The Option for Graduation: Rethinking Romania's Role in Bretton Woods Multilateral Development Banks

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Abstract

This paper argues that Romania should adopt a differentiated and nuanced strategy in its participation in Multilateral and Regional Development Banks. Transitioning from Part Two to Part One status is a viable option that warrants evaluation on a case-by-case basis. Romania's membership in the Bretton Woods multilateral development banks (MDBs) is particularly significant, as Part Two status has become largely obsolete for its profile, offering limited opportunities, while the benefits available exclusively to Part One countries remain underexplored. In this context, maintaining the status quo reflects inertia rather than strategic intent.

The analysis draws on long-term monitoring and builds upon the conclusions of an earlier policy research paper (Doltu, 2018). The evidence suggests that Romania has reached a point where a reassessment of its approach to membership in MDBs and Regional Development Banks is both timely and necessary. Romania's high level of income and access to international capital markets raise questions about its continued need to draw on International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) financial resources. [2] *Even when applying a more cautious perspective, such as Rodrik's (1999) argument for carefully assessing institutional development to ensure it can sustain future growth and avoid setbacks that might necessitate renewed reliance on the Bank's financing, Romania appears ready to move forward. Over the past two decades, the country has undergone substantial transformation. EU membership has led to stronger political freedoms, improved public institutions and judiciary, enhanced anti-corruption efforts, and more transparent policymaking*[3]*. (EU Commission, 2023)*

In this new context, the country's participation in MDBs can—and should—evolve. It is now both timely and feasible to move beyond a limited focus on borrowing toward a more active role that includes participation in international development projects, strategic partnerships with financial institutions, and contributions to global initiatives. This shift holds the potential to deliver tangible benefits, including stronger economic growth, improved infrastructure, and expanded opportunities for social development. While Romania holds only a minor share in MDBs cannot be expected to exert any substantial influence over their governance or strategic direction. However, it can still find new ways to leverage its membership.

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[2] Romania is currently classified as a high-income country, with a gross national income per capita of USD 17,600 at the end of 2024. To be part of the high-income group, the country needed to have had a gross national income per capita of at least USD 13,935.

[3] The 2023 European Commission Country Report on Romania underscores the country's institutional development gaps relative to the EU's rigorous standards, objectives, and best practices. These standards represent some of the most advanced and sophisticated benchmarks globally. Consequently, Romania's ongoing efforts to align with them are largely independent of its status as a Part Two member of the IBRD and should not be interpreted as a justification for maintaining that classification.

Keywords: Multilateral Development Banks, Regional Development Banks, Graduation

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1. The scope of the paper

Two major trends became evident over the last 10 years. On the one hand, the benefits Romania gains as a part two country in various MDBs and Regional Development Banks are becoming increasingly irrelevant to its development. On the other hand, the cost of membership is always increasing. That's why Romania should explore the new opportunities which became available graduating and becoming a part one country in some of these international financial institutions.

In the case of the IBRD, graduation or transiting from a borrower status or Part Two country to a non-borrower or Part One country does not immediately or automatic happens when a certain income level is reached[4]. (World Bank, 2025) A strategic dialogue between the country that wants to graduate with the Bank is the most preferred and wise approach for preparing the decision to graduation on a consistent and realistic evaluation of the country's institutional development and access to the capital market. (Morris and Portelance, 2019) A country is deemed mature or eligible for graduation when it achieves a specified income level and can sustain and advance its development without relying on the Bank's financial resources. (Heckelman, Knack and Rogers, 2011)

This paper present key data for the profile of Romania's membership in multilateral development banks (MDBs). Based on their assessment, it proposes the option of graduation to strengthen the value and impact of Romania's position as a minority shareholder in Bretton Woods MDBs.

2. Background

Since early 1990 up to the EU accession (2007), the MDBs have been the main source of borrowings for successive Romania's governments. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) has stood out as the most important institution for Romania, given the scale of financial resources and knowledge it has mobilized and provided. (World Bank, 2019)

As a country with a non-convertible currency and limited access to international capital markets, Romania historically faced significant challenges in meeting its

[4] USD 7,855 is currently considered by the IBRD as the minimum threshold for considering initiate the graduation process

external financial obligations. During its transition from a centrally planned to a market economy, the Bretton Woods MDBs provided indispensable financial support and technical expertise[5]. This historical reliance underscores the important role the IBRD played in Romania's development trajectory, but it does not necessarily justify maintaining a Part Two status today, given the country's evolving institutional capacity and integration into global financial markets.

After Romania joined the European Union, the relevance of all MDBs as financing partner gradually diminished. Especially, the Bretton Woods MDBs lost their relevance, being replaced by the EU institutions. More substantial, cheaper and less politically constraining sources of money became available.

The availability of EU budget funds, combined with increased access to international capital markets, significantly overshadowed the relevance of the MDBs. Occasionally, various administrations tried to use them in the domestic political process. Case by case, the MDBs were presented to the domestic political consumers as "the good, rich, powerful/knowledgeable friend", "the big bad wolf" or the classical "international occulta looking to destroy the national values", etc."[6] Romania is not a unique case. This consistently occurs in all borrowing countries that must rely on MDBs for external financing.

3. Romania membership in Multilateral and Regional Development Banks

Romania is member in eight Multilateral and Regional Development Banks.[7] The country's total contribution to their capital (the total subscribed capital) is USD 1.2 billion and EUR 2.3 billion.[8] Expressed in euro, the total country's participation to

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[5] Also note the International Finance Corporation (IFC) role by providing technical assistance for enhancing the private sector (including agriculture and health), successful privatizations, building trust and credibility.

[6] As anecdotal, to mention the long and strongly publicized conflict between the Bucharest local government and the country's central government on developing a major infrastructure project (a new bridge) using the EIB financial resources. A domestic political fight in which one of the actors used the EIB credibility to successfully promote his image.

[7] In June 2023, Romania officially withdrew from the International Bank for Economic Cooperation (IBEC) and the International Investment Bank (IIB). However, as the financial implications of this withdrawal—particularly the treatment of Romania's capital participation—remain unresolved, the Ministry of Public Finance continues to report these assets, so they are included in the official statistics.

International Monetary Fund and Bank for International Settlements (in which Romania is also member) are not considered in this paper, although both play an essential role on the international development area. However, their specific responsibilities are closer to the countries' central banks and not to the national governments.

[8] Ministry of Public Finance data, January 2025.

the MDBs capital is 3.4 billion. All the rights - including voting power, representation, and voice - as well as the obligations and borrowing limits, are defined by the by-laws of each institution and agreed upon by the shareholders at the time of membership.

Over time, these financial institutions need additional capital—whether to preserve financial stability or to expand their scope of operations. The shareholders are invited to increase their contributions to the subscribed capital. Typically, there is a strong emphasis on preserving the relative shareholding structure, as any shift in ownership could impact governance and voting power. If certain shareholders opt not to maintain their proportional stake by declining to purchase additional shares, their unsubscribed allocations are redistributed among the remaining members. Consequently, the financial burden of membership tends to increase over time for those shareholders who do not want to dilute their position.

For Romania, over the past six years (since 2019), these contributions have increased by 22 percent - amounting to approximately EUR 608 million.

Table 1. Romania's membership in MDBs, Regional Banks and its voting power

	Membership	**Voting power (%)**
Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs)		
The World Bank Group (IBRD, IFC, MIGA, IDA)		
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	1972	0.32
International Finance Corporation	1990	0.22
Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency*	1992	0.55
International Development Association	2014	0.31
European Investment Bank (EIB)	2007	0.66
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	1991	0.48
Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)	2018	0.27
Regional Development Banks		
Council of Europe Development Bank	1996	1.1
Black Sea Trade and Development Bank	1997	14
Multilateral Financial Institutions		
International Bank for Economic Cooperation**	1963	7.12
International Investment Bank**	1970	6.21

* MIGA (Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency) is not a Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) itself. However, as a member of the World Bank Group—which includes MDBs—it collaborates with them to support development. MIGA's main function is to offer political risk insurance and credit enhancement to investors and lenders.

**In 2023, Romania withdrew from the International Bank for Economic Cooperation and from the International Investment Bank.

Romania's biggest contribution or the most expensive membership to MDBs in the form of subscribed capital is to the European Investment Bank (EIB). This is followed by the contribution/subscribed capital to the World Bank Group (WBG), Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB).

In the WBG – which includes three Multilateral Development Banks and one insurance like institution (MIGA or Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency), the biggest contribution (as subscribed capital) is to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), most often referred as the World Bank. Then follows the contributions to the International Finance Corporation (IFC), MIGA and the International Development Agency (IDA).

This "ranking" of subscriptions to the MDBs' capital warrants two key observations. First, while it has evolved over time, its current structure is likely to remain stable. Second, these rankings highlight the significance of "borrowing sources" and the political importance attributed to them both prior to and following Romania's accession to the European Union.

Before joining the EU, the WBG, IBRD mainly, provided the most financial resources (also knowledge and technical assistance) to successive Romania's governments engaged in the transformation process or the transition from a centralized economy to a market oriented one. The access of a borrowing country to the MDB's financial resources is always linked with its shareholder quota. This was a good rationale for having the biggest contribution to the WBG (and this was the case before the EU accession). The dependence on the WBG was anticipated to decrease as Romania underwent structural changes, both politically and economically, which eventually allowed the country to access international capital markets. Additionally, Romania's accession to the European Union (EU) opened access to EU institutional financial resources, further reducing its reliance on the WBG. At least for the foreseeable future, this context is unlikely to change. Regardless of how rapidly Romania continues to develop and narrow the gap with net contributors (the most advanced EU member states), it is realistic to expect that the country will remain a net beneficiary of EU financial resources for many years before eventually transitioning into a net contributor. Romania's EU membership entails closer alignment with its economic and political partners within the Union, rather than with the broader global community traditionally engaged through the Bretton Woods institutions. This, in turn, offers a new and different rationale for Romania' (biggest) contributions to EU-based multilateral development banks.

Table 2. Romania's subscribed capital to MDBs (USD and EUR)

	2019 subscribed capital USD	2025 subscribed capital USD	Change 2025/2019 USD	
The World Bank Group	848,396,568.00	1,061,220,000.000	212,823,432.00	
IBRD	828,279,910.00	990,410,000.00	162,130,090.00	
IFC	4,278,000.00	50,500,000	46,222,000.00	21.25%
MIGA	10,581,960.00	10,600,000.00	18,040.00	
IDA	5,256,698.00	9,710,000.00	4,453,302.00	
AIIB	153,000,000.00	153,000,000.00	-	
Total USD	1,001,396,568.00	1,214,220,000.00	425,646,864.00	
	EUR	EUR	EUR	
EIB	1,270,021,000.00	1,630,000,000.00	359,979,000.00	
EBRD	144,070,000.00	144,070,000.00	0.00	
CEB	113,178,000.00	106,400,000.00	-6,778,000.00	18.25%
BSTDB	322,000,000.00	322,000,000.00	0.00	
IIB**	76,690,900.00	76,690,900.00	0.00	
IBEC**	25,500,090.00	28,400,000.00	2,899,910.00	
Total EUR	1,951,459,990.00	2,307,560,900.00	356,100,910.00	

Ministry of Public Finance data

As a rather irrelevant shareholder, considering the participation to the capital, Romania cannot aspire to influence any business decision of these institutions or to exert any influence on their business or development strategy. Also, the relevance of the money borrowed, the usefulness of the potential knowledge or the technical assistance that may be embedded on the borrowings and implemented decreased over time and is now almost negligible.

Total borrowings from various multilateral development banks (MDBs) account for only about 8 percent of Romania's external debt. The relevance of MDBs as providers of financial resources began to decline rapidly in the second half of the 2000s. The international capital markets and domestic borrowings as well as the EU budget are now the most relevant sources for ensuring the country's needs for external financing. The country's need for embedded knowledge in various financial programs or technical assistance started to decrease on the background of advancing in the process of creating a market economy. After the EU accession, it was just a matter of time and decision for this new reality to be acknowledged.

Table 3. Romania's subscribed capital to MDBs (EUR)

	2019 subscribed capital EUR	**2025 subscribed capital EUR**	**Change 2025/2019 EUR**	
The World Bank Group	746,673,819.50	980,570,000	233,896,180.50	
IBRD	728,969,148.79	915,140,000	186,170,851.21	
IFC	3,765,067.80	46,660,000	42,894,932.20	
MIGA	9,313,183.00	9,790,000	476,817.00	
IDA	4,626,419.91	8,970,000	4,343,580.09	21.55%
AIIB	134,655,300.00	141,370,000	6,714,700.00	
EIB	1,270,021,000.00	1,630,000,000	359,979,000.00	
EBRD	144,070,000.00	144,070,000	0.00	
CEB	113,178,000.00	106,400,000	-6,778,000.00	
BSTDB	322,000,000.00	322,000,000	0.00	
IIB**	76,700,000.00	76,700,000	0.00	
IBEC**	14,230,000.00	28,400,000	14,170,000.00	
Total EUR	2,821,529,019.50	3,429,500,000	607,970,980.50	

Own calculations (using annual average exchange rate EUR/USD

While the relevance of the EIB continuously increased and the usefulness of the concessional borrowings became questionable if not irrelevant, still, Romania is a part two country in Bretton Woods MDBs. Successive governments remained in a state of inertia, continuing to engage in various programs with IBRD and contracting new borrowings. The quality of implementing of these programs was questionable and at least hard if not impossible to see their merit in the general development of the country. This represents a distinctly different situation compared to the early 1990s and the period preceding the 2007 EU accession.

4. The benefits and the costs of the membership (at large)

On the one hand, the cost of the country's membership in various MDBs and Regional Development Banks increased by 22 percent over the last 6 years and, if to avoid diluting an even so minor voting power, is expected to increase in the years to come. On the other hand, what about the benefits of the membership?

In June 2025, Romania's financial assets as subscription to the capital of the MDBs (and regional development banks) were EUR 3.4 billion. The country's active borrowings from MDBs were EUR 8.02 billion.

How relevant are these figures? Is it significant, or rather negligible, to spend EUR 3 billion merely to hold a quiet seat in an exclusive club? How much access to borrowings these EUR 3 billion provide, and what impact does it have on the broader economy? How important are these sums in addressing the country's external financing needs or managing public debt?

EUR 3 billion is, without doubt, an astronomical sum for any individual or family. Even for billionaires such as Musk, Bezos, or Gates, such an amount would never be wasted on purposes lacking utility. This is even more relevant when it comes to public resources in a country still struggling to provide quality basic services to its citizens. In this light, EUR 3 billion is substantial, and it would be clearly irrational not to seek the most effective way to use—or benefit from—such funds.

When considering access to borrowings, limiting the assessment to a single figure (such as the 2.35 ratio in this case) provides little insight. Does it truly make sense to freeze EUR 3.4 billion just to unlock EUR 8.02 billion in borrowing?[9] Assessing the benefits of MDB borrowings goes well beyond a simple "accounting" calculation, though the financial dimension remains important if alternative borrowing sources exist.

An opportunistic view would suggest taking MDB loans whenever they are cheaper than market alternatives. Yet MDBs are not mere cash providers, nor are their loans necessarily inexpensive. Beyond financial costs, such loans carry conditionalities as well as political and reputational implications. These costs are often less visible, more complex, and difficult to quantify in the short term. More importantly, the projects embedded in conditional financing reduce the limited fiscal space available to the government—and here the real challenge of MDB's financing emerges.

Public expenditure structures inevitably reflect the shifting priorities of successive governments. Political changes occur frequently and often unexpectedly, bringing with them formal or informal reallocations of spending. Since most MDBs loans are tied to long-term programs rather than budgetary support, ongoing projects may

[9] In this study we considered the subscribed capital. This is the total amount shareholders commit to the bank and is made up of the paid in capital (already provided) and the callable capital – which is an unconditional commitment tom provide funds if the bank requires them in a financial emergency.

be delayed, neglected, or even abandoned. When programs are derailed—whether permanently or temporarily—their expected value added, spillover effects, and broader economic impact are severely undermined. In many cases, the overall costs of MDB borrowings outweigh their benefits.[10]

In recent years, the Government of Romania has contracted loans from several MDBs to support a broad range of projects targeting economic and social needs. These include transport infrastructure and budget support (EIB); health, education, environment, judiciary reform, and public administration (IBRD); as well as culture, education, and social programs (CEB). The performance of these loans has, however, been largely unsatisfactory. Limited fiscal space for public expenditure, combined with frequent shifts in political priorities reflected in budget reallocations, has resulted in significant delays for many projects. The portfolio of active projects remains broad, with EIB and IBRD loans covering the 2017–2024 period. (Romania Ministry of Public Finance, 2025). In the case of the CEB, some projects contracted as early as 2007 remain unfinished.

The anticipated benefits, needs, and value-added derived from the programs/projects associated with ongoing borrowings from Multilateral Development Banks and Regional Development Banks appear to be of lesser significance compared to the cost of membership.

How significant are these amounts for meeting external financing needs or managing public debt? The answer is: almost insignificant. As of April 2025, they accounted for approximately 8 percent of Romania's total public debt.[11] The Ministry of Finance has focused on using MDB membership to diversify public debt financing, while paying less or not at all attention to other potential benefits for the membership in various MDBs such as voice, access to knowledge, expertise, human resource, and negotiation platforms.

Table 4. Active government borrowings from MDBs is 2019 and 2025 (EUR mill.)

	2019		2025	
	Borrowings	Used (%)	Borrowings	Used (%)
European Investment Bank	4,180.20	49.5	4,998.50	65.00
World Bank (IBRD)	626.1	19.99	1,664.23	63.00

[10] Accounting figures may suggest otherwise, but such calculations rarely capture the harder-to-measure effects. It is easy, and common, to be misled by numbers. Economics, however, requires a broader perspective than accounting alone, and its conclusions are rarely confined to balance-sheet figures.

[11] Ministry of Public Finance data.

	2019		2025	
Council of Europe Development Bank	962.1	73.02	1,364.10	61.00
Total	5,768.40	48.3	8,026.83	62.30

Source: Ministry of Public Finance

The Ministry of Public Finance is the sole government institution that consistently oversees and manages Romania's membership in multilateral development banks (MDBs). This role is firmly established. According to the by-laws of the MDBs, such ministries serve as the official and permanent interface between member states (shareholders) and the institutions themselves. In this capacity, the Ministry of Finance acts as the custodian of the country's foreign assets, including capital subscriptions to MDBs. It also leads all government efforts related to contracting external borrowings. This arrangement is logical, given that the Ministry of Finance is the only agency responsible for integrating the government general budget (total revenues and total expenditures). The mission of the Ministry of Finance is unquestionable and clearly defined by the national financial legal framework (Public Finance Law, Public Debt Law) and international practices. However, the country's membership in various MDBs cannot be restrained only at the "technical side" of managing the country's foreign financial assets. And here is where the Ministry of Finance interest stops. Although the Ministry of Finance has technical expertise, it lacks the broader understanding necessary to shape long-term goals and strategy for the country's MDB membership[12].

These findings are neither accidental nor likely to be reversed in the foreseeable future. This is not simply a temporary situation that could be changed if the government focused solely on the accounting or budgetary aspects of Romania's membership in international financial institutions, or on mobilizing assets whenever MDBs request capital increases from their shareholders. Rather, it primarily reflects the country's economic and institutional evolution over recent decades, which has accelerated after the country's EU membership (and markedly over the past 12 years). It also partly reflects Romania's development, which has gradually shifted its position in these institutions from traditional borrower toward potential donor[13]. And here is again a flag on the Bretton Woods MDBs.

[12] Romania's withdrawal from IBEC and IIB and its accession to AIIB demonstrate that the country's rationale for engaging in international financial institutions (including MDBs) is broader than simply diversifying borrowing sources for public debt management. This also shows that the Ministry of Public Finance, while central to financial asset management alongside the Central Bank, cannot alone define Romania's strategic approach to such memberships.

[13] Some MDBs separate their members in "part one" and "part two countries. Only the countries in the second group are eligible for accessing the common financial resources while countries in the

Importantly, this shift is not necessarily the result of reaching a borrowing ceiling—that is, the need to repay past loans before accessing new resources[14]. Even if the Romanian government were to refrain from contracting new borrowings, particularly concessional financing, a key question remains: what other avenues exist for the country to exercise its rights and prerogatives as a shareholder in various international financial institutions? If Romania's government will not contract new borrowings – especially concessional financing – what other options are available to use its prerogatives as shareholder?

From this point onward, the analysis will focus exclusively on the Bretton Woods MDBs, given that attaining Part One (or net donor) status remains a bridge too far for the other MDBs in which Romania retains membership.

5. Doing nothing, vegetate, or graduate

One option is to maintain the status quo. A second is to adopt a neutral stance—neither borrowing nor lending—limiting activity to the minimal borrowings required to justify membership costs. A third option is to pursue graduation by requesting and obtaining Part One status, which would formally entail foregoing access to the common resources of the respective MDB[15]. While the first two options largely preserve the current, evidently unsatisfactory situation, the third option merits careful consideration and further exploration.

Would graduation involve special or additional costs for Romania beyond those already associated with the current arrangement? To answer this question, four key dimensions need to be examined: (1) financial contributions, (2) access to conditional financing, (3) political and economic challenges, and (4) the impact on borrowing capacity. Indeed, these dimensions should form the primary pillars for assessing membership decisions from the outset.

Firstly, graduation would not require Romania to increase its financial contribution. However, contributions would inevitably rise whenever the major shareholders

first group are donors. Shifting from part two to part one category means graduation, which de facto comes with the recognition of reaching a certain level of development.

[14] MDBs members/shareholders can access the common resources not without limits but based on pre-agreed quotas.

[15] This does not mean that is impossible to borrow again (even temporary) after graduation. South Korea is one example. Few years after graduation (IBRD) the country has asked and received financial assistance due to considered circumstances.

approve a capital increase, if Romania opts to maintain its proportional stake to preserve voting power and influence.

Secondly**,** as a Part One country, Romania would no longer be eligible for concessional financing from the IBRD. While this might once have posed a constraint on access to affordable resources, the risk today is minimal or even irrelevant. Romania no longer requires concessional financing, and the performance of its active borrowing portfolio clearly demonstrates that such instruments are ill-suited to the country's present development and external financing needs. With reliable access to international capital markets and substantial EU structural funds, Romania no longer relies on IBRD resources as it once did. Also, since 2014, Romania joined IDA, where is a net donor, a minor one, but still donor. This may raise a natural question: what sense makes for an EU country, classified as high income country, to access conditional financing from IBRD (one MDB in the WB Group) and being donor IDA donor (another MBD in the WB group)?

Thirdly, graduation involves assuming new roles and responsibilities within the World Bank Group (WBG). Embracing, shaping, and benefiting from these roles is precisely the rationale and long-term advantage of graduation. Membership need not serve solely to secure government funding; it could also be leveraged to help Romanian companies participate in international programs and projects. For instance, the Romanian Agency for International Development (ROAid), despite its modest financial resources, could achieve greater impact if the country's membership were approached beyond the traditional borrower role. Why Romania not to explore the benefits available to its shareholders? (Mathiasen and Aboneaaj, 2023). Romanian companies could take advantage of MIGA's products to reduce borrowing costs, given that MIGA's political risk insurance often lowers financing expenses in diverse environments? Only a transition from Part Two to Part One status would create the incentives to shift focus from securing government funds to enhancing leverage for private businesses, thereby increasing Romania's contribution to international development.

Finally, as a Part One country, Romania could gain a deeper understanding of opportunities within its current constituency. With different incentives, it could more effectively engage in political and diplomatic negotiations with allied countries—and, if necessary, adjust constituencies—to maximize the benefits and strategic value of its membership in other MDBs.

Fourthly, graduation would formally reduce Romania's borrowing capacity from IBRD, requiring greater reliance on international capital markets and other financing sources. However, Romania already accesses these markets regularly and successfully, while also benefiting substantially from EU structural funds. Given that government borrowings from IBRD account for only 1.6 percent of the country's total external debt this issue is of limited practical significance.

6. Conclusion

Obviously, the decision to graduate requires deeper analysis, including careful consideration of the institutional adjustments which may be required various across government agencies. The scope of this paper is more modest: to highlight that maintaining the status quo as a passive and quiet shareholder in various MDBs, but especially in the IBRD brings little benefit. The Romanian government should assume the initiative in initiating dialogue with the Bank on this matter. At the same time, these costs are manifested in forgone opportunities—benefits that remain untapped because, as a Part Two country, Romania lacks both the incentives and the constraints necessary to pursue them. Transitioning from an unnecessary borrower position toward a more active role—through participation in international development projects, strategic partnerships with financial institutions, and contributions to global initiatives—is well within reach for a mature EU member state. Such a shift would open opportunities for tangible benefits, including stronger economic growth, improved infrastructure, and enhanced social development. While Romania's relatively small shareholding in MDBs limits its ability to influence their governance or strategic direction, the country can still identify new ways to leverage its membership. By doing so, Romania can extract greater value from its participation, diversify its economy, and strengthen its resilience to external shocks.

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