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DRAFT REPORT

on a European Parliament recommendation to the Council, Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy for a review of the EU's Black Sea Strategy
(2026/2044(INI))

Committee on Foreign Affairs

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DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RECOMMENDATION

to the Council, Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy for a review of the EU's Black Sea Strategy (2026/2044(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 28 May 2025 entitled ‘The European Union’s strategic approach to the Black Sea region’ (JOIN(2025)0135),
 - having regard to the Joint Report from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 3 July 2026 on the implementation of the EU strategic approach to the Black Sea region (JOIN(2026)0015),
 - having regard to the European Council conclusions of 26 June 2025,
 - having regard to the EU Global Gateway strategy,
 - having regard to the revised EU Maritime Security Strategy and its action plan,
 - having regard to Rule 121 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A10-0000/2026),
- A. whereas the Black Sea is of significant geostrategic and commercial importance for the European Union, as a critical connector between the EU, Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus, Central Asia, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East and is a key region for European security, connectivity, energy diversification and economic resilience;
- B. whereas the number of EU candidate and potential candidate countries in the Black Sea region, and the envisaged new wave of EU enlargement, will further increase the significance of the Black Sea for the European Union;
- C. whereas Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine has fundamentally altered the regional security environment, causing immense suffering to the people of Ukraine, destroying its cities and infrastructure, negatively affecting and disrupting regional and global food security, disrupting maritime navigation and trade, damaging and threatening critical infrastructure, causing severe environmental damage, while intensifying conventional, hybrid and environmental threats throughout the region, with direct implications for the security of the European Union;
- D. whereas the implementation of the EU strategic approach to the Black Sea Region since its adoption in May 2025 has taken place against a further deteriorating security environment, underscoring the need to adapt and reinforce the EU’s approach in order

to ensure that its strategic priorities translate into sustained, coordinated and measurable action;

- E. whereas the EU should pursue a coherent regional approach to the wider Black Sea region, grounded in international law, respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all states, freedom of navigation, resilience and mutually beneficial cooperation, while also supporting the development of capabilities of EU Member States and partner countries in the region, in a coherent approach with wider EU and NATO policies;
- F. whereas delivering on the EU's strategic interests in the Black Sea requires a clear vision, sustained political leadership, adequate and predictable financing, a coordinated use of the EU's financial, diplomatic and security instruments, underpinned by effective coordination among EU institutions and Member States, and regular parliamentary scrutiny;
- 1. Recommends that the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy:

Security and maritime resilience

- (a) make the Black Sea region a permanent priority of the EU's security, connectivity, economic development and resilience policies and strengthen coordination between the EU's civilian, maritime, diplomatic, security and defence instruments;
- (b) develop the Black Sea Maritime Security Hub as an effective platform for maritime situational awareness, information-sharing, risk assessment, mine action and the protection of critical maritime infrastructure;
- (c) support enhancing cooperation on mine clearance, maritime safety, the protection of ports and submarine infrastructure, military mobility and preparedness for hybrid and other non-conventional threats;
- (d) ensure close complementarity with and cooperation between EU and NATO action in the region, as well as with relevant regional mechanisms, while fully respecting their respective competences and the specific character of the security and defence policies of certain Member States;

Energy security and critical infrastructure

- (e) accelerate the development of cross-border electricity interconnections, renewable energy capacity, energy-storage facilities and secure and resilient energy infrastructure across the wider Black Sea region;
- (f) strengthen the protection of submarine cables, pipelines, ports, energy facilities and digital infrastructure against conventional, cyber and hybrid threats including by facilitating the identification of appropriate EU funding for projects in these domains;

Trade, transport and connectivity

- (g) ensure the swift and effective implementation of the EU Connectivity Agenda

by improving links between the Black Sea, the Danube region, the South Caucasus and Central Asian transport networks; in this respect, ensure, facilitate and accelerate the implementation of the Connectivity Agenda coordination platform launched by the Commission in June 2026, in order to guide collective efforts, optimise project pipelines, and ensure efficiency across connectivity initiatives in the Black Sea region;

- (h) ensure that trade facilitation and connectivity projects are accompanied by high standards of transparency, financial and environmental sustainability and infrastructure resilience, as well as effective measures to prevent corruption and the circumvention of EU sanctions;

Environment, climate resilience and the blue economy

- (i) strengthen regional cooperation to tackle pollution, biodiversity loss, the degradation of marine ecosystems and the environmental consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and other military activities in the region;
- (j) enhance EU cooperation with regional partners on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, marine research, coastal resilience, climate adaptation and the development of a sustainable blue economy;
- (k) integrate environmental monitoring, early warning and civil protection mechanisms into regional security, connectivity and infrastructure planning;

Foreign information manipulation and interference, cybersecurity and democratic resilience

- (l) help develop capacities for a coordinated response to foreign information manipulation and interference, including disinformation, cyberattacks and other hybrid threats;
- (m) strengthen cooperation among EU institutions, national and local public authorities, independent media, civil society organisations, researchers and fact-checking organisations, including through media literacy programmes and secure rapid information-sharing and early-warning mechanisms;
- (n) make systematic and coordinated use of the EU Hybrid Toolbox, FIMI Toolbox and the Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox and reinforce the protection of democratic institutions, electoral processes, independent journalism and civil society;

Economic resilience and the human dimension

- (o) use relevant EU financial instruments to support sustainable investment, innovation, small and medium-sized enterprises, research and education, thereby promoting inclusive economic development and strengthening the region's economic resilience;
- (p) place people-to-people contacts, academic and research cooperation, youth mobility and meaningful civil society engagement at the centre of the EU's regional approach;

Governance, financing and implementation

- (q) establish a clear and comprehensive implementation framework for the EU's strategic approach to the Black Sea region, setting out measurable objectives, concrete actions, timelines, financing arrangements, responsible actors and

performance indicators for each policy area;

- (r) ensure adequate, predictable and coordinated financing for the implementation of the strategic approach, making effective use of existing EU instruments and preventing overlaps or gaps between funding programmes, ensuring appropriate funding from the next multiannual financial framework (MFF);
- (s) report regularly to Parliament on progress in implementing the strategic approach, including on the effectiveness of the Black Sea Maritime Security Hub, connectivity projects, energy interconnections, environmental programmes and measures to counter foreign information manipulation and interference;
- (t) seek coherence, cooperation and convergence between EU policies and the regional frameworks covering the Black Sea, the Danube region, the Baltic Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean;
- (u) use the EU's regulatory, financial, diplomatic, enlargement, security and defence instruments in a coherent and mutually reinforcing manner, with the aim of establishing the Black Sea as a secure, connected, prosperous, resilient and environmentally sustainable region;
- (v) ensure Parliament is fully and regularly informed about the implementation of the strategic approach and meaningfully involved in defining its future political and budgetary priorities;

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2. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the governments and parliaments of the relevant regional partners.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Pontos Axeinos—the “Inhospitable Sea”—was the name the ancient Greeks gave to the deep, dark, and unpredictable body of water beyond the Bosphorus. It remained an inhospitable barrier until the old world expanded through trade and cooperation. As outposts sprouted along its coasts, vibrant commerce networks took root: grain and timber flowed from the fertile lands of southern Ukraine to feed Athens in exchange for wine, while wax, honey, and metals from Georgia were traded for olive oil. The sea was now tamed as it became a bustling hub for trade and cultural exchange for European peoples of the antiquity living along its shores. The Greeks renamed the sea to into Pontos Euxinos: the “Hospitable Sea.”

This ancient metamorphosis serves as a metaphor for our present age and volatility. The Black Sea is deeply anchored in European identity, history, and geopolitical reality. Europe’s most critical navigable rivers, led by the Danube, flow into the Black Sea, directly linking the continent’s heart to global maritime routes. With Romania and Bulgaria as coastal Member States, and Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia as candidate countries, the Black Sea is not a distant frontier for the Union, but its commercial and geopolitical Heartland. Its stability and security are imperative for the European Union.

Today, Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine has once again brought destruction and instability to these waters. Revisionist aggression, naval blockades, acts of sabotage, and militarization by the Kremlin cause immense suffering to the people of Ukraine, disrupt millennia-old trade routes, exacerbate global food insecurity, and inflict severe environmental damage. This precarious reality warrants a strong, permanent European presence. The Black Sea is a European sea today and will be even more so in the future; control over it remains central to European security.

Yet, the Black Sea is even more so a sea of opportunity, cooperation, and shared prosperity. With the northern routes crippled by Russian hostility and the southern routes continually disrupted by conflicts across the Middle East, the Black Sea basin represents Europe’s primary gateway to Central Asia, China, and beyond. Through the Middle Corridor, the Black Sea offers the reliable transit hub required for international trade, green energy, connectivity, critical raw materials, and expanded market access for European industries.

To fully unleash this potential, Europe must lead with strategic vision and strength. Any hesitation in such a volatile environment can be lethal. Mobilizing the economic and military power of the EU and its future Member States is essential to deter threats, safeguard maritime trade, build and secure European infrastructure, and consolidate democracy across the region.

The European Union must craft an ambitious, comprehensive, and proactive Black Sea Strategy that treats this basin not as a geographic periphery, but as a centerpiece of our collective security and economic future. The Black Sea is a European sea through and through. Just like in antiquity, it is now time to tame these waters, render them “hospitable” again.

ANNEX: DECLARATION OF INPUT

The rapporteur declares under his exclusive responsibility that he did not include in his report input from interest representatives falling within the scope of the Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory transparency register¹, or from representatives of public authorities of third countries, including their diplomatic missions and embassies, to be listed in this Annex pursuant to Article 8 of Annex I to the Rules of Procedure.

¹ Interinstitutional Agreement of 20 May 2021 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on a mandatory transparency register (OJ L 207, 11.6.2021, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinst/2021/611/oj).