

## EU's metaphorical representation in the Moldovan economic press

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### Abstract

*The study aims to identify the metaphors associated with the EU in the economic press published in Romanian and Russian languages in the Republic of Moldova after signing the Association Agreement (AAs). It set out to answer the following research questions: How Moldovan economic newspapers frame the EaP issues through metaphors? Are these metaphors meant to increase the EU appeal to readers of economic newspapers? For this purpose, we conducted a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of a corpus of Moldavian economic newspapers in order to identify the EU-based metaphors.*

**Keywords:** content analysis, metaphor, economic press, European Union, Republic of Moldova  
**JEL Classification:** M31, Y8

### Introduction

The relations of the Republic of Moldova and the European Union under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) have developed through constant cooperation. The Republic of Moldova is a partner country of the Eastern Partnership within the European Neighbourhood Policy. The EaP was inaugurated on the 7th of May 2009 and it is an initiative governing the relationships of the European Union with the post-Soviet states, such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The Eastern Partnership initiative is an effort to revitalize the partnership-building process in the East (Korosteleva, 2011). It is intended to provide an institutionalized forum for developing trade, economic strategy and travel agreements and other issues between the EU and its Eastern neighbours.

An Association Agenda was signed in 2014 and it outlines the priorities for reform in Moldova and is based on the commitments included in the 2014 Association Agreement. The Agreement introduces a preferential trade regime – the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). Starting with the 28th of April 2014, the visa obligation for citizens of Moldova who hold a biometric passport and want to travel to the Schengen zone for a short-stay was abolished.

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The economic press has been vital for raising awareness of the business community on the opportunities provided by the agreements signed with the EU. Traditionally, businesses have been the most fervent advocates for joining economic agreements fostering economic development and trade. In our case, the EU is the newcomer on the agreements setting of this post-soviet country. For more than two decades, the trade agreements had been mostly confined to the CIS-dominated area. The new player arrived with a new agenda, a new game and different objectives (The Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Radosław Sikorski, 2016). Obviously, the old and the new agendas are not always harmoniously orchestrated. The sonority and tones used to reveal the new reality are presented in the economic press and generate consequences for audience.

The premises we start from are that “a media frame [...] provides in a positive, negative, or neutral manner an organizing principle to the structure of a news story and therefore potentially to citizens’ understanding of and thinking about political, economic, and social topics” (de Vreese *et al.*, 2011) and media are agents in constructing perceptions of reality (Buckingham, 2013). Previous studies outlined the public perceptions of Moldavians towards the European Union and there is “an increasing congruence in public perceptions of what the EU does for Moldova and what people really need, neatly expressed in the phrase “I really feel change, in education, in justice and in our lives” (Korosteleva, 2014 - Moldova’s Values Survey: Widening a European Dialogue in Moldova). Therefore, an insight into the metaphors associated with the EU used by the economic press in the Republic of Moldova may help map out and get an understanding of the attitudes and views of the local population towards its potential integration into the European Union.

## **1. Metaphor - a link among language, thought and action**

Since the early 80s, numerous studies in linguistics, psychology and sociology (Charteris-Black, 2011; Kövecses, 2010; Gibbs R. J., 2008; Gibbs R. W., 1993; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) have confirmed that metaphor is fundamental for language, thought and experience. A metaphor is more than a way of speech and it goes beyond linguistic function. In the view of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors are figures of thought as representations of the ways in which people reveal, develop and extend their thoughts. A metaphor is a way to see something as if it were something else, it is an analogy. Practically, a metaphor ensures the link between the known and the unknown. It reveals the perceived relation between different things, between the whole and the part. The metaphors involve the same process that is found in relationship-building. It is the process of establishing significant connections among ideas, among people, among different entities that have been initially separated

and different (Duck, 1994). A metaphor facilitates the access to our truths and to truths of other people as the perception of truth means the discovery of an analogy. The theory of conceptual metaphor (Kövecses, 2010; Gibbs R. J., 2008; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) states that the metaphor is a cognitive tool used to understand difficult and abstract concepts (the target domain) through different concepts but more concrete and easier to understand (source domain),

It is important to make a distinction between conceptual metaphors and metaphorical expressions. A metaphorical expression is a specific statement that draws upon a general conceptual metaphor (Lakoff, 1993, p. 209). For example, the statements “France decided to go to war” and “Germany is our ally” are two different metaphorical expressions, but both draw upon the same conceptual metaphor: STATES ARE PERSONS (Drulák and Königová, 2007, p. 7)

Metaphorical conceptualization is a process in which the speaker is under two competitive pressures: the pressure of universal embodiment and the pressure of local, cultural and personal context (Kövecses, 2008, p. 182). Recent studies (Kövecses, 2010; Lakoff, 2004) proved that metaphors may be used as ideological tools when dealing with economic and political issues. New metaphors have the power to create a new reality. If a new metaphor enters in the conceptual system that we base our action on, it will alter that conceptual system and the perceptions and actions that the system gives rise to (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 146). Also, more recent approaches (Lakoff, 2004) show that metaphors may be used as ideological weapons to frame and to reframe the political and economic issues.

## **2. The metaphors associated with the EU**

To understand the complicated and abstract concept of the European Union, a wide variety of metaphors have been used in the public discourse. These metaphors benefitted have been extensively researched. Andreas Musolff conducted several studies on the metaphorical mapping of the European Union (Musolff, 2000; 2001; 2004; 2017). He provides a comprehensive account of metaphors deployed in the political discourse about the EU. Musolff (2004) coined four main conceptual metaphors for the EU: the EU is a Family/ Love-Relationship, the EU is Moving Along a Path, the EU is a (Human) Body, the EU is a Building. The conceptual metaphors “the EU Has a Core and an Outer Circle(s)” and “the EU is an Orchestra” complete the picture of the EU. Musolff (2004, p. 52 and 153) scrutinizes the speed (tempo) and the unanimity of the EU with a firm core and a periphery. His most recent studies provide a deeper analysis of the metaphor the EU is a (human) body, (Musolff,

2003; 2008), 2003) and the EU is a (human) body with a diseased, dead, non-existent or rotten heart, in the Brexit context (Musolff, 2017).

Other studies on metaphor associated with the EU cover a more limited period of time than the time frame in Musolff's studies and focus other source domains. In the studies of the Czech conception of the European Union conducted by Drulák (Drulák and Königová, 2007; Drulák, 2006; Drulák, 2004), three conceptual metaphors were considered: CONTAINER, EQUILIBRIUM and MOTION. These metaphors embed three different discourses and visions of the European integration. The CONTAINER metaphor implies a state-like entity, clearly differentiated from the outside world, within which there may be a strong actor promoting his own interest. In contrast, the EQUILIBRIUM metaphor sees the EU as several containers (its members), The MOTION metaphor captures the unceasing transformation of the European integration (Drulák and Königová, 2007, p. 8). Drulák and Königová's study underlines the influence of context on the metaphorical conceptualization. The use of the three conceptual metaphors associated with the EU is unevenly distributed in the discourse of various Czech public institutions. Czech government officials use the EU mainly as the EQUILIBRIUM metaphor, the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs tend to use the MOTION metaphor and the civil servants incline towards the EQUILIBRIUM metaphor (Drulák and Königová, 2007, p. 19).

The study of Caterina Carta (2014) based on statements made by high-profile EU representatives, the understanding of the international role of the EU (the EU's international role) is structured using three metaphors: Candide – the EU as an idiot power in search of a world garden; Pangloss – the EU as a self-proclaimed garrulous model; and Don Juan – the EU as a global power in its infancy. Candide, Pangloss and Don Juan are metaphors used by the author to stress out the centrality of the EU's subjectivity found in the discursive practices, the EU as a model and the EU as an actor capable of pursuing its goals in a hostile environment.

The metaphors associated with the EU are often analysed in their context and refer to specific issues, such as immigration (Charteris-Black, Britain as a container: immigration metaphors in the 2005 election campaign, 2006), Turkey's candidacy to accede to the EU (Buckingham, 2013), Romanian political discourse about EU (Pricopie, 2014), the perception of multilingualism in the EU (Đurović, 2009), euro crisis (Arrese, 2015).

### 3. Methodology

In order to identify and map the metaphors associated with the European Union in the economic press of the Republic of Moldova, we used the conceptual metaphors associated with the EU analysed by Andreas Musolff (Musolff, 2008; Musolff, 2004). The table below summarizes both the macrostructures and microstructures for the four conceptual metaphors associated with the EU in public discourse.

**Table 1. The EU metaphors in political discourse**

<b>Conceptual Metaphors (Macro-structure)</b>	<b>Metaphorical Expressions (Micro-structure)</b>
THE EU IS A FAMILY/ LOVE-RELATIONSHIP	Love, Friendship, Support, Partnership, Engagement, Marriage, Couple, Faith, Fidelity, Adultery/Menage a trois, Separation/ Divorce, Family, Parents, Godparents, Father(s), Mother, Child, Brother, Cousins);
THE EU IS MOVING ALONG A PATH	Journey: Way/ Path, One-way street, Cul-de-sac/ Dead end, Crossroads, Distance Sign, Access, Obstacle, Speed ( <i>Fast, slow, two/multi speed</i> ), Timetable, Ticket, Journey ( <i>Train, Maritime, Car, Bicycle</i> ), Air/Space Travel, Volume (Tankage);
THE EU IS A (HUMAN) BODY	Life, Birth/ Baby, Adulthood, Death, Disease, Fever, Poison, Cure/ Therapy/ Care, Recovery, Healthy, Body Part ( <i>Heart, Muscle, Arteries, Liver, Gall Bladder, Head</i> );
THE EU IS A BUILDING	Architecture/ Architect, Blueprint, Building site (Abandoned), Foundation(s), Building material, Pillar, Walls, Building, House (Common European), Door/ Backdoor/ Gate/ Gatekeeper, Window (to Europe), Roof, Gable, Home, Room(s), Balcony, Cellar, Refuse dump, Yard, Garden/ Allotment, Caretaker, Furniture, Tenancy (right of) – <i>Tenant/Landlord/Rent</i> ;

Source: Musolff, A. (2004) - Metaphor and political discourse. Analogical reasoning in debates about Europe

For this study, we selected the most important newspapers and economic magazines available online based on data provided by BATI (Bureau for Auditing the Circulation and the Internet Audience of the Republic of Moldova). According to the data presented on this website, economic news in Romanian language could be found only in specific sections of general newspapers. In fact, there is no economic magazine in Romanian language. After browsing the main newspapers and magazines, we selected the online website called noi.md as it had more than 150000 real users and allowed the downloading of articles. Based on data provided by BATI, there are two economic magazines in Russian language available online, Business Class and the Economic Review

(Экономическое обозрение), These two magazines were the only ones that contained articles covering a wide range of economic topics, including the relations with the European Union, compared to other newspapers and magazines that had only advertisements and local news. We included these two magazines into our corpus although the data on their real users were not available on the BATI website, the monitored period was between January 1, 2015 and April 30, 2016.

In order to select the corpus of articles to be included in the study, we first searched the articles that included references to the European Union. For this purpose, we used the search browsers of the three websites (the economic section of noi.md website, businessclass.md and logos.press.md) to search the following key words: European Union, Europe, EU and Euro. After this search, we first downloaded the articles containing the key words and then built two corpuses of articles, one in Romanian language made of 40256 words and another one in Russian language composed of 21990 words.

In the process of identifying the metaphorical expressions associated with the EU and in the mapping, we used the conceptual metaphors associated with the EU analysed by Andreas Musolff (Musolff, 2004; 2008) and the procedure summarized by Cristián Santibáñez (2010, p. 978),

Example:

- a. Obtaining linguistic expressions for target domain – „Moldova poate întreține relații comerciale libere cu EU și Comunitatea Statelor Independente”, „EU nu poate accepta două regimuri comerciale într-o singură țară”, „EU sprijină reforma în sănătate prin diferite modalități”, „EU este extrem de îngrijorată de scandalul bancar din Moldova” etc. “Moldova may maintain free trade relations with the EU and the Community of Independent States”, “The EU cannot accept two trade systems in one country”, “The EU supports the health reform through different methods”, “The EU is extremely worried about the banking scandals in Moldova”, etc.
- b. Distinguishing conceptual source domains – Family or Love-Relationship.
- c. Naming the conceptual metaphor contained – EU is Family/ Love-Relationship.
- d. Describing the situational logic of the source domain– the adultery or multiple relations are perceived differently by the involved audiences; what is normal and desirable for one party may be unacceptable for another; the provided support is questioned when the agreed rules are violate.
- e. Characterizing aspects of the source domain –Family or Love-Relationship require loyalty and complying with the mutually agreed rules.
- f. Putting forward correspondences or mappings between the domains–Moldova and the EU have to walk the road along which the evidence of compliance with the principles and rules of

coexistence and cooperation agreed in the signed agreements will determine the nature of the relationship in which they will engage in the long run. The identification of the metaphorical expressions and their mapping was first made individually by each researcher. The individual results were then checked, compared and adjusted during several joint meetings. The next section describes the results.

#### 4. Results

Based on the analysis of the two corpuses mentioned above, we have identified 326 metaphorical expressions associated with the EU, 223 in the Romanian language corpus and 103 in the Russian language corpus. Even if the ratio of the two analysed corpuses in terms of size is two to one (40256 words and 223 metaphors in Romanian language versus 21990 and 103 metaphors in Russian language), the percentage distribution of metaphorical expressions associated with the EU in terms of conceptual metaphors provides several important ideas.

**Table 2. The Distribution of conceptual metaphors for the EU in the analysed corpus**

Conceptual Metaphors for EU	Romanian Corpus		Russian Corpus		Total Corpus	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
LOVE-MARRIAGE-FAMILY	143	64.1%	45	43.7%	188	57.7%
WAY-MOVEMENT-SPEED	69	30.9%	36	35.0%	105	32.2%
LIFE-BODY-HEALTH	2	0.9%	4	3.9%	6	1.8%
ARCHITECTURE-HOUSE-BUILDING	5	2.2%	3	2.9%	8	2.5%
THE EU IS AT WAR	3	1.3%	11	10.7%	14	4.3%
THE EU HAS A CORE AND OUTER CIRCLE(S)		0.0%	2	1.9%	2	0.6%
OTHERS	1	0.4%	2	1.9%	3	0.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>100%</b>

First, according to data presented in Table 2, in the corpus of economic press in Moldova, the EU is a Family/ Love-Relationship and the EU is Moving Along a Path are the preferred conceptual metaphors. The Moldovan general press takes over and debates the public statements of the EU, national and the CIS leaders in which the source domains, such as Life-Body-Health, Architecture-House-Building, War or Core and Outer Circle(s) are easy to identify as in the examples a, b, c and d below.

- a. „Şeful comisiei europene a vorbit despre frica care domneşte în UE” (noi.md, 22 iulie 2015), “The Head of the European Commission discussed about the fear prevailing in the European Union”.
- “Если европейцы будут лишь ссылаться на высокую мантру более тесного союза, то их учреждения атрофируются”. “If Europeans will only preach the elevated mantra of a “closer union”, their institutions may become atrophied”. (Economic Review, June, 2015)
- b. „Misiunea EU la Chişinău a fost „fortificată” cu cosilieri noi: în domeniul băncilor, finanţelor şi luptei cu corupţia” (noi.md, 18 august 2015), “The EU Mission in Chişinău was fortified with new counselors: in the area of banking, finance and fight against corruption”
- c. „Poziţia mai conciliantă a UE faţă de Transnistria, probabil, se explică prin nedorinţa de a intra în conflict cu Rusia din cauza blocadei exporturilor din această regiune în Uniunea Europeană” (noi.md, 13 aprilie 2016) „В прошлом году европейская паника сопровождалась историей с Грецией, в этом году основной удар принимают на себя банки”. “Last year, the European panic went hand in hand with the story of Greece, this year the banks have taken the main blow.” (Business Class, April 2016)
- d. „Даже если она сохранит свое членство в ЕС, Великобритания будет продолжать неуклонно двигаться дальше от Европы”
- “Even if it retains its membership in the EU, the UK will continue to steadily move away from Europe” (Economic Review, 2015)

In the corpus of Moldovan economic press selected for this study, the four source domains appear only sporadically and it is not accidental. Moldova still has to consolidate many required aspects in the process of the pre-accession negotiation. The EU-Moldova Association Agreement fully entered into force in July 2016, so it is still far from its embodiment into the EU lacking the availability to intervene significantly in the EU's construction (and deconstruction), it is situated in the OUTER CIRCLE(S) of Europe, with areas of painfully close conflicts. Therefore, it is natural that the analogies in these four source domains should be unreachable in the Moldovan economic press.

Instead, the image of the EU in this corpus is rooted mainly in the concept of Family or Moving Along a Path. In Europe, where all European nations are the children of one family, and the plans for an EU-enlargement may be viewed as a coming home of the lost children into the fold of the family (Musolff, 2004, p. 16 and 17), the status of Moldova as a lost child has a special connotation. Moldova is still Europe's lost child but also a child disputed by the two parental authorities, and, therefore still confused on which way to go.

„Возможность предоставлена, но никто с распростертыми объятиями в Европе нас не ждет.”, s“The opportunity is provided but no one in Europe is waiting for us with open arms.” (Business Class, March 2015)

“Comisarul european a confirmat că autoritățile Uniunii Europene sînt predispuse să sprijine Moldova și în continuare în înlăturarea dificultăților cauzate de restricțiile venite din partea Rusiei și în modernizarea sectorului agricol.” (noi.md, 17 ianuarie 2015), “The European Commissioner has confirmed that the leaders of the European Union are prone to further support Moldova in overcoming the restrictions imposed by Russia and in modernizing its agriculture.”

„Moldova poate întreține relații comerciale libere cu EU și Comunitatea Statelor Independente” (noi.md, 28 aprilie 2015), “Moldova can maintain free trade relations with the EU and the Commonwealth of Independent States”

Often, the metaphorical expressions subsumed under the conceptual metaphor Way-Movement-Speed appear in the larger context of the relations between the EU and Moldova. The EU is presented playing the role of a parental authority as a Strict Parent or as a Nurturant Parent (Musolff, 2004) and Moldova appears as a Child, a child who is helped and closely watched in choosing its way and staying on it (or on the path) at standards and pace set by the EU agreements.

“Delegația UE în Moldova menționează că participarea Moldovei în Programul ENPARD denotă atenția permanentă a Uniunii Europene pentru dezvoltarea relațiilor de parteneriat cu RM pe calea acordării asistenței în dezvoltarea și modernizarea țării, inclusiv a sectorului agricol și localităților rurale. Principalul scop al extinderii parteneriatului UE și Moldovei este apropierea RM către standardele UE.” (noi.md, 26 martie 2015),

“The EU delegation in Moldova mentions that the participation of Moldova in the ENPARD Program shows the constant concern of the European Union for developing the partnership relations with the RM by providing assistance and modernizing the country, including its agriculture and rural communities. The main aim of the EU-Moldova Partnership enlargement is bringing Moldova closer to the EU standards.”

„Tapiola: UE este dispusă să ajute, dar Moldova trebuie să treacă de la teorie la practică.” (noi.md, 22 decembrie 2015),

„Tapiola: The EU is willing to help but Moldova has to move from theory to practice.”

The second issue shown in Table 2 concerns the differences between the corpus in Romanian and Russian languages. The Corpus in Romanian language, the discourse focuses on EU's image in the Family Scenario (64,1% of the metaphorical expressions), The source domain Way-Movement-Speed is found in 30.9% of metaphorical expressions in the Romanian language and reflects the

opportunities and challenges accompanying putting on stage the Family Scenario of the EU and Moldova. On the other hand, in the corpus in Russian language, the metaphorical expressions associated with the EU are more shaded. The EU in the Family Scenario covers 43.7% of the identified metaphorical expressions, while the conceptual metaphor Eu Is Moving Along a Path covers appears in 35.0% of the metaphors. The distinction is made by the 10.7% of the expressions in Russian illustrating the EU target source with the source domain War. The EU as a newcomer on the agreements' setting of Moldova, a post-Soviet country is presented as a competitor potentially entering into a conflict potential with the old international relations setting of Moldova.

“Обеим сторонам нужно искать выход; но Запад, хотя и вышел с победой из Холодной войны, похоже, не только проиграл мир, но и находится на пороге нового раскола Европы.”

Both sides need to find a way out; but although the West won the Cold war, it seems not only to have lost the Peace but is even on the verge of a new Schism in Europe (Economic Review, September 2015).

Table 3 shows positive, negative or neutral framing of the metaphorical expressions associated with the conceptual metaphors EU is a Family/ Love-Relationship and EU is Moving Along a Path.

**Table 3. Positive, negative or neutral framing of EU conceptual metaphors**

Conceptual metaphor	framing	Romanian Corpus	Russian Corpus	Total Corpus
LOVE - MARRIAGE – FAMILY	positive	79%	69%	77%
	negative	10%	22%	13%
	neutral	3%	9%	5%
	positive & negative	8%		6%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
WAY - MOVEMENT – SPEED	positive	80%	56%	71%
	negative	14%	25%	18%
	neutral	3%	19%	9%
	positive & negative	3%		2%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Both corpuses present mainly positively the EU and the path of its relationships with Moldova. In the corpus in Romanian language, the metaphorical framing of EU is positive in 80% of the cases. Again, in the corpus in Russian language, the EU framing in terms of positive or negative is more shaded. The family scenario is mainly positively framed in both corpuses and the EU and the Moldova's Moving Along a Path is questioned mainly in the corpus in Russian. Also, this corpus

presents more clearly the position of Moldova in the OUTER CIRCLE(S) compared to countries in the CORE area of the EU.

„Отмечается, что самые дорогие и самые дешевые страны континента в Евросоюз не входят.”

“It has been noted that the most expensive and the poorest countries on the continent are not part of the EU” (Business Class, June 2015)

In the corpus in the Romanian language, the image of the EU, as the parental authority in addition to that of the EU as a partner, is presented positively and sometimes neutrally and the analogies with adultery, ménage a trois, separation, divorce are included into the expressions showing the threats to the relations between the EU and Moldova. In the Russian language corpus, more often appear metaphorical expressions supporting the status of Moldova as the partner of the EU without conferring to the EU the parental authority and the analogies, such as Engagement (no Marriage) and Separation are framed positively and negatively.

## Conclusions

From the perspective of strengthening the bilateral relations of the EU and Moldova, the results of this study provide an optimistic view on the dominant attitudes towards the European integration and its appeal to the readers of economic press in Moldova. These results indicate that conceptual metaphors associated to the EU in the analysed corpus allow for considerable variation in the conceptualization of the European Union, the main framing being positive. Characteristic patterns of distribution of the two main scenarios EU is a Family/ Love - Relationship and the EU is Moving Along a Path and the use of source domain War for EU indicate attitudinal differences between the two studied corpora.

The results of the study cannot be generalized for the entire economic press of Moldova. The limitations of the study are due to the size of the corpus, the period of time covered by the corpus and the inherent subjectivity accompanying the process of identifying and mapping metaphorical expressions. Considering that little research was done on the EU metaphors used by the press in the Republic of Moldova, more contributions are expected to be developed and further research should be done. Further testing of the findings is worth exploring in different contexts and in comparative studies.

If we go back to metaphors as representations of ways in which people reveal, develop and extend their thoughts, the results of the study may be interpreted as an invitation to engage into a

deeper dialogue or public debate on the relations between the EU and Moldova. Exploring and incorporating a variety of source domains for the EU target source may be the expression of a more in-depth and shaded understanding of the (still) abstract EU.

On the other hand, the EU in the Family Scenario, with all European nations animated by hope and engaged into the EU-enlargement plans, is negatively coloured in 2017 in the Core of Europe. In the heart of Europe, the rhetoric in the public space and the general moral are dominated by the metaphor the EU is a (human) body with a diseased, dead, non-existent or rotten heart (Musolff, 2017), Brexit, the identity crisis and the crisis of migrants are just a few issues undermining the positive attitudes positive towards the EU and its enlargement. But in the OUTER CIRCLE(S) peripheral areas of Europe, trust for the EU and the perspectives of enlargement remain optimistic.

In the EU report presented on 13 March 2017 in Brussels by the European External Action Service and the European Commission ahead of the EU-Moldova Association Council on 31 March 2017, the High Representative/ Vice-President, Federica Mogherini said "The European Union and the Republic of Moldova have a strong relationship, reinforced through our joint Association Agreement that entered into force nine months ago" (European Commission, 2017).

The crises faced by the EU are seen differently at the periphery of Europe in the period analysed by this corpus, January 2015 – April 2016. In 2017, EU-Moldova Association Council reaffirmed on 31 March 2017 their commitment to the process of political association and economic integration. For the countries of the outer circle, the EU maintains its role of an extended family and a landmark for the paths to be crossed.

If new metaphors have the power to create a new reality (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), we could ask ourselves how do we enrich the EU metaphors as to enable them to build the EU with more meaning also for the Europeans and not just for ourselves.

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