

## Black Sea Strategy: Wide support for fully-fledged EU strategy in the region

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The Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament voted today on 'An EU Strategy for the Black Sea' with a large majority in favour (44 votes in favour, 0 against and 6 abstentions). Rapporteur Traian Ungureanu MEP expressed his deep satisfaction at the support received and considers the vote to be a strong signal in favour of EU strategic involvement in the Black Sea region.

"I am convinced that the vote today points to a radical change in the Brussels vision of the Black Sea region. Beyond recognising the strategic importance of the region for the EU, the full support for my Report demonstrates unanimity on the need to upgrade and enhance EU involvement in this space. Challenges in the field of security and energy need particular EU attention and urgent action. Therefore, I particularly appreciate the support received for my recommendations tackling the problems of unsolved conflicts, closed borders, the presence of Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Crimea and the need to strengthen the EU's energy security", said Traian Ungureanu MEP.

The Rapporteur put forward a series of recommendations in order to upgrade EU policies in the Black Sea region to a fully-fledged EU strategy with a separate budget line and clear mechanisms of functioning. The Report proposes that the future EU strategy focuses on two main objectives: ensuring a space of peace, democracy, stability and prosperity in the Black Sea region, as well as providing for EU energy security. As defined by the EU in 2007, the Black Sea region encompasses 10 countries: EU Member States Bulgaria, Greece, Romania; candidate country Turkey; strategic partner Russia; and five Eastern partners (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine).