESCO (Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, 2013, p. 28).

In 2014, alongside the continuation of the activities mentioned above, the MFA organized a series of conferences and events that were held in Romania with various themes: "Europe is your day", "The Road of the Unwanted War", "Legislation, Religion, Liberty" (Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, 2014, p. 61). In addition, the MFA organized series of events and activities that celebrated 10 years from NATO (Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, 2014, p. 63). In 2014, MFA consolidated the coordination of activities between the Romanian Cultural Institute and the network of Romanian embassies and consulates. As well, three more delegations of the Romanian Cultural Institute were open in Beijing, Kiev and Moscow to conduct cultural diplomacy (Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, 2014, p. 67).

In 2015, the Romanian public diplomacy focused on four priorities: a programme dedicated for the commemoration of the First World War, promotion of the 22th edition of the "George Enescu International Festival" (Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, 2015, p. 62). Furthermore, it focused on the anniversary of 60 years since Romania became a member of the United Nations and the anniversary of 20 years since the ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Romania. All these activities were held in Romania (Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, 2015, p. 62). One positive aspect of the public diplomacy from 2015 is the fact that the coordination between the Romanian Cultural Institute and the network of embassies continued, as they organized together a series of cultural events in 2015 (Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, 2015, p. 67).

The reports do not mention anything about the strategic messages that Romania wishes to propagate through a long term strategy of public diplomacy. As well, most of the activities, events and conferences that were organized between 2013-2015 were held in Romania and not abroad, therefore the targeted audience was mostly the Romanian public. The purpose of public diplomacy, as was explained in the literature review, is to communicate with foreign audiences in order to change perceptions and indirectly change policies and attitudes in foreign governments. Therefore, the strategy that MFA pursued is inefficient as the events targeted the Romanian audience due to the place where they were organized.

In neither annual reports of the MFA, there is no mention of activities or events held in the Republic of Moldova and there is no long term strategy or plans to start communication with the Moldovan population in the near future. This can be considered an indication of the lack of interest of the Romanian government to

communicate with the Moldovan citizens. However, taken into consideration how much importance Romania gives to its relationship with the Republic of Moldova, it is more likely that the Romanian government does not consider public diplomacy a useful tool in changing perceptions and attitudes in other countries.

The only positive aspect of the reports is the emphasis put on the activities of the delegations of the Romanian Cultural Institute, and how they were coordinated with the embassies.

Although the programmes and activities regarding public diplomacy laid in the annual report of MFA are likely to not be effective, there are other policies of the Romanian government that can be more effective as communication tools. First, the Romanian embassy in the Republic of Moldova has organized a series of events between January 2016 and January 2017. Organizing events in a foreign country, such as the Republic of Moldova, is a better communication tool than holding events in Romania, because it makes contact and interacts with the targeted audience. Therefore, according to the website of the Romanian embassy at Chişinău (*Actualitatea ambasadei*, n.d.), since January 2016 the following events were organized by the embassy in Chisinau:

Name of the event	Date
National Culture Day	15 January
Romanian Army's Veterans Day	28 April
Europe Day	14 May
Remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust	6-9 June
Idel Ianchelevici Conference- the man and the opera	6 June
Concert "Tribute to Mihai Eminescu"	15 June

Charitable concert in the name of a SMURD team that lost their lives in an accident	20 October
Reception at the Romanian embassy to celebrate Romania's National Day	1 December
Activities to celebrate Romania's National Day	1 December
Romanian Army's Day	24-26 January

(Ambasada României, Actualitatea Ambasadei, n.d.)

As it can be seen in the example from the literature review where the UK and Norway used events to transmit their strategic messages in the US, events can be successful tools in communicating strategic messages. This type of communication activity belongs to the second dimension of public diplomacy, strategic communication, because it implies transmitting strategic messages to change perceptions. However, most of the events from the table are celebrating national holidays of Romania, and the only event that is related to EU integration, is Europe Day. Therefore, in order to positively change Moldovans perception of the integration in the European Union through events, the Romanian embassy together with the embassies of the other EU Member States embassies in Chisinau and with the European External Service Delegation from Chisinau have to organize more events that emphasize the advantages and benefits of having EU membership.

Apart from the events that are organized by the embassy, a second Romanian policy towards the Republic of Moldova that could be integrated in its public diplomacy strategy are the study grants that are offered to young Moldovan citizens and to Moldovan academics. According to a press release on the website of the Romanian embassy in Chişinău (5650 de locuri subvenţionate, n.d.), the Romanian government subsidized 5650 places for Moldovan students. On the next page there is a table where the 5650 places are categorized after the educational level:

Educational level	Total number of places reserved: 5650
Secondary school	1500
Bachelor studies	2800
Master studies	1200
Residency	25
PhD programmes	25

(5650 de locuri subvenționate, n.d.)

This programme is more appropriate to be an integral part of the Romanian public diplomacy than the current programmes that are present in the annual report of MFA because it is interacting with the Moldovan public and actors. This policy belongs to the third dimension of Public Diplomacy, relationship building, because it uses methods such as scholarships and exchanges through which the targeted audience get a clear understanding of the culture and choices of the receiver state. However, the chances of this method to improve the image of the European Union are not clear. While the Moldovan students that come to Romania due to these grants will have their opinion affected about Romania, it is not clear if their perception of the European Union will change. While the Romanian citizens are mainly pro-European, there is no proof that this attitude can be transmitted to Moldovan students. As Nye argues (as cited in Leonard, Stead, Smewing, 2002, p. 19) in the literature review, students that go and visit another country will not necessarily change their views but they will get a broader understanding of the values and issues of the country they are visiting. The Moldovans student are likely to understand why Romanians are pro-EU, but it is not clear if they will not adopt the same stance.

Therefore, organizing events is likely to succeed more in improving the image of the EU in the Republic of Moldova than scholarships. One important aspect that the Romanian diplomats should keep in mind, is that in order for these event to be able to achieve their goals, they all have to transmit the same strategic messages towards the Republic of Moldova. The strategic messages must be

agreed and respected by all governmental bodies involved: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture, the Romanian embassy at Chisinau and the Romanian Cultural Institute.

Therefore, a long term public diplomacy strategy towards the Republic of Moldova should be created, where it should be clear what strategic messages should be propagated. In making this strategy, the Romanian diplomats must consider the principle of collaboration and cooperation, and involve EU diplomats and institutions as well. Both Romania and the EU have the same values and interests in the Republic of Moldova, therefore it makes sense for them to collaborate and coordinate their resources and efforts to make the integration in the European Union attractive again to the Moldovan public. Therefore, the EU should be included in the process of selecting the strategy messages and propagate them as well through the European External Service Action Delegation present in Chisinau together with the Romanian bodies mentioned above.

Cultural diplomacy

In order to analyze how Romania can use cultural diplomacy to improve the image of the EU in the Republic of Moldova, this dissertation will look at how Romania is currently conducting its cultural diplomacy strategy in the Republic of Moldova.

Due to the linguistic and cultural bonds between Romania and the Republic of Moldova, cultural diplomacy can be a very effective tool of public diplomacy as its communication of culture is not restricted by language barriers (Gabriel Mares, interview, 16 February 2017).

The main institution responsible with conducting Romania's cultural diplomacy is the Romanian Cultural Institute. It was founded in 2003, and its main mission is to promote and to increase the visibility of the Romanian cultural values and traditions in the world. The role of the Institute is to help the Romanian government to achieve its strategic objectives by using culture (Misiunea ICR, n.d.). The countries in which Institute is present are the following: Belgium, Turkey, Spain, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Italy, China, Hungary, Portugal, USA,

Israel, Austria, Germany, the Republic of Moldova, the UK, France and Poland (Reteaua ICR, n.d.).

The main partners of the Romanian Institute of Culture are the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union National Institute for Culture (EUNIC) and many cultural festivals from Romania (Parteneri, n.d.).

Another cultural programme that Romania conducts in the Republic of Moldova is the broadcasting of the Romanian Television Moldova (TVR Moldova). Since 2013 the Romanian public-owned broadcaster, the Romanian Television, is present in the Republic of Moldova. Under the name TVR Moldova, its purpose is to promote the Romanian culture, language, traditions and to actively support the integration of the Republic of Moldova in the EU (Despre Noi, TVR Moldova, n.d.). TVR Moldova broadcast productions made in Romania such as informative shows, artistic Romanian and foreign movies, Romanian theater plays, documentaries and live coverage of events relevant to the Romanian and Moldova audience. As well, they broadcast Romanian and Moldovan cultural festivals or events (Despre Noi, TVR Moldova, n.d.).

An important initiative of TVR Moldova to support the integration of the Republic of Moldova in the EU is the broadcast of the weekly informative show European Horizon (in Romanian: Orizont European), where it is argued that a European future of the Republic of Moldova is the best option (Despre Noi, TVR Moldova, n.d.).

Cultural Activities

One of the main instrument through which Romania conducts cultural diplomacy in the Republic of Moldova is the organization of events by the Romanian Cultural Institute. The themes of the events are the following: literature, dances and theater, film, music, conferences and expositions. This paper looked at the frequency of the cultural events organized by the Institute and it found that between August 2016 and January 2017, the Institute had organized 57 cultural events in the Republic of Moldova. According to their official website (Evenimente, n.d.) the Romanian Institute of Culture organized:

Month	Number of cultural events
January 2017	11
December 2016	7
November 2016	6
October 2016	7
September 2016	14
August 2016	12

(Evenimente, n.d.)

As it can be seen in the above table, the Romanian cultural diplomacy has been very consistent. In an opinion poll conducted by the Institute for Public Policies in October 2016, 61% of Moldovans consider the relation with Romania as good or very good (IPP, 2016, p. 77). Gabriel Mares declared in the interview that European Union National Institute for Culture (EUNIC), an organization that assembles all the cultural agencies from all EU Member States, appreciates the activity of the Romanian Cultural Institute, as it is considered as one of the best cultural institutes that activates in the Republic of Moldova (Gabriel Mares, interview, 16 February 2017).

However, the types of events that are organized by the Institute are only promoting Romanian culture and values, as it says in the mission statement of the Institute, therefore it has little impact on the image of the EU. Therefore, if the Romania government wants to improve the image of the European Union through cultural diplomacy, it can collaborate with the EU's Cultural Diplomacy Platform to organize joint events and/or invite cultural agents (artists, writers, actors, musicians) from other EU Member States at its events.

Although it has a partnership with EUNIC, there is no partnership between the Romanian Cultural Institute with any EU Institution or agency. As it is mentioned in the Literature review, in order for public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy to be applied efficiently there must be international cooperation between the actors that share the same values and interests in a region or country. As both Romania and the EU are interested in stronger relations with the Republic of Moldova, both actors must work together to combine their resources to achieve better results. The signing of the Association Agreement in 2014 proves the commitment of the EU to have closer ties with the Republic of Moldova. Therefore, it would be logical if the Cultural Diplomacy Platform and other EU agencies or services will begin partnerships with the Romanian Cultural Institute to assist it with resources and expertise and by running together joint-programmes or events.

This recommendation is displayed as well in the Joint Communication of the European Parliament and the Council towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations that argues for enhanced cooperation between national cultural institutes and Commission services, and the European External Action Service. (European Commission, Joint Communication of the European Parliament and the Council towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations, 2016).

The EU programme with which the Romania Cultural Institute should collaborate is the "EU Cultural Diplomacy Platform". It was formed after the European Parliament adopted the recommendations of the Preparatory Action "Culture in EU's external relations", and the European Commission implemented it in 2013-2014 (About us, Cultural Diplomacy Platform, n.d.). The purpose of the Platform is to provide expertise, advices and recommendations to the EU institutions regarding the role and contributions of culture in international relations, especially in the relations with EU's main partners (About us, Cultural Diplomacy Platform, n.d.). However, a setback is that this platform only focuses on 10 Strategic

Partners of the EU: USA, China, Russia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, India, Brazil, South Korea, South Africa (About us, Cultural Diplomacy Platform, n.d.).

The fact that TVR Moldova broadcast a weekly informative show where the advantages and disadvantages of the integration of the Republic of Moldova in the EU is very beneficial as television broadcasting can reach a bigger audience than usual events held in venues. However, the focus of the Romanian cultural diplomacy should be the events and programs run by the Romanian Cultural Institute because as it is argued in the literature review, cultural diplomacy is more likely to achieve its goals when there is interaction between the sender and receiver.

NGO diplomacy

After analyzing the annual reports of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2013, 2014, and 2015, it was noticed that NGO diplomacy is not part of the Romanian public diplomacy. However, NGO diplomacy can be beneficial for Romania's public diplomacy. One advantage that the Romanian government has in this subset of diplomacy is that it can work with NGOs from both Romania and Republic of Moldova in communicating with the Moldovan citizens due to the cultural and linguistic links between the two states.

Romania should focus on NGO diplomacy because organizations from both countries can present to the Moldovan public the benefits of EU integration by offering expertise through reports, projects and commentary. As well, due to their networks of experts, politicians or other NGOs, they can organize events or conferences that are open to the public, where it can be debated, for example, the advantages and disadvantages of European or Eurasian integration of the Republic of Moldova. As well, the opinions and concerns of the Moldovan NGOs are heard by the Moldovan Government.

How is Romania currently working with NGOs?

Although the Romanian government does not work with NGOs as part of their public diplomacy, it does help them by granting them funds due to a development programme, namely RoAid. The Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs grants funds to Moldovan NGOs by working with the Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations for Development from Romania (FOND).

As described on the official website (Despre noi, RoAid, n.d.), RoAid is a Romanian governmental programme for development that aims to fight extreme poverty and that supports the sustainable development of the democratic institutions in developing countries. The programme accords special attention to the Republic of Moldova, due to its special relationship with Romania.

As described on their official website (About us, n.d.), FOND is a federation of Romanian NGOs that is involved in the implementation of international programmes for development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The Federation aims to contribute at the consolidation of the capacities of NGOs from Romania and to persuade the Romanian NGOs to get involved in national and international programmes for development.

FOND runs the project "Mobility Fund for Experts Romania- Republic of Moldova", through which it distributes funds granted by the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through RoAid, to joint projects between the Romanian and Moldovan NGOs. Moreover, the Mobility Fund offers training programmes that aim for the bilateral exchange knowledge, good practices and experiences between NGOs from both countries (Mobility Fund for experts Romania – Moldova, n.d.). So far, there were three editions of the project: Round One, which was a pilot edition and the funds were not granted by the Ministry, while Round Two and Three were using funds obtained through RoAid (Mobility Fund for experts Romania – Moldova, n.d.).

The projects that are prioritized by the Mobility Fund have to do with the following topics: European integration, administration reform, the reconstruction of state, democratic governance, support for civil society, local development (Descriere Generala, p. 2). All these activities must be in compliance with the objectives of

integration of the Republic of Moldova in the European Union and with the development objectives of Romania (Descriere Generala, p. 2).

The selection of the NGOs that will receive these grants and training programmes is done by a committee formed from representatives from FOND, the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from the United Nations Development Programme-Regional Center for Europe and Central Asia (Descriere Generala, p. 2).

According to the results selection (Rezultate, 2015, p. 1) for the Round Two Mobility Fund hold in 2015, the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs granted 20,000 EUR, and the application of the following NGOs was accepted:

- Children, Community, Family Moldova in partnership with Save the Children (Salvați Copiii Iași) Association
- Freedom House Bucharest in partnership with Center for Journalistic Investigation from the Republic of Moldova
- Pro Vobis association- National Center of Resources for Volunteering in partnership with Young People for the Right to Life (Tinerii pentru dreptul la viață) Association.

(Rezultate, 2015, p. 1-2)

According to the result selection (Rezultate Selectie, 2016, p. 1), the Round Three Mobility Fund that was hold last year, the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs granted 30,000 EUR to the following NGOs:

- Group of the European Youth for Change Association (GEYC) from Romania in partnership with Inveno Association from Republic of Moldova.
- Expert Forum (Romania) in partnership with Promolex Association (Republic of Moldova)
- Romanian Center for European Policies subsidiary from the Republic of Moldova in partnership with Romanian Center for European Policies
- With You (Alaturi de voi) Foundation in partnership with the Echou of Chernobyl Foundation (Republic of Moldova)

(Rezultate Selectie, p. 1)

The purposes of the NGOs that were granted funds by the Romanian government are the following:

Children, Community, Family Moldova	Social welfare
Save the children Iasi	Social welfare
Freedom House Bucharest	Promoting liberal democracy
Center for Journalistic Investigation from the Republic of Moldova	Journalism and media issues
Pro Vobis- National Center of Resources for Volunteering	Promoting and developing volunteering
Young People for the Right to Life	Promoting and developing volunteering
Group of the European Youth for Change Association (GEYC)	Local development
Invento Association	Local development
Expert Forum	Public Policies
Promolex Association	Promotion and protection of human rights
Romanian Center for European Policies subsidiary from the Republic of Moldova	Promoting the European Integration of the Republic of Moldova
Romanian Center for European Policies	European Public Policies
With You Foundation	Social welfare
Echo of Chernobyl Foundation	Social welfare

(Rezultate; 2015; p. 1-2); (Rezultate Selectie; 2016; p. 1)

The Mobility Fund project is being funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs due to a Romanian development programme and not because of Romania's public diplomacy strategy. If this project would be implemented as a part of a long term strategy of public diplomacy that aims to promote the integration of the Republic of Moldova in the EU, it could benefit from more resources that can be used to fund more projects. As well, the impact of this project on the Moldovan public

opinion could be bigger if the MFA would ensure big grants to these NGOs, instead of small grants consisting of 20,000- 30,000 EUR per year.

One setback in NGO diplomacy that the Romanian government should acknowledge is that the approval rating of the Moldovan NGOs is just 35%, according to a poll made by the Institute of Public Policies in October 2016 (IPP, 2016, p. 42).

In order to work with NGOs to improve the image of the European Union in the Republic of Moldova, Romania should play a facilitator role as Canada did in the Ottawa treaty, and create a network of NGOs that are pro-EU. Cooperative public diplomacy argues that through collaboration, the chances of achieving a common purpose or aim are higher if states and NGOs combine their resources and efforts.

However, in order for NGOs to create a network, the challenges mentioned in the Literature Review must be addressed. Therefore, the Romanian government can assist the Moldovan NGO community in addressing two of the barriers from functioning properly: financial aid and organizational skills.

First, the lack of financial sources, not only blocks NGOs from forming networks, but also it makes difficult for them to function properly. The Romanian government already offers small grants for joint projects between Moldovan and Romanian NGOs for activities that promotes European Integration or administration reform. However, in order to create a network of NGOs, Romania must sustain it financially. Therefore, it can fund the Pro-EU NGO network through the RoAid development programme, and/or it can use its EU membership and presence in the Council or in EU summits to get access to EU funds for the network and increase the funding towards Moldovan NGOs

Second, the lack managerial and organizational skills threaten the existence of the network and even of the NGOs themselves (Popa and Iațco, p. 8). In a study made by Chiriac and Țugui where they interviewed NGOs members, 90% of the respondents (members, staff and voluntaries of the organization) declared that they are interested in courses that could improve their organizational skills (Chiriac and Țugui, 2014, p. 4). The Romanian public diplomacy strategy already ensures training programmes to Moldovan diplomats and young people (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015, p. 65). Therefore, one solution can be that the Romanian government extends these training courses to other actors, such as the Moldovan NGO

community, in order to increase their organizational skills. As well, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can increase the funds granted to the Mobility Fund to offer more training programmes for organizational skills to members of the Moldovan NGOs.

5. Conclusion

The analysis of the dissertation at hand aimed to look at the current strategy of the Romanian public diplomacy in order to see how much it emphasizes communication with the Moldovan citizens and make recommendations on how to improve it.

The public diplomacy strategy of the Romanian government has several shortcomings. The activities described in the annual reports of the MFA are ineffective at communicating with foreign publics and there is no emphasis put on communicating with the Moldovan audience. In the reports there is no mention of employing NGO diplomacy, however the Romanian government is funding projects developed by Moldovan NGOs together with ones from Romania. A setback is this project is that the grants that are accorded are small and the Moldovan are facing financial problems that threaten their activity. Cultural diplomacy is the concept where Romania excels the most. There are 57 events that were organized between August 2016 and January 2017 by the subsidiary of the Romanian Cultural Institute in Chisinau.

This dissertation concludes that in order to improve the image of the European Union in the Republic of Moldova, the Romanian government should take several measures to improve its current strategy of public diplomacy. First, as the activities described in the annual reports of the MFA are not efficient in communicating with the people of the Republic of Moldova, there is a better alternative: the events organized by the Romanian embassy in Chisinau. Events are effective instruments of transmitting strategic messages, as the British and Norwegian examples from the literature review show us. Second, there should be a long term public

diplomacy strategy in place to propagate strategic messages that aim to change perceptions of the Moldovans about the EU. Without planned strategic messages that are transmitted by all events, it is likely that Moldovan's perception of the integration of their country in the EU will not change.

Third, NGO diplomacy should be included in the long term public diplomacy strategy. While a setback of NGO diplomacy is the lack of trust of Moldovans in them (only 35% credibility), Moldovan NGOs have other advantages such as expertise and network of contacts that could bring benefits in improving the image of the EU. The Mobility Fund is an example of how the Romania government can work with the Romanian and Moldovan NGOs to implement projects that aim to achieve change in the Republic of Moldova. The MFA should increase the funding for this project while also pursue the EU to make more funds available for the Moldovan NGOs.

Fourth, the Romanian government should pursue the tactic employed by the by Slovakia when it promoted the Foreign Policy Committee in the Republic of Moldova. Under a network, the NGOs that are part of it can combine their resources and efforts to a single common goal, and they can have access to more grants and funds.

Fifth, the Romanian Cultural Institute should remain a pivotal actor in conducting cultural diplomacy because the activity of this institution is consistent (57 events in six months) and because it has good results (62% of Moldova appreciate the relations with Romania as good or very good). As well, the cultural institute should expose the Moldovan citizens to other the cultures of other European nations by inviting artists from other EU Member states.

Finally, the Romanian government should cooperate with the EU in applying public diplomacy. Both Romania and the EU share the same values and both of them are interested in stronger ties with the Republic of Moldova. If both of them would combine their resources and efforts to improve EU's image in the Republic of Moldova in all levels, public diplomacy, NGO diplomacy and cultural diplomacy, then they would be more likely to succeed.

If Romania improves its public diplomacy strategy towards the Republic of Moldova by applying the six conclusions presented above, it is likely that the EU image in the Republic of Moldova will improve.

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