



**Introduction to Black Sea Studies**  
**MA elective course**  
**Spring Semester 2024-2025**  
**Class Hours: Tuesdays, 18:00-21:00**  
**Room 302**

**Instructor:** Professor Dimitrios Triantaphyllou

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**Office Hours:** Mondays, 11:00-14:00, or by appointment

**Course Description:**

The course focuses on understanding the challenges and the synergies in the Black Sea region. In particular, we will assess the regional cooperation process from both a historical and a theoretical perspective with a particular focus on how this process developed in the Black Sea region in the post-Cold War era, when it gained greater clarity and depth. We will also address issues related to economic cooperation and development, with a particular focus on the role of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). We will also focus on several regional security issues, such as frozen and protracted conflicts in the region and energy security. In this context, the role of powerful regional and extra-regional actors such as Russia, Turkey and the United States will be assessed. Finally, the role of the European Union as a potentially rising power in the Black Sea region will be explored in depth. We will assess the European Neighbourhood Policy as well as more recent initiatives such as the Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership and how these affect the Black Sea region together with the growing role of the European Union in trying to resolve the various "protracted" conflicts in the region, as well as the parallel development of a coherent energy strategy. Finally, we will examine the impact of the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine since February 2022 and assess whether the aforementioned dynamics of regional cooperation can be saved.

The syllabus covers the span of 13 weeks covering the following topics.

**Modules:**

- Course Introduction: Why study the Black Sea?
- The Black Sea and its stakes
- The countries of the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia)
- The role of Russia and Turkey
- The European Union and its priorities in the Black Sea region
- Understanding the regional cooperation process historically and theoretically



- Regional Cooperation in the Black Sea Region
- European Neighbourhood Policy and the Black Sea
- Economic cooperation in the Black Sea region
- Security Issues in the Black Sea Region
- Energy Issues in the Black Sea Region
- Lessons learned and expectations for the future

### **Objective:**

**The objective is for the students to acquire a well-rounded perspective of the key issues at stake today in the Black Sea Region with a particular focus on interstate relations, the role and policies of key stakeholders, the nature and future of regionalism in the region and a particular focus on the cross-cutting issues of security, energy security, and democratization. Students will also acquire a greater understanding of the interplay between the EU and its policies and the regional states and the EU policies and instruments for the region.**

**Honor Code:** Panteion University has an Academic Ethics (Honor Code) policy which I strongly urge students to respect.

### **Course Requirements:**

- Project to be presented in groups (roughly 50 percent of the grade)
- One final in class exam (roughly 50 percent of the grade).

Further information regarding the projects and their presentations will be provided during the second week.

### **Subject matter to be covered:**

- **Course Introduction**

Course objectives and outputs  
Getting to know each other

- **The Black Sea Region in context**

Ian O. Lesser, “Global Trends, Regional Consequences: Wider Strategic Influences on the Black Sea,” *Xenophon Paper 4* (Athens: ICBSS, November 2007) <https://icbss.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Xenophon-Paper-4.pdf>

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Dimitrios Triantaphyllou, “**The Uncertain Times of Black Sea Regional Security**,” in *The Complexities of Black Sea Regional Security*, *Euxeinos Journal*, Center for Governance and Culture in Europe, University of St. Gallen, 6/2012, August 2012, pp. 4-10.  
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- **Regional Cooperation**

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Sergiu Celac, “**The Role and Potential of the Organisation of the BSEC**,” *CIES Neighbourhood Policy Paper* 01, (Istanbul: CIES, November 2011),  
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Panagiota Manoli, “**Black Sea Regionalism in Perspective**,” *CIES Neighbourhood Policy Paper* 02 (Istanbul: CIES, December 2011),  
[https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/135477/NeighbourhoodPolicyPaper\(02\)\(1\).pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/135477/NeighbourhoodPolicyPaper(02)(1).pdf)

Panagiota Manoli, ed., “**Unfolding the Black Sea Economic Cooperation: Views from the Region**,” *Xenophon Paper* 2 (Athens: ICBSS, July 2007), <https://icbss.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Xenophon-Paper-2.pdf>

Commission of the European Communities, *Communication from the Commission on A Strong European Neighbourhood Policy*, COM(2007) 774 final, Brussels, 5 December 2007,  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0774:FIN:EN:PDF>

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Commission of the European Communities, *Communication from the Commission to the Parliament and the Council on the Eastern Partnership*, COM (2008) 823/4 final, Brussels, 3 December 2008,

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<http://www.cap.lmu.de/download/2008/CAP-Policy-Analysis-2008-04.pdf>

Dimitrios Triantaphyllou and Yannis Tsantoulis, “Looking **Beyond the Georgian Crisis: The EU in Search of an Enhanced Presence in the Black Sea Region,**” *ICBSS Policy Brief*, no. 8 (Athens: ICBSS, 2008),

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281101493\\_Looking\\_Beyond\\_the\\_Georgian\\_Crisis\\_The\\_EU\\_in\\_Search\\_of\\_an\\_Enhanced\\_Role\\_in\\_the\\_Black\\_Sea\\_Region](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281101493_Looking_Beyond_the_Georgian_Crisis_The_EU_in_Search_of_an_Enhanced_Role_in_the_Black_Sea_Region)



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Elena Gnedina and Nicu Popescu, “**The European Neighbourhood Policy's First Decade in the Eastern Neighbourhood**,” *CIES Neighbourhood Policy Paper* 03 (Istanbul: CIES, July 2012), [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/153116/NeighbourhoodPolicyPaper\(03\).pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/153116/NeighbourhoodPolicyPaper(03).pdf)

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- **European Neighbourhood Policy and Regional Cooperation**

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- **Economic Cooperation in the Black Sea Region**

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**Athens, 24 February 2025**