

# The Three Seas Initiative. Advantages and challenges for Romania

**Alexandru Ionuț Drăgulin**





## The Three Seas Initiative. Advantages and challenges for Romania<sup>1</sup>

Alexandru Ionuț Drăgulin<sup>2</sup>

*Researcher*

*Romanian Diplomatic Institute*

**ABSTRACT:** In Romania's foreign policy, regional cooperation frameworks represent a distinct and increasingly prominent dimension, receiving growing attention in governmental programs over the past decade. Across Europe, such frameworks have gained visibility within the architecture of security, economic development, and political stability. Conceived as flexible platforms for inter-state collaboration, they complement multilateral organizations endowed with institutional decision-making mechanisms, such as the European Union (EU) and NATO. Their function is to strengthen bilateral and multilateral relations within a format more closely aligned to the regional interests and strategic objectives of participating states. Since its inception in 2015, the Three Seas Initiative has followed an upward trajectory, during which Romania has successfully articulated economic priorities, strategic interests, and developmental goals in the context of European integration and its geostrategic positioning. Assuming that the Initiative now stands at a critical inflection point, this study pursues two objectives: (1) to provide an analytical assessment of its principal achievements and challenges, and (2) to propose ways in which regional cooperation can be leveraged both to maximize economic opportunities and to counter hybrid threats.

**KEYWORDS:** interconnectivity, flexibility, economic resilience, functional regionalism, European integration.

---

<sup>1</sup> This publication draws exclusively on open-source materials. The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the institution.

<sup>2</sup> [alexandru.dragulin@idr.ro](mailto:alexandru.dragulin@idr.ro)

## INTRODUCTION

The Three Seas Initiative (3SI) is “**a flexible and informal political platform, at the presidential level**, bringing together 12 EU member states located between the Adriatic, Baltic, and Black Seas (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia)” (Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, 2025). Greece joined this format as a *full-fledged participant* at the 3SI Summit in Bucharest in 2023. Additionally, the following became *associated participating states* (designation decided at the 2023 Bucharest Summit): Albania, Montenegro (2025), the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine (2023). Strategic partners include the European Commission, Germany, Japan, the USA, and, as of 2025, Spain and Turkey. Due to its informal nature, the 3SI has no founding documents that would establish mutual commitments and/or obligations among participating states.

The Three Seas Initiative aims to promote economic integration and reduce disparities between Central and Western European countries. At the 2025 Warsaw Summit, participating nations reaffirmed that “the format is politically inspired but business driven, and it is the business cooperation that is the core of its framework.” The primary goal of the 3SI is European integration (Three Seas Initiative, Joint Declaration of the 10th Summit of the Three Seas Initiative, 2025).

The main objective of the Initiative is “to increase **convergence** and **cohesion** while **reducing the economic development gap** among different areas and EU member states by enhancing **connectivity** in the region, primarily along the North–South axis in the areas of energy, **transport**, and **digital** infrastructure” (Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, 2025). The North–South connectivity axis lies at the heart of the 3SI’s creation, as most European connectivity projects have historically followed a West–East direction. Following the war in Ukraine, the rationale for developing economic relations has been expanded to include regional connectivity projects along the North–South axis at the EU level, such as the Baltic Sea–Black Sea–Aegean Sea Corridor under the TEN-T reform.

The format operates based on the following principles: “promoting economic development, enhancing European cohesion, and strengthening transatlantic ties” (Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, 2025). Flexibility is maintained through bilateral and multilateral project



implementation, with participating states free to choose the most suitable cooperation and implementation mechanisms. As a regional geopolitical format, the Three Seas Initiative offers both advantages and challenges, which will be analyzed in the final section.

The decision-making mechanism is inherently political. The 3SI deliberately maintains this system “to prevent potential disagreements regarding leadership or the management of the shared vision” (Sebe, 2025). Transitioning from a predominantly high-level political format, characterized by formalism, to a driver of sustainable development requires overcoming financial constraints, addressing geopolitical challenges, and even establishing an institutional structure.

This study hypothesizes that Romania’s active participation in regional cooperation formats such as the 3SI contributes to domestic economic development and facilitates the achievement of key economic and political performance indicators, in pursuit of broader goals such as accession to the OECD. In this analysis, I suggested the examination of the specific characteristics of the 3SI, considering two variables: geopolitics and geoeconomics. These differ from a strictly geographical perspective and are shaped by diplomatic relations among participating states, national interests, and sectoral cooperation opportunities (economic, political, and security). I will argue for the importance of Romania’s participation in the 3SI format as a means of strengthening its foreign policy doctrine on regional cooperation.

The paper is divided into three sections. First, I summarized Romania’s main economic interests within the 3SI and how they are articulated politically. The second section outlines the regional context that shapes Romania’s diplomatic capabilities to implement its regional foreign policy—especially in managing the Black Sea area. The third section provides a summary of the advantages, challenges, and threats facing the 3SI, along with public policy proposals adjusted to Romania’s capacity to implement them in cooperation with partners. The conclusions highlight the growing role of regional cooperation and the opportunities that can be harnessed through the development of minilateral formats.

## **ROMANIA’S INTERESTS IN THE THREE SEAS INITIATIVE**

In the 1990s and 2000s, Romania aimed for a firm return to the Western value and institutional space by consolidating democracy and the market economy. In this regard, its strategic objectives focused on joining NATO and integrating into the European Union.

Alongside its efforts to align with the West, Romania pursued the deepening of regional cooperation and took advantage of the opportunities provided by the European funds. The **development concept linked with the East–West direction within the EU** is now complemented by **the concept of connectivity linked to the North–South axis**, along which several 3SI projects are implemented. In Romania’s foreign policy, regional cooperation formats, both formal and informal, are considered a tool for deepening European integration. In addition to meeting these Romanian objectives, the Three Seas Initiative also facilitates cooperation with transatlantic partners, especially the United States.

Romania’s interest, as a participating state in the 3SI, is to use this context as effectively as possible to develop a coherent institutional framework at the national level, supported by a regional foreign policy doctrine that addresses the shared need for inclusion and functions in complementarity with the roles of the European Union and NATO. Romania should also initiate the strategic trilateral partnership with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova by investing economic resources and know-how, and by promoting democratic values in these two countries to keep them on the European path. Equally important in the near future could be cooperation in the trilateral format with Poland (Baltic Sea) and Turkey (Black Sea).

Romania’s goal is to identify opportunities for cooperation not only with fully participating countries of the 3SI but also with associated participating countries and strategic partners of the Initiative. This is one reason why Romania supported and succeeded in the “expansion” of the 3SI. The inclusion of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova in the 3SI is a step toward expanding investment opportunities in these two countries, along with the process of regional peace and stability. In the medium and long term, Romania may aim to shape the agenda and institutional profile of the Initiative to align with key national interests shared with other members, especially by countering Russia’s assertiveness and securing ongoing funding for the security of the extended Central European region; to achieve this, it was recently decided to raise European partners’ contributions to NATO’s budget by 5%. For Romania, the 3SI acts as a tool to strengthen relations with both EU member states and the United States.

## REGIONAL CONTEXT AND PROSPECTS FOR THE BLACK SEA AREA

Currently, the regional context places Romania “at the geopolitical frontier between the West and Russia and at the most active periphery of Euro-Atlantic structures” (Jora, 2023).

Given that “the most sophisticated node in terms of geopolitical and geostrategic significance is the Black Sea, the extremely complicated geopolitical position of Romania becomes easily understandable” (Jora, 2023). Romania is exposed to Russia’s hybrid threats. However, it remains part of the European bloc, which is in a defensive posture and undergoing reorganization, with increased allocations for the security sector in the new Multiannual Financial Framework 2028–2034 (European Commission, 2025).

The Three Seas Initiative fits within the broader framework of regional cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe, contributing to the consolidation of cohesion and convergence within the European Union. The external pressure comes from the revanchist foreign policy of the Russian Federation, an aggressor state and the sole culprit for the severe deterioration of the security situation in Europe. The 3SI countries are situated in the triangle formed by the Baltic Sea, the Adriatic Sea, and the Black Sea, at the intersection of NATO’s and the European Union’s eastern flank and the eastern neighborhood, whose stability is undermined by the war in Ukraine and the hybrid actions initiated by the Russian Federation. Currently, the 3SI countries are subjected to “a hybrid war with potential for societal destabilization, and the territorial borders with Russia face the threat of revisionism and fluidity” (Sebe, 2025).

The main objective of 3SI—to boost competitiveness and sustainable growth in the region by reducing economic and infrastructure gaps with the rest of the European Union—is even more important now. In this context, the initiative aims to strengthen Central and Eastern Europe’s identity, marking a strategic move away from the historical limitations tied to the former Soviet space, and encouraging a more integrated and resilient region connected to European and transatlantic ties.

It remains challenging to determine whether, for the Three Seas Initiative, the European Union, and NATO, the Black Sea functions as a border region, a buffer zone, or a bridge connecting Europe and Asia, with rhetoric varying based on the area of analysis and context.

## **ANALYSIS. ADVANTAGES, CHALLENGES, AND THREATS FOR THE 3SI**

Forms of regional cooperation at the informal level, such as the Three Seas Initiative, have specific advantages and limitations. These are shaped by factors like internal structure, decision-making processes, project funding, and the regional environment.

At the anniversary summit in Warsaw, marking ten years since the Initiative's founding, the agenda was dominated by the geopolitical situation in Europe and transatlantic relations, the fragility of members' economies, and the need to close development gaps. The Summit's Joint Declaration condemns Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. It supports "its sovereignty and territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders" (Three Seas Initiative, Joint Declaration of the 10th Summit of the Three Seas Initiative, 2025). Hungary also took a different stance, not aligning with paragraphs 4–9, which address the position on the Russo-Ukrainian war. In an independent document, Budapest stated that "certain elements of these paragraphs go beyond the new geopolitical circumstances" and that "after more than three years, it has become obvious that the European Union's approach to the war did not bring us closer to peace" (Government of Hungary, 2025).

The Three Seas Initiative is currently carrying out 143 projects at different stages across the three main areas of interconnection – transport infrastructure (51% of the total), energy (39%), and digital (10%). The total value of these projects is 111 billion euros (Three Seas Initiative, Status Report of 2024, 2024). All are governed by the European Union's regulatory framework, which offers all the necessary guidelines for their completion. Furthermore, the Three Seas Initiative lacks a legislative framework, which could weaken the European Union and go against its political values.

Out of these, 89 projects are prioritized: 48% in transport, 37% in energy, and 15% in digital. The total budget for these projects is 102.3 billion euros. The project implementation stages are as follows: registered – 43, significant progress – 19, completed – 14, and with reported activity – 13 (Three Seas Initiative, Status Report of 2024, 2024). The List of Priority Interconnection Projects was created at the 2018 Bucharest Summit and is updated yearly. Currently, Romania is working on nine priority projects. Among them, two transport projects are of strategic importance for Romania – Rail2Sea (rail) and Via Carpathia (road). These projects will help strengthen the North-South connectivity corridor (Guvernul României, 2025).

The priority projects have shared objectives agreed upon by all member countries: stimulating economic growth, developing the North–South infrastructure corridor, reducing regional disparities within the EU, and promoting cohesion and unity in Europe (Priority Projects, 2025).

The funding sources for the projects are distributed as follows: national funds (27%), the Connecting Europe Facility (27%), the Three Seas Initiative Investment Fund (8%), the European Investment Bank (8%), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (4%), other EU sources (11%), and additional resources making up 15% (Three Seas Initiative, Status Report of 2024, 2024). In 2018, at the Bucharest Summit, Romania proposed the creation of two new structures — the Three Seas Business Forum and the Network of Chambers of Commerce. The Business Forum aims to promote initiatives and investments in the region, discuss the implementation of priority projects, and explore growth and innovation opportunities in the area.

At the 2019 Ljubljana Summit, the 3SI Investment Fund was created. In 2024, in partnership with the European Investment Fund, the Innovation Fund was established, serving as “a new source of investment for projects that have passed the initial development stage” (European Investment Fund, 2025). The investment fund's role in turning the political vision into economic action has not yet matched the level of the EU's contribution. One point that cannot be ignored is that the projects funded by the Three Seas Initiative Investment Funds do not fully align with the Initiative's strategic projects.

### Advantages of the Three Seas Initiative format

A key advantage is **the focus on a limited number of strategic economic cooperation areas**, which helps achieve significant progress for the involved countries. In Romania's case, the energy and transport sectors have seen steady growth, mainly due to projects undertaken within the framework of the Three Seas Initiative. The 3SI format enables the development of bilateral and trilateral projects focused on a single sector.

A second advantage is **the economic potential of the region**. The 3SI is a cooperation platform for former socialist countries that are now experiencing significant economic growth and development. Building connections along the north-south corridor positions these countries to compete with Western nations; Germany, although a maritime country, is not part of this format, and its proximity to Poland tends to encourage competition rather than cooperation on joint interconnection projects. A recent example is Germany's suspension of Schengen rules at the border with Poland. Conversely, in the southern region, including Greece



within the 3SI, there is a rise in economic growth potential that enhances the Danube countries' access to the Mediterranean.

A third benefit, still largely untapped, involves **partnerships with the European Commission and third countries**—geopolitical and technological powers that support regional cooperation both politically and economically. Currently, this advantage is underused, as the partnership with Japan has not led to any projects. Similarly, the strategic partnership with South Korea is a key objective in Romanian foreign policy. It could also be enhanced within the 3SI framework, as outlined in the Government Program (Guvernul României, 2025). The most developed partnership is with the United States, which provides financial support for the 3SI, driven by the goal of countering China's trade expansion.

**Transatlantic relations and cooperation with the United States**, which Romania and the 3SI pay special attention to, represent a tangible advantage in energy projects and the military sector — bolstering national security through the American military presence (Guvernul României, 2025). Regarding Romania, while sending a signal to other partners, interim president Ilie Bolojan emphasized the importance of cooperation with the United States both geopolitically and economically. He highlighted Romania's benefits from energy projects: "Reactors 3 and 4 at Cernavodă, as well as the micro nuclear power plants, have been recognized as important projects in Romanian-American economic cooperation, playing a role in improving the energy mix and ensuring that Romania has secure and affordable energy in the coming years" (Declarația de presă susținută la finalul participării la Summitul Inițiativei celor Trei Mări, 2025).

The Three Seas Initiative consistently receives support from the U.S., which aims to counter Chinese expansion in European markets and enhance energy security. However, it also faces the Russian threat, a stance that the Trump Administration approached with a conciliatory attitude. Maintaining internal unity and leveraging the current situation are challenged by changes in governments and leaders, requiring effective coordination among member countries and a commitment to democratic values.

Currently, the United States supports the 3SI because, from the American perspective, it serves as a security anchor on NATO's eastern flank and a means to promote energy exports (Sebe, 2025). The U.S. Congress has passed legislation that provides political and financial backing for the initiative. In 2020, the House of Representatives adopted a resolution expressing support for the Three Seas Initiative in its efforts to boost energy independence and

infrastructure connectivity, thereby strengthening the national security of the U.S. and Europe, and encouraging the initiative's nations to take action toward jointly financing projects that enhance energy, infrastructure, and digital innovation in Central and Eastern Europe, including through U.S. financial contributions to the Initiative's Investment Fund (US Congress, H.Res.672 - Expressing support of the Three Seas Initiative in its efforts to increase energy independence and infrastructure connectivity thereby strengthening the United States and European national security., 2020).

More specifically, another legislative act from 2022 mentioned Congressional support for the Three Seas Initiative to increase infrastructure resilience and reduce dependence on malign actors, including in telecommunications (US Congress, H.R.3344 - Transatlantic Telecommunications Security Act, 2022). In both documents, American funding for 3SI is tied to a geopolitical vision—the role of Central European countries in countering the Russian threat by closing development gaps. In summary, regarding participation in power distribution within the international system, including involvement in Europe, “the U.S. would accept power-sharing only within a liberal-global framework, where economic interdependence and global trade would make war impossible as a tool of foreign policy” (Jora, 2023).

**The strategic relevance of 3SI** increased following the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war. This event highlighted the urgent need to diversify energy resources and complete the north-south road and rail corridors currently under construction. These are crucial for both civilian (economic) purposes and military mobility. In 2025, 3SI leaders recognized “the context of heightened global political uncertainty and adverse political shifts in our neighborhood” (Three Seas Initiative, Joint Declaration of the 10th Summit of the Three Seas Initiative, 2025).

The last four summits following the Russian aggression in Ukraine have produced decisions with long-term geopolitical and economic impact. The 2022 Joint Declaration in Riga mentioned that the 3SI has the potential “to contribute to the EU policies dedicated to the Western Balkans region, thus complementing efforts to bring this region closer to the Union, including through investments in interconnectivity, extending European corridors in energy, transport, digitalization, and telecommunications, as well as accelerating the green transition.” The U.S. financial contribution to the Initiative's Investment Fund was highlighted. In 2023, in Bucharest, the new status of an associate participant of the 3SI was defined and granted to Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova. Romania contributed to defining this status. In 2024, in

Vilnius, the role of the 3SI in consolidating the transatlantic partnership and the American strategic presence in Central Europe was reaffirmed.

At the Warsaw Summit in 2025, the supportive role that the 3SI can play in Ukraine's post-conflict reconstruction process was emphasized. The need for regional connectivity to the Black Sea was reiterated during discussions on expanding the partnership with Turkey. In short, granting associate participant status to Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, and strategic partner status to Turkey, creates opportunities for the Initiative's continuity, especially for stimulating investments in countries in the broader Black Sea area.

### **Challenges facing the 3SI**

Fragmentation of the format caused by differences in geoeconomic positions is a challenge similar to what we observe within the Council of the European Union. In the case of 3SI, there is a clear lack of internal cohesion on certain sensitive issues, with some member countries refusing to follow the pro-European integrationist stance. On one side, the European Union has a strategic approach to the Black Sea, detailed in a comprehensive document. On the other side, Russia is pursuing an aggressive expansionist policy, while China is implementing strategies to gain market share. A barrier to cohesion is the differing geostrategic views of some states—Hungary has taken a pro-Russian stance and issued a separate opinion at the 2025 Warsaw summit. Additionally, due to the lack of consensus in the security realm, the format will remain functional for now only in the economic sphere. Maintaining group cohesion and turning economic gains into security improvements are major challenges.

As a result, from a security standpoint, the 3SI countries currently rely on U.S. military bases and the missile defense shield. A 2024 Pew Research Center survey confirms the foreign policy approach of the Trump Administration toward Europe: maintaining transatlantic relations while increasing Europe's contribution to security (Pew Research Center, 2024). Currently, the 3SI is a geoeconomic regional cooperation format, with security issues managed separately by each member state. However, in the future, clarifying security management will be necessary, as it underpins economic stability and the implementation of cross-border projects. From an economic perspective, it is crucial to prioritize interconnection projects (transport, energy, digital) with strategic importance. This can help address the imbalance

between economy and security on the 3SI agenda—specifically, that security is not a standalone cooperation domain.

The gradual decrease in U.S. contributions to European security requires strengthening strategic partnerships to maintain security, which is essential for economic growth and social well-being. The 3SI participating states must find a balance between the European Union's public policies on the economy and security and American foreign policy toward Europe.

**The economic and geostrategic inclusion** of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine to support their accession to the European Union is a challenge that requires consensus and collaborative effort. Not all the 3SI participants are equally committed—Hungary, for example, stated a different position at the 2025 Summit regarding support for Ukraine's pro-European path. Romania offers comprehensive support, especially through expertise, education, culture, minority protection, the energy sector, and trade. Participating in Ukraine's reconstruction projects could provide an economic boost to Romania and present a significant investment opportunity.

Another challenge is the significant **development gaps** at the subregional level within the 3SI. The Black Sea region lags behind the Baltic and Adriatic areas in terms of investment volume and trade exchanges. One of 3SI's goals is to bring neighboring countries of these three maritime zones closer to similar economic levels. Each of the three zones has its own internal and external political culture and sets agendas to address specific subregional challenges. Currently, the center of the initiative's focus is in the Baltic Sea area because of population density, resources, governance capacity, and existing infrastructure. The 3SI needs to establish a formal coordination and synchronization mechanism to prevent conflicting national interests.

Based on Romania's proposal, the European Commission has introduced a new strategy for the Black Sea region that 3SI can utilize within the EU framework. It remains to be seen what implementation tools and mechanisms will be created and how they will impact geopolitics and geoeconomics.

Romania, along with other 3SI participant countries, remains vulnerable regarding specific economic and good governance indicators used in international assessments: political stability, governance effectiveness, legislative adequacy (United Nations Development Programme, 2025); economic freedom, fiscal deregulation, and overall competitiveness (World Economic Forum, 2025).



## Threats facing the 3SI

**The main external threat** to the 3SI is Russia—its expansionism through hybrid warfare tests the defense capabilities of participating and associated countries. Efforts to manipulate public opinion to favor anti-European candidates during recent presidential elections in the Republic of Moldova and Romania remain suspected of Russian interference. An example is the report published by the French Service for Vigilance and Protection against Foreign Digital Interference, titled “Algorithm Manipulation and the Instrumentalization of Influencers,” which shows how artificially boosting a candidate’s prominence through cyber means—outside electoral laws—can undermine voters’ freedom of choice. The report states that the methods used in Romania could be copied in other countries, creating scenarios that distort political preferences (Premier Ministre - SGDSN, 2025). The Council of the European Union has also highlighted the scale of cyber threats to electoral processes and democratic institutions (European Council, 2025).

**Mass disinformation**, part of the Kremlin’s “active measures” against democracy and European integration—considered ideological opponents—has the potential to skew public perceptions of domestic and foreign policy decisions, influencing the makeup of parliaments and governments. Populist and extremist parties may adversely affect public opinion on developments in the eastern neighborhood, European values, and transatlantic relations. There is an urgent need for unified strategies to combat disinformation. Nordic and Baltic countries offer successful examples of societal-level disinformation fighting, which eastern countries could learn from and adapt effective practices.

Potential solutions include updating the legislative framework to guarantee electoral integrity, strengthening democratic political institutions in Central and Eastern European countries through the EU acquis, and systematically promoting the benefits of the European Union’s social and economic model.

The rise of far-right populism in Europe—fostering different economic and social visions—remains a constant threat to internal unity and democracy, which are essential for economic and social progress. Solutions may include reducing social polarization by fighting hate speech, encouraging civil society development, and maintaining societal resilience.

## CONCLUSIONS

A decade after its founding, the Three Seas Initiative has experienced growth, supported by its flexible structure and focus on a limited number of realistically set objectives pursued through transnational projects that align with shared economic interests. The Joint Declaration from the anniversary Summit in Warsaw underscores the collective experience of participating countries. It states that “the lessons learned will help 3SI fulfill its role in the best possible manner, substantially contributing to regional economic resilience and economic attractiveness” (Three Seas Initiative, Joint Declaration of the 10th Summit of the Three Seas Initiative, 2025).

The economic dimension of 3SI is inseparable from its geostrategic aspect and the quality of democracy in the participating countries. From a geostrategic view, strengthening the Black Sea – Adriatic Sea – Baltic Sea triangle and reducing subregional disparities form the “engine” of the initiative, serving as the foundation for completing ongoing projects and launching new ones in the future. At the national level, democratic resilience is necessary to ease social tensions and prevent the rise of far-right extremism. The doctrine of economic nationalism, promoted by extremist movements and parties, opposes the principles of international cooperation and inclusion upheld by 3SI and the European Union.

For Romania, the Three Seas Initiative remains a tool with both political and economic importance. Politically, Romania’s involvement in the 3SI allows it to influence a set of regional foreign policy principles focused on inclusion and cooperation. Additionally, Romania can use trilateral formats in several directions, including the Black Sea, through partnerships with Poland and Turkey, Bulgaria and Turkey, and the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. Economically, the 3SI offers an opportunity for infrastructural interconnection with Central Europe and to promote free movement within the European Union.

Despite the unstable geopolitical context it must face, the 3SI currently stands as a successful model of regional integration. It exemplifies effective inclusion of regional cooperation within the broader scope of Euro-Atlanticism, as it operates based on the European economic and social model while also advocating for transatlantic relations. This type of multilateralism may offer a solution to counter economic nationalism by creating the conditions for a standard “win-win” approach through projects developed in the three key sectors—transport, energy, and digitalization.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Declarația de presă susținută la finalul participării la Summitul Inițiativei celor Trei Mări.*

(2025, aprilie 29). Președintele României:

<https://www.presidency.ro/ro/presedinte/agenda-presedintelui/declaratia-de-presa-sustinuta-in-marja-participarii-la-summitul-initiativei-celor-trei-mari>

European Commission. (2025). *The 2028-2034 EU budget for a stronger Europe.*

[https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/eu-budget-2028-2034\\_en#protecting-europe](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/eu-budget-2028-2034_en#protecting-europe)

European Council. (2025, iulie 18). *Hybrid threats / Russia: Statement by the High Representative on behalf of the EU condemning Russia's persistent hybrid campaigns against the EU, its Member States and partners.*

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/07/18/hybrid-threats-russia-statement-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-condemning-russia-s-persistent-hybrid-campaigns-against-the-eu-its-member-states-and-partners>

*European Investment Fund.* (2025).

[https://www.eif.org/what\\_we\\_do/equity/news/2024/central-and-eastern-europes-growth-stage-companies-get-boost-as-polish-and-czech-promotional-institutions-become-first-contributors-to-eif-led-three-seas-initiative-innovation-fund.htm](https://www.eif.org/what_we_do/equity/news/2024/central-and-eastern-europes-growth-stage-companies-get-boost-as-polish-and-czech-promotional-institutions-become-first-contributors-to-eif-led-three-seas-initiative-innovation-fund.htm)

Government of Hungary. (2025). *Statement by Hungary on the Joint Declaration of the 10th Summit of the Three Seas Initiative.* Warsaw.

Guvernul României. (2025). *Program de guvernare 2024-2028.* București.

Jora, O.-D. (2023). *Rolul mecanismelor regionale de cooperare în contextul geopolitic actual. Oportunități și provocări pentru România.* București: Institutul European din România.

Ministerul Afacerilor Externe. (2025). *Inițiativa celor Trei Mări.*

<https://www.mae.ro/node/49437>

Pew Research Center. (2024, mai). *Views of trans-Atlantic allies and U.S.-Europe relations.*

<https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2024/05/08/views-of-trans-atlantic-allies-and-u-s-europe-relations/>

- Premier Ministre - SGDSN. (2025). *Manipularea algoritmilor și instrumentalizarea influencerilor. Concluzii desprinse din alegerile prezidențiale din România & riscuri pentru Franța.* [https://www.sgdsn.gouv.fr/files/2025-02/20250204\\_VIGINUM\\_Rapport%20public\\_Elections\\_Roumanie\\_risques\\_France\\_ROU.pdf](https://www.sgdsn.gouv.fr/files/2025-02/20250204_VIGINUM_Rapport%20public_Elections_Roumanie_risques_France_ROU.pdf)
- Priority Projects. (2025). Three Seas Initiative: <https://3seas.eu/about/progressreport>
- Sebe, M. (2025). “East-West” Convergence through “North - South ” Connectivity: A Decade of the Three Seas Initiative’s Contribution to the European Union. *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*, 25(1), 169-187.
- Status Report of 2024. (2025). Three Seas Initiative: <https://projects.3seas.eu/report>
- Three Seas Initiative. (2024). *Status Report of 2024.* <https://projects.3seas.eu/report>
- Three Seas Initiative. (2025). *Joint Declaration of the 10th Summit of the Three Seas Initiative.* Warsaw.
- United Nations Development Programme. (2025). *Human Development Report.* <https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2025>
- US Congress. (2020). *H.Res.672 - Expressing support of the Three Seas Initiative in its efforts to increase energy independence and infrastructure connectivity thereby strengthening the United States and European national security.* <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-resolution/672>
- US Congress. (2022). *H.R.3344 - Transatlantic Telecommunications Security Act.* <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/3344>
- World Economic Forum. (2025). *Global Risks Report.*





**Our mission.** The Romanian Diplomatic Institute (RDI) has the mission to make a substantial contribution to increasing the quality of Romanian diplomacy through training, further education, research, the development of critical and strategic thinking and international networking. A good foreign policy serves as a beneficial domestic policy.

**Guiding principles:** human resource development, professionalism, respect and dialogue, and responsibility for the community.

Based on the founding legal attributions of the RDI, the further development of the Institute is carried out, according to the needs identified in the MFA, along the following four directions:

- Training and further education of diplomats and other trainees;
- Deepening the research and expertise dimension on regional and functional issues;
- Operating the RDI as a think-tank of the MFA;
- Integration of the RDI into an international network of similar relevant institutes.

Author: Alexandru Ionuț Drăgulin is a researcher at the Romanian Diplomatic Institute – Department of Expert Analysis.

RDI Policy Brief Series

ISSN 2066-5989

ISSN-L 2066-5989

Cover photo: [https://unsplash.com/photos/a-train-travels-down-the-tracks-0Mi-Vny\\_qME](https://unsplash.com/photos/a-train-travels-down-the-tracks-0Mi-Vny_qME)

The Romanian Diplomatic Institute

<https://www.idr.ro/en/> | [secretariat@idr.ro](mailto:secretariat@idr.ro)

Primăverii 17, Sector 1, Bucharest, 011972