

GA5: Political

*Aiding the development of former
Soviet Satellite states*

TIBET CEM OZUM



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Issue: Aiding the development of former Soviet Satellite states

Student Officer: Tibet Cem Ozum - Co-Chair

Introduction

The breakup of the Soviet Union was one of the most important events in modern history. It ended decades of the cold war between the west and the east. The citizens of the Eastern Bloc were tired of soviet-style socialism and wanted a liberal economy and a liberal democracy in their states. Also, due to communism's heavy emphasis on the uselessness of nations, nationalism spiked after the collapse of the USSR. Due to these demands, the countries had a few tasks at hand, namely; protect their nation, privatize their economy, and liberalize their government. However, since the USSR attacked civil institutions, and created state-owned enterprises and an authoritarian regime, this task was hard. Unfortunately, many countries couldn't overcome their obstacles and achieve their people's goals.

Definition of Key Terms

Authoritarian: Countries which enforce strict obedience to authority at the expense of personal freedoms.

Former Soviet-Satellite States: States which were under the hegemony of the USSR. Namely, Romania, Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria.

Liberal Democracy: a democratic system of government in which individual rights and freedoms are officially recognized and protected, and the exercise of political power is limited by the rule of law.

Civil Society Organizations: any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national, or international level.

Nationalism: identification with one's own nation and support for its interests, especially to the exclusion or detriment of the interests of other nations.

Illiberalism: By illiberalism, we define a strain of political culture, a set of institutional reforms (such as assaults on an independent judiciary) and broader societal processes (such as declining trust in liberal democratic institutions) that, over the past two decades, has emerged in response to liberalism as experienced by various countries.

General Overview

In the post-communist nations, which were previous satellite states of the USSR, a transition into a capitalist nation with democratization has been hard due to the low number of Civil Society Organizations(CSO). Additionally, due to the previous authoritarian nature of the regime, many CSOs have been extremely loyal to the state. This has hindered democratization efforts in many countries and has created states transitioning into illiberalism.

Secondly, the standard of living in these countries is lower when compared to the rest of Europe. This was partially due to the cities of the soviet union which emphasized more industrialized cities and built homes exclusively to limit homelessness. Due to this, created buildings were of very low quality. After privatization and a switch to a market economy, the living standards improved however there is still a lot of work to be done.

Nationalism after the destruction of the USSR is also a major issue. In some former Soviet Satellite states, such as Poland and Hungary, conservative governments took hold of the nation. Speeches of the conservative president of Hungary have been criticized for being 'fascist'. These countries and many more show extreme conservative tendencies and nationalism in their nations which is formed as a reaction to the attack on the concept of nation in the USSR.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

International Monetary Fund (IMF): The International Monetary Fund played an important role in transitioning nations that gained their independence or sovereignty after the end of the Soviet Union into market economies which was never attempted before. This was successful with many previous soviet satellite states joining economic alliances led by capitalist countries such as the European Union. Additionally, some created new economic unions such as the Central Asian Union. The IMF wants to help with the economic reconstruction of former soviet satellite states.

European Union: The European Union after the breakup of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), aided the former soviet satellites in Europe by cooperating with them in their privatization and marketization. The newly born countries of central and Eastern Europe didn't have a big market. Their entrance into the European Union increased the size of their market helping them in economic reconstruction. The European Union wishes to economically aid these post-communist states economically through both expansionary and monetary means.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): NATO has been one of the most influential organizations in the former soviet satellite states because it filled the power vacuum that the fall of the Soviet Union created. After the breakup of the soviet union, there was no organization that

would defend the sovereignty of these states from warfare. Therefore, these countries joined NATO to protect themselves from the instability of post-Soviet life.

United States of America (USA): The United States of America has been one of the greatest contributors to the development of these post-communist states. Just after these countries had gained their independence from the Soviet Union, the US sent tens of billions of dollars to these countries to aid in their development. They are wholly supportive of the reconstruction of these countries for the benefit of the people.

Timeline of Events

1945	<i>Yalta Conference:</i> After the end of the Yalta Conference, it was decided among the states of the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that Europe and specifically Germany will be separated. It is also where Stalin announced his plan to create Soviet satellite states in Europe. This marks the start of soviet plans and legitimized rule in Eastern Europe
1989	<i>Revolutions of 1989:</i> Revolutions swept through the former soviet-satellite states throughout 1989, all transitioning or merging with a liberal democratic and capitalist state <i>American Funding to former Soviet Satellite states:</i> America quickly enacts a funding strategy to the former soviet satellites to aid in their reconstruction
1994 - 1996	<i>Entrance of the former satellite states of the Soviet Union into the EU:</i> Throughout 1994-96, all soviet satellites had joined the European Union further strengthening their market economy.
2000 - 2014	<i>The former satellite states of the Soviet Union gain access to European Social Fund (ESF):</i> Throughout the years 2000-2014, all former satellite states join the ESF program which invests in the workplace, schools, and society in general to increase their living quality.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

There have been many attempts to develop the eastern regions of the European continent, former soviet satellites in particular. Funding, social, legal, and economic reform, and many have been tried with varying degrees of success

A failed attempt at developing these countries, is the funding package supplied by the US. This has failed historically because of how hastily it was done. After the Soviet collapse, the

United States of America quickly tried to develop these lands. The funding was done extremely quickly with very little effective policy and planning.

Another failed attempt is the European Social Fund which is a fund that is open to all countries but especially used by former Soviet Sattelite states. Its main purpose is to develop the workplace and the society of the countries who apply for it. This has failed mainly because it is not specific to the region and it is done on a small scale.

Possible Solutions

The situation in the former Soviet Satellite states can be improved through many means. These solutions may come in the form of funding these regions and increasing cooperation between state and notable ethnic groups.

Funding lesser developed countries is an extremely easy way of developing them. A great example of this is the Marshall plan where the United States funded the economic reconstruction of western Europe in order for them to better pay their debts to the United States, this greatly increased the development of Europe after its devastation just a few years earlier. Such a grand plan needs to be implemented in these regions. However, it should be precise and carried out effectively so as to not fall into the hands of corrupt officials and illiberal regimes.

Additionally, the promotion of more regional and ethnic cooperation is needed in former Soviet Satellite states. Since these regions are mostly run by right-wing parties, actions need to be taken to better hinder these nationalist sentiments as more and more immigrants flee from the Belarussian border into central-eastern Europe.

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