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Altri autori (Persone)	RotaruVasile
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Sommario/riassunto	The former Soviet space is at the core of Russian foreign policy. Moscow's special interest in this area results from economic factors, diaspora issues, and, most importantly, from its perceived security need. Obsessed by a fear of being encircled by enemies, Russia sees its hegemony over the former Soviet republics as paramount to the protection of its own borders. Therefore, the rapprochement of any other actor towards this region is regarded with high suspicion. Against this background, Vasile Rotaru analyzes EU-Russia relations with a particular emphasis on the impact of the EaP on Moscow's relations with Brussels. He argues that the EaP represented a turning point in EU-Russia relations, determining Moscow to revise its attitude towards the Union. Rotaru explains that, even if the EaP was Brussels' initiative, the Partnership met the aspirations of the six former Soviet republics. Moreover, despite its opposition towards the EU's initiative, Russia itself acted involuntarily as a propeller of the EaP. By aiming to keep the former Soviet republics close, Moscow often conducts an assertive, aggressive policy in the 'near abroad.' This strategy, however, had mostly opposite effects, causing Russia's neighbors to look elsewhere

for support of their sovereignty. From this perspective, the rapprochement of Moldova, Belarus, Ukraine, and the three Caucasus republics with the EU has not been determined only by Brussels' prosperity and soft-power attractiveness but also by existential fears in the former Soviet republics.
