

# UKRAINIAN PRISM: FOREIGN POLICY



# 19

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This analytical study represents a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the Ukrainian foreign policy in 2019. Fifty directions were analysed — from cooperation with key partners and international organizations to public diplomacy. Five evaluation criteria — indicators, based on the new model of research methodology, were applied. The experts have studied and assessed activities of the President, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, and other governmental institutions and parliamentary committees, involved into the development and implementation of the foreign policy of Ukraine. This book is the fifth annual study. Previous years’ analysis can be found at **[prismua.org](http://prismua.org)**

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Dear friends,

We are pleased to present our fifth annual study “Ukrainian Prism: Foreign Policy 2019”, an assessment of Ukraine’s foreign policy against various indicators, from political interest to the results achieved. 2019 was a special year for Ukraine both in terms of foreign policy and in terms of domestic political processes. Strategically, Ukraine continues its advancement along the European and Euro-Atlantic paths, counteracts Russian aggression, and attempts to strengthen the foreign economic focus of its diplomatic efforts. However, the change of approaches and tactic with regard to the implementation of foreign policy, certain institutional and personal misunderstandings have caused the loss of momentum gained in 2017–2018. The overall assessments of how Ukrainian government offices implement their foreign policy goals have dropped to what they were in 2015–2016, not least due to a decline in political interest in interstate relations.

Experts from the Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism” and our colleagues from the top Ukrainian think tanks have analysed 50 directions of Ukraine’s foreign policy. This study gives an overview of 2019 and offers an opportunity to follow five years dynamics, highlighting the best examples of efforts concentration by Ukrainian government offices as well as, unfortunately, the emergence of the reverse trends.

Although we have provided recommendations on ways of making Ukraine’s foreign policy more efficient on a yearly basis, the five years of analysing the activities of Ukrainian institutions (2015–2019) within the framework of this project gives us this year an opportunity to practice a more profound approach to the development of recommendations to government members and MPs on how not to lose the pace achieved and make the implementation of foreign policy tasks more effective. This year’s lower scoring is an unambiguous signal that both diplomacy and its political support require a more thoughtful approach.

Therefore, on behalf of the “Ukrainian Prism” team and our strategic partner, the Regional Office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Ukraine, I would like to invite you to peruse our study.

***Hennadiy Maksak,***

*Executive Director of the Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”*

# Methodology of Research



In the course of its own methodology development, the working group of the “Ukrainian Prism” carefully studied the experience of evaluation of the foreign policy of separate countries and international institutions done by other foreign analytical centres. A special attention was paid to the projects of the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) and the Czech Association for International Affairs (Asociace pro mezinárodní otázky, AMO), which reflect either peculiarities of particular member states in the EU foreign policy (ECFR) or internal aspects of the Czech Republic governing (AMO). None of these methodologies is multi-purposed, and their principles directly depend on the peculiarities of the object under research. That is why after the methodological consultations with the ECFR experts, the working group of the “Ukrainian Prism” decided to develop their own methodology, taking into account Ukrainian conditions and some elements of the existing methodologies of the Western colleagues.

This research methodology of Ukraine’s foreign policy takes into account current foreign policy situation, disadvantages and advantages of the constitutional division of powers in terms of foreign policy implementation, established political and institutional practices in the field of international relations, documents of strategic and operational nature in the sphere of foreign policy and security of Ukraine, official analytical materials that form the basis for a foreign policy position of high-ranking officials, official reports, as well as priorities reflected in relevant mass media materials.

The present research covers the year 2018 in the sections on political interest, institutional cooperation, activities, and results of each direction. Evaluation of the strategic vision is based on a whole range of respected documents that were relevant on the day of evaluation. Moreover, there is a comparison of each direction with the results of 2017.

## Foreign policy directions of Ukraine

For the evaluation of the foreign policy of Ukraine in 2019, 50 directions were selected and divided into the following thematic blocks:

- Relations with the G-7 states (United Kingdom, Italy, Canada, Germany, USA, France, Japan);
- European integration (cooperation with the EU in economic and political spheres, the Eastern Partnership, the European Energy Community);
- Euroatlantic integration;
- Bilateral relations (Belarus, Georgia, Israel, Iran, China, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, the Russian Federation [policy, economy, energy], Romania, Slovakia, Turkey, Hungary, Czech Republic);
- Regional cooperation (Asia-Pacific Region, Middle East, Western Balkans, Baltic States, Visegrad Four, Northern Europe, South Asia, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, the Black Sea Region);
- International organizations (OSCE, the United Nations, Council of Europe);
- Multilateral initiatives (international security, nuclear non-proliferation, human rights, climate change);
- Build-up of the international support on countering Russian aggression;
- Economic diplomacy;
- Public diplomacy;
- Ukrainians abroad.

## Evaluation indicators of Ukraine's foreign policy in particular directions:

Given the above, five assessment indicators for foreign policy implementation in each of these directions were developed:

- (1)** Political interest or engagement of political actors in particular directions of the foreign policy.
- (2)** Effectiveness of cooperation and coordination among Ukrainian institutions in the sphere of foreign policy.
- (3)** Strategic vision of a particular direction implementation.



- (4) Specific activities regarding a particular direction during the evaluated year.
- (5) Results and achievements regarding a particular direction during the evaluated year.

Each of the five key indicators shall be assessed using a five-point system, where 1 point is the minimum score and 5 points is the highest possible score. Each point in the assessment of a relevant direction by a specific indicator is linked to the presence or absence of a certain condition, which can be fixed. The regulatory and evidence base, required to calculate a score, was set for each indicator.

## 1. Political Interest / Engagement

The basis for analysis: Programs of the political parties represented in the Verkhovna Rada, parliamentary parties' election programs if elections happen in the evaluated year, parliamentary fractions' statements, statements of political parties' leaders, the Coalition Agreement, the Analytical Report to the President's Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, statements of the head of the government, interviews of the heads of parliamentary parties, chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada, the President of Ukraine, election programs of presidential candidates if elections happen in the evaluated year, the Agenda of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, as well as existing parliamentary hearings according to the topic, hearings in the respective parliamentary committees.

Points:

- 1 point**— lack of references to a foreign policy direction in official or unofficial statements, policy documents, and manifestos of the main political actors;
- 2 points**— existence of an informal declarative reference to a foreign policy direction that has not acquired the form of a political position, interviews, blogs, or articles in the media on the respective topics;
- 3 points**— there are official statements regarding events or certain aspects of activity regarding the direction under research among some political parties, mentioning in the Presidential Annual Address;

- 4 points** — there are official positions of various political entities represented in the higher authorities, but they are not mutually agreed upon, inclusion to the Agenda of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs or other respective committees according to the topic, organization of the parliamentary hearings and round tables;
- 5 points** — existence of a political consensus on Ukraine's activity in a chosen foreign policy direction, joint official policy statements (e.g. statements of the majority, inter-fraction statements, statements of the parliamentary delegations to the parliamentary assemblies of international organizations, decisions and letters of the Verkhovna Rada), organization of parliamentary hearings.

## 2. Institutional Cooperation

The basis for the analysis: Statements and resolutions of the chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, heads of parliamentary committees, parliamentary fractions' leaders, decisions of the President of Ukraine, the NSDC of Ukraine, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, and other ministries in case of involvement in the realization of a certain direction, press releases on the results of development or realization of joint initiatives.

Points:

- 1 point** — there are documented facts on confrontation of some institutions with others in policy development or conflicts between Ukrainian institutions or different branches of power in the implementation of a particular direction of foreign policy, failure of coordinating bodies' activities;
- 2 points** — a lack of cooperation and coordination among certain bodies involved in the implementation of a particular direction of the foreign policy, but without any competition or conflicts;
- 3 points** — individual facts of non-systemic cooperation, which are not based on agreed positions, coordinating documents, and are not covered by coordinating structures;

- 4 points** — there are declared agreed positions of the foreign policy actors regarding activities in a particular direction, establishing of the special coordinating bodies, adoption of respective documents aimed at coordination of activities;
- 5 points** — full coordination of relevant institutions' activities, establishing of special coordinating bodies to implement foreign policy in a particular direction.

### 3. Strategic Vision

The basis for the analysis: The Law of Ukraine “On the basis of domestic and foreign policy”, National Security Strategy of Ukraine, Military Doctrine of Ukraine, Sustainable Development Strategy “Ukraine-2020”, Energy Strategy 2035, strategic bilateral agreements, action plans, operational plans for the implementation of the mentioned documents, other concepts and strategies that can be adopted.

Points:

- 1 point** — a complete absence of references to a relevant foreign policy direction in strategic documents, effective at the time of the research, as well as bilateral programs of cooperation;
- 2 points** — there are references available, but they do not serve the foreign policy course of the state, or do not consider new conditions of the international environment;
- 3 points** — references correspond to current interests and objectives, with which the Ukrainian foreign policy actors are tasked, but are formulated in general terms and listed with other priorities, in such a way that a relevant direction is not identified as a priority;
- 4 points** — there are detailed bilateral (multilateral) medium-term documents, which are up-to-date or were updated during the research period;
- 5 points** — there are references in general strategic documents, along with the presence of up-to-date bilateral (multilateral) medium-term documents, which are agreed upon and meet the current interests.

## 4. Activities

The basis for the analysis: Reports of the MFA of Ukraine or other ministries involved in the realization of the direction's tasks, statements and press releases of the Administration of the President of Ukraine, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Prime Minister of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, bilateral committees and working groups, information on activities of Ukraine's diplomatic missions.

Points:

- 1 point** — de facto absence of activities connected with the implementation of the relevant direction of the foreign policy, other forms of cooperation or official contacts;
- 2 points** — individual non-systematic activities, which are not based on current strategic or operational documents for implementing a relevant direction of the foreign policy, maintaining dialogue exclusively through available diplomatic missions of Ukraine, absence of a Ukrainian ambassador in the respective country for more than half a year;
- 3 points** — along with diplomatic, trade, and economic relations, there are multilateral meetings or meetings “on the sidelines”; a relevant direction of foreign policy is implemented in a reactive manner;
- 4 points** — visits of the MFA leadership, the parliament chairperson, prime minister of Ukraine or foreign representatives to Ukraine; interdepartmental and other committees' and working groups' work according to bilateral (or multilateral) mid-term action plans and road maps, joint military exercises, cooperation at the interdepartmental level;
- 5 points** — joint international initiatives, visits at the level of presidents and heads of the international organizations, signing of international agreements, chairmanship in international organizations or initiatives, organization of joint bilateral or multilateral fora.

## 5. Results

The basis for the analysis: International agreements and memoranda signed for a relevant direction of the foreign policy, information on activities of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, Administration of the President of Ukraine, MFA of Ukraine, and other relevant ministries and institutions, statistics of trade and economic relations, information and analytical materials on meetings' results, sittings, etc.

Points:

- 1 point** — termination of diplomatic relations, withdrawal from an international organization, termination of cooperation in an initiative's framework, open military aggression or official support of the aggressor; trade, energy wars against Ukraine;
- 2 points** — reducing the level of a diplomatic mission or existing discriminatory policy in the field of trade, lack of significant joint projects on economic and energy, lack of dynamics in political dialogue;
- 3 points** — slight positive dynamics at the level of political dialogue, economic contacts, cooperation at interdepartmental, non-governmental, and trans-border level; signing action plans for cooperation at interdepartmental level;
- 4 points** — active political dialogue, partial support of Ukraine's position, signing of bilateral and multilateral agreements, and implementation of decisions agreed upon during the previous visits at the top level;
- 5 points** — full support of Ukraine's position, increasing trade turnover, results' correlation with available strategic, operational and program documents regarding the implementation of a relevant direction of the foreign policy; state and official visits of the President of Ukraine; existence of large-scale projects in economic, energy, or military sphere.

## General scoring of a relevant direction of the foreign policy (direction's rating)

After giving points for all the indicators, a direction's general score will be identified by calculating an arithmetic mean value. The general score (rating) will be then reflected in the form of Latin letters (A, B, C, D, E) with arithmetic signs (+/-) depending on the obtained value.

Rating score:

Indicator value

**A**

5

**A-**

4,6–4,9

**B+**

4,1–4,5

**B**

4

**B-**

3,6–3,9

**C+**

3,1–3,5

**C**

3

**C-**

2,6–2,9

**D+**

2,1–2,5

**D**

2

**D–**

1,6–1,9

**E+**

1,1–1,5

**E**

1

**Overall scoring of Ukraine's foreign policy implementation during the year (overall rating of Ukraine's foreign policy implementation for the relevant year)**

Overall scoring of successful implementation will be calculated by obtaining an arithmetic mean value of the general scores in all the directions of foreign policy under the research. The overall rating will be calculated similarly to the assessment of relevant directions of foreign policy.

# Foreign Policy of Ukraine in 2019

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	3+	3+	4-	4-	3+
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4-	3+	4-	4-	3+
STRATEGIC VISION	3+	3	3+	3+	3+
ACTIVITIES	4-	4+	4+	4+	4-
RESULTS	4-	3+	4-	4-	3+
TOTAL SCORES	B-	C+	B-	B-	C+



## Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest in foreign policy issues in 2019 had its distinctive features. Above all, the presidential and parliamentary elections had a significant impact on the content and dynamics of political interest on the part of the key actors of the country's foreign policy.

Foreign policy priorities outlined by President P. Poroshenko during the 2019 election campaign focused on the directions that had been traditional to his five-year term in office. Given Russian armed aggression and especially the events, which happened in the Kerch Strait in late 2018, consolidation of international support for counteraction to Russian aggression was an issue of paramount importance. An emphasis was also made on European and Euro-Atlantic integration, particularly on the adoption of the Law of Ukraine "On the introduction of amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine (regarding a strategic course of the state towards acquiring full-fledged membership of Ukraine in the EU and NATO)" in February 2019. This remained one of the top three subjects during the presidential and parliamentary elections.

At the same time, the foreign policy statements made by Ukrainian presidential candidate V. Zelenskyy<sup>1</sup> during the election campaign, in particular on Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations, were rather ambiguous. In his speeches, he mostly talked about ending the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. In his inauguration speech in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, newly-elected President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy named the expansion of foreign economic ties and the strengthening of contacts with Ukrainians abroad among his future policy priorities in addition to the need to end the war against Russia.

Newly elected President V. Zelenskyy paid his first foreign visit to Brussels in June 2019, bringing clarity regarding his position on such foreign policy directions as fight against Russian aggression, the strategic course towards the EU and NATO, and restoration of good neighbourly relations, including with Poland. The substantial joint statement following the EU-Ukraine Summit in July can be considered a political declaration regarding the continuation and strengthening of the European integration and an implementation of the Association Agreement.

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<sup>1</sup> In this report, all positions of the political and public figures are named according to what they held at the time of the fact presented.

This statement lists sectors, in which the EU and Ukraine plan to deepen cooperation, the majority of which has been promoted by previous Head of State P. Poroshenko and Prime Minister V. Groysman.

In 2019, President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy did not deliver any policy speeches aimed for Ukrainian or foreign diplomats. Neither did he deliver the Annual Presidential Address to the Verkhovna Rada “On the Internal and External Situation in Ukraine”. He did not make any policy statements while introducing new Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko to the ministry’s staff in September 2019. Therefore, the President of Ukraine’s Decree No 837/2019 “On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state” can be considered the only manifestation of V. Zelenskyy’s policy views as of the official in charge of the country’s foreign policy.

Although it is a general document touching upon various areas of state policy, it sets the following priorities with regard to foreign affairs: consolidation of international support for restoring the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, a strategic course towards Ukraine’s full-fledged membership of the EU and NATO; partnerships with G7 and G20 member states; good relations with neighbour states; development of economic diplomacy; promotion of Ukraine’s image, protection of Ukrainian citizens and organisations abroad; and strengthening cooperation with Ukrainians abroad. Overall, as far as declarations are concerned, most priorities match the previous foreign policy course, which was implemented under President P. Poroshenko. Compared with the previous years, more attention was paid to partnerships with the neighbouring states, the role of the diplomatic service in creating favourable conditions for strengthening Ukrainian economy, and cooperation with the Ukrainian diaspora.

At the level of political statements, V. Zelenskyy paid more attention to the settlement of the Donbas conflict and relations with strategic partners (the USA, Germany, France, Poland and the Baltic states).

During the snap parliamentary elections, foreign policy issues took their place in the declarations and statements of the respective political parties. At the same time, election programmes and manifests lacked systematic approach towards accentuation of the foreign policy agenda.

The election programme of the Servant of the People party did not have a clear foreign policy component and fully complied with President V. Zelenskyy’s position. As far as the settlement of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict is concerned, it

only mentioned legal support for V. Zelenskyy's initiatives to restore the country's territorial integrity and sovereignty without any meaningful content. It included some general statements about an adoption of laws, which are necessary for the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. As for the Euro-Atlantic direction, it mentioned plans to pass legislative acts, which would facilitate broader cooperation with NATO, as well as a reform of the Ukrainian Armed Forces according to NATO standards. The election programme also paid attention to the development of commercial diplomacy in order to master global markets and to strengthening contacts with Ukrainians abroad.

The Opposition Platform — For Life party represented the ideological opposition and unacceptance of the country's current foreign policy priorities. The key foreign policy ideas of its election programme included a vision for restoring peace in Donbas by establishing dialogue between Kyiv, Moscow, Donetsk and Luhansk, lifting reciprocal sanctions by Ukraine and Russia, and Ukraine's neutral status.

The election programme of the European Solidarity party focused on European and Euro-Atlantic integration, offering the most detailed description of steps and objectives presented in the party manifesto called "The Euro-Atlantic Charter". This manifesto sets the main goal of applying for the EU membership in 2023, and mentions a possibility of obtaining NATO's Membership Action Plan that same year. The party suggested in its election programme that Ukraine should continue building a strong international coalition for counteraction to Russian aggression, and making certain steps towards the de-occupation of Ukrainian territories.

Batkivshchyna party also mentioned the need to continue the European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine at the level of implementing the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and preparing for obtaining NATO's Membership Action Plan. The election programme said that Donbas and Crimea could only be de-occupied if the Normandy format of negotiations were replaced with "Budapest+" (Ukraine, Russia, the USA, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, China, and the EU). The party manifesto, called "Ukraine's New Deal", paid significant attention to international trade.

The Voice party also said that Ukraine's foreign policy should be based on obtaining the EU and NATO membership. In addition, the party's priorities

included mounting international pressure on Russia in order to restore control over the occupied territories of Donbas and annexed Crimea, stepping up diplomatic efforts in international arena, increasing the impact of sanctions on the aggressor and facilitating its international isolation. The party suggested that international trade should be made simpler by improving transparency of customs and supporting procedures.

As the Servant of the People party managed to form a majority in parliament singlehandedly (the so-called single-party majority), there was no need to draft a coalition agreement, let alone look for areas of common interest with various parliamentary parties, including in foreign policy. At the same time, the Servant of the People party did not deem it necessary to offer an extended programme, which would present its vision of the state foreign policy agenda.

The Verkhovna Rada chairman and his deputies avoided foreign policy issues during their appointment. The fact that foreign policy was not among priority issues during the parliamentary elections, including for the winner party, resulted in a decline in the general political interest and engagement in 2019. Overall, the VRU of the VIII convocation showed a much bigger interest in foreign policy than their successors. Representatives of the opposition European Solidarity party (I. Klympush-Tsintsadze, I. Gerashchenko, V. Arieu and O. Goncharenko) were the most active members of parliament of the IX convocation in this regard in 2019. The change of the parliamentary committee head and a centralised approach to forming a position of the majority did not help parliament to articulate their vision on the key issues of the foreign policy agenda.

The Cabinet of Ministers' five-year action programme, which the Verkhovna Rada approved in October, identified the political goals of O. Honcharuk's government, including in terms of foreign policy. However, although the programme acknowledges the consequences of the Russian aggression in Ukraine, it does not set the task of consolidating international support for counteraction to it. At the same time, the government's document contains individual goals concerning obtaining the EU and NATO membership for Ukraine, which mostly have to do with domestic reforms. Economic diplomacy is also mentioned among the priorities. The programme assigns such direct tasks to the MFA as strengthening consular support for Ukrainians abroad, expanding the list of visa-free countries, as well as ensuring support for business, culture, and

sports abroad. Actually, the assignments focused on applied, primarily consular issues rather than on political issues of bilateral relations, regional policy or participation in international organisations. This generally corresponds to the logic of President V. Zelenskyy, who in 2019 focused more on domestic social-economic reforms and less on European integration as a foreign policy priority.

Prime Minister O. Honcharuk in his public speeches raised the issues of economic cooperation, development of international trade, and attraction of foreign investment. Some members of the Cabinet of Ministers (for example, D. Kuleba, V. Prystaiko, T. Milovanov, T. Kachka, O. Orzhel, and others) were active in commenting on the agenda, including on prospects for European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Overall, the year of 2019 saw the highest political interest being paid to Canada, Poland, the USA, France, the Baltic states, and the EU, economic diplomacy, and cooperation with the Council of Europe. The issue of neighbouring states did not leave the agenda either but saw a shift of accents.

Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and Central Asia, international security (apart from the Russian aggression in Ukraine), and nuclear non-proliferation received the least attention from political actors.

The overall score for Political Interest

3+

## Institutional Cooperation

In 2019, the coordination of joint intentions and actions between different government offices underwent certain transformation. The system of relations in the distribution of powers and responsibility for particular foreign policy directions, that had been in place, changed for political reasons, which included the presidential and parliamentary in Ukraine, and their results, as well as a certain transition period. Both interpersonal and political factors influenced a formation of the new algorithm of cooperation.

The election of V. Zelenskyy, who had little experience in foreign affairs, as President of Ukraine was accompanied by building his team responsible international activities. In the Presidential Office, this was happening while the MFA, the Government Office for European Euro-Atlantic Integration and the respective parliamentary committee still had their old persons-in-charge, who belonged to the former government team of President P. Poroshenko. In particular, V. Zelenskyy failed to replace the Minister of Foreign Affairs in June and July because parliament did not dismiss P. Klimkin twice. A public conflict broke out between President V. Zelenskyy and Minister of Foreign Affairs P. Klimkin in late June over inconsistent positions regarding the Ministry's response to the Russian note on captive Ukrainian sailors. The President criticised the position of the Foreign Ministry leadership, while P. Klimkin pointed out differences in approaches to counteraction to Russian aggression.

More political conflicts took place during the parliamentary election campaign. In particular, Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration I. Klymush-Tsintsadze was prevented from attending the EU-Ukraine Summit in July.

Various government offices (the Presidential Office, the Cabinet of Ministers, the MFA, the VRU, and others) began to coordinate their efforts in a more or less stable manner not earlier than in the autumn after the parliamentary majority was formed, parliamentary committees elected their heads, and a new composition of the Cabinet of Ministers was appointed.

Back in the summer, there were concerns that a post of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration may be cancelled altogether, which could have a strong negative effect on the coordination of efforts of all government institutions in this area. The fact that the post was retained and assigned to D. Kuleba, who had been known for his pro-European views, sent a positive message that the state was preserving its course and continuing to coordinate EU and NATO integration processes.

A composition of the Commission for the Coordination of Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, which is an auxiliary body under the President of Ukraine, was updated in October.

During the change of government, the team of the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration at the Cabinet of

Ministers' Secretariat came up with a transition book entitled "European and Euro-Atlantic Integration" in order to keep the pace of reforms and ensure that the new government and parliament carry on the state policy on European and Euro-Atlantic integration. However, a post of the director-general of the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration has been vacant since autumn 2019, which has adversely affected the office's operation.

Though, the establishment of cooperation between Vice Prime Minister D. Kuleba and the parliamentary committee for the EU integration, headed by I. Klympush-Tsintsadze, NGO networks (for example, the Ukrainian National Platform of the EaP Civil Society Forum, the Ukrainian part of the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform, Reanimation Package of Reforms, and others) deserves praise.

The composition of the Ukrainian parts of bilateral intergovernmental commissions, which were responsible for boosting economic cooperation, was actively updated in October. Because of expectations for an appointment of the new government and a corresponding update of the Ukrainian parts of the commissions, meetings of these bilateral commissions were rescheduled towards the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020.

Relations between the Presidential Office and the MFA deserve a separate mention. Although there are experienced career diplomats in the government team, it should be noted that V. Zelenskyy had delegated some foreign policy and security issues to members of his Office, in particular to his aide A. Yermak. The latter's remit included negotiations with Russia, members of the Normandy Four, and the USA. The emphasis on informal diplomacy and the separation of the mentioned issues from the general foreign policy activities affected a level of coordination with and engagement of the MFA. The inclination to act outside the protocol and established diplomatic practices led to international scandals in 2019, for example, with the USA in the context of US President D. Trump's domestic political struggle with his political opponents.

The positive changes that are worth mentioning included Presidential Decree No 740/2019 by which V. Zelenskyy restored the Minister of Foreign Affairs' right to appoint candidates for a number of diplomatic jobs without an approval of the Presidential Office. This made it possible to rotate senior diplomats more effectively, which had often been delayed before.

The second half of 2019 saw an active reshuffle of the heads of the foreign diplomatic missions, including Ukraine's Ambassador to the United States V. Chaly. In September, V. Prystaiko secured the President's consent to appoint 20 new ambassadors, who were appointed by the end of the year. Still, a large number of embassies do not have their heads.

In 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organised a cluster meeting in Berlin for heads of foreign diplomatic missions in Western and Central Europe. Similar meetings were planned for early 2020 for Southern and Central European ambassadors in the Czech Republic and for ambassadors from the Asia-Pacific region in Singapore. This approach provides for faster and more cost-effective meetings with ambassadors.

In 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to actively cooperate with its Public Council, as well as with individual think tanks, to prepare and hold bilateral expert forums and foreign journalists' visits to Ukraine. In 2019, forums were held with Belarus, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, and Hungary. The MFA ran a programme under which Ukrainian independent experts were sent abroad for participation in thematic public events. An interesting example of coordination was the joint meeting of the Committee on Foreign Policy and Interparliamentary Cooperation and the Committee on Ukraine's Integration into the EU. In addition to committee members, the meeting was attended by Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko, Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration D. Kuleba, and the deputy head of the Presidential Office I. Zhovkva, and a number of think-tank representatives. The meeting participants discussed the issues of European and Euro-Atlantic integration and prospects for the Minsk process.

Apart from the positive examples of cooperation between the committees, it is necessary to mention the fact that political interests dominated European integration issues. In particular, the head of the respective committee, I. Klympush-Tsintsadze repeatedly said that representatives of the ruling party tend to vote for bills sponsored by their fellow party members even though they do not reflect Ukraine's commitments on the implementation of the EU Association Agreement.

There was a certain lack of coordination of actions in the new composition of the parliamentary delegation to PACE with regard to participation in the autumn 2019 session.



The appointment of B. Yaremenko's successor as a head of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Interparliamentary Cooperation was delayed by the Servant of the People faction. The committee had no head from mid-November 2019 to the end of the year.

In general, based on the findings of this study, experts have concluded that the most coordinated foreign policy efforts of Ukraine were observed in the following areas: Belarus, the United Kingdom, Israel, Germany, economic cooperation with the EU, public diplomacy, activities within the OSCE, and the Council of Europe. There was a lack of internal Ukrainian cooperation in foreign policy with regard to Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and Iran.

**The overall score for Institutional Cooperation**



## Strategic Vision

In 2019, the legal framework that sets the strategic foundation of Ukraine's foreign and security policy faced a number of changes. Some of these were a result of the policy that had been designed earlier and outlined in 2019, but had some political undertone as well. The others were a result of the reshuffle of the presidential and government teams after the elections that called for a new definition of foreign policy frames and objectives.

The key development of 2019 regarding strategic cementing of Ukraine's foreign policy course was an adoption by the Verkhovna Rada in February 2019 of the Law to Amend the Constitution of Ukraine on the Strategic Course to Obtain Full EU and NATO Membership. Initiated by President P. Poroshenko in mid-2018, the law amends a number of articles in the Constitution that define the powers of the Verkhovna Rada (Art. 85 of the Constitution), the President of Ukraine (Art. 102), and the Cabinet of Ministers (Art. 116). Among other things, the parliament is empowered to implement the strategic course towards Ukraine's full membership in the EU and NATO, while the Government should ensure the implementation of this course. The President of Ukraine is a guarantor for the implementation of this strategic course.

At the same time, this law and the amendments it introduced had more of a political effect, both domestically and in communication with international partners. Cooperation with the EU and NATO continued based on the agreements, action plans and road maps that have been in place for several years now. The update of the Ukraine-NATO Annual National Program, applying the results-based management approach, was an important internal addition to Ukraine's international commitments.

In addition to that, President P. Poroshenko signed Decree No155/2019 proposing the Plan to Implement the Strategic Course for Full Membership of Ukraine in the EU and NATO. He signed it on April 20, a day before the second round of the presidential elections, which experts saw as a politically motivated move. However, the government explained that this move was necessary because a position of the possible new president was unclear concerning strategic vectors of Ukraine's foreign policy. Among other things, the Decree proposes that Ukraine continues dialogue with the EU in the respective areas, including political dialogue, economic cooperation, security and defence, aiming at full membership in the EU. Also, the action plan determines Ukraine's priorities in the development of the Eastern Partnership, prioritizes and strengthens the format of cooperation between the three partner-states that have signed Association Agreements with the EU (Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova). The most ambitious part of the NATO vector in the document is a preparation and submission of proposals to request the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the NATO Secretary General to grant the NATO Membership Action Plan to Ukraine.

Overall, the legal framework defining Ukraine's foreign policy objectives, principles, and directions as of April 2019, when V. Zelenskyy was elected President of Ukraine, was comprised of the following documents, in addition to the ones listed above:

- Law on the Basics of Domestic and Foreign Policy (2010);
- Law on Diplomatic Service (2018);
- Law on the National Security of Ukraine (2018);
- National Security Strategy of Ukraine (2015);
- Military Doctrine of Ukraine (2015);
- Ukraine 2020 Sustainable Development Strategy (2015);
- Information Security Doctrine of Ukraine (2016);

- Energy Strategy of Ukraine until 2035 (2017);
- Export Strategy of Ukraine —Strategic Trade Development Roadmap for 2017–2021 (2017);
- Defence Industry Development Strategy of Ukraine until 2028 (2018);
- National Human Rights Strategy (2015);
- National Action Plan to Implement the UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security until 2020 (2016);
- Concept for Promotion of Ukraine in the World and Promotion of its Interests in the Global Media Space (2016);
- Peacekeeping Strategy of Ukraine (2009);
- State Program of Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad until 2020 (2017);
- Ukraine-EU Association Agreement (2014);
- NATO-Ukraine Charter on Distinctive Partnership (1997);
- Ukraine-NATO Annual National Program (2019).

Some of these documents are outdated or have not been fulfilled by the government institutions in charge sufficiently to qualify for full implementation — examples include the Sustainable Development Strategy “Ukraine-2020”, the Information Security Doctrine, the Export Strategy of Ukraine, and the Concept for Promotion of Ukraine in the World and Promotion of its Interests in the Global Media Space.

The first document by V. Zelenskyy’s team that could be described as a strategic one, and lists priorities on some areas of foreign policy is the mid-term five-year Program of the Cabinet of Ministers proposed by Prime Minister O. Honcharuk and approved by the Verkhovna Rada in October. The Program is based on measurability of the objectives set by the Government (KPI). At the same time, the foreign policy issues that cannot be quantified were not included in the Program. Especially visible is an absence of objectives to counter the Russian aggression and consolidate international support.

Under the Cabinet of Ministers Program, Vice Prime Minister D. Kuleba was put in charge of objectives 17.1 “Ukraine meets EU membership criteria” and 17.2 “Ukraine meets NATO membership principles and criteria.”

Ukraine’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs was put in charge of three objectives: 16.1 “Ukrainians are satisfied how the state protects them abroad,” 16.2 “Ukrainians travel the world freely visa-free”, and 16.3 “Ukrainian business,

culture, and sports receive decent support abroad.” The Government Program thus focuses on the functional issues of protecting interests of Ukrainian citizens abroad, developing tools of economic, public and cultural diplomacy, and intensifying projects to improve Ukraine’s image abroad to build its positive image and counter Russia’s information campaigns, rather than on the strategic tasks.

By contrast to the previous government program of V. Groysman’s Cabinet until 2020, the new Program has a positive approach to determining strategic and tactical steps for accomplishing objectives, in particular it mandates the government institutions to prepare public policy concepts on accomplishing respective objectives and a detailed mid-term plan to accomplish them by 2024.

The President’s Decree No837/2019 “On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state” can be referred as a strategic document with important foreign-policy components of 2019. The foreign policy section of this document was a response to public request regarding the position of President Zelenskyy and his team on Ukraine’s foreign policy priorities. The decree was intended to fill the gaps in the Government Program concerning foreign policy and international security. The decree outlined nine priority tasks to be implemented by the Government in the foreign policy domain by the end of 2020:

1. strengthening international support for Ukraine in restoring its territorial integrity and sovereignty;
2. finding support for Ukraine’s course towards EU and NATO membership among international partners;
3. developing partnership relations with the G7 and G20 member-states;
4. developing partnership relations with the neighbour countries;
5. effective foreign policy support to Ukraine’s economic development (economic diplomacy);
6. contributing to Ukraine’s positive image in the world, including via tools of cultural diplomacy;
7. strengthening protection of Ukrainian citizens and legal entities abroad;
8. cooperating with Ukrainians abroad; and
9. enhancing opportunities of the diplomatic service, its efficiency and impact.

It is possible to say that the Government Program is balanced with additional directions that give a more comprehensive idea about the foreign policy position of the new team in power. This is why Ukraine’s MFA not only reported in late

2019 on the fulfilment of three objectives of the Government Program, but also provided additional information on the interaction with the key international partners for the purpose of countering Russia's aggression and holding Russia accountable internationally, and on relations with neighbour-states. That helped to get a generalized view and understanding of the vector of foreign policy efforts by the President of Ukraine and his foreign-policy team (at the President's Office and the MFA) at the end of 2019.

The fact that most responsibilities on negotiations with Russia in the context of implementing Minsk Agreements were shared between A. Yermak, aide to the President, and the MFA, resulted in the visible absence of the general strategy in Zelenskyy's team for the de-occupation of Donbas and Crimea and for countering Russia's hybrid aggression. The absence of a publicly presented vision led to difficult moments both domestically and in foreign relations, e.g. during the prisoners' exchange (a situation with V. Tsemakh and the Netherlands), and in the run-up to the Normandy Four summit in Paris.

There was no specific Ukraine's foreign policy strategy, concept or doctrine passed in 2019 that would clearly list priorities, objectives and ways to accomplish them, as well as resources for that. There have been traditionally lacking of regional and thematic strategies (public policies) for individual countries, as well as regions and functional directions.

During the year, some bilateral documents were signed with different countries, mostly of functional nature. In the context of the available bulk of strategic documents, the most present in these texts are such foreign-policy directions as the EU, NATO, the US, and the UK. The lowest grades of strategic vision have relations with France, Hungary, Iran, and Turkey, countries of the Middle East, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, and Central Asia, as well as issues of international security and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons..

The overall score for Strategic Vision

3+

## Activities

Despite the change of the country leadership teams after the presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine, and as a result of the parliament and government resets in 2019, the dynamics of international political dialogue remained high, while cooperation with certain countries expanded. Ukrainian government offices involved in the implementation of foreign policy remained highly active in accordance with the priorities outlined by President P. Poroshenko and his successor V. Zelenskyy.

Ukraine's integration with the EU traditionally received the highest score in the foreign policy activities section. Acting jointly, the President of Ukraine and the MFA in early 2019 managed to draw European partners' attention to the need to give Ukraine political and financial support, in particular because of the Russian aggression in the Kerch Strait and an economic blockade of the Sea of Azov area. The EU monitoring mission worked in Ukraine to assess the scope of necessary European assistance to Ukrainian regions along the Sea of Azov.

In the context of the high-level dialogue, it is important to note that newly-elected President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy paid his first official foreign visit to Brussels as soon as in June. A month later, senior European officials came to Ukraine to take part in the 21st EU-Ukraine Summit. The 5th meeting of the EU-Ukraine Association Committee was held in November in the context of the planned work of the high-level bilateral institutions. In 2019, official Kyiv initiated negotiations to update the Association Agreement, as well as on possible formats for the expansion and deepening of sectoral cooperation between Ukraine and the EU. In the course of the year, the issues of cooperation were discussed by bilateral and multilateral working groups, joint committees and subcommittees in the AA framework.

Ukraine's activities in the framework of bilateral cooperation with G7 were quite diverse, being guided by the key foreign policy priorities, in particular in the context of consolidating support for countering Russian aggression, support for Ukraine's strategic course towards the EU and NATO membership, as well as the strengthening of trade and security cooperation. Overall, in 2019, Ukraine managed to maintain positive balance of G7 decisions, which was favourable to its national interests, as well as a constructive focus on cooperation in bilateral relations.

Relations with Canada, Germany, France, and Japan characterised by the most intensive political contacts and the use of other cooperation formats. It is also worth noting proactive efforts in relations with other G7 states.

Relations with the USA in 2019 were mostly focused on the security dimension. The issues on the agenda included the purchase of precision weapons by Ukraine and receiving of other types of security and defence assistance. Cooperation aimed at maintaining US sanctions against Russia constituted a separate important direction. There were top-level contacts between Ukrainian President V. Zelenskyy and US President D. Trump. However, V. Zelenskyy's full-fledged visit to the USA has not taken place despite Ukraine's expectations. The use of unofficial communication channels, which did not involve the Ukrainian MFA, and the US domestic political struggle were among the factors that prevented the visit from happening.

In its relations with France and Germany, Ukraine sought to ensure that the EU maintains sanctions against Russia and that the pro-Ukrainian agenda dominates the Normandy Four's negotiations, which resumed in the second half of 2019. The context of the Minsk agreements and the need to reinvigorate the Normandy format dominated the agenda of the French and German foreign ministers' visits to Ukraine (May) and Ukrainian President V. Zelenskyy's visits to Paris and Berlin (June). Apart from the June meeting, the Head of State held three phone conversations with E. Macron, and seven phone conversations and a working meeting with A. Merkel (September). Ukrainian-German dialogue in 2019 also involved an issue of energy security because of Berlin's support for the Nord Stream 2 project, which contradicts Kyiv's national security and energy interests.

Political dialogue with Canada maintained positive dynamics and focused on economic and security cooperation. The Ukrainian side's joint efforts were concentrated on preparing and holding the International Ukraine Reform Conference in Toronto (July). The numerous Ukrainian delegation was headed by President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy, who met Canadian Prime Minister J. Trudeau, Minister of Foreign Affairs C. Freeland and the Ukrainian community in Canada.

The main leitmotif of Ukraine's political dialogue with the United Kingdom was a striving to sign a comprehensive bilateral agreement that would regulate bilateral relations, including free trade, after Britain's withdrawal from the EU. Apart from Brexit, the dynamics of Ukrainian-British relations were influenced

by domestic political developments in both countries and the intensification of confrontation between London and Moscow. Although there were no high-level meetings during the reporting period, active cooperation at the ministerial level continued, and senior Ukrainian officials, in particular the prime minister, visited London on numerous occasions.

Ukrainian-Japanese contacts enjoyed positive dynamics at the level of a political dialogue. For the first time, the Ukrainian President attended the enthronement of the Emperor of Japan. During his working visit to Japan (October), President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy met Prime Minister S. Abe and senior parliament members. During the year, active intergovernmental contacts focused on the implementation of energy, transport, agricultural and environmental projects in Ukraine.

There have been no significant positive developments in the Ukrainian-Italian bilateral relations, given the pro-Russian attitude of some Italian governmental political forces. In 2019, President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy had a working meeting with Prime Minister G. Conte on the side-lines of the UN GA. Above all, it focused on the situation with Ukrainian veteran of the antiterrorist operation V. Markiv detained in Italy. Amid the lack of significant prospects for the development of political dialogue, an attempt was made to intensify economic cooperation by increasing contacts at a governmental level and enhancing interparliamentary cooperation.

The **Euro-Atlantic direction** in Ukraine's foreign policy was also eventful in 2019. In the course of the year, both Presidents P. Poroshenko (February, May) and V. Zelenskyy (June, September, and October) had numerous meetings with NATO Secretary-General J. Stoltenberg. At the invitation of the Ukrainian authorities, the North Atlantic Council visited Ukraine in October for a meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission chaired by the President of Ukraine and the NATO Secretary-General (at the level of ambassadors).

Intensive cooperation was observed in the format of the joint NATO-Ukraine working groups, as well in the Ukrainian participation in thematic committees and other NATO bodies. The MoD, the General Staff and individual branches of the Ukrainian Armed Forces were involved in cooperation and implementation of joint projects. Domestic efforts on the execution of Euro-Atlantic reforms focused on the implementation of the NATO-Ukraine Annual National Programme for 2019, as well as on a number of other implementation documents.



**The issues of countering Russian hybrid aggression**, as well as consolidating support from key international partners, are among Ukraine's foreign policy priorities closely related to the implementation of other geographical and functional objectives. The Ukrainian side held active consultations with partners to condemn military aggression against Ukraine in the Black Sea and the Kerch Strait, Russia's continuing aggressive actions in the occupied territories of Donbas and Crimea, militarisation of these territories, and violation of human rights. During the year, international organizations formats (the EU, NATO, OSCE, UN, and CoE) were actively used to attract attention and to promote Ukrainian initiatives aimed at enhancing international pressure against Russia, as well as at restoring sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

In the second half of 2019, V. Zelenskyy's foreign policy team undertook active efforts to relaunch the trilateral contact group work in Minsk. Significant preparations were taken ahead of the meeting of the Normandy Four heads of state in Paris in December. The Normandy-track-related steps taken by V. Zelenskyy and the Ukrainian negotiation team prompted controversial reaction from Ukrainian politicians and civil society. In particular, the issue of including the so-called "Steinmeier formula" in the political part of the Minsk agreements' implementation plan gave a reason for concerns.

Work has continued to maintain international solidarity with regard to sanctions against Russia. The MFA of Ukraine, through a network of foreign diplomatic missions at the bilateral and multilateral levels, was busy doing explanatory work in political, diplomatic, and expert circles, as well as working directly with the population of foreign countries. Non-governmental experts, academicians, and artists were also actively involved in information campaigns. A positive step, which became possible due to the release of Ukrainian political prisoners in September 2019, was a series of further advocacy campaigns with their participation in the EU countries and international institutions where they spoke about human rights abuses in the occupied territories and repression against Ukrainian citizens (Germany, France, Latvia, the EU and the OSCE institutions).

Ukrainian institutions' continued efforts to hold Russia accountable under international law was an important direction in counteraction to its aggression. The Ukrainian MFA and other institutions were busy preparing legal positions

(Ukraine's memoranda) and strategies of response (counter-memoranda) to be used in the UN International Court of Justice and the Arbitral Tribunal.

V. Zelenskyy's team named **"economization of foreign policy"** among their foreign policy top priorities, what, in addition to political statements, resulted in a corresponding redistribution of government functions and an assignment of relevant tasks to the MFA in O. Honcharuk's Government Programme. In the autumn, the Cabinet of Ministers audited current opportunities to intensify foreign economic activity. It announced an intention to amend the Ukrainian Export Strategy adopted at the end of 2017. In his public statements, the President of Ukraine repeatedly promised to pay priority attention to the protection of foreign business and investors in Ukraine. The First Investment Forum "RE: THINK. Invest in Ukraine" was organized under the President's aegis in Mariupol in October to attract financial support for the Azov region.

Prime Minister of Ukraine O. Honcharuk focused on political support for new investment projects funded by international financial institutions (WB, EBRD, and EIB). At the government level, Ukraine's Trade Representative T. Kachka was active both in Europe (updating the annexes to the Association Agreement and promoting the so-called "industrial visa free") and in other strategic markets (China, the USA). In 2019, 15 bilateral intergovernmental economic commissions took place. The Ukrainian Export Promotion Office organized six trade missions to foreign countries (the UK, Georgia, Germany, India, Israel, and the UAE). During the reporting period, the MFA began modernizing the Council of Exporters and Investors, and also revised the scope of work of foreign diplomatic missions so that they could provide support for Ukrainian importers and exporters, search and attract foreign investments.

The foreign policy agenda also included the relations with **neighbouring countries**. During the 2019 election campaign the new political team of V. Zelenskyy criticised P. Poroshenko's approach to relations with the neighbouring states, in particular Poland and Hungary. President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy visited Poland twice in six months. Right during the first visit, he had a working meeting with President A. Duda, at which they agreed to relaunch relations and soften the impact of historical events and their interpretation on the current bilateral agenda.

Despite declaring preparedness to look for a compromise on the issue of ethnic minority rights' protection, official Kyiv did not hurry to further reveal its vision for relations with Hungary. In May, V. Zelenskyy met Hungarian President J. Ader. The foreign ministers of the two countries had a working meeting on the side-lines of the UN General Assembly in September. Nevertheless, by the end of 2019 it was not clear when V. Zelenskyy and Hungarian Prime Minister V. Orban could meet, neither was there a roadmap to handle the difficult situation.

Ukraine's relations with Slovakia and the Czech Republic have had positive dynamics despite the differently vectored views of their political elite. In addition to bilateral cooperation, the agenda of relations with Slovakia in 2019 included issues of multilateral regional cooperation (due to the OSCE presidency in 2019 and the V4 presidency in the first half of 2019). During the year, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Slovakia M. Lajcak repeatedly visited Ukraine in a capacity of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office. The President of Slovakia Z. Čaputová and the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic A. Babis paid official visits to Ukraine in the autumn. Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman paid a working visit to Bratislava. A Ukrainian-Czech business forum was held in Kyiv. However, despite a busy schedule of exchanges of bilateral working and official visits, cooperation with Visegrad Four as a regional initiative remained low.

The political crises in Romania and Moldova, as well as elections in Ukraine, affected the intensity and effectiveness of contacts. Relations with Romania have failed to regain significant momentum. However, one of the positive developments was a working meeting between V. Zelenskyy and Romanian President K. Iohannis on the side-lines of the UN GA, during which the heads of state confirmed the need to intensify political dialogue.

The dialogue with the Republic of Belarus was stable and institutionally rich. The greatest emphasis was placed on economic cooperation. In particular, the large-scale 2nd Forum of the Regions of Belarus and Ukraine was held in Zhytomyr in October 2019. Over 1,000 participants from both countries took part in the event. The heads of state met on the side-lines of the forum.

Relations with Turkey and China should be mentioned separately because of V. Zelenskyy's announced priority to strengthen cooperation with G20 countries.

Turkey has traditionally enjoyed a high level of attention from Ukraine despite a relatively small number of high-level contacts. In August, President V. Zelenskyy

paid an official visit to Turkey and held meetings with the leadership of the state. Although the parties did not sign the FTA agreement, the dynamics of economic and military-technical cooperation remained high.

Despite the absence of a high-level political dialogue in relations with China, the Ukrainian side has taken steps to strengthen economic cooperation. President V. Zelenskyy has repeatedly held meetings with Chinese diplomatic and business circles to encourage the expansion of bilateral trade and economic cooperation. At the governmental level, there were traditional contacts that led to the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on the beginning of preparation of a bilateral cooperation plan for the joint development of the “Silk Road Economic Belt” and the “21st Century Maritime Silk Road Maritime”.

Despite the overall decline in political activity with regard to Israel compared to previous years, it is worth noting that the Prime Minister of Israel paid his first visit to Ukraine in 20 years. In particular, the sides discussed the possibility of expanding the free trade area and enhancing cooperation in the field of innovation.

In terms of the overall **regional approach to the implementation of foreign policy**, Ukraine's political and diplomatic cooperation with the Baltic states and Northern Europe was most active. In autumn 2019, President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy paid official visits to as many as three Baltic states. President of Finland S. Niinisto (September) and Prime Minister of Sweden S. Löfven (December) paid official visits to Ukraine. On the side-lines of the UN GA, V. Zelenskyy met Prime Minister of Norway E. Solberg. The high dynamics were, first and foremost, related to the need to consolidate the countries' positions on countering Russian aggression, support for reforms in Ukraine, as well as to develop common stands at the level of international organizations.

A number of important initiatives and joint projects have been implemented with the Black Sea countries, given the region's priority for Ukraine's security and economic interests. Since the beginning of 2019, the Ukrainian side has made efforts to form an international monitoring mission that would help it to restore navigation and prevent further aggression of Russia against Ukraine in the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea, but has failed to do so. There has been active cooperation with NATO in the development of programmes aimed at boosting the presence of the Alliance in the Black Sea.

Ukraine continued its cooperation within the framework of international organizations in the region. Emphasis was placed on active involvement in GUAM, while BSEC was not a priority due to the presence of the Russian Federation in it. In 2019, Ukraine presided over GUAM. As a result, the GUAM Summit at the level of heads of government was held in Kyiv in December. They issued a joint statement and signed protocols of intent to further liberalize trade and economic cooperation (creation of the FTA, development of transport corridors, and liberalization of the services market). Particular attention within the region was paid to cooperation with the Black Sea Bank for Trade and Development, as well as the Black Sea Border Cooperation Forum.

In 2019, Ukraine became more active in Latin America. The region has significant untapped potential for economic cooperation and expansion of markets for Ukrainian exports. Presidents P. Poroshenko and V. Zelenskyy had working meetings with the President of Brazil J. Bolsonaro on the side-lines of international events. Contacts and political consultations at the level of the MFA have intensified.

Western Balkans did not receive much attention from Ukraine in 2019. Most of the contacts took place at the intergovernmental and interagency level. Economic cooperation took a priority place among Ukrainian interests in the region. The most active economic cooperation was with Slovenia.

The Middle East as a region has also lacked a high-level political attention from Ukraine. The main reference point in cooperation with the countries of the region was trade and economic cooperation, as well as an implementation of projects in energy, agriculture, defence industry, and education. Cooperation with Qatar and the UAE was most active. Iran remained among the outsiders of Ukraine's foreign policy due to the extension of the US sanctions against it.

The Asia-Pacific region enjoyed moderate foreign policy attention. Security issues (Australia, New Zealand, and Malaysia in the context of the MH17 air crash investigation) and the elaboration of a legal framework for bilateral relations (visa liberalisation, avoidance of double taxation) dominated the agenda.

In South Asia, Ukraine carried out its policy most actively in India, where its significant economic interests are concentrated. From time to time, Ukrainian-Indian intergovernmental contacts were aimed at promoting Ukraine's investment opportunities, cooperation in space sphere, education, and visa liberalization.

However, attention to other countries was low, in particular due to the lack of resources. One embassy in India covers six countries of the region at once.

Bilateral cooperation in Central Asia, except for Kazakhstan (V. Zelenskyy's working meetings with N. Nazarbayev and K. Tokayev), was carried out at the level of the MFA and diplomatic missions, which shows a low priority of the region for promotion of Ukrainian goods, in particular due to the strong presence of Russia there.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Ukraine built the most active political contacts with Kenya during the reporting period. Kenyan National Assembly Speaker J. Muturi paid an official visit to Kyiv in May. In addition to Kenya, there was an increase in contacts between the foreign offices of Ukraine and Senegal, South Africa, Mali, and Mozambique. In particular, two new honorary consulates were opened in the region (Liberia and Djibouti). Ukrainian peacekeepers are currently involved in four UN missions in Africa (DR Congo, South Sudan, the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei, and the Republic of Mali).

In terms of **cooperation with international organisations**, Ukraine was most active at the level of the UN, given its universal profile and the most widespread institutional network. The fact that Ukraine's Permanent Representative to the UN was replaced in no time speaks of the importance of this area of activities. In 2019, Ukraine was less active in contributing to the resolution of global problems but was nevertheless proactive in protecting its national interests and counteracting Russian aggression. The President of Ukraine traditionally attended the UN General Assembly meeting. Active diplomatic efforts were taken in New York, Geneva, and Vienna, focusing, among other issues, on human rights, nuclear non-proliferation, innovations, health care, gender equality, and so on.

Ukraine more actively cooperated with the OSCE in 2019. The positive dynamics were maintained thanks to Slovakia's chairmanship in the organisation, which paid priority attention to issues concerning Russian aggression. The work of the trilateral contact group resumed on the initiative of Ukraine, which also boosted its cooperation with the SMM OSCE. The presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine prompted an additional dimension of cooperation with the OSCE institutions, in particular with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

Cooperation with the Council of Europe has been developing in accordance with its Action Plan for Ukraine for 2018–2021. However, most attention was paid

to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Ukraine where the Ukrainian side and its partners attempted to prevent the return of the Russian delegation without any restrictions or requirements to implement the Assembly resolutions.

Taking part in **international multilateral initiatives**, Ukrainian representatives focused on human rights issues and climate projects. International security and nuclear non-proliferation initiatives, in which Ukraine has recently been losing its positions, received less attention.

The importance of public diplomacy in the system of foreign policy instruments should be noted separately. The MFA actively contributed to the building of Ukraine's positive image abroad through capacity of its foreign diplomatic missions and targeted information campaigns (#JusticeForMH17, #LetMyPeopleGo, #StopNordStream2, #CorrectUA). Measures were taken to promote Ukrainian filmmakers and book publishers. Work on the institutional development of the Ukrainian Institute continued.

The overall score for Activities

4.0

## Results

Despite the change of the government team in 2019, the main strategic directions of the country's foreign policy, which have taken shape over the past five years, have not undergone major readjustment. President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko's activities in the first half of 2019 were in line with the priorities he had repeatedly declared in the previous years, and foreign policy was among the central themes of his communication with voters.

During the election campaign, V. Zelenskyy was careful in making statements and declaring clear foreign policy positions. This had its effect on the implementation of foreign policy in the second half of the year. Emphasis was placed on promoting Ukrainian exports and attracting foreign investment, as well as on continuing the course towards the EU and NATO membership, and consolidating international support against Russian aggression.

Analysing the results of Ukraine's foreign policy in 2019, it is reasonable to first focus on what has been achieved along the mentioned strategic directions.

By the end of 2019, positive results in terms of Ukraine's EU integration have been achieved both in the political and security dimensions, and in financial and economic cooperation. The EU-Ukraine Summit Joint Declaration (July) was an important evidence of political support for Ukraine. The EU's political leadership reaffirmed its support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, its reforms and European integration course. It is important that a reboot of the EU institutions after the elections to the European Parliament in May 2019 did not change Brussels' position regarding support for Ukraine.

The most significant achievement in this regard is that the EU has preserved and extended sanctions against Russia over its occupation of Crimea and military aggression in Donbas. In particular, it extended by six months targeted sanctions against Russian citizens in September and economic and sectoral sanctions in December. The EU slapped Russia with additional sanctions over its aggression in the Kerch Strait. Because of populist and pro-Russian government forces in some EU countries, Kyiv had to take extra foreign policy efforts regarding every EU member state in order to preserve the joint European position.

In 2019, Brussels offered important mediation in the EU-Russia-Ukraine trilateral talks on the Kyiv-Moscow contract on the transit of the Russian gas across Ukraine in accordance with the EU standards, which was agreed at the end of the year.

At the November meeting of the EU-Ukraine Association Committee in Brussels, the Ukrainian side suggested launching the talks on updating the Association Agreement. An official application outlining Ukraine's position ahead of further talks is being prepared. As part of the domestic implementation of the AA, the new government held a "European integration" meeting (November), at which it updated the plan of measures for the implementation of the AA. It was decided that it was necessary to reach additional agreements with the EU on regional development, integrated border management, migration control, and judiciary reform. The introduction of a management and control system for the implementation of the Agreement on Financing the Danube Transnational Programme gave Ukraine access to the European Neighbourhood Instrument resources to carry out international projects in the region (5 mln euros).



The Verkhovna Rada ratified international agreements, thus unblocking 472 mln euros in loans and grants from international financial organisations for infrastructure projects in Ukraine. However, the issue of the second tranche (500 mln euros) under the fourth EU macro-financial assistance programme was not unblocked in 2019.

In 2019, the key outcomes of NATO-Ukraine cooperation concerned the internal dimension of reforms and adaptation, the provision of financial and advisory assistance, and the preservation of solidarity among the Alliance members in supporting Ukraine in counteracting Russian aggression. In March, North Atlantic Council issued a remarkable statement on the fifth anniversary of the occupation of Crimea, in which it reaffirmed full support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine and condemned Russia's attempt to further militarize the Black Sea region.

To enhance cooperation with NATO, the Ukrainian side officially requested to join the Enhanced Opportunity Partnership Programme (EOP) during the North Atlantic Council's visit to Ukraine (October), but the initiative has not received full support of all Alliance members yet.

An updated version of the NATO-Ukraine Roadmap on Defence and Technical Cooperation was signed based on the results of the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group meeting in December.

In October, Ukraine and NATO agreed on an updated package of NATO assistance projects and practical activities, in particular within the framework of the so-called Black Sea Package approved in April. Cooperation with the Alliance within the Trust Funds continued, particularly the implementation of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices Trust Fund was started (February) and the Situational Awareness Project under the Command, Control, Communications Trust Fund was initiated (November).

Ukraine continues to participate in NATO operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan. However, although the Alliance recognised Ukraine as a potential operational partner of the NATO Training Mission in Iraq (April), the President has not signed the relevant decree yet. Ukraine has not finished the process of joining the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence although it was a Government Programme's objective for 2018.

By the end of 2019, no decision has been found on how to unblock the high-level NATO-Ukraine Commission, which is being blocked by Hungary due to specific issues on the bilateral Ukrainian-Hungarian agenda.

In 2019, significant results were achieved in countering Russian aggression, as well as consolidating international support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and increasing pressure on the Russian Federation within various international organizations.

At the UN level, Ukrainian diplomatic efforts brought numerous positive results. In December, the UN GA adopted two enhanced resolutions "The problem of militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine), as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov" (9.12) and "Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine" (18.12). In particular, the resolutions now refer to the 1974 UN GA Resolution 3314 (XXIX), which defines the concept of aggression, requires the Russian Federation to stop its policy of changing the demographic situation in Crimea, pointing to significant violations of international humanitarian law, etc. In addition, by working with international partners, Ukraine managed to prevent Russia from putting the Law of Ukraine "On Languages" (May, July) for consideration by the UN SC.

The report by the UN Secretary-General on the human rights situation in Crimea and Sevastopol (September) indicated violations of international law and human rights abuses by the Russian occupying authorities. Bringing Russia to account in international courts was a separate trend in countering aggression, which had significant positive achievements in 2019. The United Nations judicial and arbitration institutions deserve special attention here. For example, in May, the International Maritime Law Tribunal announced the application of temporary measures to Russia for violating the immunity of three Ukrainian warships and 24 crewmembers during an incident in the Kerch Strait in November 2018. However, despite the Tribunal's order, under which Russia was to return the ships and the captives within a month, the return took place only in September as part of a bilateral exchange, which also included other 11 Ukrainian prisoners. Moreover, Russia returned the Ukrainian warships only in November. Ukrainian diplomats and lawyers have succeeded in blocking Russia's efforts to delay the arbitration process in the ship-and-sailors case. In November,

the tribunal decided to shorten the time for the preparation of the Memorandum of Ukraine (May 2020) in order to quickly review the case.

In November, the UN International Court of Justice issued a ruling in the case of Ukraine v. Russia regarding violations of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The Court dismissed Russia's attempt to challenge the Court's jurisdiction and allowed the case to proceed to the merits phase.

There were mixed results of work in the Council of Europe in 2019 in the context of counteracting Russia's hybrid aggression, compared to previous years. Political statements by leadership of the CoE as well as some powerful European states (France, Germany) about the need to maintain Russia's membership of the Organization have seriously changed the situation. During the PACE winter and spring sessions, the Ukrainian delegation ensured the adoption of two resolutions condemning Russia's aggression in the Kerch Strait and procedurally hampering Russia's return to work in the Assembly without fulfilling its obligations. However, in the summer, the mandate of the Russian delegation was restored without any sanctions or restrictions, prompting the Ukrainian delegation to boycott the autumn session. A positive but few in numbers was an initiative to establish the Baltic Plus group of MPs in the PACE framework (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, Ukraine, as well as individual MPs from the United Kingdom), which seeks condemnation for the occupation of the territories of Ukraine and Georgia by Russia.

Cooperation with the OSCE was also aimed at maintaining continued attention to the problem of Russian aggression in all institutional dimensions. Numerous visits by the OSCE high-ranking officials, including senior diplomats from Slovakia, who chaired over the Organization in 2019, can indicate considerable attention to the problem. At the annual session of the OSCE PA, the Ukrainian delegation made sure that it adopted the Resolution on the Militarization of Temporarily Occupied Crimea and the City of Sevastopol, the Black Sea, and the Sea of Azov by Russia (July). Ukraine also managed to draw attention by holding an information event on the side-lines of the December meeting of the Council of Ministers with the participation of O. Sentsov and R. Sushchenko, who had been released from the Russian captivity.

At the same time, quite predictably, the 26th session of the OSCE Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which was held in Bratislava in December, did not adopt any documents concerning Ukraine. Because of the Russian blocking, Ukraine has failed to ensure that the OSCE SMM carries out its functions in full and that its mandate at the Gukovo and Donetsk checkpoints is expanded.

The Trilateral Contact Group on a Donbas settlement intensified its work in 2019. In particular, it contributed to the unblocking of a meeting of the heads of state in the Normandy format in December 2019.

The new political team paid considerable attention to economisation of foreign policy, both at the level of political statements and at the level of government plans and actions, in particular to improving the terms of trade with the EU, restoring US trade preferences, and developing economic cooperation with China. The new government led by O. Honcharuk has continued most of the international trade development projects launched by V. Groysman's team. With regard to the EU, the focus was on achieving compliance with the conditions of adherence to the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA). At the end of the year, quotas for duty-free import of poultry meat by Ukrainian exporters to the EU countries were increased.

In October, the USA reinstated trading preferences for the vast majority of Ukrainian goods that were withdrawn from the US Generalized System of Preferences in 2018.

The Free Trade Agreement with Israel was signed in 2019 (January), but Israel has not ratified it yet due to internal political developments. Also, despite preliminary plans, the FTA between Ukraine and Turkey has not been signed by the end of 2019.

An intergovernmental agreement with China on granting Ukraine USD 30 mln in free technical and economic assistance was approved in April. The sides also signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the beginning of preparation of a bilateral cooperation plan for the joint development of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

For the first time, the resolution entitled “ Strengthening of international cooperation on asset recovery and the administration of frozen, seized and confiscated assets “, which was drafted by Assets Recovery and Management Agency of Ukraine, was adopted at the Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption (December, the UAE)

At the same time, the year of 2019 saw a lack of coordination among state institutions, which were supposed to create a system of support for Ukrainian exports and attraction of investment. Whereas the Export Promotion Office was busy with conducting trade missions to different countries, the work of the International Trade Council and the Export Credit Agency was almost invisible. The MFA focused its attention on adjusting the work of its Council of Exporters and Investors, as well as promoting the investment attractiveness of Ukraine. Bilateral intergovernmental commissions were one of the major tools for stepping up trade and economic cooperation. However, it was only in November that the government was able to relaunch the Ukrainian parts of joint intergovernmental commissions and appoint their heads. This slowed down the dynamics of bilateral meetings, some of which were postponed to 2020. In addition to the institutional weakness, it is also worth noting the low level of implementation of the Export Strategy of Ukraine, which was adopted in 2017. To supplement and advance the export vision, Ukraine approved the Strategy for the Development of Export of Agricultural, Food and Processing Industry Products of Ukraine until 2026 and a plan of objectives and measures for its implementation (July).

Overall, in 2019, exports of Ukrainian goods increased by 5.8% compared to the previous year (USD 50 bln), and imports to Ukraine by 6.3% (almost USD 61 bln). The negative balance amounted to USD 10.7 bln. The largest trading partner of Ukraine is the EU, accounting for 41% of Ukrainian exports (USD 20 bln) and nearly as much in imports (USD 24 bln).

The top 15 partners, where Ukraine exports its goods are China (7.2% of total exports), Poland (6.6%), Russia (6.5%), Turkey (5.2%), Germany (4.8%), Italy (4.8%), Egypt (4.5%), India (4%), the Netherlands (3.7%), Belarus (3.1%), Hungary (3.1%), Spain (3%), the USA (2%), Romania (2%), the Czech Republic (1.8%), and Moldova (1.5%). In 2019, exports grew most rapidly (40% of growth and more) to Australia, Algeria, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Ireland, Kuwait, Malaysia, North Macedonia, and Thailand. Despite the low relative numbers, it is worth mentioning the countries where Ukraine has increased its exports over 2.5 times, namely Benin, Botswana, Cambodia, DR Congo, Guyana, Guatemala, Ecuador, Laos, Mauritius, Madagascar, Niger, Paraguay, Zambia, etc.

There was a significant drop (more than 20%) in exports to such countries as Argentina, Bosnia, Chile, Georgia, Iran, Finland, Malta, Morocco, Pakistan,

the Philippines, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, and others. In addition, there was a slight decline in exports to such important partners of Ukraine as Bulgaria, India, Italy, Hungary, Moldova, Slovakia, and the United States.

Metallurgical and machine-building products were gradually replaced as the prevailing export positions by agro-industrial products. In 2019, exports of cereals were almost 34% up, mainly as a result of deliveries to China.

The top 15 largest importers to Ukraine are the following countries: China (15.1%), Russia (11.5%), Germany (9.9%), Poland (6.7%), Belarus (6.2%), the United States (5.4%), Turkey (3.9%), Italy (3.4%), France (2.7%), Switzerland (2.6%), Hungary (2%), Lithuania (1.9%), the Czech Republic (1.9%), Japan (1.6%), and Spain (1.4%). The highest increase in imports (over 20%) was recorded with such trading partners as Australia, Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Georgia, Estonia, Jordan, Japan, Lithuania, Morocco, Montenegro, Romania, Spain, and Turkey.

The highest indicators of negative balance (over USD 1 bln) in Ukraine's trade with foreign countries in 2019 were registered with China (–USD 5.6 bln), Russia (–USD 3.7 bln), Germany (–USD 3.6 bln), the USA (–USD 2.3 bln), Belarus (–USD 2.2 bln), Switzerland (–USD 1.5 bln), and France (–USD 1 bln).

In cooperation with G7 countries, Ukraine paid considerable attention to the issues of forming a common position on the restoration of its territorial integrity and sovereignty, the inadmissibility of Russia's return to the Group until the territorial integrity of Ukraine is restored, and support for reforms in Ukraine. In trade and economic cooperation, Germany, Italy, and the USA were the largest trading partners of Ukraine among the G7 states.

Both the Presidential Office of Ukraine and the MFA worked closely with France and Germany to ensure support for the Ukrainian position in the framework of preparing and holding the Normandy format summit of heads of state and government in Paris on 9 December.

Agreements and contracts with France signed during the year are of predominantly limited and applied nature. For example, a framework international agreement was signed to implement a project to modernize Mariupol's water supply system (29.01). France remains the fourth largest European investor in Ukraine.

Political and economic cooperation with Germany has been more active. However, despite the generally positive dynamics of bilateral relations, Ukraine

has failed to change Germany's position on the Nord Stream-2 gas pipeline from Russia. Though, during the high-level contacts, it was agreed that Berlin would support the need to maintain gas transit through the territory of Ukraine. With Germany's direct involvement, an agreement on gas transit was signed on 31 December. Germany remains one of Ukraine's main trading partners.

Relations with the USA were of strategic importance. Washington has repeatedly expressed support for Ukraine at various political levels, including in the context of new forms of Russian aggression in the Kerch Strait and the issuance of Russian passports in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions (ORDLO). The US role in preventing Russia and individual EU countries from implementing the Nord Stream-2 project, in particular by imposing sanctions on companies implementing this project in December, should be noted separately. Defence and security support for Ukraine increased in 2019. Among other things, the USA agreed the sale of Javelin systems worth USD 39 mln to Ukraine and increased support for Kyiv in the National Defense Authorization Act (USD 300 mln in 2020). In the context of energy security, Ukraine, the USA, and Poland signed the trilateral Energy Memorandum. At the same time, in 2019, Ukraine found itself at the epicentre of the US domestic political rivalry ahead of the presidential election, which negatively affected the dynamics of Ukrainian-American cooperation (for example, the delay in security assistance to Ukraine).

Canada is one of the most active advocates of Ukraine at international arena, including in NATO, the UN, and G7. It is worth noting that in March, in coordination with the USA and the EU, Canada introduced the largest sanction package against Russia since 2014 due to its military aggression in the Kerch Strait. The main event in bilateral relations with Canada in 2019 was the Ukraine Reform Conference in Toronto. Canada provided a new USD 45-mln reform support package to Ukraine. Also, a decision was made in March to expand and continue the UNIFIER military training mission until March 2022. Overall, despite the small trade and its decline in 2019, a positive development was an increase in the share of Ukrainian exports to Canada thanks to the free trade agreement.

Ukrainian-British dialogue in 2019 concentrated on shaping the future framework for bilateral relations after Brexit, given London's focus on finding ways and legal formats for completing its political "divorce" with the EU. Ukraine's intensive negotiations with the United Kingdom have led to a new full-

fledged agreement, which could be concluded in 2020. The UK is the third largest investor in the Ukrainian economy with the total investment of almost USD 2 bln. Like Canada, the United Kingdom is a significant contributor to the training of Ukrainian servicemen (Operation “ORBITAL”). In addition, the United Kingdom has announced the allocation of more than 37 mln pounds to support reforms in Ukraine next year. A Protocol on Amendments to the Agreement on International Road Transport was signed in 2019.

Cooperation with Japan in 2019 was conducted both directly at the bilateral level and at the level of the UN agencies implementing projects in Ukraine (UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, and UNOPS). The Japanese government allocated USD 2.82 mln to meet Ukraine's humanitarian needs. In trade, there was a revival in terms of imports and exports, with a total turnover reaching USD 1.2 bln. During the year, the sides signed various agreements, including on the prevention of money laundering, on the granting of a non-project grant to the Government of Ukraine to buy special equipment for the National Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine, etc.

An analysis of the development of bilateral relations with Italy in 2019 shows that, despite some problematic issues related to the pro-Russian stance of some influential Italian political forces, the Italian side continued to declare support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as for continued EU sanctions against Russia. Total trade between Ukraine and Italy in 2019 amounted to USD 4.48 bln with a slight drop in Ukrainian exports.

President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy saw relations with neighbouring states as a priority direction of the foreign policy and directed diplomats' work towards establishing good neighbourly and partner-like relations with them.

The countries of the Visegrad Group expressed their continued support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Poland strongly supported Ukraine during its non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council in 2018–2019. Slovakia, as the OSCE chair in 2019, has significantly contributed to supporting Ukraine's efforts to counteract Russian aggression. In terms of trade, all V4 countries are among the top 20 importers and exporters (V4 countries account for almost 17% of total turnover). However, there were no meetings of intergovernmental commissions on economic cooperation during the year. In 2019, the issue of Poland granting Ukrainian carriers insufficient permits for international haulage remained acute. At the same time, Ukraine and Slovakia managed to sign the Declaration on the Use of the Slovak Airspace for Uzhgorod International Airport and to increase



the number of flights. They also signed the Agreement on Amendments to the bilateral Agreement on Local Border Traffic dated 2008.

There have been significant changes in political dialogue with Poland. In September 2019, Kyiv lifted a moratorium on search works at Polish burial sites. In response, Warsaw expressed its readiness to restore a vandalised Ukrainian monument in Podkarpackie Voivodeship.

Despite positive expectations in 2019, Ukraine and Hungary have failed to settle the bilateral dispute over the provisions of the Ukrainian language legislation. Against this background, the Hungarian side continued to block the activities of the NATO-Ukraine Commission. Among other issues, because of the blocking by the Hungarian side, Ukraine failed to resume full participation in the V4+Ukraine format.

Romania remains an important partner in supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and is one of the top 20 trading partners of Ukraine. In 2019, an important inter-operator agreement was signed between gas companies of the two countries. At the same time, the approval of the Protocol on Cooperation in Education has been stalling and the expectations for the launch of the railway connection along the Chernivtsi-Suceava route have not been justified.

The political crisis in Moldova in 2019 prevented the sides from achieving significant results in bilateral cooperation. Nevertheless, Moldova's political position was clearly manifested when the two countries made their joint political stands within the Eastern Partnership initiative and in GUAM.

Ukraine developed consistent political contacts with both members of GUAM — Moldova and Georgia. In May, the governments of Ukraine and Georgia signed a protocol on amendments to the Free Trade Agreement dated 9 January 1995. The protocol creates conditions for applying the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin to bilateral trade.

Mostly economic focus was also typical for Ukrainian-Belarusian relations. The 2nd Forum of Regions of Ukraine and Belarus in Zhytomyr (October), in which the two heads of state took part, was a remarkable event. A number of bilateral documents, as well as 40 commercial contracts worth over USD 500 mln, were signed during the forum.

Cooperation with the Baltic states, Ukraine's strategic allies in counteraction to Russian aggression and supporters for its European integration prospects, was important. In the autumn, PACE delegates formed a group, Baltic Plus, which brought

together representatives of countries that disagreed with Russia's return to the Assembly. The development of digital technology, cyber security, and agro-industrial cooperation were among the important issues of bilateral cooperation with the Baltic countries. Among other things, Ukraine and Lithuania signed the Declaration on development of strategic partnership for 2020–2024 and the Declaration of Intent on Cyber Security. During an official visit of the Ukrainian delegation to Tallinn, the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Information Technology of Estonia signed a Memorandum on IT sector cooperation. A Memorandum of Understanding between the justice ministries of Ukraine and Latvia was signed during President V. Zelenskyy's visit to the country.

Northern Europe preserved unity in supporting Ukraine in counteracting Russian aggression. In 2019, the countries of the region boosted support for humanitarian projects in Donbas. Finland allocated an additional 600,000 euros to mine clearance. Sweden and Norway provided significant assistance. However, there are no results of cooperation with Iceland at all.

In the Western Balkans, the top level of political dialogue and cooperation was registered with Croatia, Albania, and Slovenia. In particular, as NATO members, these countries provided practical assistance to Ukraine in humanitarian mine clearance projects and in carrying out reforms under the NATO standards. It is important that within the Croatia's EU Presidency in the first half of 2020, Zagreb reaffirmed its support for Ukraine's membership of the EU and NATO and expressed solidarity in counteraction to Russian aggression. Tirana also expressed its support for Ukraine as it was preparing to chair the OSCE in 2020. The governments of Ukraine and Bosnia and Herzegovina signed an Agreement on Tourism Cooperation. The highest increase in trade cooperation was registered with North Macedonia and Montenegro (double up), while the biggest volume of trade turnover was seen with Serbia and Slovenia.

Functional ministerial relations with Middle East countries have seen a boost. Various memoranda, protocols, and agreements with Kuwait, Qatar, Morocco, the UAE, and Tunisia in finance, justice, education and agriculture were signed in the course of the year. Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE remained Ukraine's main trading partners in the region, showing a trend towards an increase in turnover. There was a significant increase in exports to Qatar (by 25%), Kuwait (by 25%), and Oman (by 34%).

The Black Sea region did not receive much attention in 2019, except for security, which had its impact on the results of Ukraine's foreign policy in this direction. At the December summit, the heads of government of the ODED-GUAM member states agreed to implement the free trade area, while customs offices of GUAM member states intend to mutually recognise authorised economic operators.

In other regions, especially remote ones like Central Asia, South Asia, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America, Ukraine continued its diplomatic efforts with a view to liberalising interpersonal and business contacts. Two international agreements reached by Ukraine with Dominica and North Macedonia on the cancellation of visa requirements to holders of diplomatic and official passports came into effect in 2019. Six international agreements, which relax travel regulations for citizens were signed (Colombia, Ecuador, the Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Argentina, and Sri Lanka). Protocols on amendments to the double tax conventions (Cyprus, Turkey, and Singapore) and the treaty on avoiding double taxation (Malaysia) were ratified.

Among the countries of Central and South America, and the Caribbean, Ukraine held the most active dialogue with Brazil. A joint communique on the establishment of diplomatic relations with Dominica was signed in April, with Grenada, St Vincent, and the Grenadines in September. The number of Ukraine's trade and economic partners in the region grew from 25 in 2018 to 26 in 2019. In June, the Cabinet of Ministers authorised a USD 40,000 voluntary contribution to the Organization of American States on behalf of Ukraine as a permanent observer interested in developing cooperation with North and South American states. Bilateral documents at the levels of chambers of commerce and cities were signed in the course of the year.

South Asian countries are the biggest importers of Ukrainian agricultural products. India maintains the lead in trade and economic cooperation, accounting for nearly 7% of Ukrainian agricultural exports. A positive development was the establishment of relations with the government and parliament of Afghanistan. Following the first meeting of the intergovernmental commission on trade and economic cooperation, the sides signed a respective protocol. Ukraine and Bangladesh resumed active dialogue on migration.

There were no significant achievements in multilateral cooperation in 2019. In terms of its climate change commitments, Ukraine focused on implementing domestic tasks in accordance with the Agreement with the EU. The country

continued to carry out its commitments on nuclear non-proliferation. Human rights activities were centred on cases against Russia in international courts and protection of human rights in occupied Crimea and Donbas. As far as international security is concerned, Ukraine limited its activities to the UN and NATO.

In 2019, in the sphere of public diplomacy the MFA carried out over 300 public activities, including 190 image projects, as part of the budget-paid programme for building Ukraine's international positive image. The Ukrainian Institute started implementing projects, mostly cultural ones. The government sponsored participation in international events for over 100 Ukrainian experts, civil activists, and artists, who presented their positions or projects abroad. However, the Strategy of Public Diplomacy, which has been in the making for years, has not been finished by the end of 2019. Bilateral expert forums with Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Belarus were held in cooperation with the Public Council under the MFA. Foreign journalists' visits to Ukraine were organized in cooperation with partner organisations.

The overall score for Results

3+





# G7 COUNTRIES

.....	
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>B+</b>
.....	

.....	
<b>Italy</b>	<b>C+</b>
.....	

.....	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>B+</b>
.....	

.....	
<b>Germany</b>	<b>B+</b>
.....	

.....	
<b>USA</b>	<b>B+</b>
.....	

.....	
<b>France</b>	<b>C+</b>
.....	

.....	
<b>Japan</b>	<b>B-</b>
.....	

# United Kingdom

# B+

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	5	4	4	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	4	5	5	5
STRATEGIC VISION	2	3	3	3	5
ACTIVITIES	5	5	5	5	4
RESULTS	4	4	5	5	4
TOTAL SCORES	B-	B+	B+	B+	B+

2019 was somewhat quieter in relations between Ukraine and the UK as a result of the Brexit turbulence and the long election period in Ukraine. Still, this only affected the intensity of contacts, not their quality. Therefore, they are expected to intensify again in the first half of 2020.



# '15– '19

Ukraine's relations with the UK in 2015–2019 can be described as a success story. The UK has consistently supported Ukraine in the bilateral format since 2014 (reforms and security cooperation), in the EU (including in the context of implementing and compliance with sanctions), as well as in various international platforms. Brexit has undermined the part of the EU member-states critical of Russia and the influence of supporters of further EU and NATO expansion eastward. Apart from that, the turbulence triggered by Brexit in the UK distracted it from Ukraine and had a negative impact on the intensity of contacts in the past two years. From the positive perspective, the new solidarity and experience of cooperation gained in 2014–2019 allow the two sides to establish new strategic goals.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest remains stable given the UK's consistent support of Ukraine in the fight against the Russian aggression, proactive cooperation between parliaments, established channels of communication with civil society activists, human rights advocates and analysts.

On the level of parliaments, the fact that the Interparliamentary Group of Friendship with the UK has 133 MPs (almost a third of the Verkhovna Rada) reflects their interest in this cooperation. Initially, the priority status of resuming the Normandy Format stifled the interest of the newly elected government in relations with the UK, shifting it to other partners, but the political interest increased again at the end of 2019. This was reflected in the statements of Prime

# '19

Minister Honcharuk during his visit to London, statements at public events in London by Ukraine's Deputy Defence and Economy Ministers, as well as of MPs (5.12). The UK is mentioned separately in the President's Decree No 837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" in the foreign policy section, with a focus on establishing the agreement framework for the bilateral relations between Ukraine and the UK after its exit from the EU and within G7.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

No irregularities were spotted in institutional cooperation in 2019. Coordination was mostly done between the MFA and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade on the new post-Brexit deal, and between the MFA and the MoD to ensure the UK's assistance to reform the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

## **Strategic Vision**

Ukrainian politics on the UK still relies on the 1994 Treaty on the Principles of Relations and Cooperation between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Ukraine, and ad hoc short-term priorities that have been updated (the latest in 2017 when Ukraine set the target to bring trade up to UAH 3.5 bn, get into the top 20 exporters to the UK, and sign an FTA and visa liberalization agreements). In 2019, a bilateral Agreement on Political Cooperation, Free Trade and Partnership was prepared proactively, including in consultations with the UK side, so the dynamics on setting strategic priorities has been positive.

## **Activities**

Domestic political turbulence in both countries led to a decline in the intensity of top-level contacts. Just like 2018, 2019 did not see official visits at the level of heads of states. President V. Zelenskyy spoke on the telephone with

Prime Minister T. May and twice with Prime Minister B. Johnson (5.08, 22.08). PM Johnson invited Ukraine's President to the UK on an official visit.

Contacts between governments remained active with both Governments in Ukraine. Culture Minister Y. Nishchuk visited London (13.03), where he met with M. Ellis, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Arts, Heritage and Tourism and participated in the London Book Fair. Infrastructure Minister V. Omelyan met with Secretary of State for Transport C. Grayling and CEOs of Ryanair and Hutchison Ports (7.06). Ukraine's Trade Representative T. Kachka visited the UK regularly. Among others, E. Dzheparova, Deputy Minister for Information Policy, attended the Global Conference for Media Freedom (11.07); S. Kryvonos, Deputy Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council, visited the military equipment expo (12.09), and Foreign Affairs Minister V. Prystaiko spoke at the NATO Engages conference during the NATO summit in London (3.12). Prime Minister Honcharuk travelled on a working visit to the EBRD investment summit for the Eastern Partnership countries (22.11). Aide to President A. Yermak, Deputy Defence Minister A. Frolova, Deputy Minister of Economy T. Kachka and MPs V. Halaichuk and S. Vakarchuk attended Ukraine: Great Expectations, a conference co-organized by Ukrainian Prism and Chatham House in London (05.12).

The embassy works fruitfully, attending public events and organizing them, including visits of former political prisoner O. Sentsov to the UK (14.11) and the family of E. Bekirov (20–21.05), publishing articles in the top media, including on the anniversary of the annexation of Crimea in the Telegraph (18.03) and the anniversary of MH17 downing in the Times (17.07). Also, it responds swiftly to illegal visits to occupied Crimea and inappropriate formulations in the media, successfully promotes the #KyivnotKiev initiative, organizes presentations of books etc.

In 2019, working consultations on the basic treaty and talks on the liberalization of the visa regime prevailed. Final decisions on both issues remain a task for 2020.

In 2019, the UK did not change its position on support for Ukraine. It continued to support the extension and expansion of sanctions against Russia, sanctions against the Russian delegation at PACE, and was critical on Russia, sticking to a position coherent with Ukraine's interests at international platforms, such as the UN. It made statements to protect safety of navigation in the Black Sea

(18.02), on the anniversary of Crimea annexation (18.03) or on the downing of MH17 (with a public event in Parliament in addition to the statement, 17.07). The issues related to Ukraine are regularly discussed in UK parliament.

UK Defence Secretary B. Wallace, Minister of State for International Development H. Baldwin, Minister of State for Europe and the Americas C. Pincher, Chief of the General Staff M. Carleton-Smith and others visited Ukraine in 2019. The UK continued providing technical support for reforms in Ukraine and supported security cooperation. Among other things, the UK instructors continue working in Ukraine as part of Operation Orbital mission (2015–2023), and mission's mandate expanded to train the Ukrainian Naval Forces in 2019.

## Results

The UK remains one of Europe's top countries that consistently condemns Russia's actions and highlights the need for deterrence in relations with Russia. The intensity and fruitfulness of interparliamentary cooperation was reflected in the III-class Order of Merit awarded to British MPs J. Wittingdale, P. Latham, M. Antoniwi, and S. McDonald based on the President's decree dated 24.08.

Progress in accomplishing the short-term goals set in 2017 can be assessed as moderate. Currently at USD 2.56 bn, trade in goods and services has not yet reached the planned USD 3.5 bn. Getting into the top 20 of exporters to the UK is still to be accomplished, but Ukraine's exports to the UK grew 10% comparing to 2018. The UK is the third largest investor in Ukraine's economy with total investment of almost USD 2 bn. The goal of the FTA has developed into talks about a new bilateral agreement that is at the final stage of preparation, as stated by the government, and could be signed during the visit of President Zelenskyy to London planned for 2020.

The issue of visa liberalization has not yet delivered practical results. Still, the need to resign the respective agreements after the transition period of the UK's membership in the EU at the end of 2020 gives Ukraine some leverage for improving the visa situation.

In support of reforms, the UK has announced over £37 mn in defence, peacekeeping, fight against corruption, humanitarian issues, women's rights and equal rights, as well as £9 mn for new projects in the media sector for all Eastern Partnership countries. Assistance was expanded in 2019 with £2.8 mn for the humanitarian sphere and £3.5 mn for projects to strengthen peace, support people affected by the conflict and overcome gender violence. 17,500 Ukrainian military servicemen, including 1,000 instructors, were trained within the Operation Orbital program by 2019.

In culture, the national stand of Ukraine was presented for the first time at the 48th London Book Fair, organized by the team of the Ukrainian Book Institute.

Important documents include the Protocol between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ukraine on Amendments to the Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ukraine on International Road Transport of 13.12.1995, signed by the ministers of transport. It simplifies the permits system in the industry.

# Italy

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	3	4	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	3	3	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	4	3	3	3
ACTIVITIES	n/a	4	4	4	4
RESULTS	n/a	4	3	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	B-	C+	C+	C+

In 2019, Italy continued to support the European integration aspirations and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Italy does not recognize the annexation of Crimea and officially supports the introduction of sanctions against the Russian Federation. Security, military, cultural and humanitarian cooperation formed an important dimension. There was no increase in activity on the part of Ukraine, except for some cultural initiatives at the end of 2019.

# '15– '19

Political and economic relations between Ukraine and Italy have remained quite asymmetrical over five years. The change of governments both in Ukraine and in Italy did not facilitate co-operation and understanding of the strategic interests of both countries. Although Italy is home to one of the largest Ukrainian communities in the EU, its potential for engagement has been minimal.

A strategic vision for further interaction for the next period after the implementation of the Roadmap for Cooperation between Ukraine and Italy for 2016–2017 has not been presented. Despite the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Parliaments of Ukraine and Italy in 2017, interparliamentary interaction was low until 2019.

Although exports of goods and services to Italy did not increase significantly from 2015 to 2019 (from USD 2.11 billion in 2015 to USD 2.54 billion in 2019), imports doubled up (from USD 1.01 billion to USD 2.15 billion). The withdrawal of the Italian Unicredit bank from the Ukrainian market in 2016 was quite painful for Italian investors, which did not prompt more small and medium-sized enterprises to invest in cooperation with Ukraine. In addition, the great potential for the development of bilateral trade and economic cooperation, which existed in the areas of industrial cooperation and investment cooperation, was not used.

Positive developments took place in late 2019, when a joint Ukrainian-Italian photo project on the events in Donbas and a film about Markiv allowed the Italian society to understand for the first time that there was a war in eastern Ukraine.

## Political Interest / Engagement

In 2019, Ukraine's political interest in this direction was determined by Italy's support for Ukraine's reforms and European integration. Among Ukrainian politicians, who showed notable interest in Italy, were MPs of the VIII convocation, including S. Alyeksyeyev, O. Byelkova (Petro Poroshenko Bloc), H. Hopko, and MPs of the IX convocation, including S. Yurash, D. Monastyrskyy and Y. Cherniev (Servant of the People), most of whom joined the new inter-faction association "Free Markiv". The Verkhovna Rada's group on interparliamentary relations with Italy was formed in November. However, this direction is not mentioned in any party documents and programmes.

It is too early to speak about strengthening of Ukrainian-Italian cooperation. Negotiations focused on opportunities for bilateral economic cooperation, Ukraine's European integration aspirations, the Markiv case, and on the issue of maintaining sanctions against the Russian Federation. The Ukraine-Italy interparliamentary friendship group approved new representatives of both Ukraine and Italy only in November 2019. It began to prepare an agenda for cooperation with the MIA and the MFA in the V. Markiv case.

## Institutional Cooperation

Due to the change of power in Ukraine at the presidential and parliamentary levels, institutional cooperation in questions of cooperation between Ukraine and Italy did not get much attention in public discourse. The Markiv case, in which the MFA and the MIA of Ukraine continue to cooperate, became the only exception at the end of 2019. Representatives of the Ukraine-Italy friendship group in the Verkhovna Rada were involved in this work.

## Strategic Vision

A strategic vision for Ukraine-Italy interaction was outlined in the Roadmap for Ukraine-Italy Cooperation for 2016–2017. No other strategic document was



presented in 2019. Despite the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Parliaments of Ukraine and Italy in 2017, both countries have failed to intensify dialogue at the level of political parties in 2019.

## Activities

In 2019, Italian leaders continued to declare support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and to international sanctions against the Russian Federation until the Minsk agreements would be implemented in full, as stated by the ministers of the previous and current governments of Italy.

Counteraction to hybrid threats has been a major challenge for Ukraine's government offices, especially for the MFA, in the context of mitigating populist statements on the possibility of lifting sanctions against Russia by some Italian politicians from the League, the Five Star Movement, and the Brothers of Italy.

Working meetings at the parliamentary level were not numerous, which is explained by the election of the new president, government and parliament in Ukraine, as well as the change of the government coalition in Italy. However, there were a telephone conversation and a personal meeting between President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy and Prime Minister of Italy G. Conte (on the side-lines of the UN GA), during which they discussed, in particular, the fate of Markiv.

Ukraine and Italy discussed expanding of military-political, economic, agricultural, cultural and sport dialogue. At the same time, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine did not use the experience of previous years effectively enough in their partnership with Italian counterparts in 2019.

The visit by the Chairman of the Italy-Ukraine friendship group U. Cappellacci to Ukraine can be described as positive. In addition, the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Internal Affairs of Ukraine met Italy's Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs M. Di Stefano in November 2019. The latter also met T. Milovanov, Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture of Ukraine.

The First Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Economic Development and Trade S. Kubiv paid an important visit to Rome (June). Negotiations continued during a corresponding visit by Italian Undersecretary of State for Foreign

Affairs M. Di Stefano (November), who held meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture and the MFA of Ukraine.

Cooperation between Italy and Ukraine has somewhat increased at the level of institutions and regions, mainly from western Ukraine and southern Italy. Representatives of Lviv and Vinnytsya regions visited the Italian cities of Frosinone, Bari and Taranto.

The humanitarian and cultural components saw some action in 2019: the text of the Memorandum of Cooperation on Civil Protection is being developed, and cooperation on quality assurance of higher education and cultural cooperation is being carried out. It is worth noting a joint photo exhibition by O. Kromlyas and R. Travani about the events in Donbas, which received wide publicity in the local and national press and for the first time, changed the discourse from an “internal conflict” to a “forgotten war” in Ukraine. The film about Vitaliy Markiv, “The Wrong Place”, produced together by Ukrainian and Italian journalists, was completed at the end of 2019. It is being prepared for distribution in Europe as soon as in 2020.

## Results

An analysis of the development of bilateral relations in 2019 shows that despite some controversial issues related to the interpretation of events in Ukraine and the pro-Russian attitude of some influential Italian political forces, Italy continued to declare commitment to Ukraine’s European course in support of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to the continuation of the EU sanctions policy on the Russian Federation.

Total trade between Ukraine and Italy in 2019 amounted to USD 4.48 billion amid a slight drop in Ukrainian exports. The overall balance remained positive for Ukraine. Traditionally, Ukraine mostly exported raw materials (metals, grain, and wood) and imported finished goods or products (products made of metal and wood, equipment).

A twinning agreement was signed between the balneological resorts of Ukraine and Italy, the cities of Truskavets and Chianciano Terme respectively..

# Canada

# B+

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4	5	5	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	5	4	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	3	3	4	5	3
ACTIVITIES	5	5	5	5	5
RESULTS	5	5	4	5	5
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B+	B+	A-	B+

2019 was extremely favourable for the development of cooperation with Canada. Various forms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including high-level visits and especially the Ukraine Reform Conference in Toronto, helped to enhance the political, security and investment relations. The Free Trade Agreement contributes to the intensification of trade relations and an entry of Ukrainian goods to the Canadian market. Canada traditionally continued to support domestic reforms in Ukraine, particularly in public administration and defence sectors. This allows the two countries to move to a long-term planning and setting common priorities in bilateral relations.

'15–  
'19

Bilateral cooperation between Ukraine and Canada improved significantly over the past five years, most notably in the areas of security, economic, trade, consular and healthcare. Both countries recognized the priority of Ukraine's cooperation with Canada where unique consensus has emerged in support of Ukraine from all key political players. Starting with S. Harper's Government, Canada consistently adhered to the sanctions against Russia and provided material and technical assistance to Ukraine, which amounted to about USD 800mn over the five years.

According to the State Statistics Bureau of Ukraine, total trade turnover of 2015–2018 almost doubled from USD 236mn in 2015 (exports to Canada at USD 30 mn, imports at USD 206 mn) to USD 411 mn in 2018 (exports to Canada at USD 78 mn, imports at USD 333 mn). The Free Trade Area launched in 2017 boosted this growth. However, in 2019 trade turnover fall till USD 280.2 mn due to the Canadian import.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Canada is among Ukraine's top foreign policy priorities. Although there were no mentions of Canada in election programs of presidential candidates or political parties in 2019, the priority of cooperation was repeatedly mentioned by leaders of the two countries in joint statements (joint briefing of the President of Ukraine and the Prime Minister of Canada on July 2 in Toronto), during bilateral meetings of parliamentary and governmental delegations (Ukraine Reform Conference in July), etc.

'19

Both countries identified security, trade, economic and investment as their top priority areas of cooperation, as was explicitly stated by Ukraine's President V. Zelenskyy and Canada's Prime Minister J. Trudeau at their joint briefing in Canada. According to President Zelenskyy, "Canada is an example of the state Ukraine would like to become". Canada was regularly mentioned in the G7 framework, particularly by V. Prystaiko in his appointment speech as Ukraine's Foreign Affairs Minister at the VRU (29.08) and in the President's Decree No 837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" (8.11).

## **Institutional Cooperation**

2019 saw high level of coherence in the activities of Ukrainian authorities on Canada. This was primarily marked by the Ukraine Reform Conference hosted by Canada in July. The Embassy of Ukraine in Canada traditionally played a leading role in promoting cooperation, ensuring dialogue in these areas. Canada's Ambassador R. Vashchuk praised close cooperation of Ukraine's authorities in cooperation with Canada in his meeting with Verkhovna Rada Speaker D. Razumkov. At the same time, despite the plans to expand the Free Trade Agreement to include investment and services announced back in the summer of 2017 and reaffirmed in the summer of 2019, progress in negotiations was marginal and limited to video consultations at the level of experts. Formal negotiations were delayed once again given the lack of initiative by Ukraine's Ministry of Economic Development and Trade.

## **Strategic Vision**

Despite intense cooperation, strategic partnership with Canada is defined only in the Joint Declaration on Special Partnership (1994). On the other hand, the Ukrainian authorities repeatedly mentioned their interest in increasing Canadian investment and trade potential. In summer, a number of planned steps to promote relations at a new level were announced. These involved the expansion of the Free Trade Agreement to include services and the investment sector, the new agreement

on youth exchange, which would simplify visa requirements and conditions for short-term mobility, the Agreement on Audio-Video Co-production (signed in July), etc.

## Activities

There was a number of high-level contacts on bilateral and multilateral cooperation during this year. The visit of Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister C. Freeland to Ukraine (in May) was important. During the visit, Canada's investments into the Ukrainian economy and the preparation for the Ukraine Reform Conference scheduled for July were discussed.

A large long-term monitoring mission worked in Ukraine during the presidential and parliamentary elections, led by former Foreign Affairs Minister L. Axworthy, one of the well-known advocates of Ukraine's integration into the global educational, scientific and cultural projects.

The International Ukraine Reform Conference hosted by Canada in July was the most important event of the year. Representatives from 37 countries, including foreign affairs ministers, heads of international institutions (the EU, NATO, World Bank, IMF), MPs, businessmen, NGO leaders, academics and experts, as well as representatives of the diaspora attended it. A number of issues related to investment opportunities and necessary reforms in the economy, security and public sector were discussed during the conference.

In November, an official Ukrainian delegation led by Defence Minister A. Zagorodnyuk attended the Halifax International Security Forum. Cooperation to counter hybrid influences and cyber threats, and to protect national information security from external influences were discussed, among other things.

Traditionally, cooperation in the field of public and cultural diplomacy was active due to the involvement of the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada. In particular, Ukraine debuted as a partner country at the Montreal International Book Fair in October.

L. Galadza, a newly appointed Ambassador of Canada to Ukraine, declared full support of the government of Canada in reforming Ukraine's judicial system, visa

liberalization, humanitarian and cultural cooperation, as well as in developing a legal framework of relations.

## Results

The most important results in Canada-Ukraine cooperation were in security, trade, economic and investment areas. In coordination with the US and the EU, in March Canada introduced a vastest since 2014 package of sanctions against Russia as a result of the Kerch incident, which effectively increased the number of Russian individuals and companies in the sanctioned list to 435. Also in March, Ottawa decided to expand and continue the UNIFIER military training mission until March 2022. By now, more than 14,000 Ukrainian troops have undergone the training program. In addition, security cooperation is expected to cover a range of issues for collaboration, such as cybersecurity, countering hybrid threats, developing critical and social infrastructure, etc. At the end of 2019, the first delivery of sniper rifles from Canada to Ukraine took place.

During a briefing at the Ukraine Reform Conference, the Prime Minister of Canada announced additional assistance of USD 45 million to support reforms in Ukraine, including USD 25 million for inclusive reforms and reforms that would promote gender equality in Ukraine under the framework of the Canadian feminist initiative.

Trade between the two countries in 2019 decreased from USD 411, 2 million in 2018 to USD 280.2 million, due to the drop in imports of goods from Canada. However, exports of Ukrainian goods increased as a consequence of the Free Trade Agreement.

In October 2019, British Columbia recognized the Holodomor as an act of genocide against Ukraine — its interest in the matter had been limited previously. It was Canada's sixth province to recognize the Holodomor as a genocide. In addition, Canada continued to support Ukraine in international platforms, especially in the case of returning Ukrainian navy sailors and vessels seized by Russia. Canada articulated its position in support of Ukraine in international platforms, particularly of Ukraine's accession to NATO and of blocking Russia's return to the G7.

# Germany

# B+

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4	4	5	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4	4	4	5
STRATEGIC VISION	3	4	3	3	3
ACTIVITIES	5	5	4	5	5
RESULTS	4	4	5	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	B	B+	B-	B+	B+

Germany remains the most important political partner of Ukraine. Official Kyiv counts on Germany's support for keeping the pressure of sanctions on Russia and for solving the armed conflict in Donbas in the framework of the Normandy Four. Scheduled for 2020, the finalization of Nord Stream 2 remains one of the most problematic issues in the bilateral relations. With Germany's mediation, Ukraine has managed to sign an agreement on gas transit from Russia through the Ukrainian territory. Ukraine's priorities also include the attraction of German investment and Germany's assistance in rebuilding the war-damaged infrastructure in the East.



# '15– '19

Ukraine's foreign policy cooperation with Germany in the past five years predictably focused on the solution of the conflict with Russia (cooperation within the Normandy Format and the Minsk process). Another focus was on countering the construction of Nord Stream 2. In 2015–2019, the level of the political dialog was very intense on the top level (president, prime minister, foreign affairs minister). The Ukrainian Embassy in Germany promoted Ukrainian interests proactively, including with public diplomacy. Despite the fact that Germany is not listed among Ukraine's strategic partners in the legal framework, the role of Germany in supporting territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, mediation between Ukraine and Russia in the Normandy Format, provision of macro-financial and humanitarian assistance is unprecedented. In the past five years, all political forces in Ukraine have been unilateral in pointing an important role of Germany in the support of territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine and condemnation of the annexation of Crimea.

Numerous projects of technical assistance are implemented for sustainable economic development, energy efficiency, decentralization and democracy building. In 2016, the joint German-Ukrainian Trade and Industrial Chamber was launched. Starting from January 1, 2016, when the DCFTA with the EU came into effect, bilateral trade has been developing. For now, the key products of Ukrainian exports to Germany include electric machinery, agricultural products, clothing and knitwear, ore and slag, metals and wood.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Germany has traditionally been one of the most important political partners and allies for Ukraine. 2019 saw a highly intense dialog between Ukraine and Germany. The election of the new president and parliament in Ukraine did not substantially change the nature of Ukraine's political interest in Germany. Cooperation priorities include Germany's support in Ukraine's fight against the Russian aggression, including the Normandy Four negotiations, and continued sanction pressure against Russia. President Zelenskyy mentioned these, among other things, during his press marathon. It is important for Ukraine to attract German investments, its comprehensive assistance in implementing structural reforms and contribution to initiatives to restore the infrastructure in Eastern Ukraine damaged by the war. According to Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko, Ukraine would also like to receive military assistance from Germany, but that has not been fruitful so far. According to Ukraine's Ambassador to Germany A. Melnyk, Ukraine does not fully share the exaggerated German pacifism.

The situation has been problematic around Nord Stream 2 for several years now. Berlin keeps claiming that the project is purely commercial, while Kyiv insists that it has a political component and that Europe should be more independent of Russian fuels. In 2019, Ukraine's attention was focused on amendments in German legislation on the EU gas directive.

The Ukraine's President Decree No 837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" does not mention Germany directly, but it is implied in the context of the EU and G7. The group of friendship with Germany was established in the new parliament in December only.

## Institutional Cooperation

Throughout 2019, Germany was in focus of all branches of power in Ukraine. Their position and activities on the development of Ukraine-Germany relations can be described as coordinated. The President and Prime Minister played a central role in the bilateral relations given Germany's key role in keeping

sanctions in place, countering Russia's aggression, Normandy Format talks and serious economic potential. Ukraine's Embassy to Germany, MPs, and individual ministries and agencies acted in sync with the position of the President.

## Strategic Vision

The strategic vision of partnership with Germany did not change. 88 legal acts remain effective. In 2019, the Governments of Ukraine and Germany ratified the Agreement to Establish Local Bureaus of GIZ GmbH and the Credit Institute for Reconstruction (KfW) that was signed earlier in 2018. Adopted on September 30, the Government Action Plan does not refer to Germany directly, yet the goals set for the MFA, including on support for the Ukrainian business abroad, increasing exports and inflow of investment, and on ensuring favourable international conditions for sustainable economic development of Ukraine, regard to Germany as an EU member-state and as a member of G7.

## Activities

In 2019, Foreign Affairs Minister V. Prystaiko made two working visits to Germany. The parties spoke about ways to implement decisions from the Paris Summit of Normandy Four to accomplish progress in the Minsk process and about energy security. Support of the German government for further deep reforms and financial technical cooperation projects were other aspects of the talks. German Foreign Affairs Minister H. Maas visited Ukraine twice. During the year, representatives of the Ukrainian Energy and Defence Ministries met with their German peers.

On June 18, President Zelenskyy went on his first official visit to Germany, where he had negotiations with Federal President F.— W. Steinmeier, Chancellor A. Merkel, Bundestag President W. Schäuble, heads of some parties and business representatives. Also, he met with A. Merkel at the 74th session of the UN GA in September to discuss the security situation in Eastern Ukraine and to prepare the Normandy Four meeting. The Ukrainian Embassy in Germany

worked proactively to promote Ukraine's interests abroad through media presence, work with the leaders of German lands and business, and used a wide variety of tools of public diplomacy.

On January 18–27, the Ukrainian business was officially represented at a food expo — the International Green Week (Berlin), for the first time in the past five years with an individual national pavilion. Ukraine's return in the high status of a national pavilion was possible thanks to the joint effort and successful cooperation between the Ukrainian business and the Government. With the support of Ukraine's Office for Promotion of Exports and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, light industry companies from Ukraine went to Germany as part of the Trade Mission. In October, the 11th meeting of the Permanent Ukraine-Bavaria Working Commission took place.

## Results

In 2019, bilateral trade in goods and service with Germany grew to USD 9.4 bn with a negative balance for Ukraine.

The meeting of the Normandy Four and Germany's support to the position of Ukraine in its fight against the Russian aggression were important political accomplishments of the year. At the same time, Ukraine failed to persuade Germany to stop the construction of Nord Stream 2 despite the consolidated position of all government agencies. In the view of the official Kyiv, this damages the interest of both Ukraine and the whole of Europe. Ukraine managed to get Germany's firm position on the need to continue the transit of gas through its territory — the agreement was signed on December 31.

Ukraine failed to persuade German MPs to recognize the Holodomor as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people (October). Germany recognizes the fact of the crime politically, yet it opposes an interpretation from the perspective of international law as was claimed during the hearings at Bundestag and by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in response to Ukraine's petition.

According to the agreements reached during the President P. Poroshenko and Prime Minister V. Groyzman's visits to Germany in fall 2018, Germany appointed a Special Government Envoy for Privatization in 2019.

# USA

# B+

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4	4	5	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4	4	4	5
STRATEGIC VISION	3	4	3	3	3
ACTIVITIES	5	5	4	5	5
RESULTS	4	4	5	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	B	B+	B-	B+	B+

Considering the priority nature of cooperation with the United States, political interest in this direction was demonstrated at all levels, while foreign policy activities focused on a security dimension of cooperation, as well as on its political, economic and energy components. Despite the deep involvement and existing strategic vision, its results were overshadowed by the fact that in 2019 Ukraine found itself at the epicentre of the domestic political scandal in the USA. Nevertheless, in 2019, the USA continued to support Ukraine and help it to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity. It insisted on the need to ensure the release of Ukrainian political prisoners and the return of control over occupied Crimea to Ukraine. Sanctions against Russia were extended and the new ones were introduced over Nord Stream 2. Assistance to Ukraine from the US defence budget for 2020 was increased to USD 300 million.

'15-  
'19

Over the period in question, relations with the USA have always been of priority and strategic significance to Ukraine. This is reflected in the main strategic documents as well as in the statements and speeches by Ukraine's high-ranking officials, who have always emphasized the leading role of the United States in supporting the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression (the US Crimea Declaration reaffirming its rejection of Russian's annexation of Crimea was important in this regard). There was an ongoing active dialogue with the US counterparts, the sides maintained intergovernmental and interagency contacts. The US-Ukraine Strategic Partnership Commission resumed its work in an updated format in 2018.

Ukrainian diplomats focused their main efforts on security issues, in particular the supply of defensive weapons (the supply of lethal defensive weapons was authorized in 2017, the sale of the Javelin systems was approved in 2018 and 2019), extension of sanctions against Russia. Considerable attention was paid to sectoral cooperation, in particular in the energy sector.

However, Ukraine's aspirations to become a major non-NATO ally and to involve the USA in negotiations on Donbas conflict have not been fulfilled.

## Political Interest / Engagement

’19

Given the priority of Ukraine’s dialogue with the USA in various domains, in 2019, both teams showed an active political interest at all levels. President P. Poroshenko constantly drew attention to the high strategic level of partnership between Ukraine and the USA, in particular to the coordination of efforts in response to security challenges in the region. President V. Zelenskyy also emphasized the strategic nature of relations and the importance of the US political and security assistance to Ukraine.

However, the vision of Ukraine’s foreign policy towards the USA was not widely reflected in the election programmes of presidential candidates. This direction was only mentioned by R. Koshulynskyy (who called the USA a strategic ally of Ukraine in fighting an aggressor) and by O. Lyashko (who called for a direct military agreement with the USA). Parties appeared slightly more involved: foreign policy towards the USA was outlined in the election programmes of Batkivschyna and Svoboda parties (on the launch of talks in the Budapest format), Syla I Chest (Strength and Honour, on the development of a multi-tiered strategic partnership), Hromadysnka Posytsia (Civic Position, on the establishment of allied relations), O. Lyashko’s Radical Party (on a direct military agreement). In addition, some MPs addressed the issue directly in their speeches. Batkivshchyna leader Y. Tymoshenko repeatedly highlighted a strategic partnership with the USA and the importance of the US security assistance. Golos Party’s representatives mentioned the importance of cooperation with the USA in the context of security and defence. Representatives of the Opposition Platform — For Life in their speeches mostly cast criticism on the so-called US “interference” in Ukraine’s domestic and foreign policy.

The Foreign Affairs Committee of the VRU of the VIII convocation, headed by H. Hopko, was highly active in the US direction. A group on interparliamentary cooperation with the USA was formed in the Parliament of the IX convocation on 23.10.

## Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation has seen various trends over the year. An example of the agreed position could be a coordination of efforts during the purchase of the Javelin anti-tank missile systems from the USA. Unlike in 2018, in 2019, all the institutions concerned, including the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Agriculture of Ukraine, have cooperated to achieve progress in ensuring the enforcement of intellectual property rights, which facilitated the resumption of the US preferences for Ukraine regarding duty-free imports.

In 2019, the lack of institutional coordination was seen behind a statement by former Prosecutor General Y. Lutsenko about US Ambassador M. Yovanovitch, and during the organization of an aide to President V. Zelenskyy's visit to the USA without proper coordination with Ukraine's Embassy in Washington D. C. and the MFA.

Some cross-party misunderstandings were observed during the formation of the Ukraine-USA Interparliamentary Friendship Group in the VRU of the IX convocation, which prompted members of the European Solidarity party to refuse formal membership of the group.

V. Chaly was dismissed from the post of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the United States (19.07). V. Yelchenko was appointed as a new Ambassador (18.12).

## Strategic Vision

The USA is mentioned in a number of strategic documents, which were adopted in the previous years, such as the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Memorandum on Bilateral Cooperation between the US Congress and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the USA-Ukraine Charter, etc. The 2008 Charter defines bilateral dialogue as a strategic partnership and remains relevant, in particular its provisions on defence and territorial integrity, advancement of democracy, and security guarantees provided by the Budapest Memorandum. The Military Doctrine mentions the USA in the context of its support for Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity as a factor of global and regional stability.



The 2019 Government Priority Action Plan (18.12.2018) names the USA among the key partners in the implementation of the President of Ukraine's initiative on activities of the Friends of Crimea's De-occupation International Platform and the implementation of the NATO-Ukraine ANP, as well as in the context of diplomatic facilitation in securing foreign assistance to Ukrainian citizens affected by Russian aggression. O. Honcharuk's Government Action Programme (29.09.2019) does not mention the USA. However, the President of Ukraine's Decree No 837/2019 (8.11.2019) "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" highlights the need to maintain the positive dynamics of bilateral political dialogue between Ukraine and the USA.

## Activities

Ukraine's foreign policy in this direction has been marked by high activity. Emphasis is placed on the security dimension of cooperation, as well as on the political, economic and energy sectors. A situation in eastern Ukraine, strengthening of sanctions against Russia, a prospect of Ukraine's NATO membership, a release of Ukrainian prisoners, an implementation of reforms, and risks associated with a completion of Nord Stream 2 still form the core of the bilateral agenda.

There has been an active dialogue with US counterparts over the year. V. Zelenskyy and D. Trump had two phone conversations and a meeting on the side-lines of the 74th session of the UN GA. Representatives of the Ukrainian political establishment (the Prime Minister, the Vice-Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and their deputies, etc.) met with US Vice President M. Pence, National Security Adviser J. Bolton, Charge d'Affaires W. Taylor, Deputy Secretary of State J. Sullivan, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs D. Hale, deputy assistant secretaries, Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations K. Volker, Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee J. Risch, Ranking Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee R. Menendez, Energy Secretary R. Perry, other senators and government representatives.

Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs of the VIII convocation was active in the US direction. MPs had meetings with the representatives of the

Senate Committee on Armed Forces, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Department of State's Bureau of Energy Resources and others.

At the invitation of the Atlantic Council, the Ukrainian parliamentary delegation consisting of members of the anticorruption policy committee made a working visit to Washington D. C., where it held a number of meetings, including with representatives of political parties and the Department of State. MPs from Ukraine (and the EU member states) issued an address to the House of Representatives and the Senate on counteraction to the Russian hybrid threat and the implementation of the Nord Stream 2 project (15.03). They also addressed the Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, E. Engel, regarding the situation resulting from statements made by members of Congress about the Azov battalion (31.10).

Ukraine's Embassy in the USA together with the MIP organized the forum "Crimea after Five Years of Russian Occupation. The Threat to Global International Order" in Washington D. C. (19.03).

The United States and Ukraine held a non-proliferation working group meeting in Kyiv (November) to discuss multilateral non-proliferation arrangements, arms and export control, etc.

## Results

In 2019, the USA continued to support Ukraine, emphasizing the need to ensure release of Ukrainian political prisoners and the return of control over occupied Crimea to Ukraine. D. Trump's meeting with V. Putin was cancelled in protest against an illegal detention of Ukrainian sailors. Sanctions against Russia over its aggression against Ukraine were extended by another year (4.03). The House of Representatives passed the Crimea Annexation Non-Recognition Act. The USA condemned the granting of the Russian citizenship to residents of uncontrolled territories of Donbas.

The US National Defense Authorization Act for 2020 reserves USD 300 million in assistance to Ukraine, which is USD 50 million more than a year before. In addition, the US budget foresees sanctions over Nord Stream 2. After the Department of State agreed to sell the Javelins worth USD 39 million to Ukraine,

a contract on their supply was signed. The US Presidential Administration introduced a new position of the US senior defence industry adviser on Ukraine, which was taken by D. Winter.

The Ukrainian MoD and the Pentagon Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency signed a Memorandum of Understanding. A protocol on further directions of cooperation was signed following the consultations between the MoD of Ukraine and the US Department of Defense. Ukraine, the USA and Poland signed the Energy Memorandum. Two agreements — on Promotion of Transparent Governance Processes with Broad Public Participation and Sustainable Economic Development Agreement on a broad public basis — were extended until 2025. To continue cooperation in science and technology, the sides approved an agreement on further intergovernmental cooperation. Ukraine and the USA have launched a cooperation project on education and research in modern nuclear science and engineering.

Given Ukraine's progress in enforcing intellectual property rights, the USA restored Kyiv's access to the Generalized System of Preferences, granting Ukraine duty-free treatment on about 3,500 products. The US Board on Geographic Names replaced "Kiev" with "Kyiv" in its official databases at the request of Ambassador of Ukraine V. Chaly, supported by members of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus and the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America.

Despite high political interest in the USA, strategic vision and active engagement, the results of cooperation were marred by the fact that Ukraine found itself at the epicentre of the US domestic political scandal. There have been a number of unpleasant moments in the Ukrainian-American dialogue, ranging from criticism of the progress in anticorruption reform in Ukraine by US Ambassador to Ukraine M. Yovanovitch, statements by former Prosecutor General Y. Lutsenko, the delay in security assistance to Ukraine, to the fact that a phone conversation between V. Zelenskyy and D. Trump was a part to the US president's impeachment case. The position of US Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations has been vacant after K. Volker resigned.

# France

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4	4	4	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	5	4	4	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	2	2	2	2
ACTIVITIES	5	4	4	5	4
RESULTS	4	3	3	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	B+	C+	C+	B-	C+

The trend that has shaped Franco-Ukrainian relations over the past five years, namely the priority of issues related to the resolution of the Ukrainian-Russian conflict, peaked in 2019, when matching goals resulted in active communication and effective cooperation between the two presidents, and culminated with a Normandy summit. Economic and investment cooperation is advancing very slowly. Ukraine has so far failed to develop a strategic approach to its relations with France.

'15–  
'19

Ukrainian-French relations intensified from 2014 to 2019, under the influence of Russian aggression, in connection with Paris's initiatives to boost its diplomatic involvement on behalf of the EU in general and in the Eastern European affairs in particular. Naturally, this intensification was primarily concerned with the conflict resolution; however, there was a real chance to use the "transfusion effect" for a new qualitative leap in bilateral relations. This chance was lost. Ukraine and France continue to have diametrically opposite strategic visions on the prospects for Ukraine's integration into the EU and NATO, on the role of the Russian Federation in the EaP and the European security architecture, and on the return to the "Russia first" logic in general. Despite the steady growth of economic exchanges and investment, there is a lack of initiatives and steps aimed at expanding the French presence, which has a significant impact given France's efforts to economise diplomacy.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest in France increased during and immediately after the presidential election in Ukraine. Before the election, candidate V. Zelenskyy actively communicated with the French Embassy and had his first meeting with President E. Macron in Paris. However, this interest focused almost entirely on the issue of settling the conflict with the Russian Federation and, in

'19

particular, an organization of a meeting in the Normandy format by the end of the year. The Ukrainian side also followed this logic during V. Zelenskyy's press marathon, where France was also mentioned in the context of the Russian Federation. France has also become more prominent in the media and in expert commentaries, though not always in a positive light in view of President E. Macron's initiatives to expand French relations with Russia, his controversial comments on Ukrainian migration, etc.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

Intergovernmental cooperation in 2019 in the France's dimension was hindered by the post-election reboot. Therefore, the Office of the President of Ukraine played a decisive role in Ukrainian-French contacts, while the role of the MFA was secondary. One of the negative moments was a delay in the formation of the Ukrainian parliamentary group for interparliamentary relations with the French Republic. As a result, the heads of the committee representing the Servant of the People party faced criticism from other factions. The group was formed only on November 18.

## **Strategic Vision**

The situation with the lack of strategic vision has remained unchanged — France earned no individual mention in the basic strategic documents, while the Declaration of Heads of State of April 2, 2015 constitutes the last attempt to outline at least short-term priorities for bilateral relations outside the Normandy format. There were no signs that this situation may change in 2019. France is not mentioned separately in the foreign policy section of the Presidential Decree No 837/2019 “On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state” and is only indirectly mentioned in the sections concerning the Normandy format, G7 and the EU.

## Activities

Then President P. Poroshenko paid a working visit to France (12.04) on the same day that the winner of the first round of the presidential election, V. Zelenskyy, privately visited Paris. Both had separate meetings with French President E. Macron that day. Immediately after the inauguration (30.05), V. Zelenskyy met Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs J-Y. Le Drian, who visited Ukraine together with his German counterpart. Zelenskyy then paid an official visit to France (17.06). Over the year, the newly-elected President has had three telephone conversations with E. Macron (07.08, 29.08, 15.11). The agenda of these conversations was, in fact, entirely dictated by the need to settle the situation in Donbas and to organize a meeting in the Normandy format. The result was the relaunch of the Normandy format, initially at a level of diplomatic advisers to the presidents meeting in Paris (12.07), which then culminated with the Normandy Four Summit in Paris (9.12). Among other things, the French side paid particular attention to the issue of securing the release of political prisoners. It is worth noting that Ukrainian President V. Zelenskyy did not attend events with the wide representation of foreign leaders, in particular the funeral of former French President J. Chirac or the anniversary of the end of World War I.

Interparliamentary cooperation was observed at the beginning of the year (visits by R. Chubarov (28.01) and O. Goncharenko (5.03)), who met the leaders of the France-Ukraine Friendship Group in the National Assembly and the Senate, respectively. However, due to the mentioned delays in the formation of the Ukraine-France Friendship Group, the visit of the head of the France-Ukraine Friendship Group of the French Senate, H. Maurey, scheduled for November 25, did not take place.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine did not meet their French counterparts. Government members active in this direction included Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration D. Kuleba (took part in the business forum “Ukrainian Meetings”, 17.12), Minister of Internal Affairs A. Avakov (approved a project on the joint manufacturing of patrol boats, 19.11), and Minister of Finance O. Markarova (met French Secretary of State for Economy and Finance A. Pannier-Runacher (7.05) in Paris to discuss economic cooperation and support for infrastructure

projects). Also, the delegation of the Verkhovna Rada and representatives of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy visited France to study the land market (24.04), while the delegation of the Kyiv City State Administration met the Movement of the Enterprises of France (MEDEF) (8.04), etc.

Compared to previous years, the Embassy of Ukraine in France has focused more on commemorative and cultural activities. In particular, it took part in honouring the memory of Ukrainians killed in World War II (07.05), Ukrainian soldiers of the French Foreign Legion (2.11), the memory of the victims of the Holodomor (17.11) and others. Several cultural events were held: a booth at the Paris Book Fair (15–19.03), the Kobzar Festival of Ukrainian Culture in Nice (4–11.05), the Christmas in the Kingdom of Anna Yaroslavna festival in Senlis (22.12), a retrospective screening of K. Muratova's films (26.09). It also supported the participation of Ukrainian artists in exhibitions. The activities of the Cultural Centre of Ukraine in France and the support of the Ukrainian Institute were of great importance to these and other cultural exchanges.

In 2019, two Honorary Consulates of Ukraine were opened (Hauts-de-France and Nouvelle-Aquitaine). The Ambassador met the Director General of the French Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions C. Chaillou (24.01), facilitated the visits by representatives of Ukrainian cities and exporters to France, as well as visits by former political prisoners R. Suschenko and O. Sentsov (who met President E. Macron and was awarded the title of an honorary citizen of Paris).

Diplomats continued to protest against manifestations of Russian propaganda, which could facilitate the legitimization of the annexation of Crimea (the Embassy of Ukraine's letter to the French Ministry of Culture, 26.07). The MFA strongly condemned the visit by a group of French politicians to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea occupied by Russia (14.03) and summoned the Ambassador of France to Ukraine over President E. Macron's statements about Ukrainian migration to the EU (2.11).

The Year of the French Language was held in Ukraine. However, it was not reciprocated because there was no Year of the Ukrainian Language in France.



## Results

The change of power in Ukraine in 2019 and, in particular, the overlapping of the two presidents' political priorities for peace in Donbas prompted the French leadership to intensify relations with Ukraine. The other dimensions of political cooperation during the election year noticeably slowed down. However, it transpired that the long-awaited official visit of the French President to Ukraine might be organized next year, which can give these relations a new impetus.

France's position in 2019 has changed in a way that is not favourable for Ukraine, given that French dialogue and enhanced cooperation with Russia have reached a new priority level this year. This was clearly demonstrated by French support for the return of the Russian delegation to the PACE, statements about the construction of common European security architecture with Russia, as well as the French President's willingness to attend Victory Day celebrations in Moscow on May 9, 2020. France's sceptical attitude towards the prospects for European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine and the development of the Eastern Partnership has not changed either.

Agreements and contracts signed during the year are generally of limited and applied nature. Some of the projects announced last year are still waiting to be implemented. A framework international agreement was signed to implement a project to modernize Mariupol's water supply system (29.01). A project on the use of Airbus helicopters bought from France last year (for the development of a training centre) is developing. A project to manufacture patrol boats for the State Border Service was announced. The construction of an arch over the Chornobyl sarcophagus by French companies, which was funded by the international community, has been completed. Ukraine received a grant of 560,000 euros from the Ministry of Economy and Finance of France for a joint project by Ukrenergo and RTE International to develop the Energy Storage system (01.02).

In terms of trade, French exports to Ukraine continue to increase, primarily thanks to the AA and FTA, while the growth of Ukrainian imports resumed (both by 10% in 2019). Trade turnover was USD 2.25 mn. In general, asymmetry in trade in favour of France persists. France remains the largest foreign employer in Ukraine and the fourth largest European investor.

# Japan

# B-

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	3	4	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	3	3	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	3	3	3	3
ACTIVITIES	n/a	5	5	4	5
RESULTS	n/a	5	5	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	B-	B	C+	B-

Despite a rather reserved strategic stance on Japan and an openly low political interest in Ukraine, public offices have traditionally demonstrated a high level of engagement in dialogue on security, use of nuclear and renewable energy, reforms implementation, and healthcare. Japan has consistently supported Ukraine in the framework of international cooperation and bilaterally within numerous investment projects.

'15–  
'19

The reporting period is characterized by the steady development of economic relations: an increase in general trade, implementation of investment projects, and active cooperation at the government level. As part of the Kusanone programme, Japan implements projects for the development of medical and educational institutions, material assistance to the occupied territories, and provides technical assistance under JICA. The systematic support for Ukrainian diplomatic initiatives in the international arena contributes to the fruitful implementation of Ukraine's foreign policy priorities. Japan was one of the first to condemn Russian occupation and to support sanctions.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Given the election turmoil of 2019, no significant changes in Ukraine's interest in this direction of foreign policy took place. Political interest is focused on cooperation in energy saving technologies, manufacturing, the municipal sector, and attraction of Japanese investment in the development of transport and energy infrastructure of Ukraine. Traditionally, Japan is seen as a key partner in countering Russian aggression and providing support in the international arena. These aspects are reflected in the election programme of the UKROP party but not in the manifestos of the political parties represented in the Verkhovna Rada. Nevertheless, a group of friendship with Japan was one of the first to be

'19

formed in the VRU Rada of the new convocation (October). Japan was mentioned by representatives of the new team only in the G-7 format, for example, in the speech by Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko during his endorsement in the VRU or in the President's Decree No 837/2019 "On Urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state".

## **Institutional Cooperation**

The Japanese direction in Ukraine's foreign policy was not reflected in the Government's Priority Action Plan and the Work Plan of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Interparliamentary Cooperation. However, the composition of the VRU's group on interparliamentary relations with Japan was updated and now includes 117 MPs. Institutional cooperation aimed at ensuring high-level visits was rather fruitful.

## **Strategic Vision**

The main strategic documents contain almost no mention of Japan, which attests to the lack of strategic interest. The main directions and forms of cooperation on a broad range of bilateral and international issues are outlined in the Joint Statement of the President of Ukraine and the Prime Minister of Japan on Ukraine-Japan Global Partnership (18.01.2011), which is already outdated. No bilateral comprehensive agreements were signed in 2019.

## **Activities**

The second half of 2019 was filled with government-level visits and meetings. For the first time, the President of Ukraine attended the enthronement of the Emperor of Japan. During this working visit (21–24.10), the President met Prime Minister Sh. Abe, the Speaker of the House of Representatives (lower house)

and the Speaker of the House of Councillors (upper house), the leadership of the Japan Association of New Economy (JANE), and the head of the Japan-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Association. During the meetings, the sides discussed cooperation in the implementation of infrastructure projects in Ukraine, as well as mutually beneficial projects in the fields of energy, transport, agriculture, environment and visa-free travel for Ukrainians in the run-up to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. On June 25, the President of Ukraine met the founder of the Japanese company Rakuten (the owner of Viber messaging service) to discuss possible cooperation in the “State in a Smartphone” project.

Before the Ukraine Reform Conference (2.07, Toronto) Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine H. Zubko met the Japanese Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs to discuss areas of further cooperation: infrastructure development in Mykolaiv Region (port development and construction of a bypass bridge over the South Bug River), waste management, and social development of the Chornobyl Exclusion Zone (transformation into an investment area).

The chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the new convocation, D. Razumkov, met a delegation of the Japanese House of Representatives, led by the head of the Japan-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Association, who came to study the the Verkhovna Rada work, constitutional processes and expansion of bilateral cooperation with the Ukrainian Parliament.

Prime Minister of Ukraine O. Honcharuk met a delegation of the Japan-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship League (September) to discuss the areas of bilateral cooperation in nuclear energy and information technology.

The Ukrainian-Japanese defence consultations (19.09) in Kyiv chaired by the Deputy Minister of Defence of Ukraine for European Integration and the Director-General for International Affairs of the Ministry of Defence of Japan discussed military cooperation in the medical sector and defence industry, as well as cyber security. .

The Japanese Government continues to supply Ukraine with medical equipment under the Agreement on Technical Cooperation and Grant Aid (the total amount of the grant is over UAH 112 million).

The Japanese-language version of the Ukrinform news agency's website launched in late 2018 has been gaining popularity.

## Results

Judging by the results of the year, the Governments of Ukraine and Japan have fruitfully cooperated both bilaterally and in international organisations framework. Japan has consistently maintained its principled position on support for the independence, territorial integrity and inviolability of Ukraine's internationally recognized borders. The Government of Ukraine allocated USD2.82 million to Ukraine to help it meet humanitarian needs, support vulnerable groups of the population, restore its eastern regions and buy medical equipment for the Defence Ministry's hospital. In addition, assistance was provided through four projects being implemented by the UN agencies in Ukraine, including UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNOPS.

In 2019, the State Financial Monitoring Service of Ukraine and the Japanese Financial Intelligence Unit signed a Resolution on cooperation in counteracting the legalization (laundering) of income proceeding from crime and the financing of terrorism. The Government of Ukraine and the Government of Japan approved the draft agreement (in the form of exchange of diplomatic notes) on a non-project grant to the Ukrainian Government for the purchase of special equipment for the National Public TV and Radio Company of Ukraine.

Amid the traditionally negative balance of Ukraine's trade with Japan, imports and exports increased by 29.2% and 17.7% respectively, compared with a similar period a year earlier. Total turnover in 2019 reached USD 1.2 billion.



# B+



# EUROPEAN INTEGRATION



.....

**European Union**

**A-**

.....

**Eastern Partnership**

**B**



.....

**European Energy  
Community**

**B-**

.....



# European Union

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	5	5	5	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4+	4+	4+	4+
STRATEGIC VISION	5	5-	4+	5	5
ACTIVITIES	4	5-	5-	4+	5
RESULTS	5	4	4	4+	4
TOTAL SCORES	A-	B+	B+	A-	A-

	TOTAL SCORES	POLITICAL INTEREST	INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	STRATEGIC VISION	ACTIVITIES	RESULTS
POLITICAL DIALOGUE	A-	5	4	5	5	4
ECONOMIC COOPERATION	A-	5	5	5	5	4

# '15– '19

Over five years, Ukraine has come a very long and constructive way towards the EU but failed to persuade the EU to consolidate the prospect of its membership in any binding document. However, at the practical level, the EU provides all necessary and possible assistance to Ukraine: it signed the Association Agreement, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area; introduced visa-free travel; approved and extended on a regular basis four levels of sanctions against the Russian Federation over the occupation of Crimea and aggression in eastern Ukraine, etc.

Ukraine, for its part, continues to prove its European choice by amending the Constitution, setting up the Government Office for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, introducing the post of Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, appointing deputy ministers for European integration, developing numerous roadmaps and action plans on the content and deadlines of deliverables, as well as incorporating EU norms and standards in Ukrainian legislation.

Ukraine's economic cooperation with the EU is based on the DCFTA and has a positive dynamic, although the growth of Ukrainian exports has been slowing down in recent years. The country maintains political unity on European integration and proper institutional cooperation. The energy sector, the digital market, customs policy and technical regulation are turning into real priorities for Ukraine's bilateral cooperation with the EU. Based on the results of 2019, a position was elaborated regarding the need not only to implement the AA by both parties, but also to revise its provisions.



## POLITICAL DIALOGUE

At the end of 2019, the vacuum of understanding of the foreign policy vision for European integration by the new Ukrainian authorities gradually gave way to cautious optimism that the chosen instruments, methods, tone of discussion, and the promises implementation pace were correct. Although it is too early to draw unambiguous conclusions, official Kyiv's actions currently evoke more approval and support from the EU, giving it carte blanche to implement reforms and receive additional support under the "more for more" formula.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Compared with President P. Poroshenko's foreign policy statements in the first quarter of 2019, President-elect V. Zelenskyy's focus on domestic agenda resulted in a somewhat lower number and diluted content of statements on political cooperation with the EU. Still, a joint statement on the results of the EU-Ukraine Summit and V. Zelenskyy's visit to Brussels in June confirmed the irreversibility of Ukraine's EU membership bid.

Whereas there was hardly any mention of the European integration in O. Honcharuk's speeches and interviews at the beginning of the new government work, at the end of the year, he held joint briefings on European integration with Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration D. Kuleba. The government programme has a separate section on European integration. All parties in the Verkhovna Rada paid considerable attention to cooperation with the EU in their election programmes, although the Opposition Platform — For Life party had a different position.

## Institutional Cooperation

All actors participating in elaboration the European integration dimension of foreign policy were reset in 2019. Sometimes this was accompanied by friction and misunderstanding. The July conflict, when the new President's team prevented the Vice Prime Minister and a head of the Government Office from taking part in the EU-Ukraine Summit, sent a negative signal, but the trend was reversed with an appointment of the new Cabinet of Ministers in late September.

The best indicators that the new authorities' European integration policy is consistent are the facts that they retained the post of Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine (who received the Transition Book from the previous government), the launched institutional dialogue and continued consultations with the public. The Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration continues to act as a liaison coordination point.

The CMU and VRU cooperation have intensified. With some exceptions, the Parliament mostly considered and passed the bills that had been lingering "on the back burner" since the previous convocation. A change of the name of the parliamentary committee to the Committee on Ukraine's Integration with the EU attests to a shift of accents in its work. The fact that former Vice Prime Minister I. Klympush-Tsintsadze, a member of the opposition pro-European parliamentary party "European Solidarity", was appointed its chair sent a positive signal about the political interest of the legislative branch of power.

## Strategic Vision

In February, the Verkhovna Rada passed the bill that enshrined Ukraine's strategic course for EU and NATO membership in the Constitution.

The President of Ukraine's Decree "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" (8.11) paid significant attention to cooperation with the EU.

Medium-term prospects include updating the AA Implementation Action Plan and adopting a five-year Programme of the Cabinet of Ministers, which clearly outlines Ukraine's course for meeting EU membership criteria. The

inclusion into Ukrainian legislation of at least 80% of the EU acts envisaged by the AA is one of the key indicators of this plan implementation. Moreover, pretty much the first time, European integration is defined not only as a key foreign policy priority but also as a domestic political task, including through its regionalization, meaning explaining practical tangible benefits of Europeanization to residents of all regions.

## Activities

It is important that President V. Zelenskyy paid his first foreign visit to Brussels and soon Kyiv hosted the most important event of the year in relations with EU, the 21st EU-Ukraine Summit (8.07). Unlike in previous years, the Summit resulted in the signing of a joint declaration and five agreements on the EU financing of reforms in Ukraine, fight against corruption, an economic restoration of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, and development of Ukrainian culture.

Vice Prime Minister D. Kuleba paid numerous working visits to Brussels for political consultations with the leadership of the European institutions. The EU-Ukraine Association Committee held its fifth meeting in Brussels in November. However, the Association Council had to be postponed until 2020 due to the reboot of the European institutions.

Access to the online monitoring system “Pulse of the Agreement” was granted to the general public in 2019.

EU sanctions on Russia, including the sectoral and Crimea ones, were maintained throughout the year.

## Results

The Joint Declaration on the results of the EU-Ukraine Summit reaffirmed the EU's unwavering support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, as well as its European integration course and reforms. Visits by almost the entire highest EU political leadership — President of the European Council D. Tusk, President of the European Commission J-C. Juncker — to Ukraine are also telling.

The continued course for European integration and the pace at which new and existing action plans have been developed and updated can be considered achievements. In particular, Ukraine has adopted 16 bills and regulations on European integration.

An additional package of agreements on the EU assistance to the opening of Administrative Service Centres in Ukraine, migration management, free legal assistance, continuation of public service reform, and facilitation to the implementation of international development projects under the Danube Transnational Programme in Ukraine was approved.

An agreement on the EU's additional support, under which it would allocate 10 million euros to finance medium- and long-term support efforts in Donetsk and Luhansk regions and in the Sea of Azov coastal area, was signed at the EU-Ukraine Summit.

## **ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

Positive trends in the development of economic cooperation between Ukraine and the EU continued in 2019. Following the presidential and parliamentary elections, the country has maintained political unity with regard to European integration and proper institutional cooperation. The EU is Ukraine's largest trade partner and the volume of foreign trade turnover continues to grow. Ukraine's deeper sectoral integration and a revision of the Association Agreement with regard to the DCFTA are even more topical now.

## **Political Interest / Engagement**

Despite the alarmist sentiments in connection with the presidential and parliamentary elections, Ukraine continued a trend of advancement towards Europe in 2019. Political players show interest and involvement in European integration processes, but the topic has been losing presence in the information space. Economic cooperation with the EU is based on the DCFTA, however this year the stakeholders' attention is focused not only on implementing the

Association Agreement, but also on revising its provisions. In particular, the foreign policy section in the President of Ukraine's Decree No 837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" talks about revising the AA and ensuring further sectoral integration between Ukraine and the EU, including in digital economy, energy and customs among other sectors. *Rapprochement* with the EU in many sectors outside the DCFTA (green economy, digitalization, human capital, small and medium-sized businesses, financial services, transport, regional and cross-border cooperation) continues.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

The level of interinstitutional cooperation has remained adequate despite top-level reshuffles in government and parliament. The Government Office for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration continues to provide internal coordination for European integration, with the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture playing a leading role in economic sphere. The 21st EU-Ukraine Summit confirmed that the sides have maintained constructive dialogue at the top level.

At the bilateral level, cooperation with the European Commission's Support Group for Ukraine continues, and the formats foreseen by the AA and the EaP are working properly. There is ongoing dialogue between governmental offices and pro-European public platforms such the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform and the Ukrainian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

## **Strategic Vision**

The strategic vision for economic cooperation with the EU continues to be based on the provisions of the AA concerning the DCFTA, which main implementation document is the Association Agreement Implementation Action Plan approved by the CMU a year earlier. During the meeting of the EU-Ukraine Association Committee, the parties started discussing ways of improving the AA. Ukraine is interested in provisions concerning tariffs revision, updating of



provisions on non-tariff barriers, so-called “industrial visa-free regime” (ACAA), the adaptation of the agreement to changes in regulations, which have taken place in the EU. The Export Strategy for 2017–2021 continues to be the roadmap for stakeholders. The Annual Government Priority Action Plan for 2019, based on the Government’s Mid-Term Priority Action Plan until 2020, focused on the implementation of domestic tasks. The new Cabinet of Ministers’ activity programme mentions the development of human capital and economy, European integration among its main priorities. Discussions on initiatives of Ukraine’s accession to the EU Customs Union, the EU Energy Union, the Digital Single Market and the European Common Aviation Area have intensified in connection with the EC’s structured consultations on the future of the EaP.

## Activities

The economic part of the 21st EU-Ukraine Summit agenda focused on issues of macroeconomic stability in Ukraine, NBU independence, stability of the financial sector, an implementation of the IMF programme and the EU Macro-Financial Assistance programme, as well as expectations of further strengthening of economic integration and regulatory convergence in the areas of digital economy, trade facilitation and customs cooperation. The EU welcomed and acknowledged the progress made by Ukraine in adapting its legislation on technical regulation, standards and conformity assessment. The fifth meeting of the EU-Ukraine Association Committee discussed economic and sectoral cooperation, monitoring of the AA implementation and updating of its annexes. Work has taken place on the planning of the Association Council, scheduled for January 28, 2020, which might extend plans for further sectoral integration into the EU’s digital and energy markets, simplify trade with the EU and obtain “industrial visa-free regime”. As in previous years, numerous economic activities have taken place: forums, meetings of platforms, panels, meetings at ministerial and expert levels.

## Results

The year of 2019 did not bring any new tangible results in economic cooperation with the EU. Amendments to the AA Implementation Action Plan concerning customs and financial policy, taxation, entrepreneurship, financial services, competition, energy, energy efficiency, transport, digital sector, science, technology and innovation were approved on November 20. The “Pulse of the Agreement” system, a tool for monitoring progress in the implementation of the AA, is now open for public access. It shows that Ukraine has been lagging behind the implementation schedule in almost all areas. Important economic European integration legislation on common transit and authorized economic operators was adopted.

The issues concerning the trade in hops, pesticides, amber and wood continue to pose problems. Automobile transport permits were added to the list this year. There has been no progress with regard to the second tranche of 500 million euros under the fourth Macro-Financial Assistance programme, which the EU is ready to allocate as soon as Ukraine fulfils its obligations. The turnover in 2019 rose to USD 45.7 billion with negative balance for Ukraine.

# Eastern Partnership

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	2	3	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	4	4	3	4
STRATEGIC VISION	3	2	3	3	4
ACTIVITIES	3,5	4	5	5	5
RESULTS	4	4	4	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	C+	C+	B-	B-	B

The Eastern Partnership has regained the lost focus following the completion of the current political cycle and due to the need to determine its future format. Although the anniversary summit was postponed to the next year, the structured consultation on the future of the EaP held by the European Commission gave a significant boost to the Ukrainian stakeholders' activity. Continued implementation of the "20 Deliverables by 2020" and public monitoring of this process have shown that this approach is not ambitious enough for Ukraine. The strategic vision that Ukraine is promoting together with Georgia and Moldova is that the track of the three countries that signed the Association Agreements should be separated in order to bring them closer to the EU faster. The new A3 format was filled with quality content as a result of numerous events and consultations held throughout the year.

'15–  
'19

Despite changes in the EaP, including, above all, the evolution of the initial format into “20 Deliverables by 2020”, Ukraine’s position that it is secondary to the bilateral dimension of cooperation with the EU has remained unchanged over the five years. Ukraine has been actively using opportunities provided by the Eastern Partnership. The year of 2019 was marked by the emergence of a clear position on the need to separate the track of the three AA signatory states in order to bring them closer to the EU faster.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Whereas earlier Ukraine saw the EaP only as an additional opportunity for deepening European integration beyond the framework of the AA, this year its interest in the project transformation was more clearly articulated. The current format implemented on the basis of the Joint Staff Working Document “Eastern Partnership — 20 Deliverables by 2020: Focusing on key priorities and tangible results” prompted experts’ criticism and was of not much interest to the key stakeholders. The event that took place in Kyiv on October 22 as part of the EC’s structured consultation showed that Ukrainian officials had political interest in redirecting the EaP towards the key goal of Ukraine’s European integration. Nevertheless, Ukraine’s attention to the implementation of the Association Agreement is still much higher, which is reflected in both the domestic agenda and its bilateral relations with the EU.

'19

## Institutional Cooperation

Institutional changes that happened as a result of the presidential and parliamentary elections have not had a significant impact on the level of institutional cooperation, which remains fairly high. The Government Office for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration continues to provide internal coordination and liaise with the Deputy Ministers of European Integration.

There were no significant changes in the international dimension either. During the year cooperation continued at traditional platforms: formal and informal ministerial meetings, thematic platforms and panels, EURONEST, CORLEAP, Business Forum, Civil Society Forum (first of all, Ukrainian National Platform). Efforts to coordinate positions with partner countries, first of all signatories to the AA, have been taken both by the authorities and civil society.

## Strategic Vision

The Joint Staff Working Document “Eastern Partnership — 20 Deliverables by 2020: Focusing on key priorities and tangible results” continues to play a strategic or rather tactical role in the EaP framework. The goals of this document have not been reflected in the Ukrainian legal framework. The strategic interest with regard to the EaP is granting Ukraine and interested partner countries the prospect of EU membership and, as a consequence, to transform the initiative into a connecting link to the enlargement policy, while the development of bilateral relations remains an absolute priority. Currently, the government seeks to combine the efforts of stakeholders to transform the EaP after 2020 into a policy of supporting the European integration of Ukraine and other AA signatory states. Ukraine has assumed a role of a leader in this process, while the Government Office outlined the main provisions of a new format in a Joint Position Paper, which needs to be coordinated with Georgia and Moldova. Strategic planning for future activities within the EaP and Ukraine’s participation in it depends on the results of structured consultations conducted by the EC and on the newly-formed EU governing bodies.

## Activities

The postponement of the anniversary summit to 2020 placed the festivities, which took place in Brussels on 13–14 May, among the key events of the Eastern Partnership. There, the foreign ministers of the EU and the EaP failed to reach an agreement on the 10th anniversary declaration. It was published on behalf of High Representative F. Mogherini, who chaired the ministerial meeting. As in the previous year, the core activities within the EaP focused on the implementation of “20 Deliverables by 2020”. With various degrees of success, Ukraine has been trying to use the tools it was offered to help advance the reform and to implement the AA. The practice of holding thematic platforms, panels, forums, conferences and other events continued, which, however, did not have a tangible impact on achieving qualitative changes in the partner countries. Civil society remains one of the most active actors in the EaP dimension. The division of policy based on the strengthening of A3 (AA signatory states) became the main idea of the third Association Forum in November, a panel where experts could discuss the lessons learned, common challenges and the future of the Eastern Partnership after 2020.

## Results

In view of the 10th anniversary of the EaP, the EU has identified its 10 key achievements across the region. Ukraine has provided no formal assessment of the policy and the country’s participation in it. Instead, the Ukrainian National Platform of the EaP CSF prepared an analytical report “10 Key Eastern Partnership Achievements: Ukrainian Dimension”. The year of 2019 saw no breakthroughs, it is still a matter of “patchwork” achievements in different sectors, implementation of individual projects, provision of expert and technical support.

As far as the promotion of Ukrainian interests in the EaP is concerned, notable results in 2019 included Ukrainian officials’ formal opinion regarding the need to consolidate the positions of the AA signatory states in order to develop cooperation within the EaP and promote common interests at the EU level.

# European Energy Community

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3	4	4	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3	3	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	3	2	3	4
ACTIVITIES	4	3	2	3	4
RESULTS	3	2	2	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	C+	C-	C-	C+	B-

During 2019, Ukraine and the Energy Community worked closely to implement a new model of the electricity market in Ukraine, to separate and certify the gas transmission system operator, and to fulfil other commitments within the framework of the energy sector reform. The launch of the electricity market became an important achievement, but it still requires considerable work to deregulate and certify the transmission system operator. While a creation of the independent GTS operator took place in quickest-ever time and helped to keep a transit role, the reduction in physical volumes of gas transportation requires a revision of the state's gas strategy. Elaboration of an integrated energy and climate plan for 2030, development or update of the second phase of the Energy Strategy by 2025, resolution of the RES problem and implementation of the European Green Agreement approaches in energy are the next timely issues.

# '15– '19

The dynamics of the five-year relationship between Ukraine and the EU is positive. During this period, they managed to launch the natural gas and electricity markets, to reform the NKREPK, to implement most of the measures of the first stage of the Energy Strategy of Ukraine for the period until 2035, to ensure high dynamics of energy resources (gas and electricity) export-import operations with the EU Member States, to launch the Energy Efficiency Fund. Ukraine became one of the regional leaders in terms of renewable energy introduction. At the same time, the political populism of the Ukrainian authorities in keeping price preferences for certain categories of consumers remains an obstacle to large-scale implementation of the European energy legislation, and the oligarchic influence dominance distorts competition and increases energy resources costs for the national economy.

Ukraine and the EU failed to use the potential of working together to prevent the implementation of Russian bypass energy projects. Also, the EU did not become a platform for advocating Ukraine's interests in the EU institutions in the implementation of the Association Agreement in terms of coordination of decisions on infrastructure projects of common interest.



’19

## Political Interest / Engagement

The presidential and parliamentary election campaigns in Ukraine were held without high political interest in the Energy Community. At the same time, the political forces that formed the previous and new government did not applaud the EU's constant control and recommendations regarding the implementation of European energy legislation, when launching a new electricity market in Ukraine, the absence of auctions for renewable energy sources, poor implementation of energy efficiency and absence of communication with relevant legislative and executive authorities in their decision-making process, which must be coordinated with the EU. At the same time, the EU4Energy project and the USAID energy security project became convenient platforms for engaging parliamentarians, relevant ministries and public experts in a more systematic dialogue on various energy policy issues, especially after a new power vertical was formed.

Updating legislation on NKREPK, the procedure of electricity importing from third countries, the certification of the gas transmission system operator and the electricity transmission system operator became politically sensitive issues.

## Institutional Cooperation

The EC Secretariat repeatedly noted poor communication with the Ukrainian authorities on issues related to the introduction of the electricity market and those that had to undergo a process of approval following the obligations under the Association Agreement. As most unsatisfactory, they named a dialogue on putting special obligations on state-owned energy companies and price caps setting in the electricity market, with such decisions made urgently during closed CMU meetings without consulting the participants of the electricity market, civil society and international experts.

The VRU also adopted a number of amendments to the electricity market legislation without proper discussion with market participants and opposition political parties.

Since July 2019, a dramatic positive change has taken place in the dialogue around Naftogaz of Ukraine's unbundling and a creation of the new independent

GTS operator. Following the new CMU forming and establishment of the Ministry of Energy and Environment, a road map of unbundling was agreed in a short time, the relevant regulatory documents were adopted, and the NKREPK certification was carried out. However, they failed to agree on a unified approach and legislative framework for the simultaneous creation of independent operators for the natural gas and for the electricity sector, which would ultimately delay the certification of PJSC Ukrenergo and could adversely affect the process of integration into the European electricity market.

## **Strategic Vision**

In the first half of 2019, the predominant vision was to continue pursuing the strategic goals of integrating Ukraine into the EU's single energy market, following the 2018 Annual Address of the President of Ukraine and the Government's Priority Action Plan for 2019.

The post-election reshuffling of all branches of power in the second half of 2019 did not change the strategic vision on energy policy and relations with the EU, but several legislative initiatives jeopardized some of the integration measures implementation, especially in the electricity market, competition and deregulation sphere. In his New Year's address, the Prime Minister of Ukraine assured that the ENTSO-E integration course would not change until 2023. At the same time, the Ministry of Economy announced the need to revise the Energy Strategy of Ukraine for the period until 2035, motivating the inconsistency of the stated there goals with new aspirations of Ukraine in part of the decarbonisation and RES development.

## **Activities**

Two election campaigns, which took place in 2019, negatively affected cooperation between the Ukrainian authorities and the Energy Community. In the first half of the year, there was intensive communication on the introduction of a new electricity market model in the country, with discussions held on

readiness of regulatory and legal framework, market participants, as well as price jumps preventing mechanisms, and socially vulnerable population categories protection ensuring. The Groysman government launched a new market and in July-August 2019 tried to correct mistakes made in government decisions on its functioning conditions in terms of special responsibilities, renewable energy financing, and overcoming the consequences of rising electricity prices for non-residential customers. At the same time, the vast majority of the offered by the EU recommendations were ignored and the dialogue was substantially restricted.

The Honcharuk's government, together with the Verkhovna Rada, continued to implement measures aimed at increasing competition in the electricity market, but at the same time created obstacles to integration into the European energy market by expanding cooperation with Russia and Belarus in terms of imports.

After the change of the government, the unbundling procedure of NJSC Naftogaz of Ukraine was unblocked. In cooperation with EU experts, a new roadmap for the creation of an independent GTS operator and preparation for the introduction of European standards in its activities were developed.

The Constitutional Court of Ukraine decisions on the illegitimacy of the National Commission for State Regulation of Energy and Public Utilities created a new challenge for Ukraine-EU energy cooperation. As of today, the VRU and the EU continue active communication on ensuring the independence of the future energy regulator in the executive bodies' structure. The "EU4Energy Governance" project became one of the main tools for providing technical assistance to Ukrainian authorities in developing regulatory acts, exchanging experience with the EU Member States on different energy market segments functioning, implementing energy efficiency measures, and skills improvement.

## Results

In 2019, Ukraine-EU relations were marked by high dynamism and significant divergences of approaches to reform implementation. The main results were as follows: introduction of the electricity market following the requirements of the European energy legislation; unblocking the issue of separation of transportation sphere and the creation of the independent GTS operator; development of the regulatory framework for the GTS operator functioning under the ENTSO-G network codes; launch of the PJSC NEC-Ukrenergo corporatization and its certification as an independent transmission system operator; harmonization and development of the retail electricity market regulations, as well as rules for capacity reservation and congestion management, simplification of connections, new electricity market regulation.

The EU did not become an active partner of Ukraine in counteracting Russian bypass pipelines across the Baltic and the Black Sea. In its turn, Ukraine introduced legislative changes that contradict the goals of integration into ENTSO-E and separation from the energy system of the Russian Federation and Belarus.





# EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION (NATO)

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4	4	5	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	5	5	5	4
STRATEGIC VISION	5	5	5	5	5
ACTIVITIES	5	5	5	5	4
RESULTS	5	5	5	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	B+	A-	A-	A-	B+

In 2019, Ukraine-NATO cooperation continued at all levels with the participation of both presidents and governments. Ukraine's integration into NATO and reform of the security sector in accordance with NATO standards remained a priority. The most important development was the adoption of the Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine (concerning the strategic course of the state for Ukraine's full membership in the EU and NATO). However, compared with previous years, the level of results and activities has decreased.

# '15– '19

Over the past five years, Ukraine and NATO have cooperated at the high level, which included political dialogue, practical cooperation, advisory and financial assistance. Despite the different views of individual political parties represented in the VRU, amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine regarding the strategic course for NATO membership were adopted.

The establishment of the post of Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Cooperation and relevant coordination offices and commissions marked a significant progress in institutional cooperation. The Cabinet of Ministers, the MFA, the MoD, the General Staff, the VRU and other institutions responsible for individual areas of cooperation were involved in the dialogue at all levels.

Cooperation has been taken to a new level thanks to the launch of NATO Trust Funds for Ukraine, the decision on the Comprehensive Assistance Package, advisory support for security and defence reform, the transformation of the annual national programmes, and continuous operational exchange of experience, in particular in combating hybrid and cyber threats.



## Political Interest / Engagement

,19

In the course of 2019, the issue of implementing the state policy on Euro-Atlantic integration and cooperation with NATO was high on the agenda, however there has been a change in tactics and the issue risked fading into the background after the presidential elections.

Whereas President P. Poroshenko and his European Solidarity party clearly stated their striving for full membership, both before and during the elections, and emphasized the need to increase the NATO warships presence in the Black Sea due to Russia's aggressive actions; V. Zelenskyy and his Servant of the People party has changed their position over the course of the year from maintaining the usual partnership policy and a possible holding of a referendum to a goal to become an Enhanced Opportunity Partner. In Brussels and Kyiv, President V. Zelenskyy repeatedly said that the course for full membership in the Alliance remains Ukraine's foreign policy priority (June, October).

Political parties represented in the VR of the IX convocation have different approaches to partnership with NATO, which was reflected in their election programmes. Opposition Platform — For Life rules out Ukraine's membership of the alliance, while European Solidarity, Voice and Batkivshchyna talk about meeting NATO standards as a result of reforms, the Membership Action Plan and full membership, and Servant of the People calls for expanding cooperation with NATO and reaching its membership criteria. These positions were in fact reflected in the parties' later statements.

O. Honcharuk's Government Priority Action Plan for 2019–2020 includes the issue of Ukraine's integration into NATO, reform of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in accordance with its standards, and diplomatic support for Ukraine-NATO dialogue. Representatives of the security and defence sector repeatedly spoke about membership in NATO as a Ukraine's strategic goal. Among them were Minister of Defence A. Zagorodnyuk (10.11), Chief of the General Staff R. Khomchak and others.

## Institutional Cooperation

Concerns about the possible cancellation of the post of Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, which were observed in the summer, sent a negative signal about the extent of understanding of the important coordinating role of this official and functions of the Government Office. A concern, which, however, proved unjustified later, had been in August that interaction with NATO would not be included in the tasks of relevant parliamentary committees, also sent a negative signal.

The situation regained balance as soon as in the autumn. In particular, on 31 October, the President of Ukraine signed a decree to update the composition of the Commission for Coordination of Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, which is an auxiliary body under the President. The Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration at the Cabinet of Ministers' Secretariat continued its operation. This allowed the government to restore the proper level of interagency coordination, which had been somewhat "on hold" due to elections and an appointment of the new Cabinet of Ministers.

At the end of the year, Vice Prime Minister D. Kuleba initiated a new format of public consultations to accelerate Ukraine's integration into the EU and NATO with the participation of deputy ministers for European integration. However, at the moment, this format focuses on the EU rather than NATO.

The MFA, the MoD and the VRU took part in the implementation of a state policy on Euro-Atlantic integration and cooperation with NATO. More than 80 public offices, including state-owned enterprises and local authorities, have been implementing the NATO-Ukraine Annual National Programme for 2019. At the same time, the Government Programme for 2019–2020 only mentions issues of cooperation with NATO among the tasks of the Vice Prime Minister and the Ministry of Defence, but not of the MFA. By the end of the year, the Head of Ukraine's Mission to NATO had not been appointed (to replace V. Prystaiko who became Minister of Foreign Affairs in August).

## Strategic Vision

NATO has a significant place in all strategic documents adopted in Ukraine in previous years. The focus is on the reform of Ukraine's security and defence sector in accordance with NATO standards, cooperation and possible membership. The most important development of 2019 was an adoption of the Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine (concerning the strategic course of the state for Ukraine's full membership in the EU and NATO) (February). Other new documents of strategic importance are Presidential Decree No 837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" (November), which declares the priority of "ensuring sustainable international support for the strategic course of the state for acquiring full membership in NATO", including start of cooperation under the NATO Enhanced Opportunity Programme, more active interaction in combating hybrid threats and enhance Ukraine's cyber security.

One of the five goals of the MoD for 2019–2020, as identified by the new Government Programme, concerns NATO ("Ukraine's defence forces have reached new capabilities that meet Ukraine's NATO membership criteria"), while four other goals include elements of cooperation.

## Activities

In 2019, Ukraine and NATO actively cooperated at all levels despite the elections. Presidents of Ukraine held a number of meetings with the NATO Secretary General, in particular P. Poroshenko met him in Munich (February) and Brussels (May), V. Zelenskyy in Brussels (June) and on the side-lines of the UN GA (September), as well as during the visit of the North Atlantic Council to Kyiv (October).

The Vice Prime Ministers for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration in both governments, I. Klympush-Tsintsadze and D. Kuleba, had regular working visits and meetings.

During the year, the active implementation of the ANP under the aegis of the Ukraine-NATO Commission was underway. The results-based management

system for ANP monitoring was first established in 2019. After an evaluation visit by experts of the NATO International Secretariat to Ukraine in October 2019, the Alliance gave a positive assessment of the ANP-2019 implementation by Ukraine.

Practical cooperation has mostly concentrated at the level of the MoD, the General Staff and certain military branches in the form of consultations, joint events, foreign advisers' work in Ukraine, the adaptation of required standards and procedures. In particular, Minister of Defence of Ukraine S. Poltorak made a working visit to NATO HQ in February and A. Zagorodnyuk in October. The latter announced that the format of cooperation with NATO would be relaunched to make it more practical (in particular, all the existing programmes for cooperation between NATO and Ukraine would be merged into one, while the ANP would remain). The delegation of the MoD of Ukraine took part in the events at the level of NATO defence ministers with the participation of the states, which contribute to NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan (June). The Chiefs of the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces met the head of the NATO Military Committee, NATO Deputy Secretary General R. Gottemoeller and took part in respective events (January and October). The delegation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine visited the Allied Command Operations (November).

The NATO HQ hosted a meeting of the NATO Military Committee with Ukraine at the level of military representatives and a meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission at the level of ambassadors to discuss the situation in occupied Crimea (March). The NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Environmental Protection held its 16th meeting with the participation of Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine M. Strikha (March). The NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Military Reform held its next meeting, and the NATO Political Committee held a briefing on energy security (September). The NATO Aviation Committee held a plenary session with the participation of representatives of the State Aviation Service of Ukraine and the state-owned enterprise Ukraerorukh (November).

The North Atlantic Council led by Secretary General J. Stoltenberg visited Odesa and Kyiv (30–31.10). During the visit, the President of Ukraine stated the need to discuss in essence Ukraine's accession to the NATO Enhanced Opportunity Programme, Ukrainian interest in expanding the training of civilian personnel in the defence sector, improving the professional training of Ukrainian military

and enhancing demining capabilities. The Minister of Defence said that Ukraine wanted to become an integral member of the NATO group in the Black Sea.

There has been no further progress in activities within the NATO-Ukraine Platform on countering hybrid warfare. In particular, a Conference on countering hybrid threats, which had been scheduled for September, was postponed until 2020.

In 2019, the Ukrainian national contingent and personnel continued to carry out tasks in NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan and KFOR's multinational forces in Kosovo.

The VRU of the VIII convocation paid more attention to NATO issues as opposed to the IX convocation. In particular, on 7 February, the Parliament approved an appeal to parliaments of NATO member states, the North Atlantic Council and the NATO PA to grant Ukraine a Membership Action Plan at the NATO summit in London in December 2019. Lviv hosted a meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Interparliamentary Council (23–25.06). A roundtable “Information and cyber security in the context of Euro-Atlantic integration” was held at the initiative of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (11.03). The Parliamentary permanent delegation to the NATO PA took part in its 65th meeting in London (October).

Ukraine formally applied for Enhanced Opportunity Partner status (November).

The Verkhovna Rada gave the first reading to Bill No 2247 “On Amendments to Some Legislative Acts of Ukraine on Military Ranks of Military Personnel” (which had been delayed for a long time), which aligns the current Armed Forces military system with NATO standards (9.12).

## Results

In 2019, the main results of NATO-Ukraine cooperation concerned the internal dimension of reforms, adaptation, financial and advisory assistance.

On the fifth anniversary of the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia, North Atlantic Council issued a statement, in which its member states expressed full support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, urged Russia to return control over Crimea back to Ukraine, and reiterated that they have not and would not recognize the illegal annexation of Crimea. They also expressed concern over Russia's efforts to further militarise the Black Sea region (March).

On 12 December, the NATO HQ in Brussels hosted the 28th meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence-Technical Cooperation to discuss provisions of the draft National Security Strategy of Ukraine (12.12). An updated NATO-Ukraine Roadmap for Defence-Technical Cooperation was signed. The Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices Trust Fund was launched (February), as well as the Situational Awareness project under the Command, Control, Communications and Computers Trust Fund (November).

Despite the Government Programme plans for Ukraine to join the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence back in 2018, the process had not been completed by the end of 2019. In April, the NAC recognized Ukraine as a potential operational partner for the Alliance's training mission in Iraq, however the President had not signed a decree and thus the national contingent was not dispatched. The issue of Hungary blocking the NATO-Ukraine Commission has not been settled.







# BILATERAL RELATIONS

.....  
**Belarus** **B+**

.....  
**Georgia** **B-**

.....  
**Israel** **B+**

.....  
**Iran** **E+**

.....  
**China** **C**

.....  
**Lithuania** **B+**

.....  
**Moldova** **C**

.....  
**Poland** **B+**

.....  
**Romania** **C**

.....  
**Slovakia** **B-**

.....  
**Turkey** **C+**

.....  
**Hungary** **C-**

.....  
**Czech Republic** **B-**

.....  
**Russia** **C**

.....

# Belarus

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	3	3	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	4	4	5	5
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	4	4	4	4
ACTIVITIES	n/a	4	4	5	5
RESULTS	n/a	3	3	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	B-	B-	B+	B+

In 2019, despite the change of political elites in Ukraine, they managed to keep good contacts with Belarus at the highest level, as well as systematic work at the level of the Foreign Ministries. The Forum of Regions of Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus traditionally became the main event of the year and a platform for formal negotiations and business contracts. Trade cooperation remained a priority area of cooperation.

# '15– '19

During five years, Ukraine's foreign policy towards Belarus underwent a significant evolution caused by Russian aggression. As the Republic of Belarus is in a strong orbit of the Russia's influence in political, security and economic terms, Kyiv had to take a special approach. Belarus was and still remains a strategically important partner of Ukraine in the economic and fuel-and-energy spheres. Stable personal contact between the presidents of Ukraine and Belarus allowed preserving an atmosphere of trust despite not always friendly public discourse. Therefore, it is not surprising that in most cases political interest among politicians in Ukraine in Belarus was provoked rather by the negative context than by the positive practices of cooperation.

Despite Belarus' strong involvement in Russian integration projects, official Minsk declares support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty. Since 2014, Minsk served as a venue for negotiations in the format of the Trilateral Contact Group of Ukraine, Russia, and the OSCE.

In the economic sphere, bilateral cooperation is characterized by active inter-industry contacts, transition to medium-term projects and road maps, and a gradual increase in turnover. At the same time, trade restrictions on strategic export groups from Ukraine, predominantly provoked by Russia's destructive policies through the economic instruments of the Eurasian Economic Union, cannot be fully resolved.

## Political Interest / Engagement

In 2019, the political interest in Belarus did not have a clear outline and was not among the priority topics addressed by the major political actors in Ukraine.

However, one of the public manifestations of Ukraine's appeal to Belarus was connected with the conflict development of relations between Minsk and Moscow against the Russian leadership compulsion of Belarus to deeper political and economic integration, which was perceived in the Ukrainian information space through the prism of threats to the Ukrainian national interests.

The president of Ukraine V. Zelensky raised the issue of bilateral relations prospects during the Second Forum of the Regions of Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus. Among the main areas of cooperation, the following were named: fuel and energy, infrastructure and transport projects, agro-industrial complex.

During his speech to the Verkhovna Rada before his appointment as a Foreign Minister (29.08), V. Prystaiko called Belarus one of the countries Ukraine should watchfully monitor. At the same time, no inter-parliamentary Ukraine-Belarus friendship group has been established by the end of the year.

## Institutional Cooperation

The most coordinated work of the Ukrainian institutions took place during the preparation for the Second Forum of the Regions of Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus, held in Zhytomyr in October. Despite the change in a governmental team, preparation was at an appropriate level not only between the central executive bodies but also at the regional and local authorities' level.

Due to the process of reassignment of heads of the Ukrainian parts of the joint intergovernmental commissions initiated in autumn, the 27th meeting of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Belarusian Mixed Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation was postponed from September to December. The Minister of Energy and Environment of Ukraine O. Orzhel was appointed its new Chairman.

The intensification of the Belarus-Russia crisis relations pushed the NSDC of Ukraine to coordinate the efforts of Ukrainian profile agencies and special services responsible for security issues.

## Strategic Vision

Ukraine's relations with neighbours, including Belarus, still have no conceptual manifestation in the work of the new team. The Presidential Decree #837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" has just a passing reference, and provides "developing good neighbourly partner relations with neighbouring states" as one of the steps in the foreign policy area.

Like in previous periods, the absence of a strategic document that would determine the level and focus of bilateral relations with Belarus was offset by agreements and operational plans. A new plan of consultations between the MFAs of Ukraine and Belarus for 2020–2021 can be added to the already existing plans and roadmaps adopted in recent years.

## Activities

In 2019, stable dialogue was established between heads of the states. V. Zelenskyy and A. Lukashenko. They had two telephone conversations (in April and July) and a working meeting during the Belarusian president visit to Ukraine (in October).

The main by its scale event in bilateral relations was the Second Forum of the Regions of Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus, held in Zhytomyr (3–4.10). The forum brought together over 900 governmental representatives and entrepreneurs from both sides. Both heads of the states, V. Zelenskyy and A. Lukashenko participated in the plenary session of the Forum. The 8th meeting of the Ukrainian-Belarusian Advisory Council of Business Cooperation was held, as well as the meeting of the Ukrainian-Belarusian working group on problems resolution in mutual trade in terms of veterinary and sanitary measures application.

In December, the 27th meeting of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Belarusian Mixed Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation took place in Kyiv. In addition to the plenary session, the work was held in the formats of the 6th meeting of the Ukrainian-Belarusian Working Group on Industrial and Production Cooperation and the 1st meeting of the Ukrainian-Belarusian Working Group on the supply of oil and petroleum products.

The work at the MFA level is systemic. In April, some consultations were held at the level of the Ministers of Ukraine and Belarus. The Embassy of Ukraine in Belarus actively worked not only supporting contacts but also providing logistical assistance for the Trilateral Contact Group in Minsk, which resumed its activities in the second half of 2019. In December, the Honorary Consulate of Ukraine in Vitebsk (the second in Belarus) was opened.

## Results

Increase in trade and economic ties does not advance political relations to a strategic level. Considering that Belarus is a part of a common security space with Russia within the framework of the Union State of the Russian Federation and Belarus, Ukraine repeatedly felt this influence during voting for “Ukrainian” resolutions at the UN GA. Nevertheless, Minsk remains a partner providing a negotiating platform for the Trilateral Contact Group of Ukraine, Russia and the OSCE, as well as humanitarian support to regions of Ukraine affected by the Russian aggression.

In 2019, they managed to resolve an issue of return to Ukraine of P. Sharoiiko, convicted in Belarus for espionage, in exchange for a citizen of the Republic of Belarus Y. Polityka, accused of spying in Ukraine.

The results of the Second Forum of the Regions include signing of 15 agreements (2 interagency and 13 interregional ones). About 40 contracts worth about USD 500 million were signed there.

As a result of 2019, at the expense of Ukrainian exports, trade turnover has increased and amounted to USD 5.3 billion, with a significant negative balance remained. Trade in services brought another 268.6 million. As of July 1, 2019, the Republic of Belarus invested USD 48.3 million in the Ukrainian economy, while Ukraine invested only USD 2.7 million in the economy of Belarus.

# Georgia

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	2	3	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	3	4	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	3	3	4	4
ACTIVITIES	n/a	3	4	4	4
RESULTS	n/a	3	4	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	C-	B-	B-	B-

Ukraine's foreign policy on Georgia in 2019 did not walk away from the strategic line of bilateral relations focused on strengthening European and Euro-Atlantic integration. With new political leaders both in Ukraine and in Georgia, the two countries mostly used accomplishments of the previous two years to strengthen political ties in bilateral cooperation and in solving common challenges — restoration of territorial integrity undermined by Russia's aggression.

'15–  
'19

Ukraine's foreign policy on Georgia evolved from passive cooperation to strategic partnership in 2015–2019. Some domestic political differences turned out to be smaller than common interest in implementing foreign policy priorities on integration with NATO and the EU, restoration of territorial integrity and resistance against Russia's aggressive policies in the region. These factors were the main ones shaping the strengthening of political and humanitarian ties, diplomatic contacts (especially since 2017). Trade and economic indicators of bilateral cooperation demonstrated slight growth in 2015–2018 and declined in 2019. The number and the quality of measures on all aspects of bilateral relations grew annually.

## Political Interest / Engagement

'19

Strategic partnership of the two countries, common agenda in relations with NATO and the EU and the Russian factor guaranteed high political attention for Georgia in 2019. The general motivation for additional engagement of Ukrainian political establishment in the promotion of national interests on the Georgian vector was the change of presidents, parliaments and governments both in Ukraine, and in Georgia. On November 7, Ukraine's President Zelenskyy demonstrated continuity of the common bilateral strategy during his meeting with the newly appointed Georgian Ambassador T. Sharashenidze, when President highlighted the strategic nature of Ukrainian-Georgian relations. The importance of continued constructive interaction within international organizations and



coordination of forces on the path of European and Euro-Atlantic integration for Ukraine and Georgia was highlighted as well.

On December 13, Georgia's Prime Minister G. Gakharia said in his meeting with Verkhovna Rada Speaker D. Razumkov that Ukraine and Georgia were bound by history, aspirations and values, as well as common problems, such as the struggle for territorial integrity and sovereignty. The need to develop cooperation between the countries on the level of parliaments and in other spheres was stressed out. That same day, Prime Minister O. Honcharuk said in his meeting with Georgia's Prime Minister Gakharia that Georgia was a strategic partner for Ukraine. In the first session of the IX convocation of the VRU (29.08), Ukraine's FM Prystaiko said that Kyiv was following closely the developments in Georgia, among others, as a country that was in the sphere of Ukraine's interests.

The group for parliamentary relations with Georgia, which comprised of almost 60 MPs, was established in November.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

In the year of presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine and amidst the change of leadership in ministries and departments, the latter — including the Presidential Administration (President's Office), the Cabinet of Ministers and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine — succeeded in continuing effective coordination among the authorities in charge of progress in Ukraine-Georgia relations. Conditions were prepared for the bilateral dialogue of the two countries' leadership and cooperation continued in the multilateral format in the framework of PACE, BSEC, GUAM and under the aegis of NATO and the EU.

## **Strategic Vision**

In 2019, the foundation of the strategic foreign policy vision for Tbilisi was a declaration on strategic partnership between Ukraine and Georgia signed in 2017. The current level of political interest and the statements in bilateral meetings from Ukraine's authorities de facto guarantee continuity of this approach.

## Activities

In the context of developing bilateral relations, the important event was the first meeting of Ukraine's President Zelenskyy and Georgia's President Zurabishvili (20.05) in Kyiv during the inauguration of Ukraine's Head of State. Another important event was the second meeting (1.09) during the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of WWII start in Warsaw. The visit of Georgia's President to Ukraine, initially scheduled for November, was postponed to 2020 upon request of the Ukrainian side.

On October 22, the Ukrainian delegation led by Minister of Infrastructure V. Krykliy attended the Tbilisi Silk Road Forum, where Ukrainian officials had bilateral meetings with Prime Minister Gakharia, Vice Prime Minister — Regional Development and Infrastructure Minister M. Tskitishvili, and Economy and Sustainable Development Minister N. Turnava. On December 13, Prime Minister Honcharuk proposed improving ferry transportation between Ukraine and Georgia on the Odesa-Poti route in his meeting with Georgia's PM Gakharia.

In 2019, Ukrainian and Georgian businesses intensified cooperation. In July, the delegation of Ukraine's Audit Chamber led by its Chair V. Patskan visited Georgia. The delegation of the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs visited a number of Georgian cities and had negotiations with representatives of the local business and industry (20–21.07). In September, Ukraine sent its Trade Mission to Georgia and the Ukrainian-Georgian Business Forum took place. Other contacts took place on the regional level, including a visit of the official delegation from Lviv Oblast led by Lviv Deputy Governor R. Fylypiv (11–13.04).

Ukrainian, Georgian and Moldovan NGOs called on their governments and parliaments at the 3rd Association Exchange Forum (13–15.11) in Kyiv to establish a trilateral format of cooperation to exchange experience, coordinate policies and support each other for deeper integration with the EU.

Just like in the previous years, the Ukrainian Embassy to Georgia with Ambassador I. Dolhov worked proactively in 2019. Among other things, Amb. Dolhov met with Georgia's PM Gakharia (8.10) and Parliament Speaker A. Talakvadze (24.07). Ukraine in Focus, a Ukrainian film festival, was

supported. On April 19, photo exhibition Children of Ukraine: Traditions and Modernity opened in Tbilisi. On July 1, the Ukrainian-Georgian cultural and educational project titled Georgia is my love, and Ukraine is in my heart! started in Telavi.

On December 8–9, the parliamentary permanent delegation attended the 8th Ordinary Session of EuroNest PA in Tbilisi. On December 22, Ukraine and Georgia reported together on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes item on the agenda at the Committee on the Charter of the UN at the UN Headquarters.

## Results

Throughout 2019, the new leaders of Ukraine and Georgia confirmed their interest in commitment to strategic partnership, supported each other on the way towards NATO and the EU and condemned Russia's aggressive politics in the region. On December 14, in Kyiv Ukraine's President Zelenskyy and Georgia's PM Gakharia signed the Provision on the Ukrainian-Georgian Top Level Strategic Council that should become the key mechanism for the bilateral dialogue.

With its resolution of January 16, the CMU approved draft Protocol between the Governments of Ukraine and Georgia on amending the Agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Georgia on free trade dated January 9, 1995. These amendments will allow Ukraine and Georgia to apply identical rules for the origin of goods in bilateral trade, among other things.

In 2019, trade between Ukraine and Georgia declined from USD 613.6 mn to USD 547.3 mn, mostly as Ukrainian exports shrank. The launch in October of the new container route to the Georgian town of Poti may boost trade next year.

# Israel

# B+

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	3	3	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	3	3	4	5
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	1	2	3	3
ACTIVITIES	n/a	4	4	4	4
RESULTS	n/a	4	4	4	5
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	C	C+	B-	B+

2019 saw a decline in bilateral activities. There were no contacts at the level of parliaments, and interaction between governments shrank compared to previous years. The existing contacts at the top level and the completion of work on the free trade zone offset this to a certain extent. The first visit of Israel's Prime Minister to Ukraine in 20 years ended with the signing of a number of bilateral agreements, and generally was an evident of deeper cooperation prospects.

'15–  
'19

In the past five years, negotiating the free trade zone was the key foreign policy task of Ukraine on Israel. The respective ministries (MFA, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Ministry of Agricultural Policy, Ministry of Infrastructure etc.) coordinated their work on this, regulate meeting of the interagency commission on trade and economic cooperation took place, leading to the signing of the Free Trade Agreement in 2019 and its ratification by the Ukrainian side. Technology, healthcare, education, infrastructure and investment remained other important spheres of cooperation. In 2015–2019, contacts on the level of the two countries' leaders took place. Ukrainian politicians demonstrated interest in Israel, including through regular mentions of the importance of Israeli experience in state building in a difficult security context and of its military experience in general.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Interest in cooperation with Israel is visible in statements by Ukrainian politicians, yet it has not developed a systemic nature. Neither the election platforms of Ukrainian presidential candidates, nor the programs of political parties mentioned Israel. The re-staffing of all branches of power in Ukraine did not change the accents on priority interests in relations. President Zelenskyy outlined priority sectors of cooperation at the press conference following the meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu in Kyiv in August 2019: these included infrastructure, education and innovation technologies. Also, President Zelenskyy highlighted Ukraine's interest in Israeli investment. He described

'19

Israel as the main trade partner for Ukraine in the Middle East. V. Groysman, then Prime Minister of Ukraine, also pointed to the importance of developing bilateral relations: “Ukraine is a strong partner of Israel and Ukrainian government is ready to comprehensively support the implementation of Israeli projects in our state” (August).

Ukraine’s interest in Israel’s experience remains high in the sectors of security, defence and state building under a permanent security threat. MPs S. Alekseyev and O. Liashko highlighted this. Liashko has also noted that Ukraine should deepen relations with Israel and expressed interest in engaging Israel in gas extraction in Ukraine. After the new Verkhovna Rada was elected, it established the inter-parliamentary group of friendship with Israel. V. Prystaiko did not mention Israel in his speech at the Verkhovna Rada when appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

The work of Ukrainian government agencies on finalizing the free trade area with Israel was well coordinated. The agreement was signed and ratified, pointing to effective cooperation between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Parliament, including its committee in charge, and the Presidential Office. As a result, the task specified in Groysman’s Government Priority Action Plan was accomplished.

## **Strategic Vision**

The current framework of bilateral relations legal base and Ukraine’s strategic documents point to the absence of a strategic level of relations. Ukraine’s Export Strategy mentions Israel. The signing of the Free Trade Agreement is aligned with a vision of Israel as a promising market for Ukrainian exports, what is an evidence of some progress in the level of bilateral relations. The President’s Decree No 837/2019 “On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state” does not mention Israel in its section on foreign policy.

## Activities

Ukraine's activities declined compared to 2018. It shrank at the level of cooperation between parliaments, among others due to the domestic political crisis in Israel (two rounds of snap elections). Still, Knesset Deputy Speaker Y. Eichler participated in the first session of the 9th convocation of the Verkhovna Rada. At the same time, there were contacts on the top political level. Trade and economic relations were the key topic during the visit of President Poroshenko to Israel in January. In August, Ukraine hosted the Prime Minister of Israel for the first time in 20 years. Apart from discussing a wide range of cooperation issues, the parties agreed to expand the free trade zone on services and to open high-tech development centres for exchange of technologies. B. Netanyahu made a statement about the opening of a Ukraine's representative office in Jerusalem, but this referred to the above mentioned development centre, as Ukraine acts within the framework of international law and principles on the status of Jerusalem, so it does not intend to move its embassy there.

The development of trade relations and sectoral cooperation traditionally remain in focus of activities on the part of Ukraine as reflected in the work between governments. However, in 2019, the sectors of this cooperation shrank: another round of political consultations took place between the two MFAs; Defence Minister S. Poltorak visited Israel in January and Deputy Minister of Education visited the country in June; a delegation of the MIA went to Israel in November. Two Ukrainian trade missions visited Israel as part of the work to deepen economic cooperation: on July 7–9, including a roundtable with the Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce and the Israeli-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce, and on November 23–28. Representatives of Ukraine attended a number of international expos in Israel, including MuniWorld-2019, an international urban innovation fair, and IMTM 2019, an international tourism expo.

## Results

The main accomplishment of 2019 was the signing of the Free Trade Agreement. Following the visit of Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, a number of agreements were signed: 1) Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in agriculture, 2) Agreement on support of learning Hebrew in Ukrainian education facilities and of Ukrainian in Israeli education facilities, 3) Program of Cooperation in Education, Culture, Youth and Sports for 2019–2022, and 4) Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine and Israeli Patent Office of the Israeli Ministry of Justice. To implement the agreements accomplished during the visit of B. Netanyahu to Ukraine, the first meeting of the Joint Committee for Science and Technological Cooperation took place in Kyiv (25–26.11).

To solve the problem of frequent rejections of entry for Ukrainian citizens to Israel, Ukraine's Interior Minister A. Avakov met with his Israeli peer A. Deri and signed Declaration on Intensification of Cooperation. Following the visit of Defence Minister Poltorak to Israel, UkrOboronProm and Elbit Systems Ltd. signed the Memorandum of Cooperation outlining further development of joint projects on systems of communication, surveillance and reconnaissance for land and air forces; on equipment to protect ports, on modernization of tank and armoured equipment, etc.

Trade in goods and services with Israel in 2019 grew from USD 993.6 mn in 2018 to 1.11 bn in 2019.



# Iran

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	3	3	2	1
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	3	4	2	1
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	1	1	2	2
ACTIVITIES	n/a	4	2	1	1
RESULTS	n/a	2	2	2	1
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	C-	D+	D-	E+

In 2019, Ukraine's policy on the Islamic Republic of Iran narrowed down somewhat as a result of two factors. One was an application of a more comprehensive package of US economic sanctions against Iran back in 2018. The other factor was Iran's political line, which sometimes showed lack of solidarity with Ukraine's political position on the international arena.

'15–  
'19

Overall, the summary of Ukraine-Iran relations in the past five years shows that bilateral cooperation has serious potential. This includes energy, machine building, agriculture and services. However, the situation around Iran's nuclear program (including the EU and the US sanctions before 2015) and the withdrawal of the US from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action in 2018 seriously undermine this potential. Despite the attempts to maintain relations with Iran beyond the position of the third parties, the US policy was the stumbling block impossible to bypass financially or politically.

Ukraine's relations with Iran intensified somewhat in 2015–2016 after the signing of the JCPA and the lifting of most economic sanctions from Teheran. It was in 2016 that Ukraine's Strategic Vision on Relations with Iran was adopted and then-MFA P. Klimkin visited Teheran. As a result, 2017 saw the highest trade between Ukraine and Iran (USD 622.7mn) and proactive work of the joint intergovernmental Ukraine-Iran Commission for Economic and Trade Cooperation. In 2019, trade dropped almost threefold compared to 2017.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Ukraine's interest in cooperation with Iran declined somewhat in 2019 compared to the previous years. Iran was not mentioned in most important political documents or speeches of the Ukrainian leadership in 2019. The possible reason is new economic sanctions introduced by the US against Iran, which block

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the opportunities for Iran's big trade partners in some important sectors, such as energy. At the same time, Ukraine's political partnership with the US and an absence of bank transactions with Iran have also stifled Kyiv's interest in trade and economic cooperation with Teheran.

Iran's refusal to support the resolution on the militarization of Crimea, the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov by Russia introduced by Ukraine at the UN GA in 2018 was probably another factor that affected Ukraine-Iran relations.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

The MFA, the Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Ministry of Agricultural Policy were in charge of developing Ukraine-Iran relations. The Intergovernmental Ukraine-Iran Joint Commission for Economic and Trade Cooperation coordinates their activity. Its last meeting took place in March 2017 and did not resume in 2019.

## **Strategic Vision**

Ukraine's strategic vision of Iran was outlined during the visit of then-Foreign Affairs Minister P. Klimkin to Teheran in 2016. It is based on three principles: a friendly nature of relations between the two states; prevention of interference and cooperation hindering on the part of third states; mutual interest — in Iran as a contributor to the energy security for Ukraine, and in Ukraine as a contributor to Iran's food security. At the same time, this vision is mostly irrelevant at the current stage of relations between Ukraine and Iran, including because of the US sanctions. First and foremost, Ukraine's opportunities in energy cooperation with Iran have shrunk critically. This affects the practical development of bilateral relations. Therefore, the de facto situation is different from the normative framework.

## Activities

In 2019, no political contacts between Ukraine and Iran took place, as there was no political interest in them. Trade between the two states decreased: 36.5% in exports and 89.7% in imports compared to 2018. The most likely reason for the decline of imports is in the anti-Iran sanctions that mostly affect fuels, in which Ukraine was most interested. This caused the decline in its imports from Iran. The Iranian goods, that were not covered by sanctions and are still imported by Ukraine, include dried fruit and medicines. Iran's imports from Ukraine did not decline as much as these goods are not covered by sanctions. They are mostly agricultural products and components for gas turbines and locomotives. Most of the trade is through the third countries as there are no direct bank transactions between Ukraine and Iran.

## Results

2019 saw a certain decline in relations between Ukraine and Iran. This decline started in 2018, mainly resulting from the blocking of energy cooperation opportunities.

Despite statements on continued economic cooperation, Ukraine is in some solidarity with the US position. As a result, there have been no top-level visits or meetings of the joint Ukraine-Iran intergovernmental Commission that coordinates all economic relations between the two countries since 2017. The decline of trade from USD 468.9 mn in 2018 to USD 263.7 mn in 2019 offers a good illustration. It happened due to the almost 50% decline in Ukrainian exports. Cooperation continues in agriculture only and in the search of new projects not covered by the sanction list.

# China



	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	3	3	4	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	3	4	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	2	4	4	4
ACTIVITIES	n/a	3	4	3	2
RESULTS	n/a	2	4	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	C-	B-	C+	C

Political interest in Ukraine-China relations somewhat decreased in 2019. There were no breakthroughs in institutional cooperation between government offices. The fact that a new ambassador to China was not appointed for over half a year marked a significant drawback. As a result, while economic indicators improved, there was no visible progress in political relations.

'15–  
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In general, the dynamics of relations with China has been heterogeneous over the last five years. Shortly after the Revolution of Dignity, Ukrainian diplomats made efforts to resume bilateral cooperation. The peak was reached in 2017 when Vice Premier of China Ma Kai visited Ukraine. However, the dynamics subsided again soon. The fact that the leaders of Ukraine and China have not exchanged visits over the last five years, while their bilateral meetings have been limited to the side-lines of international events, constitutes a significant gap in relations. Filling this gap and establishing a trusting relationship at the highest level could be the key to a significant improvement in relations.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Batkivshchyna Party has noticeably the greatest interest in China, compared to other political parties. Its election programme “Ukraine’s New Course” says that a new formula for negotiations, the so-called “Budapest+”, should involve China. The programme also mentions the economic indicators of growth and stability of the Chinese financial and credit system. Batkivshchyna leader Y. Tymoshenko regularly mentions China in her speeches and interviews. There is no reference to China in the programmes of other parliamentary forces and their leaders’ statements. Similarly, there was no mention of China in the programmes of the leading Ukrainian presidential candidates V. Zelenskyy, P. Poroshenko and Y. Tymoshenko.

'19

There is no reference to China in the Extraordinary Presidential Address to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (29.08) or the Cabinet of Ministers' Action Programme. However, Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko mentioned China in his speech to parliament before his endorsement. A group for Interparliamentary relations with China had not been formed in the new convocation of the VRU by the end of the year.

## Institutional Cooperation

The 3rd Ukrainian-Chinese Strategic Partnership Forum “One Belt, One Road” (May) was an example of cooperation between the NSDC of Ukraine and a number of academic organisations and institutions. Positive examples of institutional cooperation include the interaction between the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade and the Ministry of Infrastructure, the MF, other ministries and offices, which made possible a meeting between the President of Ukraine and representatives of the Chinese business community (July).

Ukraine had no ambassador to China for over six months (previous Ambassador O. Diomin was dismissed on May 17, the new one was appointed on December 20).

## Strategic Vision

There has been no change in strategic vision. The National Security Strategy of Ukraine mentions China as one of the key centres of influence, with which Ukraine seeks to establish strategic cooperation based on partner-like relations. The Ukraine-China Action Plan was signed in 2017 in order to implement an initiative to jointly build the “Silk Road Economic Belt” and the “21st Century Maritime Silk Road”. China is mentioned among important partners in the 2017 National Export Strategy. This state of affairs does not fully reflect the potential of bilateral cooperation, but negotiations on the development of individual action plans continue.

## Activities

The MEDT paid attention to China throughout the year of 2019. In particular, First Deputy Prime Minister S. Kubiv attended the 2nd High-Level Forum on International Cooperation “One Belt, One Road” in Beijing (25–27.04). During the meetings on the side-lines of the forum, the sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding to begin the development of a bilateral cooperation plan for the joint construction of the “Silk Road Economic Belt” and the “21st Century Maritime Silk Road”.

The 3rd meeting of the Subcommittee on Cooperation in Education and the 7th meeting of the Subcommittee on Cooperation in Agriculture were also held.

On May 13, newly-elected President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy and China’s Ambassador to Ukraine Du Wei discussed the prospects for bilateral cooperation. At a meeting with representatives of the Chinese business community on July 22, V. Zelenskyy invited China to invest in the development of infrastructure, agriculture and gas fields’ development in Ukraine.

## Results

In 2019, bilateral trade in goods reached about USD 12.8 billion, almost 30% more than in 2018. However, a negative balance of foreign trade with China, which reached USD 5.6 billion, persisted.

On April 11, the Government of Ukraine and the Government of China approved an agreement under which Ukraine would receive free technical and economic assistance of about USD 30 million. This is the largest amount of China’s one-off free assistance to Ukraine over the 27 years of Ukraine’s independence. Negotiations on this Agreement have lasted since 2016..



# Lithuania

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	4	4	5	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	3	4	5	4
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	4	4	4	4
ACTIVITIES	n/a	5	5	5	4
RESULTS	n/a	4	5	5	5
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	B	B+	A-	B+

Lithuania continues comprehensive support to Ukraine across platforms and spheres. MPs of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania established such groups as ProUkraine and Group of Friends of Ukrainian Crimea. The change of presidents in both countries did not affect the intensity of the top-level dialogue — this was reflected in the visit of Ukraine's President to Vilnius and the agreements accomplished in security and defence throughout the year.

'15–  
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International relations between Ukraine and Lithuania offer a good illustration of virtually perfect interstate interaction, their dynamics intensifying throughout these five years. The illegal annexation of Crimea and Russia's aggression against Ukraine were followed by the record-breaking reinforcement of bilateral cooperation between Ukraine and Lithuania. Lithuania continued supporting Ukraine both bilaterally and via the EU, demonstrating maximum unanimity in supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, as well as sanctions against Russia.

In response to the request of the Ukrainian government, Lithuania was the first state to provide military assistance followed by humanitarian and other types of support. These included treatment and rehabilitation for hundreds of Ukrainian soldiers. In these five years, in Ukraine, Lithuania was referred to as "an advocate of Ukraine's European aspirations," "friend" and "strategic partner" — all these references were confirmed with real actions from Lithuania. At the same time, Lithuania has always been consistent in pushing the Ukrainian government to intensify reforms and make progress in fighting corruption.

## Political Interest / Engagement

The dynamics of Ukraine-Lithuania relations is consistently high, evolving towards more fruitful cooperation every year. Public support from representatives of the Ukrainian government, including Verkhovna Rada Speaker A. Parubiy, for Lithuania's former Prime Minister A. Kubilius as a candidate for Secretary General of the Council of Europe offered a good illustration of this political interest. At

'19

the same time, most of the statements concerning Lithuania throughout 2019 were in sync with the general vision of the Baltic region. The group of MPs for interparliamentary relations with Lithuania was one of the first ones to be established in the new parliament (in October). However, election programmes did not outline Lithuania individually.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

An illustrative and important test of interaction between Ukrainian government agencies was a preparation for the Council of Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania under the chairmanship of V. Zelenskyy and G. Nausėda — it involved serious coordination work to shape the bilateral agenda. The official visit of a Ukrainian delegation with a number of Ukrainian ministers led by President Zelenskyy in November demonstrated a fairly good quality of institutional cooperation.

## **Strategic Vision**

Based on the meeting of the Council of Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania in November 2019, the parties signed a declaration on the development of strategic partnership between Ukraine and Lithuania for 2020–2024. This was a result of significant Ukraine's attention towards Lithuania at all levels.

## **Activities**

Proactive cooperation between Ukraine and Lithuania took place under the both Ukrainian presidencies and despite the change of government in Lithuania. In April, the 19th meeting of the Ukraine-Lithuania government Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific And Technical Cooperation took place. Lithuania's new President Nausėda met Ukraine's President Zelenskyy both during Zelenskyy's official visit to Vilnius and during the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of WWII start in Warsaw.

The unintended pause in relations caused by the presidential and parliamentary elections was fully compensated by the visit of the official Ukrainian delegation led by President Zelenskyy to Lithuania in November. Cooperation and communication between the states was proactive on virtually all levels of power. Among others, in August, VRU Speaker A. Parubiy went on an official visit to Lithuania, and Speaker of the Lithuanian Seimas V. Pranckietis came to Ukraine in November, meeting with a number of Ukrainian top officials.

## Results

The meeting of the Council of Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania was followed by the signing of the Declaration on the Development of Strategic Partnership between Ukraine and Lithuania for 2020–2024, a fundamental document. In Vilnius, the parties signed the Declaration of Intentions on Mutual Recognition of Electronic Identification and Electronic Trust Services between Lithuania's Energy Minister Ž. Vaičiūnas and Ukraine's Vice Prime Minister for Digital Transformation M. Fedorov. Ukraine and Lithuania signed Declaration of Intentions in Cyber Security entailing the establishment of joint points of single contact to share information about cyber threats and attacks and the development of a joint training plan, among other things.

During the visit of the official Lithuanian delegation to Avdiivka, a frontline town in Eastern Ukraine, the agreement was reached to fund partial reconstruction of the local school. Ukraine's Ministry of Defence agreed to work with the Strategic Communications Department of Lithuanian Armed Forces. Ukraine's Ministry of Defence reached an agreement on cooperation in cyber security in Lithuania.

The honorary consulate of Lithuania in Ukraine was opened in Ternopil, Western Ukraine.

Trade between the two countries was USD 1.55 bn in 2019, comparing to USD 1.2 bn in 2018, still with a significant negative balance for Ukraine.

# Moldova

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	4	4	3	2
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	2	2	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	3	3	3	3
ACTIVITIES	n/a	3	4	5	4
RESULTS	n/a	2	4	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	C-	C+	B-	C

The dynamics of relations between Ukraine and Moldova slowed down substantially in 2019. In particular, there was a decline in the level of political interest, and there were no breakthroughs in institutional cooperation. Moldova had a greater interest in Ukraine than other way around. Older problems have added to the new ones, including the risk of Moldova's U-turn towards Russia, while the results achieved do not match the declared ambitions and the level of activity.

'15–  
'19

Overall, the positive and vibrant dynamics of bilateral relations between Ukraine and Moldova of recent years slowed down significantly in 2019. Probable causes may include the political turbulence in the Republic of Moldova, as well as the presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine. At the same time, a number of issues in bilateral relations — the settlement of property disputes inherited after the Soviet Union, the final demarcation of the state border, and the functioning of the Dniester hydroelectric complex — have remained unresolved for a long period of time regardless of the level of intensity of bilateral contacts.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Interest in Moldova was not reflected in the election programmes of political parties. A similar situation is with the programmes of the leading presidential candidates, as they do not mention Moldova either. There is no reference to Moldova in the President's Extraordinary Address to the Verkhovna Rada (29.08) or in the Cabinet of Ministers' Action Programme (4.10). However, in his pre-appointment speech to the Parliament (29.08), Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko described Moldova as a state that should be in the focus of attention.

'19

The number of references to Moldova in Ukrainian politicians' speeches has decreased compared to previous years. However, a number of statements made by President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy in July 2019 directly concerned Moldova. In particular, the President stated that Ukraine and Moldova were united by a common desire not to have Russian troops in their territory and would not allow plans for so-called federalization to be imposed. He also highlighted the joint position of the two states regarding the protection of sovereignty and regional security. This surge of interest was sparked by then Prime Minister of Moldova M. Sandu's visit to Ukraine. A parliamentary group on Interparliamentary relations with the Republic of Moldova was established on December 18.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

In terms of cooperation between ministries and agencies, one should note the Ukrainian MFA efforts to arrange four meetings of the Joint Ukrainian-Moldovan Demarcation Commission and a meeting of the Dniester River Commission. However, due to the lack of political interest and elections in both Ukraine and Moldova, as well as government reshuffles in Moldova (June and November) and Ukraine (September), there is no reason to talk about the strengthening of institutional cooperation.

## **Strategic Vision**

There has been no change in strategic vision. Strategic documents only contain sporadic references to Moldova. The Military Doctrine mentions Moldova in the context of actual threats due to "the presence of the Russian military contingent in Moldova's Transnistrian region", while the Energy Strategy of Ukraine until 2035 mentions the need "to put in place the necessary contractual framework and implement relevant measures to integrate the energy markets of Ukraine and Moldova".

## Activities

The year of 2019 was marked by the high intensity of Moldovan representatives' visits to Ukraine. Moldovan Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration T. Ulianoschi visited Kyiv and met President V. Zelenskyy on May 20.

Then Prime Minister of Moldova M. Sandu met V. Zelenskyy and her Ukrainian counterpart V. Groysman in Kyiv on July 11. M. Sandu was accompanied by Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration N. Popescu. On September 9, the Minister of FAEI of Moldova paid a second visit to Ukraine. During the meeting, the sides discussed a functioning of the Dniester hydroelectric complex, a demarcation of the common border, an opening of more checkpoints with joint control at the Ukrainian-Moldovan border, and an introduction of arrangements allowing citizens of either country to travel with their ID cards. During the negotiations, Ukraine and Moldova agreed on further cooperation with the aim of abolishing roaming for citizens of the two countries and later on with the EU.

In November, Ukraine and Moldova drafted a Plan for the demarcation of the Ukrainian-Moldovan state border for 2020. However, given that a new Moldovan government was appointed in November, these issues are likely to be deferred.

A bilateral meeting between Prime Minister of Ukraine O. Honcharuk and new Prime Minister of Moldova I. Chicu took place at the London Investment Forum (21.11). The sides discussed current issues and prospects for bilateral cooperation. On December 12, Mr. Chicu attended a summit of GUAM heads of government in Kyiv, during which he met PM O. Honcharuk and President V. Zelenskyy.

Certain dynamics of interparliamentary relations have been preserved. In particular, First Deputy Speaker of the VRU R. Stefanchuk met Deputy Speaker of the Moldovan Parliament M. Popșoi in Kyiv (15.11). The parties agreed to develop a roadmap to identify common interests in legislative initiatives and priority areas for cooperation. At the same time, it should be noted that cooperation at the level of the Georgia-Moldova-Ukraine Interparliamentary Assembly did not draw MPs' attention.

On April 25, Ambassador of Ukraine to Moldova I. Hnatyshyn was dismissed and his successor M. Shevchenko was appointed only on December 18.



## Results

In 2019, the sides failed to increase mutual trade to USD 1 billion, as was expected in previous years. There was even a decline in trade. In 2018, trade in goods and services reached USD 953.6 million, and in 2019, it was USD 896.2 million.

Incomplete border demarcation and the slowdown in the introduction of joint customs control show that the results of bilateral efforts sometimes do not correspond to the level of the two sides' activity. However, the decline in Ukraine's interest and the political turbulence in Moldova (three governments changed during the year) are equally to blame for this.

# Poland

# B+

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	5	4	5	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4	4	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	3	2	3	4
ACTIVITIES	4	5	5	5	5
RESULTS	5	4	3	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B+	B-	B+	B+

In 2019, the relations between Poland and Ukraine saw some positive transformations. Ukraine unblocked for Poland the search of the burial sites of the Poles in Ukraine from the WWII period, allowing intensifying contacts on the top level including new President Zelenskyy. While differences in interpretations of historical events remain in place, the main focus in bilateral relations has shifted towards the implementation of economic and infrastructural projects, as well as strategic elements of security cooperation.

'15–  
'19

In 2015–2019, Polish-Ukrainian relations remained strategic — mostly in the context of supporting Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration and solidarity in countering Russian aggression. Warsaw supported Ukraine as an Eastern Partnership partner-state and a signatory of the Association Agreement with the EU in the V4 and the EU formats.

The change of the political team in Poland and the election of Law and Justice political party made an issue of historic memory more topical, but that did not find understanding in Ukraine. Given the lack of compromise on historical issues, the relations on the high level between the Presidents of Ukraine and Poland deteriorated, affecting the work of bilateral institutions and the dynamics of dialogue. At the same time, Poland gradually gained weight as a trade partner as Ukraine reoriented its trade flows, getting into the top five trading partners for Ukraine.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Interest in Ukraine-Poland relations remained high in 2019. The fact that the supporters of different parties shared that interest allowed political forces to use bilateral relations to mobilize their electorate in the early parliamentary election. The reset in relations with the closest neighbours was clearly articulated in the Servant of the People's election programme. Golos political party (Voice) and Syla i chest political party (Force and Honour) addressed Ukraine-Poland relations mostly in the context of regional cooperation within the Baltic-Black Sea framework.

'19

President Zelenskyy highlighted the strategic nature of relations with Poland and unacceptability of the historical dimension dominating the agenda. Also, he mentioned the support of Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic integration by Poland, sanctions against Nord Stream 2 and the implementation of joint business projects.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

The Ukrainian part of the Ukrainian-Polish Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation was re-staffed and Vice Prime Minister D. Kuleba was appointed a co-chair. The Ukrainian side represented by Prime Minister O. Honcharuk expressed a request for Poland to staff its side as soon as possible after the new Government of M. Morawiecki was appointed. Cooperation of the Ukrainian side of the Ukrainian-Polish Mixed Commission for International Automobile Transportation offered an interesting example.

## **Strategic Vision**

The approval of the President's Decree No 837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" can be seen as a starting point of the strategic vision of V. Zelenskyy's team on bilateral relations with the neighbouring states, including Poland, where one of its foreign policy points focused on the "development of partnership and good neighbourly relations with the neighbouring states". Ukraine's MFA and other respective agencies by December 1 had to prepare action plans for 2020 to implement the Decree.

The Trilateral Memorandum of Cooperation with the US and Poland to diversify gas sources and improve Ukraine's energy security, signed in Warsaw, is another document that can be considered as strategic.

## Activities

President Poroshenko met with Poland's President twice in 2019, in Davos in January and during his working visit to Poland in February. President Zelenskyy spoke to President Duda on the telephone twice (April and December) and met with him in Brussels. Also, he went to Poland on an official visit in August-September.

Two meetings of the Consultation Committee of the Ukrainian and Polish presidents took place in February and November. The Intergovernmental Coordination Council for Interregional Cooperation met in March; the Ukrainian-Polish Working Group on Cooperation in Agriculture met in February, and the Ukrainian-Polish Mixed Commission for International Automobile Transportation met in July. Despite the attempts of the Ukrainian side, the Ukrainian-Polish Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation did not meet in 2019 after the previous meeting in 2017. Prime ministers of the two countries spoke on the telephone in October.

In 2019, seven meetings took place on the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Ukraine's Embassy in Poland was proactive throughout the year. Preliminary work was done to prepare the opening of a Ukrainian Institute office in Warsaw.

Cooperation between parliaments was traditionally active: the Parliamentary Assembly of Ukraine and Poland met in March; and the Inter-parliament Assembly of the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada and the Polish Sejm and Senate met in June. Representatives of the Ukraine-Poland inter-parliament friendship group visited Poland in March. Verkhovna Rada group of inter-parliament relations with Poland was among the first ones to set up in the newly elected parliament (15.10).

## Results

Poland remains a strategic partner for Ukraine in supporting its territorial integrity and sovereignty, and of its European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations. During Poland's non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council in 2018–2019, Kyiv and Warsaw closely coordinated their actions to counter Russia's intentions. The results of their cooperation in energy security can be assessed positively.

Historical issues stopped dominating the bilateral agenda when Ukraine cancelled the ban on the search of Polish burial sites on its territory. Still, the Polish side has not yet solved the problem of ordering Ukrainian memorial sites in its territory.

The traditionally problematic issues include restricted capacity of the current crossing points on the border and insufficient authorization of international automobile cargo transportations by Poland.

In 2019, Poland was the fourth largest trade partner for Ukraine accounting for virtually 6.6% or USD 7.39 bn of Ukraine's total trade.

# Romania

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3	4	4	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3	4	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3,5	3	3	3	3
ACTIVITIES	4	4	4	4	3
RESULTS	4	3	4	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	B-	C+	B-	B-	C

Political dynamics in Ukraine-Romania relations subsided to some extent in 2019 compared with previous years. The second half of the year also saw a decrease in political interest. The implementation of the Law of Ukraine “On Education” remains a controversial issue. In the meantime, relations in other sectors were at the level of 2018, although without significant results. A drop in dynamics can be explained by the presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine and the presidential elections in Romania.

'15-  
'19

In general, recent years have seen a noticeable revival in bilateral relations and active political dialogue. Romania has supported Ukraine on its path to European and Euro-Atlantic integration, and relations have essentially reached the level of strategic partnership. Differences in the views on Article 7 of the Law of Ukraine "On Education" did not interfere with military and political cooperation.

## Political Interest / Engagement

'19

The interest in Romania among top-ranking members of the Ukrainian Parliament and Government was visible in the first half of 2019. One of the reasons was Romania's EU Presidency during this period.

The election programmes of parliamentary political parties make no mention of Romania. A similar situation is with the programmes of the leading candidates in the presidential elections: V. Zelenskyy, P. Poroshenko and Y. Tymoshenko. There was no mention of Romania in the President's Extraordinary Address to the Verkhovna Rada (29.08), the Action Plan of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (4.10). However, in his pre-appointment speech, Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko (29.08) mentioned Romania among the countries, from which a circle of friends should be formed.

A parliamentary group on interparliamentary relations with Romania has not been formed.



## Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation within the framework of efforts to organize the work of the Ukrainian-Romanian Mixed Intergovernmental Commission on the Rights of Ethnic Minorities was a highlight of 2019. In particular, a delegation of the Ukrainian part of the Commission visited the Romanian counties of Suceava and Maramures in April.

The joint Ukrainian-Romanian exercises “Riverine 2019” took place on the Danube in early September due to the good work of the MFA, MoD, and State Border Service of Ukraine.

## Strategic Vision

There has been no change in the strategic vision. There are no direct references to Romania in the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy”, the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, and the Ukraine 2020 Strategy. The Energy Strategy 2035 mentions Romania, albeit in broad terms.

## Activities

The Ukrainian-Romanian Mixed Intergovernmental Commission on the Rights of Ethnic Minorities held a meeting in April. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine V. Bodnar and State Secretary of the MFA of Romania D. Neculaescu took part in political consultations the same month. However, no significant results were achieved.

During his working visit to the USA on 25 September, Ukrainian President V. Zelenskyy met his Romanian counterpart K. Iohannis on the sidelines of the UN GA. The two presidents agreed on the need to enhance top-level political dialogue and to exchange visits in the near future (Iohannis’s visit to Ukraine had been planned for 2017 but was postponed due to the adoption of the Law “On Education”).

The delegation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine headed by the Chief of the General Staff and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Lt-Gen R. Khomchak paid an official visit to Romania on 30 November-1 December. The sides discussed security in the Black Sea region, shared experience in reforming and developing the armed forces. It is noteworthy that it was the first foreign bilateral visit by the General Staff's Chief. Negotiations on signing of an agreement on military and technical cooperation continued in the course of the year. In addition, the bilateral Ukrainian-Romanian exercises "Riverine 2019" was held on the Danube for the second time. The navy worked out tactical steps in accordance with NATO standards as part of multinational boat tactical groups, and advanced the interoperability of the two countries' maritime and coast guards.

## Results

According to the State Statistics Committee, the trade turnover between Ukraine and Romania in 2019 reached USD 1.65 billion. This is more than during the previous year, when it was USD 1.44 billion.

It should be noted that Operator GTS Ukrayiny LLC (Ukraine's gas transport system operator) and Romania's Transgaz signed an interconnection agreement that will enable gas import from Romania as of 1 January 2020, which had been blocked by the gas transit agreement with Russia's Gazprom until the end of 2019.

Like a year before, the approval of the Protocol on Cooperation in Education between the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the Ministry of National Education of Romania has been stalling.

The expectations to launch a railway connection Chernivtsi-Suceava with a change at the Vadul-Siret station were not justified. Ukrainian Railways postponed the plan due to lack of rolling stock and low passenger traffic to Romania. The launch of a Danube ferry link between Orlivka and Isakcea was delayed because the Romanian side was not ready yet. Both projects had been scheduled to be completed in 2019.

# Slovakia

# B-

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	4	3	4	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	3	4	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	3	3	3	3
ACTIVITIES	n/a	4	4	4	4
RESULTS	n/a	4	4	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	B-	B-	B-	B-

Relations with Slovakia remain focused on political and diplomatic activities given the special role of this country in political processes in Central and Eastern Europe. The bilateral agenda does not have problematic issues as most strategic interests of the two countries are similar, including those on reverse supply of gas, prevention of Nord Stream 2 construction, the need to restore Ukraine's territorial integrity, etc. However, limited trade, economic or military-political cooperation and the absence of major agreements of strategic nature prevent full-scale fulfilment of the potential in bilateral relations.

'15–  
'19

In the past five years, the dialogue between Ukraine and Slovakia was stable and predictable regardless of the change of government teams and heads of states. Slovakia proved a reliable partner for Ukraine in the past years, solidarizing with it in supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity, non-recognition of the annexation of Crimea and sanctions against Russia, including by organizing reverse delivery of gas to Ukraine — thus helping Ukraine ensure its energy independence from Russia. Despite controversial views of some political leaders in Slovakia (former Prime Minister R. Fico or Parliament Speaker A. Danko), the country under the last government resisted swinging the state by the revisionist forces, and Ukraine preserved official support. The key task in the bilateral dialogue now is the transfer from statements about absence of conflicts or problems in bilateral relations to the start of work on strategic topics (other than energy) by the authorities of both states, which the Slovak or Ukrainian governments have not addressed before systematically.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Relations with Slovakia remain unburdened by serious problematic issues. The political and diplomatic dimension of cooperation prevails over all others, especially as Slovakia presided in the Visegrad Group between mid-2018 and mid-2019 and chaired the OSCE in 2019. All mentions about Ukrainian-Slovak relations by Ukrainian top officials are consistently positive. There is a consensus

'19

that these relations should be deepened, but Ukrainian political establishment does not demonstrate systemic interest in Slovakia. Interest for it intensifies during official visits, such as of the newly elected Slovak President Z. Čaputová to Ukraine in September 2019, or the first in several years meeting of Prime Ministers during V. Groysman's visit to Bratislava in April 2019.

Relations with Slovakia did not come up in the presidential or parliamentary campaigns in Ukraine. The group of MPs for interparliament relations with Slovakia was not established by the end of 2019 in Ukraine.

Slovakia was mentioned the most in the context of its efforts on the resolution of the Donbas conflict during its chairmanship in the OSCE and on trilateral gas talks in the Ukraine — Russia — EU format where M. Šefčovič, the Slovak European Commissioner for the Energy Union, had an important role chairing the talks.

In all bilateral platforms, Slovakia's experience of EU and NATO membership, unchanging support for Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and European integration aspirations were traditionally mentioned. Cooperation in the energy sphere, including attempts to preserve the status of the key transit countries for the Russian gas going to the EU, remains the pillar of Ukrainian-Slovak relations. Potential participation of Slovakia in the future consortium managing Ukraine's gas transit system is mentioned.

At the same time, V. Prystaiko mentioned Slovakia as one of the countries, with which Ukraine should rebuild "the circle of friends", in his inauguration speech as Foreign Minister at the VRU. The President's Decree No 837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" mentioned it indirectly as one of the neighbour-states to develop good partnership relations with.

## Institutional cooperation

Institutional coordination of the Slovak vector of Ukraine's foreign policy on the government level is good enough. The problem of labour migration to protect the rights of Ukrainian migrant workers in Slovakia requires more attention from Ukraine, including from its Ministry of Social Policy. In this context, the legal framework between the two countries should be updated. The introduction of

joint control and infrastructure improvement at crossing points on the Ukrainian-Slovak border is traditionally stalling, including because of limited financial resources. The meeting of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Slovak Commission on cross-border cooperation, previously scheduled for October 2019, did not take place as the Ukrainian side was in the process of approving its co-chair to the Commission.

## Strategic Vision

Alongside the great potential of cooperation and moderate political interest of Ukraine to Slovakia, the gaps in the Ukrainian-Slovak interaction remain in place. All high-level meetings tackle the issue of unfulfilled potential, including in economic cooperation. After the launch of reverse gas transit from Slovakia to Ukraine in 2014, the absence of other “major” issues still shapes the bilateral agenda. Limited trade, economic or military-political cooperation, the absence of strategic agreements, and tactical rather than strategic planning that dominates the bilateral relations, does not allow full-scale fulfilment of this potential.

## Activities

In 2019, the bilateral political dialogue was quite proactive. In September, Slovak President Z. Čaputová came on an official visit to Ukraine, confirming Slovak support of Ukraine’s European integration aspirations. During that year, Slovak FM M. Lajčák, as the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, had several visits to Ukraine. Ukraine’s PM V. Groysman visited Slovakia, so did Deputy FM V. Bodnar to attend the meeting of the Visegrad Four and Eastern Partnership countries foreign ministers under Slovakia’s presidency in V4 in Bratislava, etc. Several agreements were signed during the visits.

Progress was seen in the sphere of transport — the development of the combined China-Europe route. After Ukraine joined the Memorandum of Understanding on the new Silk Road development, the parties began discussing practical aspects of cargo delivery from the EU member-states to China

and back via Ukraine and Slovakia, the development of logistics centres in Mukachevo, Chop, and Košice. A new train route for Mukachevo — Chop — Košice was launched.

Because of the anti-Ukrainian position of Slovak Parliament Speaker A. Danko, the dialogue between parliaments is virtually frozen. The Slovak side once again postponed the meeting of the Inter-Governmental Mixed Commission for Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technical Cooperation that last met in 2013 because of the Slovak Ministry of Economy obstruction.

## Results

Slovakia's foreign policy consensus on the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity and the extension of the EU's sanction policy against Russia remains in place. This is a positive accomplishment, especially as the Slovak political establishment is not homogenous on support for Ukraine (e.g., three out of four Slovak representatives in PACE from Smer and SNS, both parties then in power, voted for the Russian delegation return in June 2019).

In 2019, the Agreement to Amend the 2008 Agreement between Ukraine and Slovakia on Local Crossborder Movement was signed, extending the list of frontier towns covered by this Agreement and the term of stay for their citizens to 90 days. The two countries signed the Declaration on the Terms of Use of the Specified Part of the Slovak Air Space by Ukrainian air traffic service providers for the Uzhhorod International Airport. As a result of the visa-free travel for Ukrainian citizens to the EU, the flow of passengers increased between Ukraine and Slovakia. WizzAir launched a new Bratislava-Odesa flight in addition to the ones to Kyiv and Lviv in 2019.

The opening of the Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Presov was an important development in the humanitarian field. Slovakia continued providing humanitarian assistance for rehabilitation of Ukrainian military.

In economic cooperation, foreign trade between Ukraine and Slovakia slowed down its growth.

# Turkey

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	5	5	5	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	4	4	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	3	5	4	4	2
ACTIVITIES	4	5	4	4	4
RESULTS	4	4	4	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	B-	A-	B+	B	C+

In 2019, Turkish-Ukrainian relations developed mainly at the working level, in particular in the economic and military-technical sectors. However, the dynamics of political dialogue and the official rhetoric of the Turkish leadership have changed considerably. The main reasons for this were the lack of a strategic vision of the development of bilateral relations on the part of Ukraine and the general changes in Turkey's foreign policy, which led to its rapprochement with Moscow and striving to avoid any steps in support of Ukraine that could impede close cooperation with the Russian Federation.



# '15– '19

After the beginning of Russian aggression against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea, Turkey assumed a special role among Ukraine's foreign policy partners. Whereas previously Ankara was perceived primarily as an important trade and economic partner, after 2014, it became a key actor in the Black Sea security. Turkey has not recognised the annexation of Crimea, consistently campaigned in support of Ukraine's territorial integrity and traditionally paid great attention to protecting rights of Crimean Tatars.

On the other hand, despite its status of a strategic partner, expectations that Turkey would play a role of a potential counterweight to Russia in the region proved unjustified. Ankara did not align itself with sanctions against Russia, and the official rhetoric of the Turkish leadership has changed over five years from the harsh condemnation of Moscow to calls for restoration of the inclusive dialogue aimed at bolstering trust in the Black Sea region. Currently, Ukrainian-Turkish relations are still subject to objective restrictions because of Turkey's growing economic and military-political cooperation with Russia.

After a significant decline in 2014–2015, trade has shown steady growth after 2017. At the same time, the bilateral trade surplus has been rapidly decreasing (by 30–50% annually). At present, the trade turnover amounts to almost USD 5 billion and has not reached the 2008 pre-crisis level of USD 8 billion.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Turkey is not mentioned as a separate foreign policy direction or international activities' priority either in the manifestos of political parties, which made it to the VRU of the new convocation, or in presidential candidates' election programmes. High-ranking Ukrainian officials occasionally mention Turkey in their statements in the context of its support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, protection of Crimean Tatars' rights on the temporarily occupied Crimean peninsula, and Turkey's potential mediation in securing the release of the Kremlin's political prisoners. The importance of the Crimean Tatar track in relations with Turkey had its effect on the level of interparliamentary relations: the group of friendship with Turkey, which was formed in the VRU in December, now includes several Crimean Tatar MPs, one of them co-heading the group. President V. Zelenskyy has repeatedly noted Turkey's successful experience in large-scale infrastructure projects, road construction and so on. In general, the southern (in particular, Turkish) direction has been devoid of sufficient political attention while true interest in cooperation was focused on the defence industry and economy.

## Institutional Cooperation

The level of interagency cooperation with Turkey is satisfactory. The authorities see eye to eye on the need to ensure Turkey's support in countering Russian aggression, de-occupation of Crimea and cooperation on international platforms. The actions of the Presidential Office, the MFA, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the MoD, and cooperation between law-enforcement agencies on the implementation of joint military-technical projects are coordinated.

## Strategic Vision

Although Turkey is mentioned as an important trading partner in the Strategy for the Development of Exports of Agricultural, Food and Processing Industry

Products until 2026 and other economic documents, the announced signing of the Free Trade Area (FTA) agreement has not happened. The only document signed during the official visit of the President of Ukraine to Turkey in August 2019 was the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the peaceful exploration and research of space between the space agencies of the two countries. The existing legislative framework is a sufficient basis for the development of cooperation, but the level of political statements and official documents signed in 2019 indicates the lack of a clear strategic vision of further development of bilateral relations.

## Activities

Bilateral political dialogue remained stable throughout the year, although the number of high-level visits decreased compared to previous years. In 2019, both Presidents of Ukraine paid visits to Turkey. In particular, President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko and Speaker of the Parliament A. Parubiy paid a working visit to Istanbul to attend the solemn ceremony of the Tomos granting to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Newly-elected President V. Zelenskyy met Turkey's top leadership during a two-day official visit in August 2019. At the beginning of the year, the Ukrainian-Turkish Joint Strategic Planning Group held its seventh meeting in Odesa with the participation of the two countries' ministers of foreign affairs. At the same time, a meeting of the High-Level Strategic Council, the annual top-level summit with the participation of government delegations under the chairmanship of the two presidents, did not take place in 2019.

In addition, it is worth noting the mutual working visits by representatives of the ministries of internal affairs of Ukraine and Turkey: Navy Commander I. Voronchenko's visit to Turkey, staff talks in Ukraine at the level of the deputy commanders of the Navy, a number of working meetings with regard to the military sphere, defence industry and sectoral cooperation.

Cooperation in defence and security developed most actively. In particular, Turkey carried out a contract on the supply of its Bayraktar combat UAVs to Ukraine while Turkish Akinci drones were equipped with Ukrainian Motor

Sich engines. The sides implemented a project on the modernisation of Mi-17 helicopters. Turkey continues to offer rehabilitation for members of the families of the Ukrainian Armed Forces killed in the Antiterrorist Operation/Joint Forces Operation.

Serious attention was paid to the development of humanitarian cooperation and public diplomacy. During the year, a number of cultural events took place: a concert of the Virsky Folk Dance Ensemble and “Ukrainian Readings” in Ankara, Ukrainian Movies Days in Istanbul, etc.

## Results

Economic growth was observed in 2019 (the trade turnover in 2019 reached USD 4.97 billion comparing to USD 4.06 bn in 2018). However, the change in the trade balance was not in favour of Ukraine due to a significant increase in Turkish exports (the trade surplus decreased by 50%). Contrary to the stated intentions, the FTA was not signed. Tourism has been actively developing, primarily thanks to the higher number of Ukrainian tourists visiting Turkey (around 1.5 million).

In the international arena, Turkey continued to pursue the policy of walking a delicate line between Kyiv and Moscow. Ankara does not recognize the annexation of Crimea by Russia, has consistently supported Ukraine’s territorial integrity and Kyiv-sponsored UN resolutions, and campaigned in defence of the rights of Crimean Tatars. On the other hand, the Turkish delegation to the PACE voted in full for the return of the Russian delegation, thus setting the precedent for Turkey’s support of anti-Ukrainian decisions in international organisations.

In August 2019, the NSDC of Ukraine announced the creation of a joint venture in the field of high-precision weapons and aerospace technologies between Ukrspetseksport and the Turkish company Baykar Defence, which should help the two countries to boost defence cooperation. At the same time, Ukraine has proved unable to prevent the implementation of a number of joint Turkish-Russian projects, which directly or indirectly threaten its national interests (supply of Russian S-400 to Turkey, construction of two branches of the Turkish Stream and the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant, Turkey’s reluctance to review the provisions of the Montreux Convention, etc.).

# Hungary

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	3	3	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	2	3	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	2	2	2	2
ACTIVITIES	n/a	5	3	3	3
RESULTS	n/a	4	2	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	C+	C-	C-	C-

The election of Ukraine's new president and parliament and the change of government to some extent softened the tension in relations between Kyiv and Budapest and shaped inflated expectations of a quick ending of the conflict around the rights of the Hungarian minority in Ukraine, and of a reset in the bilateral relations. At the end of 2019, however, the bilateral relations are stagnating on the same crisis and conflict level as shaped in 2017–2018.

'15–  
'19

Over the past five years, the Hungarian vector of the Ukrainian foreign policy enjoyed a lot of political interest and reactive policy due to the ongoing dispute. There is good ground for a change in bilateral relations now — and such windows of opportunity emerged regularly in the past five years despite the serious disputes over Ukraine's education and language laws. This dispute between Kyiv and Budapest has lasted for two years now, involving NATO, the EU, the OSCE and other influential international players. It affects the whole range of the bilateral dialogue. This situation is caused by the lack of expertise on Hungary in Ukraine, the absence of a strategic vision for its development, and of an understanding how to turn Ukraine's dialogue with Hungary into a success story.

## Political Interest / Engagement

Compared to two previous years, the conflict level in bilateral relations faded somewhat in 2019 as the clash between Kyiv and Budapest shifted to a less intense stage. In the first half of 2019, this nominal lull was a result of the presidential election in Ukraine, and in second half — of the fact that the team of President Zelenskyy saw the conflict as something inherited and did not have an obvious or possible solution scenario.

While the program of the Servant of the People, a party that got the monomajority after the parliamentary election, included support “for the President's initiative to reset relations with Ukraine's closest neighbours in the

'19

West,” relations with Hungary ended up beyond the list of priorities in the 2019 foreign policy. The parliamentary group of friendship with Hungary was not established in 2019.

V. Prystaiko spoke about relations with Hungary in his speech at the Verkhovna Rada before his appointment as a Minister of Foreign Affairs (29.08). The President’s Decree No 837/2019 “On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state” (dated 8.11) mentioned Hungary in the context of restoring good relations with the neighbouring states.

## Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation developed between the MFA and the Ministry of Science and Education to solve the crisis in bilateral relations over the Law on Education (first half of the year) and its implementation, as well as the need to process other recommendations of the Venice Commission (second half of the year). In 2019, the institute of Ukrainian envoy for cross-border cooperation did not manifest its involvement in any way.

Institutional cooperation also took place between the MFA and Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, including in the context of the need to unblock Hungary’s veto at the level of NATO’s political decisions and the appointment of Hungarian representative O. Várhelyi as a European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement.

After the change of the Zakarpattia Oblast State Administration leadership, the Ukrainian side managed to resume uniformity of positions on Hungary at the regional level, at least in the public domain, as the statements of the new Governor I. Bondarenko were in sync with the position of the Ukraine’s MFA.

## Strategic Vision

Hungary remains out of focus as an individual potential partner in Ukraine’s strategic documents and is only mentioned in the context of the need to unblock Ukraine’s Euro-Atlantic integration at the top political level — the NATO-Ukraine

Commission. The absence of a strategic vision for relations with Hungary is a precondition for a long-standing tension in bilateral relations and for the lack of ideas for solving the current crisis.

## Activities

Throughout 2019, the key activities of the Ukrainian side on the Hungarian vector focused on explaining the implementation of the Law on Education to Hungary taking into account recommendations of the Venice Commission and specifics of the language law passed in Ukraine, as well as concepts of new draft laws on the rights of national minorities, including the ones on citizenship and school education. Much attention was focused on diplomatic responses to statements from Hungary on the status of the Hungarian national minority, Ukrainian laws and bilateral relations — this was essentially the framework of dialogue between the countries in 2019.

Presidents Zelenskyy and Áder met in Kyiv in May and Ministers of Foreign Affairs met in New York during the UN GA session in September, but no agreements were reached and no progress in relations took place.

In 2019, a constructive component remained in bilateral relations — cooperation continued on projects of the Hungarian government in Zakarpattia Oblast implemented via the mechanism of envoy and the network of financial and humanitarian assistance programs.

The Ukrainian embassy in Budapest in 2019 was among the most proactive in public diplomacy and engaged in the political dialogue.



## Results

In 2019, Ukraine's foreign policy on Hungary was driven by the principle of responding to the actions of the other side. It was within this framework that the protection of national interests and the drawing of red lines took place. This policy lacked a proactive approach from the perspective of solving the crisis in relations, yet the Ukrainian side spoke publicly about its readiness to compromises. Therefore, Ukraine-Hungary relations did not improve or deteriorate significantly in 2019.

A series of promising projects remains suspended, including the Hungarian loan of EUR 50 mn to repair the detour road in Berehovo, an opening of new checkpoints and repair of the current ones at the Ukraine-Hungary border etc. Given the open criminal case for the funding of separatism, further work of the Charity Foundation "Egán Ede" Zakarpattia Center of Economic Development is at risk.

The crisis in political relations between the countries in 2019 was not a serious barrier against increased economic cooperation. In 2019, bilateral trade was USD 2.8 bn with a surplus balance for Ukraine.

# Czech Republic

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3
ACTIVITIES	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5
RESULTS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	B-

In 2019, Ukraine's relations with the Czech Republic had a positive dynamics both at the level of political dialogue and in the context of trade and economic cooperation. Bilateral relations were partly affected by the change of the domestic political situation in both countries. For the first time in 11 years, Czech Prime Minister A. Babiš came to Ukraine on an official visit. A compromise emerged in solving problematic issues, for example with the "Yamburg Debt".

# '15– '19

Since 2015, despite the support of Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty by the Czech Republic, there was no significant interest in developing bilateral relations neither in Kyiv nor in Prague. The political position of Czech President M. Zeman did not contribute to a more fruitful political dialogue as he stands on the pro-Russian position. In 2019, Ukraine-Czech relations intensified seriously to develop bilateral political dialogue and cooperation. Czech PM visited Ukraine for the first time in 11 years, in addition to the strengthening of business contacts formats development.

In 2017, the Czech Republic lifted all barriers for military and technical cooperation with Ukraine. In the past five years, EUR15 mn was provided to Ukraine to support reforms, educational and humanitarian projects. Cooperation is widespread on the level of civil society organizations. Despite the growing trade and economic cooperation, there are few infrastructure or investment projects so far. Ukraine has no contacts with the Czech Republic on historical memory or the rights of national minorities, yet the issue that needs to be solved is the payment of the "Yamburg Debt" by Ukraine whereby Ukraine has to find ways to cover its debt liabilities to the Czech Republic.

## Political Interest / Engagement

During the presidential and parliamentary campaigns in Ukraine, the Czech Republic was traditionally out of focus for the key political players. Interest in the Czech Republic was fuelled by the pro-Russian destructive actions of its President M. Zeman to which the Ukrainian side responded.

Bilateral relations were mentioned in November during the official visit of Czech Prime Minister Babiš to Ukraine and his meetings with President Zelenskyy and Prime Minister Honcharuk. President Zelenskyy highlighted the restoration of the dialogue between the two countries, the significant assistance provided by the Czech Republic to reforms in Ukraine, and its support for Ukraine's civil society. At their meeting, the prime ministers spoke about bilateral cooperation in energy, military technical cooperation, and the record-breaking pace of trade cooperation.

## Institutional Cooperation

From early 2019, Ukrainian institutions (MFA, MEDT, Chamber of Commerce and Industry) coordinated preparations for the 9th meeting of the Ukraine-Czech Commission for Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technical Cooperation in Ukraine. However, it had to be postponed because of elections in Ukraine. In November, the Ukrainian part of the Commission was re-staffed and Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration D. Kuleba was appointed co-chair.

In November, the Group for Parliamentary Relations with the Czech Republic in Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada held a founding meeting. Together with the Embassy of Ukraine to the Czech Republic, preparations began for a visit of the friendship group's members to Prague.

From November, government meetings intensified to solve the "Yamburg Debt" issue, involving the Ministry of Finance, Naftogaz and Ministry of Energy.

At the end of 2019, the MFA was in active consultations with the Public Council at the MFA on the organization of the Ukraine-Czech Forum scheduled for early 2020 in Prague.

## Strategic Vision

Strategic documents have no mentions of the Czech Republic, but there are cursory mentions of the Visegrad Four. The National Security Strategy of Ukraine (2015) highlighted Ukraine's continued cooperation with V4 on the subregional level to ensure national security in the foreign policy sphere, and it mentions the need to bring social standards in Ukraine closer to the level of Central and Eastern European states to ensure economic security. The parties did not sign any bilateral documents or mid-term roadmap in 2019.

## Activities

The top-level dialogue between presidents remained blocked as a result of pro-Russian statements and provocative expressions by the Czech President M. Zeman. However, the governments and parliaments were in proactive political dialog from early 2019. In January, Czech FM T. Petříček came on a two-day visit to Ukraine. In May, political consultations between deputy ministers took place in Prague.

The dialogue evolved after the changes in the Ukraine's foreign policy team as a result of elections. In May, Senate President J. Kubera attended the inauguration of the newly elected President Zelenskyy. President Zelenskyy met twice with Czech Prime Minister A. Babiš in September and November. During the first visit of the Czech PM to Ukraine in the past 11 years in November, A. Babiš met with Prime Minister O. Honcharuk and VRU Speaker D. Razumkov. During his visit, the Ukrainian-Czech Business Forum took place with nearly 200 attendees on both sides. Ukrainian FM V. Prystaiko and Czech FM J. Petříček spoke on the telephone in September and met in Bratislava in December.

As a result of the change of parliament in Ukraine, and the ensuing reshuffle in the Cabinet of Ministers, the meeting of the Ukraine-Czech Commission for Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technical Cooperation did not take place in 2019. Still, the Ukrainian-Czech Working Group on Cooperation in the Industrial Sphere, that is part of the Commission framework, had a meeting, and bilateral consultations on the level of secretaries of the national segments in the Commission were held too.

The dialogue between parliaments was proactive as well. The delegation of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies in the Czech parliament came to Ukraine in April, and the delegation of the Senate Permanent Commission on Rural Development visited Ukraine in September.

Ukraine's Embassy to the Czech Republic worked proactively both on strengthening the political dialogue and on using public and cultural diplomacy tools.

## Results

The Czech government consistently supports Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, its European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Czech FM visited Hutove crossing point and Mariupol in Eastern Ukraine in January. The visit of Czech PM Babiš to Ukraine in November 2019 was definitely a positive development. Still, statements of Czech President M. Zeman triggered negative responses from Kyiv from time to time.

In May, the Ukrainian and Czech MFAs signed a Memorandum to establish the Ukrainian-Czech Forum for NGOs. Its first inauguration meeting was scheduled for February 2020. Five agreements and memoranda between companies were signed during the Ukrainian-Czech Business Forum in November.

In 2019, Ukraine failed to solve the "Yamburg Debt" issue despite the measures taken on the government level.

The Czech Republic ranked 15th in the list of top destinations for Ukraine's exports in the world and 7th among European states in 2019. Bilateral trade grew 9% to over USD 2 bn. Exports from Ukraine to the Czech Republic grew 4.9% to USD 921 mn, while imports increased 12.6% to USD 1.2 bn.

# Russia

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	3+	3	3+	4-
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	3+	3+	3+	3+
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	3	4-	4-	3-
ACTIVITIES	n/a	3-	3+	3	3
RESULTS	n/a	1+	2	2+	2+
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	C-	C+	C+	C

## 2019

POLITICAL RELATIONS  
ECONOMIC COOPERATION  
ENERGY RELATIONS

TOTAL SCORES

C-  
C+  
C-

POLITICAL INTEREST

4  
3  
4

INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

3  
4  
3

STRATEGIC VISION

3  
3  
2

ACTIVITIES

3  
3  
3

RESULTS

1  
3  
3

# '15– '19

The five-year period of military-political aggression has shown that year after year there is less and less room for “package settlement” in bilateral Ukrainian-Russian relations with a view to improving them in the future. The military-political and information level of Russian aggression against Ukraine remains a major risk and challenge for Ukraine.

Amid the destruction of Ukrainian-Russian political relations, Ukraine, on the one hand, demonstrated general maturity in understanding the urgent need for its own sovereignty while, on the other hand, proved incapable of finalizing the model of coexistence with the aggressor. In fact, the last five-year period in the Ukrainian-Russian relations at the political level demonstrated an absence of the Ukrainian vision for relations with Russia under new circumstances.

The main results of 2019 are the preservation of international support in countering Russia's aggression, including the extension of sanctions and rulings from the international courts. There were no new final court decisions in favour of the Ukrainian side in 2019. Ukraine's trade with Russia almost halved since 2014, down to USD 10.22 bn (87% of 2018 — USD 11.74 bn); and negative balance at USD 3.7 bn. Ukraine's key defeat was the implementation of Russia's projects Nord Stream 2 and Turkish Stream that will result in losses for the Ukrainian economy.

As a result of five years, Ukraine won a short-term victory in the field of gas relations but failed to change Russia's long-term



plans for the political application of the energy policy instruments. Winning a case in Stockholm arbitration is one of the biggest victories. Transforming energy negotiations format from a purely bilateral into the EU-RF-Ukraine triangle became another positive achievement of these five years.

## POLITICAL RELATIONS

2019 did not become a year of positive changes in Ukrainian-Russian political dialogue. Although the new political authorities promised a quick end to the war and re-establishment of pragmatic relations with Russia among its election slogans, there were no qualitative changes in bilateral relations. For the most part, the new authorities lack a holistic view of a new model of political dialogue with Russia, both bilaterally and multilaterally.

## Political Interest / Engagement

A political reset of the legislative and executive authorities as a result of the presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine was accompanied by election slogans on restoring effective Ukrainian-Russian political dialogue, ending the armed confrontation in Donbas, and regaining military-political control over the entire territory of Donbas using only political and diplomatic tools. In fact, the change of power in Ukraine took place under the slogan of “ending the Ukrainian-Russian war.”

At the same time, an arrival of the new government team has only aggravated the “Russian issue” in Ukrainian politics. The position, within which the understanding of the reality of the Russian threat blocked any “pro-Russian” foreign policy strategy, was replaced by a syncretic view of the “Russian direction” of foreign policy, within which pragmatic ideas about the possibility of forming a new agenda in Ukrainian-Russian relations and understanding of the lack of

alternatives to international support in countering Russian aggression coexist.

In his Extraordinary Address to the VRU on August 29, President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy said that priorities included “strengthening national security and defence, ending the war in Donbas and bringing back Russia-annexed Crimea”. However, he did not explain a new model of relations between Ukraine and Russia. During his endorsement as a Minister of Foreign Affairs, V. Prystaiko said that the ongoing war against Russia continues to cause significant damage to Ukraine and that “Ukraine cannot and will not hold endless negotiations in various formats”.

In addition to the parliamentary faction of the Servant of the People political party, which is focused on “legislative support for V. Zelenskyy’s initiatives aimed at restoring Ukraine’s territorial integrity and state sovereignty” in terms of the Ukrainian-Russian political dialogue, political parties with opposite views on the elaboration of Russian direction in Ukraine’s foreign policy were elected to the Parliament. While the European Solidarity, Batkivschyna and Voice parties spoke (albeit with some differences) from the standpoint of counteracting Russian aggression, the Opposition Platform — For Life party insists that the Russian aggression is mostly caused by Ukraine’s pro-European aspirations.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

The fact that the political power triangle of Parliament-Government-President has been formed by one political force, following the elections in summer 2019, facilitated the formation of the most favourable conditions for institutional cooperation within the Ukrainian state apparatus. At the same time, certain functions and tasks were observed to be carried out not only at the level of the MFA, but also at the level of the Presidential Office (at the level of advisers to the President of Ukraine), making their implementation problematic, politically biased and non-public.

## Strategic Vision

The current level of political dialogue in Ukrainian-Russian relations remains low. Transformations in the personnel and political provision of Ukrainian foreign policy have not changed the military confrontation between the two countries. The strategic legal regulations (the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy”, the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, etc.) describe the Russian Federation as a significant and long-term threat to Ukraine.

## Activities

Diplomatic representation in both countries continues to be at the level of charges d'affaires. The diplomatic activity of Ukrainian consular establishments remains the main institutional component for pressing issues of bilateral relations (legal support for the protection of Ukrainians held captive in the territory of the Russian Federation, representation of Ukrainian citizens' interests in the territory of the RF, etc.).

The low level of the Ukrainian-Russian political dialogue limits interstate communication to multilateral formats and contact groups (Minsk and Normandy formats).

Similarly, a substantial level of confrontation between the two countries remains within the framework of international organizations, first of all, the UN, OSCE, CoE, PACE and others. International and arbitration courts also offer important platforms for the Ukrainian-Russian confrontation.

The channels of communication between the Presidents of Ukraine and Russia have also changed to some extent. For example, “telephone conversations” with V. Putin were added to the working formats of communication of President V. Zelenskyy, while contacts at the level of aides and advisers to the Presidents intensified.

A possible meeting between the Presidents of Ukraine and Russia within the Normandy format gained particular importance due to the change of political power in Ukraine. For this meeting to take place, Ukraine made a number of concessions (a disengagement of troops in a number of locations, an approval of the wording of the so-called “Steinmeier formula”, which largely complicated the strategy of preventing the inclusion of dangerous legal clauses into national legislation) but did not achieve the full release of Ukrainian prisoners of war and hostages during a swap (contrary to what was agreed at the meeting).

## Results

Political dialogue in bilateral relations remained at an extremely low institutional level. The hopes of the new authorities for a quick political settlement of Ukrainian-Russian relations and for the end of the Russian armed aggression against Ukraine did not materialise. Despite the meetings in the Normandy format (9.12) and the statements by the leaders of the Normandy Four about significant progress based on the results of the meeting, further achievement of the declared agreements seems extremely problematic.

President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy's efforts to establish personal contact with V. Putin have yielded very limited results in the form of partial swap of Ukrainian hostages and returning previously captured warships. To ensure security of stay in Russia for Ukrainian citizens, the crossing of the Russia-Ukraine border can be only with foreign passport use as of March 1, 2020. This is done on the initiative of the MFA and in accordance with the decision of the Government of Ukraine (18.12).

Most of the results of political cooperation in 2019 concern international law and work within international organizations. Among them are the Ruling of the UN International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (25.05) to Russia to immediately release 24 captured seamen and return three ships, which Russia has not completed in full; the recognition by the International Court of Justice (8.11) of its jurisdiction to consider the case on the application and interpretation of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in Ukraine vs Russia; the adoption of the UN GA Resolution

“Problem of the Militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov” (9.12), which urged the Russian Federation to withdraw its military forces from Crimea and to end its temporary occupation, and return equipment and weapons seized from the released vessels of the Ukrainian Navy in November 2018; the adoption of the updated UN GA resolution “Situation of Human Rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine” (18.12), which, among other things, urges Russia to end its policy of changing the demographic situation in Crimea and calls for the release of all illegally detained Ukrainian citizens in occupied Crimea and the Russian Federation.

## ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Economic cooperation with Russia received less attention compared to other issues in 2019. By contrast to 2018, new lines of conflict did not emerge in this sphere in 2019. Sanctions are still in place and cooperation is shrinking, Russia is losing a position of Ukraine’s key trade partner. Yet, Ukraine is still highly dependent on imports from Russia. Ukraine does not have a strategic vision or systemic policy in this area. Just like before, Ukraine’s policy is reactive.

## Political Interest / Engagement

In 2019, political interest and involvement of the key stakeholders in the economic aspect of Russia’s hybrid war against Ukraine was not very high. In the context of the political discussion on the “Steinmeier formula” and withdrawal of troops, the economic agenda in Ukraine-Russia relations has been beyond attention of the key political actors. The election program of the current president and his party did not mention the future of bilateral economic relations. Political parties generally do not pay much attention to economic relations with Russia. The Opposition Platform — For Life is the exception as foreign policy objectives

listed in its platform, presented as protection of the citizens' interests, include abolition of bilateral sanctions and restoration of mutually beneficial trade and economic relations with Russia and the CIS countries. Economic cooperation with Russia is mostly viewed from the perspective of losses suffered by Ukraine's economy and injection into the public domain of a discussion about how much sense it makes to keep the current approach where Russian goods end up in the Ukrainian market at higher prices via third countries.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

Like previous year, cooperation between the key actors in power is established and maintains focus on keeping the international consensus to continue the pressure on Russia via sanctions; on work in international courts, and on the necessary decisions at the national level. The key foreign policy actors, including the President, the NSDC, the VRU, the Cabinet of Ministers, the National Bank of Ukraine and the Security Services of Ukraine, work in a coordinated manner. Cases against Russia that are taking place in international courts are curated by the MFA; their progress is properly coordination between Ukrainian government agencies. Despite this, the concentrated effort of the Ukrainian side was not enough to effectively counter the progress on the Nord Stream 2 and Turkish Stream pipelines and to support resistance to these projects in EU member-states.

## **Strategic Vision**

The lack of a strategic vision on economic cooperation with Russia in the past six years resulted in contradicting statements from Ukrainian officials. Previous year, the position of minimizing economic cooperation with Russia and protecting interests of Ukrainian citizens prevailed. In 2019, the President's representative at the Cabinet of Ministers spoke about the need to continue economic relations between Ukraine and Russia. The position expressed by a Deputy Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture shows that the government works

reactively, responding to the measures undertaken by Russia vis a vis Ukraine. Ukraine sees most of Russia's actions as illegal, so it continues trade restrictions as a response. The strategy is to further maintain sanction policy for the purposes of national security. International courts and sanctions wars remain the main tactical element of economic resistance, while the President's Decree No 837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" lists the respective instructions for the Cabinet of Ministers.

## Activities

Sanctions and courts hearings remain at the core of Ukraine's economic relations with Russia. Sanctions were reinforced in spring and summer. Ukraine introduced a special tax on diesel and liquefied gas and extended the ban on imports of a few Russian goods through the end of 2020, adding new groups into the list: construction materials, mineral fertilizers, wood processing and metallurgy goods, passenger cars and trucks. Russia continues economic pressure on Ukraine, making it dependent on imports of natural gas, coal, oil products and nitrogen fertilizers, and restricts imports of value-added goods from Ukraine, including pipes, metal-ware, cardboard, machine building products etc. The main action on the part of Ukraine was the ban on exports of oil, oil products and coal that can be imported to Ukraine under special approvals only. Ukraine has sued Russia in international courts on a number of cases, but the proceedings are slow. Investment arbitration cases are linked with compensations for the property lost in Crimea as a result of the Russia's annexation. Arbitration tribunals in the Netherlands, France and Switzerland are looking at up to ten such cases.

## Results

The main results of 2019 are the preservation of international support in countering Russia's aggression, including the extension of sanctions and rulings from the international courts. There were no new final court decisions in favour of the Ukrainian side in 2019. Ukraine's trade with Russia almost halved since

2014, down to USD 10.22 bn (87% of 2018 — USD11.74 bn); and negative balance at USD 3.7bn Ukraine's key defeat was the implementation of Russia's projects Nord Stream 2 and Turkish Stream that will result in losses for the Ukrainian economy.

## ENERGY RELATIONS

In 2019, energy relations of Ukraine and the Russian Federation were marked with several significant events, such as hydrocarbons' import taxes review aimed at reduction of dependence on the monopoly supplier, opening of the domestic electricity market for imports from the Russian Federation and Belarus, payment of debt according to the decision of the Arbitration Institute of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce, signing of a 5-year contract on the Russian gas transit through the Ukrainian gas transmission network, and a fierce political struggle over the Nord Stream-2 project, which resulted in its implementation delay.

## Political Interest / Engagement

The presidential election campaign in Ukraine significantly added to recalibration of the political interest and engagement in resolving energy relations issues at senior government level. While in the first half of the year, the President's official position to avoid direct involvement in the negotiations dominated, so in December, the gas issue became a key subject of the Normandy format meeting agenda and in a work of a whole team of negotiators from the presidential and government teams. At the same time, the opposition political forces and their leaders V. Medvedchuk and Y. Boyko showed high activity, in particular, having held several meetings with the Russian high-rank officials and the Gazprom top management. In the first half of 2019, the parliamentary group, headed by H. Hopko, also worked very actively with the European and American partners. After the snap parliamentary elections, no new similar group of MPs



was formed, and after reaching agreement on a new transit contract, the topic disappeared from the legislators' agenda.

## Institutional Cooperation

In 2019, significant changes took place at the level of institutional cooperation between various Ukrainian and Russian Federation authorities. If in the first half of the year the Ukrainian president's office had no official negotiations with the Russian Federation, then after the elections, they had active contacts at the level of the presidential advisers. The Minister of Energy returned to the trilateral contact group for gas transit, and they had some contacts with the Russian side, at the bilateral level as well, on the details of the future contract for the Russian gas transit to the EU and Moldova. The Verkhovna Rada unilaterally adopted amendments to the legislation aimed at unblocking the Russian electricity import to the liberalized market, that was ambiguously met in society and among the energy companies' representatives.

## Strategic Vision

The change in political forces in the second half of 2019 did not result in an immediate revision of the strategic energy policy foundations towards Russia. At the same time, a number of steps taken to politically condemn the aggressiveness and militancy of the previous authorities, the haste in fulfilment of the Russian requirements for the transit contract signing, preserving Naftogaz of Ukraine to be a partner of Gazprom, creation of preconditions for the Russian electricity import, and appeasement rhetoric — they are taken by a part of the society and experts' community as a high level of readiness for a strategic vision change. The rest of the public have an opinion that these were short-term concessions needed to sign a gas transit contract and hold a political summit. No changes were made at the level of the strategic documents.

## Activities

In the second half of 2019, the newly elected Parliament adopted a number of decisions with different effects on the energy sector. For example, amending of the customs legislation contributed to the decline in Russian hydrocarbons import and, accordingly, the pro-Russian opposition forces influence. At the same time, changes concerning the Russian electricity import unblocking caused a strong public reaction, although to some extent they contributed to lowering prices in the wholesale electricity market. The VRU also quickly adopted legislative changes facilitating the rapid certification of the gas transmission system operator and the transit contract signing. Meanwhile, the VRU blocked a similar certification process for a system electricity grid operator, what can adversely affect the integration process into the European single electricity market.

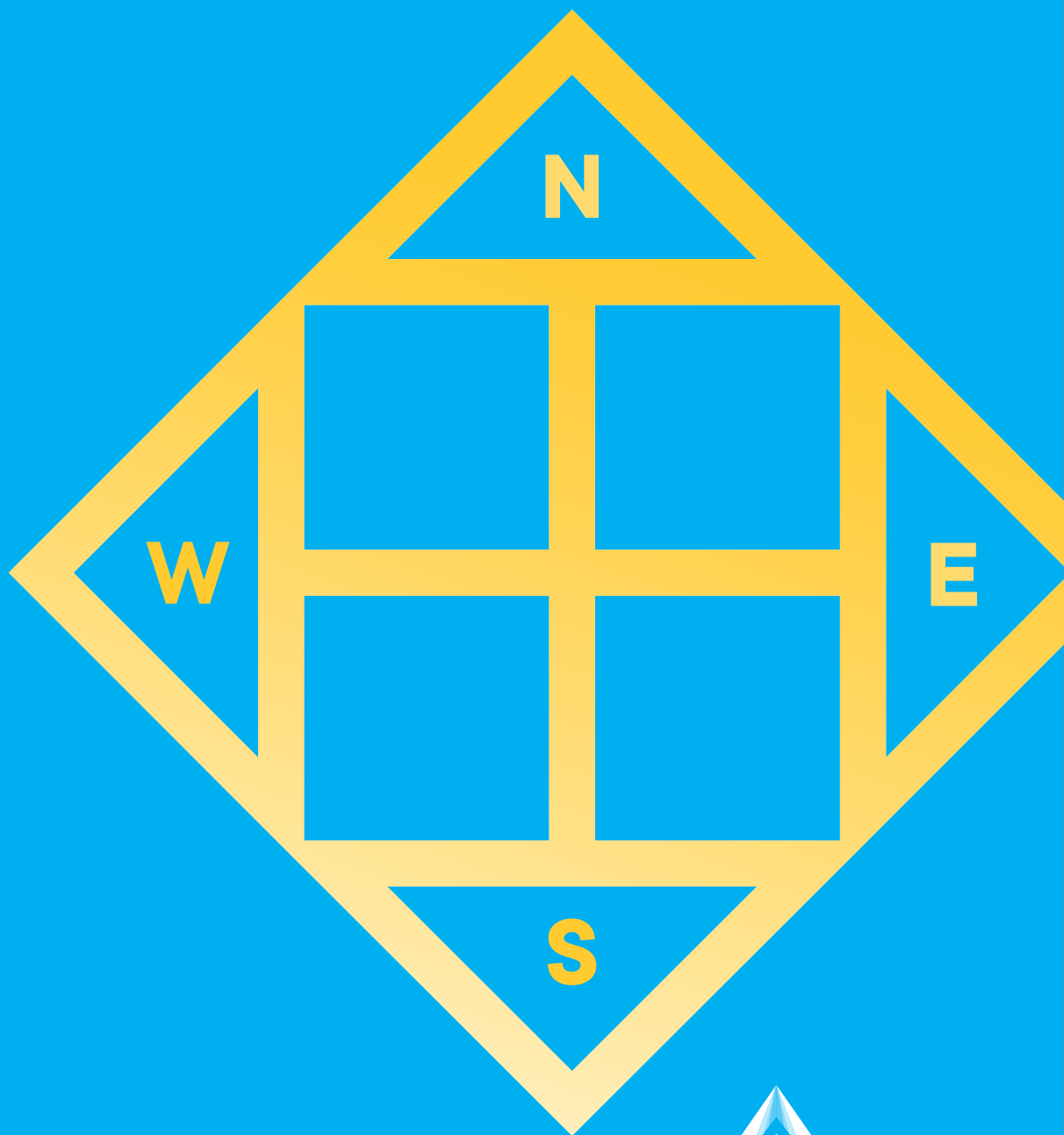
Ukrainian nuclear industry completed the process of obtaining a permit for the industrial operation of Westinghouse nuclear fuel, thereby increasing its independence from Russian Rosatom's fuel and Russia's political pressure possibilities.

The joint work of the Cabinet of Ministers and NJSC Naftogaz of Ukraine contributed to the company's splitting up and creation of an independent gas transmission system operator. The Gas Transmission System Operator of Ukraine (OGTSU) signed all the necessary operating agreements with its European partners, thus introducing European rules of operation and the possibility of virtual reverse. At the same time, the new transit contract was signed by Naftogaz and Gazprom, but not by the respective GTS operators. Thus, Ukraine did not take full advantage of the possibility of introducing the EU energy law principles for all international counterparties and lost the chance to win other political or security victory (in particular, in issues related to the Donbas region).

## Results

The main result of 2019 is a signing of a new gas transit contract. While Ukraine sought to maintain the country's transit position and annual budget revenues, as well as to minimize the threat of a major military invasion following the cessation of physical gas movement near the current front line, the Russian Federation sought to return to the usual format of political arrangements at the energy sector level. The failure of such goals became possible due to the work and efforts of previous representatives of the Verkhovna Rada, the CMU, and NJSN Naftogaz of Ukraine to counteract the construction of Russian bypass gas pipelines and to cooperate with the European Commission to form a common position in tripartite negotiations.

At the legislative level, they also managed to somewhat limit the Russian oil products volume in the domestic market, which reduced the pro-Russian forces political influence. At the same time, the opening of the electricity market was negatively met in society and among domestic generation owners (public and private). The electricity market remains really challenging with Russian imports to be constantly monitored and restricted.



# REGIONAL COOPERATION

.....  
**Asia-Pacific Region**

**C**  
.....

**Middle East**

**C+**  
.....

**Western Balkans**

**C+**  
.....

**Baltic States**

**A-**  
.....

**Visegrad Four**

**C**  
.....

**Latin America**

**C-**  
.....

**Northern Europe**

**C+**  
.....

**South Asia**

**B**  
.....

**Sub-Saharan Africa**

**C-**  
.....

**Central Asia**

**D+**  
.....

**Black Sea Region**

**B-**  
.....

# Asia-Pacific Region

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3	2	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3,5	3	3	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	2	2	2	2	2
ACTIVITIES	4	2	4	4	4
RESULTS	4	3	4	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	C+	C-	C	C+	C

In 2019, cooperation with countries in the region was generally at the same level as in 2018. Institutional cooperation and strategic vision hardly changed. The MFA was in active political dialogue with the Republic of Korea and Malaysia. Also noteworthy was the work of embassies in Australia, Indonesia and Malaysia. In general, there is a lack of strategic vision for cooperation with the region. There were no high-level meetings with representatives of the countries of the region in 2019.

'15–  
'19

Ukraine's foreign policy was revitalized at various levels on the Asia-Pacific region in the past five years. The greatest focus was on trade and economy, cooperation in the military and technical spheres. Despite limited resources, Embassies of Ukraine in the region actively worked to build these relationships. However, a separate strategy for cooperation with the region was not developed in five years despite political attention to the dynamics of the Asia-Pacific region development and the need to deepen relations with these countries. The region is hardly mentioned in the documents that shape Ukraine's development strategy.

## Political Interest / Engagement

President V. Zelenskyy has repeatedly mentioned the success stories of Singapore or South Korea as an example for Ukraine's development. During the presentation of credentials to President Zelenskyy by Kwon Ki-Chang, the newly appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Ukraine, the parties discussed intensification of political dialogue, trade, economic and investment cooperation. Ukraine's foreign trade policy focuses on maximum attraction of investments, including from the Republic of Korea, as well as an increase of agricultural exports to Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam. Australia is also an important political partner of Ukraine in the context of investigation of the MH17 catastrophe in 2014.

'19

The region was mentioned only in the general context of Asian countries in both speeches and decrees by President Zelenskyy and in the speech by V. Prystaiko before his appointment as Foreign Minister.

No countries of the region were mentioned in election platforms of political parties. Batkivshchyna's New Course of Ukraine was the only program that mentioned Japan in the context of economic indicators of growth and stability of financial systems. The newly elected parliament established friendship groups with Vietnam, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan (December).

## **Institutional Cooperation**

Overall, institutional cooperation with the countries of the region continues at the same level as it was last year. According to the O. Honcharuk's Government Action Plan, visa facilitation negotiations with two countries in the region — the Republic of Korea and Australia — are due to be completed. Ukraine has had no ambassador to Vietnam since July 2019.

## **Strategic Vision**

There was no change in the strategic vision of relations with the Asia-Pacific region in 2019. It is hardly mentioned in the main strategic documents. The 2017–2021 Export Strategy identifies the markets of Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines as a focus for Ukraine. Bilateral strategic agreements were not signed in 2019. The President's Decree No 837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" addresses Asia and G20 in general in the Foreign Policy section, which includes Australia, Indonesia and South Korea.

## **Activities**

At the level of the MFA, political consultations with the relevant agencies of Malaysia and the Republic of Korea were held in 2019. Cooperation with



the relevant Australian and Malaysian institutions continues in the context of investigation of the MH17 catastrophe.

The 8th round of Ukrainian-South Korean political consultations between foreign ministries took place in Seoul (24.05). Among other things, the agenda included visa liberalization between Ukraine and Korea. During the working visit to Seoul, Deputy Foreign Ministry S. Kyslytsya visited the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (23.05). The parties discussed the main aspects of bilateral cooperation, as well as the interaction of the two countries within the organization. S. Kyslytsya hosted S. Wongsinsawat, Director-General of the European Affairs Department of Thailand's MFA (05.07). The parties discussed the priorities in further development of Ukrainian-Thai cooperation, as well as the extension of the legal framework. In this context, Ukraine is interested in having draft agreement on the transfer of convicted individuals between Ukraine and Thailand approved as soon as possible.

Y. Bozhok, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, was on a working trip to Singapore, New Zealand and Australia (7–16.10). The priority issues in all three countries were security cooperation. S. Kyslytsya also visited Malaysia (29.10), where MFAs of the two countries held political consultations. However, there was no intensification of dialogue with these countries at the government level in 2019.

Ukrainian companies actively participated in numerous fairs in the countries of the region throughout the year, including Defence and Security Expo Vietnam 2019 (2–4.10, Hanoi), Seoul ADEX 2019 (Seoul International Aerospace & Defence Exhibition 2019, 15.10, Seoul), LIMA 2019 on maritime and aerospace defence (Malaysia), where UkrOboronProm demonstrated its capabilities. Representatives of Ukraine met with the Commander of the Malaysian Armed Forces and the Commander of the Royal Cambodian Air Force. Cambodia discussed the renovation of its aviation park by Ukrainian aircraft companies.

On July 8–11, O. Shovkoplyas, Ukraine's Ambassador to Cambodia, met with the country's MFA and MoD. The parties discussed the establishment of bilateral cooperation between the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces. A Ukrainian delegation, comprised of representatives of Antonov State Enterprise and Ukraine's Embassy to the Republic of Korea, participated in "Fostering Aviation Industry of South Korea", an international conference on October 29, presenting the prospects and benefits of international cooperation

in aviation between Ukraine and the Republic of Korea. The Ukrainian delegation led by V. Kozhevnikov, Deputy Director General of UkrSpetsExport, participated in Defense & Security 2019 in Thailand (12–21.11), the biggest International exhibition of weapons and military equipment in Southeast Asia. During the exhibition, the Ukrainian delegation held a series of meetings and negotiations with the military leadership of Thailand and other countries. The BTR-3E1KSh command vehicle designed in cooperation between UkrSpetsExport and the Defence Technology Institute of the MoD of Thailand was presented at the exhibition.

Representatives of the State Hydrographic Service of Ukraine participated in the international maritime exhibition PACIFIC 2019 in Sydney (11.10). The Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Korea presented the potential of Ukrainian fisheries at the Busan International Seafood & Fisheries EXPO (6–8.11). With the assistance of the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Korea, start-ups from Lviv participated in G-Fair Korea 2019 (30.10–3.11).

Deputy Minister of Health O. Linchevskiy met with C. Crewther, Chairman of the Australian-Ukrainian parliamentary friendship group at the Australian Federal Parliament (May 15), during his visit to Australia, where he attended the WADEM conference. The Ukrainian Embassy in Australia worked on developing relations in the sphere of space. Among others, Ukraine's Ambassador M. Kulynych discussed with Australia's Minister for Industry, Science and Technology K. Andrews, this issue on December 2.

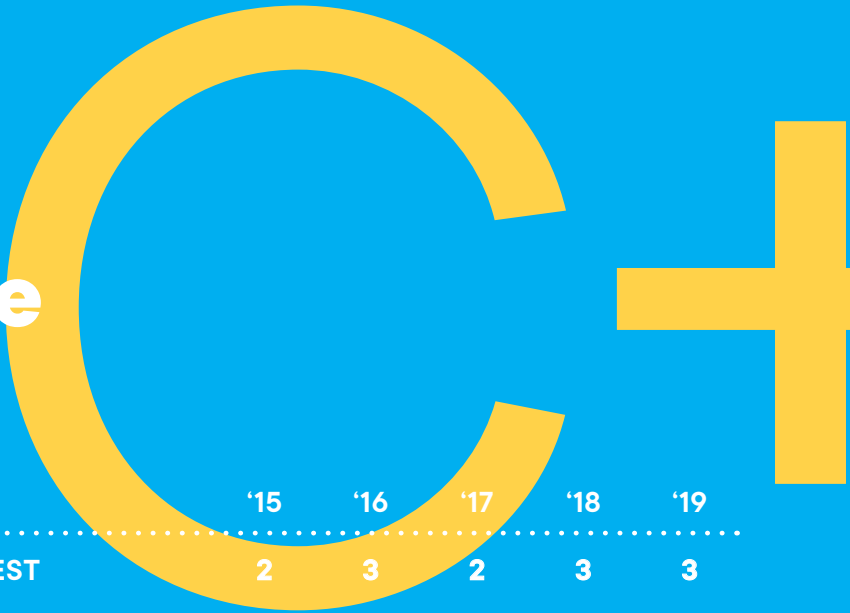
This year attention was also paid to cultural diplomacy in the region, particularly in South Korea and Indonesia.

During the meeting of V. Pakhil, Ukraine's Ambassador to Indonesia, with M. Nasir, Indonesia's Minister of Research, Technology and Higher Education, the parties confirmed their intention to expand the bilateral legal framework by concluding memorandums on cooperation in higher education, science and technology, as well as on exchange of scholarships. Noteworthy is the work of the Ukraine's Embassy in Malaysia, which actively developed relations with representatives of the Malaysian government in 2019.

## Results

In 2019, treaties to avoid double taxation were signed with Malaysia and Singapore. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine approved the Laws of Ukraine “On Ratification of the Agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of Malaysia on Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes and a Related Protocol” (30.10). Finance Minister O. Markarova signed the Protocol Amending the Agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Singapore on Avoidance of Double Taxation for Income Tax (16.08). The Agreement between Ukraine and the Kingdom of Thailand on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (9.08) entered into effect. Also, this year a memorandum was signed between the Korean Institute of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

# Middle East



	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	2	3	2	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3	3	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	1	2	2	3	2
ACTIVITIES	4	4	4	5	4
RESULTS	4	3	4	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	C-	C	C	B-	C+

In 2019, the intensity of activities at the high-level and at the parliamentary one declined. There was proactive intergovernmental work on trade and economic cooperation, energy, education and a military industrial complex. The greatest attention in bilateral cooperation was on Qatar and OAE. Intensification of cooperation with Oman is noteworthy. Parliamentary and presidential elections did not affect Ukraine's policy on the region.

# '15– '19

In 2015–2019, Ukraine did not see the Middle East as a vector of its foreign policy — the absence of strategies, concepts or mentions in strategic documents reflects this. The priorities included the development of trade cooperation, which points to the economization of Ukraine's foreign policy on the Middle East, and of cooperation by industries (agriculture, defence industry, infrastructure, healthcare, energy, education etc.). The share of Ukrainian exports to the Middle Eastern markets reached 13% of its total exports — Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Tunisia being the key partners. The most interesting countries for cooperation were those of the Persian Gulf as reflected in a series of high-level visits and the increasing number of agreements with these countries.

Despite the lack of systemic attention to the region from Ukrainian politicians, it was mentioned from time to time throughout all five years. These mentions were mostly in the context of global security threats and Russia's destructive activities in the Middle East. However, the focus on a security aspect is gradually declining after peaking in 2016–2017 when Ukraine held a non-permanent membership at the UN Security Council.

## Political Interest / Engagement

The Middle East traditionally remained on the periphery of Ukrainian politics in 2019, pointing to the lack of the vision of the region as an individual dimension of Ukraine's foreign policy. The re-staffing of all branches of power following the presidential and parliamentary elections did not affect interest in the region. Election platforms of the presidential candidates and parties did not mention the region.

At the level of the legislative power, as reflected in the agenda of the respective Parliamentary committee (meeting on June 5) there were cooperation with countries in the region in the context of preparation for ratification of signed agreements and discussion of the trade-economic perspectives and interparliamentary cooperation with Kuwait. Also, the agenda points to the need to intensify relations with the Persian Gulf countries, as a subregion is mentioned in the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs' work plan for the beginning of the 2020, dated October 18, stated. By the end of 2019, new parliamentary groups of friendship were established with Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Ukraine is interested in industry cooperation with some Middle Eastern countries as articulated by representatives of the respective ministries in the previous Cabinet of Ministers (statements by O. Trofimtseva, Acting Minister of Agricultural Policy about the importance of the UAE in the agricultural and food industries, and Ukraine's intention to become a strategic partner for the UAE in ensuring its food security; by O. Gladkovsky, Deputy Secretary of the NSDC on the potential of military technical cooperation with the Middle Eastern countries and on interest in establishing joint companies in tank and aircraft building; and by V. Omelyan, Minister of Infrastructure on the interest in investment attraction from Qatar).

## Institutional Cooperation

There are no regional projects that require interagency coordination. Government agencies interact is happening in the context of preparation of agreements with the region's countries — that work was active between the Presidential Administration, the CMU and the VRU in the first half of 2019

(ratification of a number of agreements with Qatar by the Verkhovna Rada; the Cabinet of Ministers' decrees and instructions to sign agreements with Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Oman; implementation of the President's orders etc.). New heads of Joint Inter-Agency Commissions were approved in November. New ambassadors were appointed to Qatar and Jordan at the end of the year.

## Strategic Vision

The Middle East does not feature in Ukraine's key foreign policy documents, which points to the fact that there is no strategic dimension to these relations. The region is mentioned in the 2015 Military Doctrine of Ukraine in a broad security context and in the 2017 Exports Strategy that lists some countries, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Lebanon as promising markets. Yet, this does not bring relations with the region to a new level. The lack of the regional strategy in foreign policy has a negative influence. The President's Decree No837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" does not mention the Middle East in the foreign policy section.

## Activities

Ukraine's activities on the Middle Eastern vector has been focused on intensifying trade cooperation and deepening interactions in some areas, including energy, education, agriculture and defence industry, taking place via interagency contacts and participation in business fora. The most active work was done to intensify cooperation with Qatar (political consultations between the two MFAs and two visits of the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, when the partners were informed about trends in economic development and investment opportunities in industry, agriculture, infrastructure, energy etc.), and with the UAE (a trade mission to the UAE; a visit of S. Savchuk, Head of the State Agency for Energy Efficiency, to participate in IRENA Assembly, where strategies for boosting the development of clean energy in Ukraine and the UAE were discussed; a visit of L. Hrynevych, Minister of Science and Education, to

discuss the preparation of a new Memorandum of Cooperation; and a meeting of O. Gladkovsky, Deputy Secretary of the NSDC, with the military leadership of the country).

Ukraine intensified interaction with Oman as reflected in the first round of bilateral consultations between the two MFAs on November 5–6 and two business fora. Main trade partners were also not left without attention, in October and November respectively, representatives of the Ministry for Economy, Trade and Agriculture visited Ukraine's key trade partners in the regions — Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

In order to intensify its trade cooperation, Ukraine attended a number of conferences and fairs, including Hospitality Qatar 2019, International Conference and Expo on Oil and Gas (UAE), Project Qatar on construction, AGRITEQ-2019 (Qatar), DJAZAGRO-2019 (Algeria), Gulfood 2019 (UAE), IDEX 2019 (UAE), Dubai Air Show-2019 and others. The biggest ones were on agriculture.

Ukraine's diplomatic efforts throughout 2019 focused on obtaining the status of observer at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). These included negotiations with the OIC administration during the 46th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers in Abu Dhabi on March 1–3.

However, a number of regular intergovernmental commissions on trade and technical cooperation did not take place in 2019. The only regular meeting held was with Tunisia in April.

Activities have declined both at the high political level (just one meeting between President Zelenskyy and Egypt's President A. F. el-Sisi during the 74th session of the UN GA), and at the parliamentary level (just one case of interaction in February, when Ukraine hosted the interparliamentary group of friendship with Lebanon and a Ukrainian delegation visited the country in May in response).



## Results

The results of activities in the form of bilateral agreements are available in different sectors covered by individual ministries: in the financial sector — Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Countering Illegal Money Laundering and Funding of Terrorism with Kuwait; in agriculture — Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Agriculture and Food Safety with the UAE; in the justice sector — agreements between Ukraine and Morocco on legal aid in criminal cases and extradition, transfer of convicted individuals and legal aid in civilian and commercial affairs, Memorandum on Interaction between Ministries of Justice of Ukraine and Morocco; and in infrastructure — a protocol on changing and updating the Air Transportation Agreement between the governments of Ukraine and Qatar. Based on the results of the regular meeting of the Ukraine-Tunisia intergovernmental commission, the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation on Youth and Sports and the Agreement on Higher Education and Scientific Research were signed. As part of the Commission meeting, the Ukrainian-Tunisian Business Forum was held and memoranda were signed to establish cooperation between Ukraine's Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Tunisian Union for Industry, Commerce and Handicraft, and about the Business Council creation.

According to the State Statistics Bureau, Ukraine's trade with Middle Eastern countries in 2019 (without Israel, Turkey and Iran) was USD 7.1bn, including USD 6.6 bn of exports — which points to a serious positive balance. This is 13.2% of Ukraine's total exports. Egypt, Saudi Arabia and UAE remain the key partners and the trend is for trade to increase with these countries. Ukraine seriously stepped up its trade with Qatar (25%), Kuwait (130%) and Oman (34%).

# Western Balkans

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	2	3	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	3	2	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	2	3	3	3
ACTIVITIES	n/a	4	2	4	4
RESULTS	n/a	4	3	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	C	C-	B-	C+

In 2019, Ukraine's foreign policy activity with regard to Western Balkans was low and mostly focused on counteraction to Russian aggression and mitigation of its aftermath, as well as facilitation of Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic integration. The absence of visit of the top political leaders of Ukraine to the countries of the region and low dynamics of interparliamentary cooperation resulted in the weakening of political dialogue and its limitation to the ministerial level. Measures aimed at stimulating economic cooperation with the countries of the region (except Slovenia) were at a low level.

'15–  
'19

The Western Balkans has not been one of Ukraine's foreign policy priorities for the past five years. The lack of a comprehensive approach to the region was compensated by the tendency towards building relations with individual countries, notably Croatia and Slovenia. Dialogue with Albania has intensified, resulting in Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Bushati's visit to Kyiv in February 2018 and an agreement on the opening of diplomatic missions. The key foreign policy tasks in relations with the countries of the region included securing their support for international counteraction to Russian aggression and an assistance to Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Among the results achieved, the most significant ones were international support for Ukraine on the part of most countries in the region, with the exception of Serbia's negative attitude and BiH's neutral position; Slovenia's and Croatia's assistance in organizing humanitarian demining, rehabilitation of Ukrainian servicemen and children, and training of Ukrainian psychologists. Ukraine has short-term visa-free travel arrangements with all the countries in the region. The participation of the Ukrainian contingent in the KFOR stabilization mission contributed to the positive image of Ukraine in the region.

Economic cooperation between Ukraine and the countries of the region remained at a rather low level, with the trade turnover with none of these states exceeding USD 500 million. Cooperation in the tourism sector has intensified somewhat. In the energy sphere, Ukraine has shown an interest in the implementation of gasification projects in North Macedonia and the construction of a liquefied gas terminal in Croatia.

## Political Interest / Engagement

The Balkan countries and the region as such were not in the focus of the Ukrainian authorities. There were no references to them in official political documents, election programmes of President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy, the ruling Servant of the People party or other political forces, which made it to the newly-elected parliament. Priority was given to Croatia, which again was named Ukraine's traditional partner in the region. Ukraine also showed increased interest in Slovenia and Albania, which has had a positive effect on bilateral relations. Interest in Serbia, North Macedonia and Montenegro was manifested in the context of their movement towards the EU membership, as well as Russia's active measures to destabilise the situation in the region.

Four out of seven groups of friendship with the Balkan countries (Albania, North Macedonia, Slovenia and Croatia) were formed in the Verkhovna Rada by the end of the year. The quick and numerous formation of the group for interparliamentary relations with Croatia confirms its priority for Ukraine. Ukraine's engagement in regional cooperation formats was also low.

## Institutional Cooperation

During the year, all Ukrainian government offices were involved in the development of relations with the Western Balkans, although there was a decrease in interparliamentary activity due to the early elections to the VRU. The MFA and Ukraine's diplomatic missions, which are present not in every country of the region, played the key role in developing relations with these states. Ukraine's new Ambassador to Croatia was appointed in December. The diplomatic mission in Montenegro is still headed by the charge d'affaires. An agreement on the mutual opening of the diplomatic offices was reached with Albania. Overall, institutional cooperation with the countries of the region was rather coordinated but hardly active.

## Strategic Vision

The Western Balkans fall through the cracks of Ukraine's strategic priorities, with the exception of Croatia, the friendly partnership with which has been developing well. Croatia has in fact become a Ukraine's regional pillar in international counteraction to Russia's aggression as well as in Ukraine's striving to become a member of the EU and NATO. There is almost no mention of the Western Balkan countries in the strategic documents Ukraine approved during the year, although the Government's Priority Action Plan for 2019 planned negotiations on avoidance of double taxation treaty with Montenegro. This approach has little regard for the capabilities of countries in the region, which have already been granted the EU and NATO membership or are in the process of accession negotiations, which could support Ukraine's respective aspirations.

## Activities

Ukraine's foreign policy activity in the Western Balkans in 2019 was low and marked by the absence of top-level visits to the countries of the region. Most of the ministerial visits were made by members of the previous Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, including the visits by Minister for Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced People of Ukraine V. Chernysh to Montenegro (January), acting Minister of Agrarian Policy and Food O. Trofimtseva to Slovenia (March) and Minister of Veteran Affairs I. Friz to Croatia (May). The Chief of the General Staff of the AFU, V. Muzhenko, also visited Croatia in April to attend the Adriatic Sea Defence and Aerospace Show in Split. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Bodnar met State Secretary of the Slovenian MFA D. Božič (February). Also, meetings between the heads of the diplomatic academies of Ukraine and Croatia (November) and another round of Ukrainian-Croatian political consultations at the level of deputy ministers (September) took place. An Albanian delegation headed by Minister of State for Diaspora P. Majko visited Ukraine in November, which facilitated the development of interparliamentary relations, cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

Ukraine's interparliamentary cooperation with the countries of the region was also low, with no visits by parliamentary delegations. Only the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Interparliamentary Cooperation of the VRU, B. Yaremenko, met Albanian Minister of State P. Majko, while the first Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Family, Youth Policy, Sport and Tourism of the VRU of the 8th convocation, M. Velychkovych, met Secretary General of Albania's Ministry of Tourism and Environment A. Kamenica in Kyiv.

Ukrainian-Slovenian contacts have developed quite actively, in particular, between the National Agency for Civil Service of Ukraine and the Ministry of Public Administration of Slovenia, educational institutions, local self-government bodies, scientific and cultural institutions, medical and rehabilitation institutions. Interregional cooperation between Ukraine and North Macedonia also developed. The Embassies of Ukraine ensured regular contacts with the top leadership of the countries of the region and shared information about Ukraine.

Tourism, energy and agriculture dominated economic cooperation. Among all regional countries, economic cooperation with Slovenia developed in the most dynamic manner thanks to the work of the Ukrainian-Slovenian Business Council, the holding of the eighth meeting of the Joint Ukrainian-Slovenian Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation and a business forum, a visit by the delegation of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy of Ukraine to Slovenia, and a business seminar in Ljubljana. Children from families of the Antiterrorist Operation and the Joint Forces Operation veterans were on holiday in Croatia. Ukrainian delegations attended the International Tourism Fair in Serbia. Cooperation in the energy sector between Ukrainian (DTEK) and Croatian companies developed too.

At the same time, Ukraine did not make a proper use of regional formats, in particular it was represented just by the Ambassador to Slovenia at the summit of the Three Seas Initiative in June in Ljubljana.

## Results

The low level of Ukraine's political dialogue with the Western Balkan countries can be explained by their low attention to the problems of and developments in Ukraine. Of all the countries in the region, only State Secretary

of the Croatian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs Z. Bušić attended the inauguration of newly-elected President V. Zelenskyy.

A number of bilateral documents, including the Visa-Free Agreement between the Governments of Ukraine and North Macedonia and the Tourism Agreement between the Governments of Ukraine and BiH, were signed during the year. Other documents signed included the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of Slovenia on cooperation in sports; the Memorandum on Cooperation between the Diplomatic Academy under the MFA of Ukraine and the Diplomatic Academy under the MFEA of Croatia, the Plan of Consultations for 2020–2021 between the MFA of Ukraine and the MFEA of Croatia, the Memorandum on Cooperation between Ukrainian DTEK and the Croatian national energy company HEP.

Prioritising Croatia paid off as official Zagreb declared its unwavering support for Ukraine in its counteraction to Russian aggression and its bid for the EU and NATO membership, which is important in the context of Croatia's EU presidency in the first half of 2020. As NATO member states, Albania, Croatia and Slovenia provided important assistance to Ukraine, including in humanitarian demining, material and technical support, rehabilitation of servicemen and the implementation of reform in line with NATO standards. Preparing for its chairmanship in the OSCE in 2020, Albania expressed its support for Ukraine. The participation of the Ukrainian contingent in the KFOR stabilization mission (Kosovo) contributed to the positive image of Ukraine in the region. At the same time, Ukraine failed to persuade the Serbian leadership to maintain at least a neutral position when international organisations adopted decisions condemning Russian aggression.

There is a positive tendency towards the development of Ukraine's economic cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkans. Overall, Ukraine's trade with the countries of the region has slightly increased, and the decline was recorded in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania. The highest growth in trade and economic cooperation was seen with North Macedonia and Montenegro (double), while the highest volumes of trade in 2019 were recorded with Serbia (USD 431.1 million) and Slovenia (USD 283.9 million).

# Baltic States

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	4	4	5	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3	4	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	3	3	3	4	4
ACTIVITIES	5	4	5	5	5
RESULTS	5	4	5	4	5
TOTAL SCORES	B	B-	B+	B+	A-

The Baltic States remain among the top “advocates” of Ukraine on the international arena. Thanks to their efforts, the Baltic Plus initiative was launched at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and also the position that Nord Stream 2 is an unacceptable and politically motivated remains on the table. The Baltic States have repeatedly called for non-recognition of the so-called “elections” in Crimea and for a termination of the illegal actions against Crimean Tatars by Russia. The dynamics of cooperation between Ukraine and the Baltic States leans towards increasing intensification in many important spheres. Still, a forced pause in relations due to the presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine affected results of relations with the region. In fall, however, this deficiency was fully addressed.



# '15– '19

The Baltic States de facto have long been Ukraine's strategic partners. These countries proactively support Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and its European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

The common challenges and risks faced by Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia forced them to revise their vision and reinvigorate international cooperation in the past years. During this time, the attention of the Baltic States to Ukraine increased seriously as reflected by many top-level meetings and messages exchanged by the top officials on Ukraine's reforms and resolution of the conflict in the East. Cooperation primarily took place in the military, humanitarian and economic spheres. 2018 can certainly be listed as one of the most productive and intense years for Ukraine's foreign affairs with the Baltic States. Among other things, the visits of the presidents of all three countries to Ukraine reflected this. In 2019, the newly-elected President Zelenskyy visited all three countries of the region in the span of several months. One of the important results of cooperation with the Baltic States was a launch of the Four-Capital-Train (Kyiv, Minsk, Vilnius, and Riga with the prospect of Tallinn joining in 2020).

’19

## Political Interest / Engagement

Despite the change of power in Ukraine, the interest for the Baltic region stayed and increased in 2019. Within six months after his election, President Zelenskyy managed to visit all three Baltic States in a reflection of strong interest in the region. Just like in the previous years, Ukraine's interest in the region was not limited to security or humanitarian aspects. It also covered the economy, logistics, transport, IT, etc. Platforms of candidates for presidency and parties running for the parliament did not mention the Baltic States. Still, groups of friendship with the Baltic States were the first ones to be established in the new convocation of the Verkhovna Rada (on 23.09 with Estonia and on 15.10 with Lithuania and Latvia).

V. Prystaiko mentioned the Baltic States separately as the countries, which Ukraine should watch closely in his statement while appointed as a Minister of Foreign Affairs (29.08).

## Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation remains largely bilateral, without a broader framework of cooperation with the Baltic region. The fact that the 7th Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Latvian Commission for Economic, Industrial and Science Cooperation was prepared and took place can be seen as a sign of institutional interaction. Productive visits of Ukraine's official delegation to Estonia and Lithuania led by President Zelenskyy reflected a fairly good level of coordination between the Presidential Office, the Ministry of Digital Transformation, the MoD and the MFA of Ukraine. The meeting of the Council of Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania in November in Vilnius also reflected prospects of interaction and coordination between Ukrainian governmental institutions, despite some flaws.

Noteworthy is the appointment of the Ukraine's ambassador to Latvia in early 2019 after a long delay.

## Strategic Vision

As for now, it is difficult to say what is the new leadership strategic vision of the Baltic region. Nevertheless, serious attention to this direction means that it is a priority for Ukraine's political leaders. Despite this vision is not stated in strategic documents, official meetings at the top level and the dynamics of interstate relations reflect the importance of the Baltic States for Ukraine. This interest needs to be strategically outlined, following the example of the declaration on the development of strategic partnership between Ukraine and Lithuania for 2020–2024 signed in November 2019 during the meeting of the Council of Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania chaired by Zelenskyy and Nausėda.

## Activities

In April, the 19th meeting of the Ukraine-Lithuania commission for trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation took place. In May, the 7th meeting of the Intergovernmental Ukraine-Latvia commission for economic, trade, industrial and scientific cooperation took place. I. Klympush-Tsyntsadze, then-Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, chaired the Ukrainian delegation.

During the fall, the Ukrainian delegation led by V. Zelenskyy visited all three countries in the region. In Latvia, for example, President had a number of productive official meetings with Saeima Speaker I. Mūrniece, Prime Minister K. Kariņš and President E. Levits. In Lithuania and Estonia, Zelenskyy also had a number of fruitful top-level meetings, including with the countries' leaders, G. Nausėda and K. Kaljulaid. President Zelenskyy met with Estonian President four times in 2019.

There were a number of meetings between Ukraine's Defence Minister A. Zagorodnyuk and his peers from Estonia and Lithuania, as well as Supreme Commanders of these countries. On the level of the NSDC, Secretary O. Danylov met with the Foreign Affairs Minister of Estonia U. Reinsalu, who during his visit to Kyiv also spoke with his Ukrainian peer V. Prystaiko and Prime Minister O. Honcharuk.

There was also cooperation on the parliamentary level. In fall, a group of MPs from Ukraine met with their peers and Riigikogu committees' chairs in Estonia.

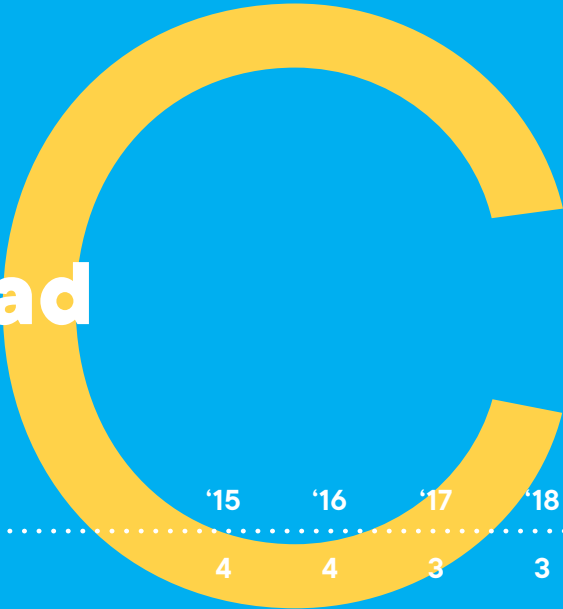
## Results

Based on the results of President Zelenskyy's visit to Latvia, the Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Justice Ministries of the two countries — mostly concerning return from Latvian banks of illegal capital of the Ukrainian former top officials. Based on the meeting of the Intergovernmental Ukraine-Latvia commission for economic, trade, industrial and scientific cooperation, a protocol was signed and bilateral agreements were reached on the implementation of the bilateral Program of Cooperation in Agriculture.

Following the meeting of the Council of Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania, Declaration on the development of strategic partnership between Ukraine and Lithuania for 2020–2024 was signed. After the July visit of the Lithuanian official delegation to Donbas, funding was provided for partial reconstruction of a school in Avdiyivka, a frontline town. In addition to that, in Lithuania Lithuanian Energy Minister Ž. Vaičiūnas and Ukraine's Vice Prime Minister for Digital Transformation M. Fedorov signed Declaration of Intentions on Mutual Recognition of Electronic Identification and Electronic Trust Services. Also in Vilnius, ministries of defence signed the Declaration of Intentions in Cyber Security, entailing the establishment of joint points of single contact to share information about cyber threats and attacks was signed.

During the official visit of the Ukrainian delegation to the Digital Society Sandbox Forum in Tallinn, the Ukrainian Ministry of Digital Transformation and the Estonian Ministry of International Trade and IT signed a Memorandum on cooperation in the IT sector. They decided to organize six massive hackathons in Ukraine and Estonia, the first one taking place in Odesa in 2020. Ukrainian and Estonian Defence Ministries signed a document on cooperation in territorial defence: Estonian experts will help Ukraine implement the territorial defence pilot project in some regions of Ukraine..

# Visegrad Four



	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4	3	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3	3	3	2
STRATEGIC VISION	4	5	4	4	4
ACTIVITIES	4	4	4	3	3
RESULTS	4	4	3	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	B	B	C+	C+	C

In 2019, the Visegrad Four was chaired by Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Although its priorities were formed by the member states that are friendly towards Ukraine, the group's agenda for cooperation with Kyiv has not radically improved, traditionally focusing on V4+EaP meetings at the level of ministers of foreign affairs.

# '15– '19

From 2015 to 2019, cooperation with both the Visegrad Four as a regional initiative and its individual member states has undergone significant transformation but, unfortunately, not towards improvement or positive dynamics in relations. At the same time, it should be noted that as part of joint initiatives, Visegrad Four member states have repeatedly adopted political statements and appeals in support of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. In practical terms of cooperation, Ukraine has received humanitarian assistance for residents of the regions affected by the Russian aggression and for the projects of rehabilitation and treatment of Ukrainian servicemen. V4 member states have placed a particular emphasis on the implementation of reforms in Ukraine. The V4+Ukraine cooperation format has taken on many new practical dimensions. Ukraine's energy security was directly dependent on the support of the V4 countries for organizing reverse natural gas supplies to Ukraine. The situation changed in 2016–2017 in parallel to the deterioration of political dialogue with individual V4 countries. Hardly any use has been made of the V4+Ukraine format. To be able to resume active cooperation, Ukraine faces the task of rebuilding bilateral trust in relations with Warsaw and Budapest. The first steps in this direction were mapped after the new authorities came to power.

’19

## Political Interest / Engagement

In 2019, political actors in Ukraine did not articulate political interest in the Visegrad Four as a regional initiative in their statements and speeches. During the parliamentary election campaign, references to the V4 member states were mostly made in the context of bilateral relations with individual countries (in politicians’ election programmes and speeches) or concerned the improvement of relations with neighbours and cooperation in a broader geographical format.

During the meeting with Czech Prime Minister A. Babiš in November, President V. Zelenskyy stated the need to boost cooperation with the Visegrad Four and learn from its members’ experience of the EU integration.

## Institutional Cooperation

Coordination efforts by the Ukrainian side required the preparation of a meeting of the V4+Eastern Partnership ministers of foreign affairs. The absence of different thematic areas in the V4+Ukraine format reduced the level of institutional interest in regional cooperation.

## Strategic Vision

The current version of the National Security Strategy (2015) mentions cooperation with the Visegrad Four for the sake of ensuring national security in foreign policy at the sub-regional level. The 2035 Energy Strategy says it is necessary to integrate Ukraine’s energy systems into the European Network of Transmission System of Operators for Gas (ENTSO), which includes the Visegrad Four states.

V. Zelenskyy’s new foreign policy team has not yet proposed a strategic vision for the development of cooperation with the Visegrad Four as a regional international entity with its political weight and tools. The President of Ukraine’s Decree “On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state” (8.11) only mentions the neighbouring states that are members of the EU.

## Activities

Although in 2019 the Visegrad Four was chaired alternately by Slovakia and the Czech Republic, the positive expectations for intensifying the group's work with Ukraine did not materialize. This can be explained by the fact that all decisions in V4 are made by consensus, and Hungary's position on blocking cooperation with Ukraine has affected the level of cooperation in the reporting period.

In the first half of 2019, the MFA of Ukraine held consultations with the Czech Republic on the Ukrainian agenda during the Czech chairmanship of V4 in the second half of 2019. The Czech MFA suggested that meetings should be held in an extended V4+Eastern Partnership format. Ukraine's initiative to continue consultations at the level of MFAs political directors of the V4+Ukraine was welcomed.

In 2019, President V. Zelenskyy held bilateral meetings with President of Poland A. Duda (August, Warsaw), President of Slovakia Z. Čaputová (September, Kyiv) and Czech Prime Minister A. Babiš (November). It was suggested at the latter meeting that V4 and Ukraine hold a meeting at the level of heads of government, which can be a positive signal.

In May, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Bodnar represented Ukraine at a meeting of the V4+EaP foreign ministers in Bratislava.

The Chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces' General Staff, V. Muzhenko, took part in the V4+Ukraine meeting at the level of General Staff commanders (May) in Slovakia. This format is a traditional and rare example of continued cooperation in the V4+Ukraine format.

In 2019, Ukrainian NGOs received grants from the International Visegrad Fund.



## Results

It is a positive fact that at the sub-regional level V4 member states demonstrate support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine despite the quite varying dynamics of relations between Ukraine and Visegrad Four countries. Although there were not many V4 political statements about Ukraine, its member states show solidarity when voting at the Council of the EU.

In general, compared with the previous chairmanship of the Visegrad Four by Slovakia, the programme of the Czech chairmanship has no direct references or projects in support of relations with Ukraine. The focus is on the Eastern Partnership region and the Balkans.

Although Slovakia emphasized its intention to resume thematic roundtables in Ukraine that draw attention to the reform experience of V4 countries in some areas (Roadshow V4 for Ukraine), this initiative did not acquire a practical dimension in 2019.

The change in Ukraine's position on relations with Poland and Hungary, which could be observed in 2019, may in the future give a positive impetus to the restoration of more intensive contacts in the V4+Ukraine format.

# Latin America

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	2	2	3	2	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3	3	3	2
STRATEGIC VISION	1	1	2	2	2
ACTIVITIES	2	3	2	3	4
RESULTS	2	3	2	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	D	D+	D+	C-	C-

Interest in bilateral cooperation with countries in the region has been clearly articulated after the 2019 presidential elections. However, the developers of Ukraine's foreign policy strategy continue to underestimate the human and resource potential of Latin America. This was reflected in the slow growth of Ukrainian exports and the subsequent loss of international support for Ukraine in counteracting Russian aggression from the ruling elites, in particular in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Chile, and others, as confirmed by the results of the UN GA vote on the updated and reinforced Resolution "Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine (18.12.2019). At the same time, compared with the previous year, there were more votes in support of the Resolution "Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov" (09.12.2019).

'15–  
'19

Russian aggression against Ukraine has first and foremost brought to the fore the political aspects of cooperation with the countries of the region. However, despite Ukraine's best efforts, Latin American and Caribbean states have a reserved position regarding the issue of countering Russian aggression against Ukraine, as evidenced by the results of their votes on the UN "Ukrainian resolutions" in 2014–2019.

The period of 2014–2016 saw a rapid decline in Ukrainian exports to the countries of the region, but in 2017–2018 there was a positive dynamics of export growth, which, however, has not reached the level of 2011–2013. Local political elites do not have a positive image of Ukraine, first of all, due to the lack of well-articulated state policy, goals and objectives of Ukraine in the region. Ukraine suffered a blow to its image, in addition to large financial losses, due to the unilateral termination of the "space" agreement with Brazil.

## Political Interest / Engagement

In 2019, the Latin American vector was not considered as a separate direction in Ukraine's foreign policy. In his extraordinary address to the Verkhovna Rada (29.08), newly-elected President V. Zelenskyy did not mention either the Latin American region as a whole or any of its individual countries or regional organisations.

The agenda of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee of the VIII convocation showed that it did not consider the Latin American direction in foreign policy a priority either. During the parliamentary elections, this region

'19

received no attention either in political parties' programmes or in politicians' public speeches. New "groups of friendship" with Brazil, Cuba, and Mexico were formed in the Verkhovna Rada of the IX convocation in December, however, their activities cannot be evaluated yet.

The interest in the region is expressed in general terms and is necessitated by the need to maintain political support in countering Russian aggression, restoring Ukraine's export potential, finding new distribution markets and expanding the existing ones, attracting foreign investment, including with the support of the Ukrainian diaspora. This was mentioned in the 2019 Priority Action Plan of V. Groysman's government, the Action Programme of O. Honcharuk's government, the President's Decree No 837/2019, President V. Zelenskyy's speeches at business forums and during a meeting with President of the Ukrainian World Congress P. Grod, Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko's speech in the parliament (29.08). At a meeting of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee (18.09), Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko and a deputy head of the Presidential Office, I. Zhovkva emphasized the importance of economic cooperation with Chile and Peru and expressed confidence that "the President will pay attention to the Latin American direction" in 2020. The Action Programme of O. Honcharuk's government, whose foreign policy focused on protecting the interests of Ukrainian citizens abroad, including by signing visa-free travel agreements, visa facilitation and simplifications of the rules of stay, mentions nine countries of Latin America and the Caribbean out of the total list of 21 states.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

There are no visible results of cooperation on personnel issues between the MFA and the Presidential Office. After the new President's team came to power, some heads of diplomatic missions were recalled, in particular from Argentina, but a new appointment has not been made. Ukraine has had no ambassador to Cuba since 2014.

The fact that there are several centres for coordination and support for export at once potentially hinders the consolidated promotion of Ukrainian business

interests abroad. In particular, the Council of Exporters continues to operate under the auspices of the MFA while the International Trade Council consisting of representatives of various agencies and government offices was launched under the Ministry of Trade and Economic Development in February 2019. The State Office for Export Promotion of Ukraine was also active, facilitating export and business forums in Ukraine with participation of Latin American partners of the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

## Strategic Vision

Official documents adopted during P. Poroshenko's presidency, which defined Ukraine's short-term foreign policy strategy, did not mention Latin America among potential objects of attention. The regional markets were not considered to be promising for Ukraine, as can be seen in the Export Strategy of Ukraine for 2017–2021.

After the arrival of President V. Zelenskyy's administration, this Strategy was mentioned as a basic one in the Action Programme of O. Honcharuk's Cabinet of Ministers. However, this runs contrary to V. Zelenskyy's course for the "economization" of foreign policy, which prioritises G20 markets (Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil among them), which was also stated in the President's Decree No 837/2019.

## Activities

Both presidents of Ukraine met Brazilian President J. Bolsonaro in 2019 (on the sidelines of the Davos Forum and during the enthronement of the emperor of Japan) to discuss prospects for trade and economic cooperation. V. Zelenskyy also suggested that a joint space project using the Alcantara Launch Centre should be relaunched. As a result of the meetings, both President P. Poroshenko and President V. Zelenskyy invited J. Bolsonaro to visit Ukraine (who accepted the invitation for 2020), and V. Zelenskyy was invited to visit Brazil.

The Ukrainian delegation headed by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Kyslytsya attended the inauguration of the President of Panama (July), where they met Panama's Parliament Speaker, the Vice President of El Salvador, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica and Peru, the Deputy Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, the newly-elected President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Argentina. The delegation of the Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry of Ukraine visited Brazil in June. The head of the State Space Agency of Ukraine, the delegation of the Ukrainian Armed Forces' Air Forces, and the delegation of the state-owned enterprises Ukrinmash and Antonov visited exhibitions in Mexico in April. The delegation of the state-owned enterprise Antonov visited Argentina in February and December.

Ukraine was represented at international forums in Latin American countries, including the 49th session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (Colombia), the 8th summit of the Association of Caribbean States (Nicaragua), the 88th Interpol General Assembly (Chile), the 6th International Sculpture Symposium (Chile), the 2nd Global Human Rights Summit (Mexico). The delegation led by Vice Prime Minister P. Rozenko took part in the 10th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Science (Mexico). Ukraine was also represented at the Forbes Industrial Summit 2019 and the 82nd F eria de Todos Los Santos 2019 fair (Mexico), the EXPONOR 2019 international mining exhibition (Chile), FAMEX Airshow 2019 (Mexico) and the 7th International Conference of Technology for the Defence and Prevention of Disasters SITDEF 2019 (Peru). A series of Ukrainian events took place at the 45th International Book Fair in Argentina.

Non-resident ambassadors visited the countries under their watch, including Paraguay, Belize and Costa Rica. Heads of foreign diplomatic missions based in the region met local officials, heads of bilateral and local chambers of commerce, representatives of business elite, groups of friendship with Ukraine in local parliaments, the Secretary General of the Andean Community, members of the Ukrainian diaspora, and students. Heads of foreign diplomatic missions spoke to the local media.

The delegation of the Kyiv City State Administration visited Argentina for talks with the Government of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires and members of the Ukrainian-Argentine Chamber of Commerce (February), the delegation of a

consular district (Kharkiv) paid an official visit to Brazil (September), negotiations were held with officials of the Parana Trade Federation. The President of the Court of Appeals of Santiago (Chile) visited Ukraine in May.

To protect the interests of domestic producers, the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture sent necessary files to Mexico and Brazil, which are taking eight anti-dumping measures, while the Ukrainian delegation raised the issue of Brazil's anti-dumping practices at the WTO Committee meetings. A roundtable on economic and diplomatic relations with South American countries (though with the countries of other regions at once), which was scheduled to be held during the second session of the Verkhovna Rada of the IX convocation (September 2019-January 2020), did not take place.

The 5th National Export Forum was held under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Ukraine. It was attended by a business delegation from Argentina (June). A Ukrainian-Cuban business forum was held in September and a Ukraine-Chile business forum in March.

None of the six existing joint intergovernmental commissions for trade and economic cooperation at the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture met in 2019, despite the arrangements for this year's meetings of the Ukrainian-Argentine, Ukrainian-Brazilian, and Ukrainian-Chilean commissions.

Colombia's experience in ending the conflict and reintegrating militants is of interest to the new political team. In particular, former President of Colombia J. M. Santos spoke at this year's YES Forum in Kyiv, and the team of S. Syvokho, an adviser to the Secretary of the NSD, included experts, who studied these issues.

Foreign diplomatic missions in the region held exhibitions and other commemorative events to honour victims of political repression and the Holodomor (embassies in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Peru), and marked Day of Vyshyvanka. The Days of Ukrainian Cinema were held in Brazil and the Days of Ukrainian Culture at the International University of Cuernavaca (Mexico).

A delegation of the Peruvian Institute for Ground Troops' Historical Studies visited Ukraine, and archive institutions of the two countries exchanged documents. The Ukrainian group StopFake took part in the Europe-Latin America investigative journalism forum (Peru) by video conference.

## Results

In response to an appeal by the VRU in connection with the holding of the so-called “local elections” by Russia in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol in September 2019, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and National Defence of the Chamber of Deputies of the National Congress of Brazil issued a statement in support of Ukraine (November). A group of friendship with Ukraine was established in the upper house of the Paraguay Parliament (June).

A joint communique on establishing diplomatic relations with the Commonwealth of Dominica was signed in April, with Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in September (both countries abstained from voting on the UN Ukrainian resolutions, while Dominica did not vote). Agreements on mutual visa waiver were reached with Ecuador (April), the Commonwealth of Dominica (May) and Columbia (September). The Protocol on Amending the Visa Waiver Agreement was signed in November to fulfil the objective of the Government Action Plan on an extension of visa-free stay in Argentina (scheduled to be reached in 2020). The first Ukrainian-Brazilian consular consultations were held (October). The Honorary Consulate of Ukraine was opened in Belize (September).

In June, the Cabinet of Ministers ordered the transfer of a voluntary contribution of USD 40,000 to the Organization of American States on behalf of Ukraine as its permanent observer for the purpose of developing cooperation with the countries of the Americas.

A protocol of intent on the intensification of cooperation at the executive level was signed between the cities of Kyiv and Buenos Aires, and with the leadership of the Ministry of Health and the Directorate General of Medical Establishments of Buenos Aires. The sides also signed a memorandum on cooperation between medical institutions (February). During the visit of the Director of the National Antarctic Scientific Centre of Ukraine to Chile, the sides agreed to launch a dialogue on signing of a framework agreement on cooperation in the field of Antarctic peace research (April).

Following the visit of the Chilean business delegation to Ukraine, the Cooperation Agreement was signed between the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Ukraine and the Chilean-Ukrainian Chamber of Trade and Tourism,



as well as with UKRSADVINPROM and the Berry Association of Ukraine (March). Thanks to the efforts taken by the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture to secure access for Ukrainian goods to the Brazilian market, the Brazilian Ministry of Industry, Foreign Trade and Services made a decision in October to cut the anti-dumping duty on Ukrainian products in five times.

The state-owned Ukroboronprom won a tender announced by the Peruvian Ministry of the Interior for the supply of a military transport aircraft (the first export delivery of the new transport aircraft An-178 is planned).

A decrease in the Ukrainian export of goods to the countries of Central and South America and the Caribbean has been observed in the trade and economic sector. In 2019, it decreased by 9% or by USD 37 million in monetary terms, compared with the same period of 2018. At the same time, imports from the region grew by almost 12%. Meanwhile, exports to markets, which had been traditional until recently (Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, Chile), have been falling, while exports to Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Guatemala have been growing. The geography of trade cooperation has expanded (26 countries of the region in 2019 compared to 25 countries in 2018). In particular, trade cooperation with Paraguay has resumed.

# Northern Europe

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	3	4	4	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	2	3	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	2	2	3	3
ACTIVITIES	n/a	4	4	5	5
RESULTS	n/a	4	4	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	C	C+	B	B

The elections year of 2019 led to a pause in Ukraine's political relations with the Northern Europe states, with its aftermaths overcome in the second half of the year. The countries of the region continue to provide Kyiv with political support in the international arena. However, in the future, political dialogue needs to be revitalized and inter-parliamentary interaction resuscitated. At the same time, Nordic countries strengthened their positions as sponsors and promoters of several important Ukrainian reforms. The economic sphere needs urgent measures to stimulate both Ukrainian exports to these countries and to attract investments for Ukraine from there.

'15–  
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2017 can be considered the peak of the Kyiv's political interest in Northern Europe, when the state tasks for Northern Europe were most clearly outlined in security context. In 2016–2017, the high-level dialogue was the most intense — four official visits of the president of Ukraine to the countries of the region were an impetus for a number of important events and trends in the following years (meetings of joint intergovernmental commissions, intensification of inter-parliamentary dialogue, implementation of large-scale projects facilitating reforms, and promotion of Ukraine's artistic presence in the region).

## Political Interest / Engagement

The 2019 elections led to a pause in Kyiv's political relations with Northern European countries. The northern region found no place in the programs neither of the key presidential candidates nor of the parties that got into the VRU.

Political statements of the new leadership of the state, made following the official visits of Finland's and Sweden's leaders to Ukraine, give an idea of the Ukrainian authorities' priorities in the Nordic direction. Economic and investment cooperation comes first, and assistance in reforming Ukraine is second, and only then goes security cooperation. The sanction regime against the Russian Federation and holding back the construction of the Nord Stream-2 pipeline remain a constant priority. At the same time, neither the president's message to the Parliament nor his Decree (dated 8.11) mentioned the countries of the region. By the end of the year, inter-parliamentary groups with Norway and Denmark were created in the new parliament.

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## Institutional Cooperation

Interaction with Northern Europe countries is carried out on a bilateral basis. At the governmental level, cooperation with Finland and Norway is coordinated within intergovernmental commissions, which, however, did not have meetings during the year (only a meeting of the interagency Ukrainian-Finnish commission for international transport took place).

At the same time, institutional cooperation was carried out in other formats. In particular, the State Agency on Energy Efficiency and Energy Savings acts as a factual coordinator of institutional cooperation in a number of joint energy projects. Ministry of Education coordinates cooperation with Finnish institutions within the framework of the New Ukrainian School project. The Export Promotion Office organized trade missions to Sweden and Denmark (food producers) and Norway (IT sector).

In 2019, the problem of the prolonged absence of the Ukrainian ambassadors in important countries aggravated. The leaders of Finland and Sweden paid visits to Ukraine in the absence of ambassadors to these countries.

## Strategic Vision

The 2019 V. Groysman's Government Action Plan traditionally included the MoD participation in "Operation Falcon" (transportation of fuel to Greenland). In the program of the O. Honcharuk's government, the Ministry of Internal Affairs planned to implement the Scandinavian model of public order keeping. However, strategic goals for Ukraine's interaction with the region were absent in both documents.

The international treaty framework of Ukraine's relations with the countries of the region has more than 180 documents. Among them, there are such framework documents as the Agreement between the Governments of Ukraine and the Kingdom of Sweden on Cooperation Development and the Joint Declaration on Partnership between Ukraine and the Kingdom of Norway. Five new documents were added to the legal framework during the year, the

most important of them is the Framework Agreement with the Government of Denmark regarding the general conditions of the implementation of the Danida Business Finance programme in Ukraine.

## Activities

The double election campaign in Ukraine marked the development of the Kyiv's political dialogue with the Northern European capitals. In September, a new season of dialogue began with an official visit of the President of Finland S. Niinistö to Ukraine, continued with V. Zelenskyy's meeting with the Norwegian Prime Minister E. Solberg in New York, and ended with an official visit of the Sweden's Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Löfven to Ukraine in December. The only event at the level of the governments' heads was V. Groysman's visit to Norway. At the level of legislative bodies no dialogue was started. The Foreign Affairs Ministers of Denmark, Sweden, and Finland visited Ukraine, and V. Prystaiko paid a working visit to Stockholm.

2019 was a year of stable development of contacts between Ukraine and Northern Europe in the field of security and defence (visits to Ukraine by the head of the MoD of Denmark, delegations of the MoD of Norway and Finland, Ukrainian-Norwegian space consultations, etc.).

Inter-parliamentary relations suffered from the elections pause the most. In the first half of the year, the exchange of visits took place, but in the second half of the year, the bilateral Ukrainian-Scandinavian parliamentary events were not recorded at all.

In 2019, there was a significant increase in the cultural and artistic presence of Ukraine in all five Northern Europe countries.

At the same time, there is a complete lack of political activity of Ukraine in Iceland. This situation is unacceptable given the increased activity of the Russian diplomacy towards Iceland, and a try to make Iceland a "weak link" for breaking the sanctions front.

## Results

Kyiv manages to keep the official position of Northern European countries unchanged in matters of territorial integrity of Ukraine and counteraction to military aggression by the Russian Federation. This position was expressed in a statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe T. Soini on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the annexation of Crimea, in a similar but a wider statement by the Finnish Foreign Ministry, in a statement by the Foreign Ministers of four countries, including Sweden, in support of Ukraine's territorial integrity (26.11).

At the same time, the limits of such support are situations, in which Nordic countries have to go in the fairway of the EU leaders' position. Thus, in the context of lifting sanctions against Russia in the PACE, Finnish Foreign Minister T. Soini, in his post of the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the CoE, promoted the adopted decision, and none of the delegations of Northern European countries voted against it in full.

In 2019, Northern European countries continued and expanded financial and expert support for reforms in Ukraine. In some areas, it is the Scandinavian models that become prototypes of Ukrainian reforms. This concerns the reform of school education, the development of renewable and green energy, and the reform of energy efficiency.

Assistance from the countries of this region in resolving humanitarian problems in Donbass significantly increased. An important outcome of the Finnish Foreign Minister P. Haavisto visit was a decision to allocate additional 600,000 euros for the territories demining. Significant assistance in improving the humanitarian situation in Eastern Ukraine is provided by Sweden and Norway.

The results of the trade-economic relations with the North European states are ambiguous. The only success can be named an increase in exports of the Ukrainian goods to Sweden for 9%. It was a 5% increase in import from Sweden and 16% increase from Norway. Against this background, the drop in the Ukrainian exports to Finland (almost twice) and Iceland (by more than a quarter) is striking. In overall, in 2019 the trade in goods turnover was USD 528.9 million with Denmark, USD 95.4 million with Iceland, USD 291.8 million with Norway, USD 321.5 million with Finland, USD 566.1 million with Sweden. The investments level from the Northern European region remains unsatisfactory and does not match the investment potential of the region.

# South Asia



	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	2	2	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	2	2	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	3	3	3	3
ACTIVITIES	n/a	4	4	4	4
RESULTS	n/a	3	3	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	C-	C-	C+	C+

Cooperation with South Asian countries did not see much change in 2019 compared with the previous year. A certain revival of political interest in the region as such, and India and Pakistan in particular, was observed. A breakthrough was achieved in establishing government and parliamentary relations with Afghanistan. At the same time, almost no attention was paid to Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives.

'15–  
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For five years, Ukraine's relations with the countries of South Asia have remained within the defined trajectories, including in the trade-economic, military-technical and aviation sectors. There is a lack of strategic vision of relations with the Asia-Pacific region in general and individual countries of this region in particular. For the past five years, there have been no high-level visits or meetings between Ukraine and the countries of the region, which is critical given Russia's active efforts in the region. A positive achievement of this period was the revival of political dialogue with Sri Lanka.

## Political Interest / Engagement

The 2019 parliamentary and presidential elections showed that political actors in Ukraine currently has no particular interest in cooperation with South Asian countries. European Solidarity is the only one among the political parties, which made it to parliament, whose election programme mentions the region. In particular, it said that Ukraine should build cooperation in the development of armaments and military hardware not only with its Western partners, but also with the countries of Southeast Asia. Also, "Ukraine's New Course", the comprehensive programme of the Batkivshchyna party, draws attention to the growth and stability indicators of the Indian financial system.

Accepting credentials from the newly appointed Ambassador of Pakistan, Z. Mubashir Sheikh, President P. Poroshenko expressed hope for the development of political dialogue between Ukraine and Pakistan (11.02). During his

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endorsement as Minister of Foreign Affairs by the VRU, V. Prystaiko referred to India as one of those countries “without the support of which we cannot survive, we cannot develop”. President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy had a telephone conversation with Indian Prime Minister N. Modi, during which they agreed on the need for enhanced top-level political dialogue and on an exchange of visits in the near future.

No groups of friendship with South Asian countries were established in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine by the end of the year.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

Institutional cooperation in 2019 continued at virtually the same level as in 2018, although some adjustments were made by the presidential and early parliamentary elections in Ukraine. 2019 can be called the year of intensifying cooperation with Afghanistan at the levels of parliament and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. In addition, Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration D. Kuleba became a chair of the Ukrainian-Indian Intergovernmental Commission.

Three embassies of Ukraine are responsible for eight countries in the region; in particular, the embassy in India is responsible for six countries. Ukraine appointed a new ambassador to Tajikistan (16.05), who will also be responsible for Afghanistan. However, the accreditation process in Afghanistan is still underway.

## **Strategic Vision**

Over the years, major cooperation between Ukraine and countries of the region has taken place in three main areas: trade and economic, military-technical, and aviation. In this context, the regional countries are mentioned in the documents defining the strategic directions of Ukraine's development. In particular, the Strategy for the Development of the Defence and Industrial Sector of Ukraine until 2028 sets a goal of mastering the Asian markets, while the

Export Strategy for 2017–2021 mentions India and Bangladesh among the top-20 markets, which can show fast results. A single strategy of working with the South Asian countries is still lacking.

## Activities

In 2019, a number of important topical meetings were held between representatives of Ukrainian ministries and their counterparts from South Asia. Most of them were aimed at developing trade and economic cooperation, with the main focus being on India. In particular, First Vice Prime Minister — Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine S. Kubiv paid a working visit to India (11–13.01), during which he presented the investment, trade and economic potential of Ukraine at the 25th International Partnership Summit “New India — Rising to Global Occasions” in Mumbai. On the side-lines of the summit, S. Kubiv met India’s Vice President M. V. Naidu and Minister of Commerce, Industry and Civil Aviation S. Prabhu, as well as Afghanistan’s Minister of Economy. Also, the Joint Working Group on Trade and Economic Cooperation held its fourth meeting (2.04) to discuss the prospects of increasing mutual trade and expanding the bilateral legal framework. Also, a visit of the Ukrainian Trade Mission (22–26.04), consisting of representatives of small and medium-sized enterprises of the space industry, as well as the sector of new technologies and green innovations, was organized with the support of the Export Promotion Office of Ukraine. Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko met External Affairs Minister of India S. Jaishankar on the side-lines of the UN GA to discuss the possibility of bilateral visits, development of bilateral economic and education cooperation, as well as a pressing issue of visa liberalization.

In 2019, Ukraine took an active part in defence and aviation exhibitions in South Asia. The Ukrainian delegation headed by the First Deputy Secretary of the NSDC, O. Gladkovsky, took part in the Aero India 2019 aviation exhibition (20–24.02), where he met Minister of State for Defence A. Bhamre, the commanders of the Indian Air Force, Navy and Army. The delegation from Pakistan participated in the 16th International Specialised Exhibition “Weapons and Security 2019” in Kyiv (8–12.10).

The Ministry of Health also joined bilateral dialogue this year. Acting Health Minister U. Suprun met her Indian counterpart J. Prakash Nadda (25.02).

The Ukrainian-Afghan Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation held its first meeting (27–28.05). In particular, representatives of the countries discussed the possibility of supplying Ukrainian KrAZ automobiles and oil and gas equipment to Afghanistan. Members of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Interparliamentary Cooperation met members of the upper house of the Afghan Parliament led by Senator M. Alam Izdyar (6.11).

The head of the Ukrainian Migration Service, M. Sokolyuk, visited Bangladesh for the first time in the history of bilateral relations (30.09–3.10). The sides discussed the prevention of and counteraction to illegal migration, which is a pressing issue requiring attention at such a high level.

The head of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, H. Hopko, met Pakistani Ambassador M. Sheikh (22.02) to discuss the development of bilateral dialogue and economic cooperation.

## Results

The establishment of relations with Afghanistan at the parliamentary and government levels was a positive development. A protocol was signed based on the results of the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation. Following a meeting on the side-lines of the UN GA, V. Prystaiko and Secretary of the MFA of Sri Lanka, R. Aryasinha, signed an agreement on visa exemption for citizens of the two countries, who hold diplomatic or official passports.

The countries of the region are among the largest importers of Ukrainian agricultural products (India accounted for 7.1% of total agro-industrial exports in 2019). However, in 2019, Ukraine's exports in goods to India amounted decreased by 7% (USD 2.02 billion) and to Pakistan by 48% (USD 62.9 million) comparing to 2018. At the same time, Ukrainian exports has seriously increased to Sri Lanka by 52% (USD 62.3 million) and to Bangladesh by 102% (USD 442.7 million). Import of goods from India and Pakistan increased by 20%. Students from India remain the largest group of international students in Ukraine.

During the voting on the UN GA Resolution "Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov" (9.12), all countries of the region (India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives) abstained. However, in the case of the Resolution "Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine" (18.12), as in previous years, India voted against it, while other countries of the region abstained, and only Bhutan supported this resolution.

# Sub-Saharan Africa

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3	3	3	2
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3	2	2	2
STRATEGIC VISION	1	2	2	3	3
ACTIVITIES	2	3	2	3	3
RESULTS	3	3	3	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	D+	C-	D+	C-	C-

There was a noticeable increase in attention to African countries in the political discourse at the level of declarations after the change of power in Ukraine in 2019. In particular, it was announced that preparations were underway for high-level political dialogue in the framework of the President of Ukraine's pending visit to Africa in 2020. The emphasis was placed on making relations pragmatic with a view to economic benefits. Attention to Africa has also increased in the context of prospects for the distribution of Ukrainian agricultural products. Trade between Ukraine and Sub-Saharan Africa in 2019 demonstrated strong growth, although the number of trading partners has stayed unchanged. Support for Kyiv in international organisations has remained at the previous level. However, given the intensification of Russia's efforts on the continent, further development of Ukraine-Africa dialogue in multinational formats will continue with limitations.

'15–  
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Despite the growing weight of Sub-Saharan African countries in the international arena, stabilization of the military-political situation on the continent, and positive economic dynamics, the Ukraine's political position on relations with the region has hardly changed over the past five years. Africa remains at the periphery of interests in strategic documents, although attention to it has been showing a trend towards cautious growth. Still, a high-level political dialogue has never taken place. However, in 2019, the hope of holding it in the short-term perspective appeared.

There has been a slow increase in Ukraine's presence in African markets, but there has been no significant expansion of the range of African partners. Trade contacts with many countries in the region remain situational and do not tend to be sustainable. Due to increasing competition in African markets, conditions for strengthening Ukraine's partnership with African countries, while still favourable, require prompt and urgent action by Kyiv.

## Political Interest / Engagement

The programmes presented by candidates and political parties during the presidential and parliamentary elections do not mention Sub-Saharan Africa. The only exception to this was the "Syla I Chest" (Strength and Honour) party, whose candidate S. Andrushchenko said that Africa should be of strategic importance to Ukraine, and suggested that Ukraine should initiate an involvement of the

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Eastern Partnership states in the EU-Africa Alliance. Deputy head of Svoboda party Y. Syrotyuk said in April that while implementing the policy of economic nationalism, Ukraine should follow the example of Rwanda, which “became one of Africa’s most successful countries after the genocide and destruction”.

Members of the Verkhovna Rada of the IX convocation had not formed new composition of any of the existing 11 groups for interparliamentary relations with the countries of the region by December 2019.

Speaking at iForum-2019, President V. Zelenskyy said that Ukraine can catch up on progress in one or another sector by implementing ideas that omit “yesterday’s pitfalls”, citing the example of African countries, which leapfrogged cable telephones right into mobile communications.

Accepting the credentials from the Ambassador of South Africa A. Groenewald in July, President V. Zelenskyy emphasized the importance of intensifying political dialogue with this country. He was speaking about trade and economic relations and a Ukraine-South Africa business forum. The two countries are expected to establish closer constructive cooperation within the framework of South Africa’s non-permanent membership at the UN Security Council. It is worth mentioning a statement by the Deputy Head of the Presidential Office I. Zhovkva on preparations for Zelenskyy’s visit to Africa in 2020 with the goal of “boosting economic interaction”.

Senior members of parliament did not refer to Africa in their speeches in 2019. However, it was mentioned by a candidate for a head of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Interparliamentary Cooperation, Y. Yasko (Servant of the People group), who referred to African countries when she said that the committee should focus on deepening and diversifying markets for economic cooperation and trade of Ukraine.

It should be noted that in his speech to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine upon his appointment, Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko said that many African countries are peculiar partners but contacts with them should be developed to expand trade and promote a positive image of Ukraine.

## Institutional Cooperation

In 2019, the MFA was the main government office, which coordinated the work of various Ukrainian agencies cooperating with Sub-Saharan African countries. Institutional cooperation was carried out mainly in the trade, economic, transport and educational sectors and involved the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the Ministry of Agriculture, the State Aviation Service, and others.

For example, the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the MF Affairs, Ukraine's Embassy in Nigeria, the Export Promotion Office, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade and the Ministry of Agriculture established the Ukraine-Nigeria trading house NewSvit as part of measures to implement Ukraine's Export Strategy for focus countries.

Ukraine's embassies in the countries of the region provided necessary assistance to various Ukrainian public offices' contacts with African partners, including in Angola, Senegal, South Africa, Ethiopia and Nigeria.

At the same time, the fact that some ambassadors to Sub-Saharan African countries have not been appointed is a significant disadvantage. As of December, the Ukrainian diplomatic missions in South Africa, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal and Angola had no heads.

## Strategic Vision

Progress in consolidating long-term objectives on the development of relations between Ukraine and Sub-Saharan African countries in legal documents of strategic significance was achieved in 2019. The Cabinet of Ministers' Resolution "On the Approval of the Strategy for the Development of Exports of Ukrainian Agricultural, Food and Processing Industry Products for the Period until 2026" (10.07) says that according to a study by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the largest population growth was observed in Africa, which will increase demand for the simplest and most affordable foods.

An important novelty in Ukraine's strategy for Africa is that the region is mentioned in the President of Ukraine's Decree No 837 "On urgent measures for



reforming and strengthening the state” (08.11). The list of measures to be taken by the end of 2020 mentions the need to expand trade and economic ties between Ukraine and African countries.

## Activities

As far as political contacts with Sub-Saharan African countries are concerned, a landmark event, which took them to a whole new level, happened in 2019. A delegation of the Republic of Kenya headed by National Assembly Speaker J. Muturi paid an official visit to Kyiv in May for talks with Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Chairman A. Parubiy and Prime Minister V. Groysman. The sides discussed the issue of Kenya’s recognition of the Holodomor as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people, prospects for the opening of the Kenyan Embassy in Kyiv, and the establishment of direct air flight between the capitals, intensification of efforts on the preparation and signing of 12 interstate agreements on trade, economy, agriculture and tourism. It is also necessary to mention plans for Odesa and Mombasa to become twin cities.

In September, Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko met his Kenyan counterpart M. Juma at the 74th session of the UN GA in New York. Juma confirmed that she was planning to visit Kyiv. The second round of political consultations between the MFAs of Ukraine and Ethiopia took place in Addis Ababa in September. The Ukrainian delegation headed by Director of the Middle East and Africa Department M. Shcherbatyuk discussed ways of intensifying political dialogue, economic cooperation and interaction within international organizations. In addition, it was stated that the MFA was examining the issue of providing humanitarian assistance to the Republic of Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in line with the political and security dynamics in these countries.

The MFA’s focus was on expanding contacts with countries in Africa such as Senegal, South Africa, Mali and Mozambique. In particular, two new honorary consulates were opened in the region: in Liberia and Djibouti.

On 19–20 February, Pretoria hosted the negotiations between the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of South Africa and the State Aviation Service

of Ukraine on the draft agreement on air connection between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.

In March, with the support of the Embassy of Ukraine in Nigeria, an agreement was reached to set up a group for interparliamentary relations with Ukraine at the Nigerian House of Representatives, which is topical after the February elections held in the country.

Negotiations on the launch of the Kyiv-Addis Ababa air connection were held with the coordination of Ukraine's Embassy in Ethiopia. The mission also focused on assisting the State Food Safety and Consumer Protection Service in addressing the issue of certification of Ukrainian poultry products. The Embassies of Ukraine in Nigeria and Ethiopia joined the "Study in UA" initiative of the Ministry of Education and Science, which resulted in the presentation of Ukrainian universities in these countries.

In October, the Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine held a roundtable entitled "Middle East and Africa: Search for Ukrainian Interest" as part of the project "The Concept of Ukraine's Foreign Policy". Its goal was to develop a guideline on Ukraine's foreign policy on the African continent.

As regards the activities of Ukrainian peacekeepers on the African continent, as of December 2019, there were 279 Ukrainian troops in four UN missions (DR Congo, South Sudan, the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei, and the Republic of Mali), including 263 in DR Congo.

## Results

Despite the efforts to build a comprehensive dialogue with African countries through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and some shifts in the strategic perception of the region by the Ukrainian leadership, efforts to enhance the partnership appear to be insufficient. The lack of high-level proactive political contacts continues to have a negative impact on the development of Ukrainian-African relations.

Political support of Sub-Saharan Africa at the UN level remains virtually unchanged, as evidenced by the vote on a “Ukrainian” resolution, which, like in previous years, is supported by Botswana, Djibouti and Liberia. At the same time, Burundi, Guinea, Zimbabwe, Eritrea, Sudan, and Uganda openly oppose Ukraine for complex reasons.

The recognition of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa looks like an important achievement of Ukraine against this background.

As far as trade between Ukraine and the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa is concerned, it showed an increase for 8% in the reporting period. The share of the region in the total structure of exports in 2019 was 2.32% or USD 1.15 billion in absolute figures. The balance of trade was positive for Ukraine (+ USD 589.2 million). The largest importers of Ukrainian products were Ghana, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ivory Coast, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa,, and Sudan. At the same time, Ukrainian exports to the markets of Angola, DR Congo, Guinea and Gabon Liberia, Mali, and Senegal weakened. Ukrainian companies, which were active in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2019 included MHP (poultry production), UIA (transport), Ukroboronservis, KRaz, Frigate (mechanical engineering) and Smart Holding (repair of ships).

In the humanitarian sector, it is worth mentioning the successful holding of the 3rd Ukrainian Festival in Stellenbosch (Western Cape province) by the Ukrainian Association of South Africa.

# Central Asia

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	2	1	2	2
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	2	2	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	2	2	2	2
ACTIVITIES	n/a	3	2	2	3
RESULTS	n/a	2	2	1	2
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	D+	D-	D	D+

The great political and economic dependence of the Central Asian countries on the Russian Federation, as well as the lack of joint political and economic projects between Ukraine and the countries of the region, significantly reduce the prospect of this foreign policy direction. The geographical remoteness of the region and Russia's actual blocking of Ukraine's transit and trade access to it continue to affect dynamics of interstate relations development with the countries of Central Asia.

'15–  
'19

Within five years, the Central Asian trend has did not become a priority due to some objective reasons (the pro-Western vector of the Ukraine's foreign policy and the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, as well as a geographical distance of the region). The foreign political and economic relations stagnation between Ukraine and the Central Asian countries became a permanent reality. With exception made to several economically attractive projects, the volume of exports and imports of goods and services between Ukraine and the CA countries remains insignificant, and there is a steady tendency for further decline in mutual business activity. In fact, the absence of a common economic and political agenda, the preservation of the post-Soviet regimes of the Central Asian countries, focus on their own agenda, as well as economic and political dependence on Russia led to the situation of Ukraine absence in the region in the med-term perspective. An important indicator of the lack of prospective relations with the countries of the region is their already established foreign policy position on the Russian occupation of the Crimea. Russia's influence on the regimes of these countries and the lack of an effective Ukrainian presence in the region close it for further prospective cooperation with Ukraine.

## Political Interest / Engagement

The political interest of Ukraine to the Central Asian region is steadily low-level. Development of relations with countries of the region (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) is absent in almost all programs of the parliamentary political parties (except for the party “Opposition Platform — For Life”, which states in its program a need for the CIS countries related trade and economic ties development) and in the official speeches or statements of influential Ukrainian politicians.

The Ukrainian political class reached an understanding of the impossibility of a full-fledged partnership with the countries of Central Asia without solving the “Russian question”. Due to their considerable political “pro-Russian” commitment, development of the political dialogue and economic relations between Ukraine and the regional countries is extremely complicated and limited. In fact, there are currently no representatives of the political elite in Ukraine, who would view the “Central Asian” vector of the foreign policy cooperation as a self-sufficient direction or an object of political investment.

In a speech at the Verkhovna Rada before his appointment, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine V. Prystaiko among tasks of the diplomatic service named return of the export markets, promotion of Ukrainian goods and services exports, expansion of the Ukrainian trade and economic relations, including with the Asian countries.

## Institutional Cooperation

The level of coordination between the Ukrainian authorities in issues of cooperation with the Central Asian countries can be defined as satisfactory. There are no open conflicts or confrontations between them on current issues of cooperation with the countries of the region. Among 2019 positive developments, they can mention the appointment of a new Ambassador of Ukraine to Tajikistan. At the same time, currently, there are no Ukrainian ambassadors in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan.

## Strategic Vision

Bilateral interstate relations with the countries of the region are not considered as promising or strategic. In the strategic package (Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy”, National Security Strategy of Ukraine, Military Doctrine of Ukraine, The Strategy for Sustainable Development “Ukraine 2020”, Strategic Defence Bulletin of Ukraine, Export Strategy of Ukraine: Road Map of Strategic Trade Development (2017–2021)) — there are no references to countries of the Central Asia.

## Activities

Given generally low level of interstate relations between Ukraine and the Central Asian countries, cooperation focused on the level of diplomatic missions, some executive agencies, business and civil society. However, no “breakthrough” projects are observed. In 2019, a “high-level dialogue” between leaders of the countries of the region and Ukraine did not take place.

The only exceptions were contacts with Kazakhstan, in particular, President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy meetings with the First President of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev during his visit to Japan and with President of Kazakhstan K. Tokaev during his participation in the 74th session of the UN GA. In Japan, the parties discussed the war in Donbas and the occupation of Crimea, in particular, the prisoners return and the diplomatic talks’ resumption, as well as the possibility to increase trade between Ukraine and Kazakhstan. N. Nazarbayev stated that Kazakhstan always adhered to the idea of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. During his meeting with President K. Tokaev, the parties discussed a wide range of bilateral cooperation issues and invited each other to pay reciprocal visits. Similar issues were discussed during V. Zelenskyy’s meeting with Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Kazakhstan B. Becknazarov in May 2019. Although these contacts, in general, create a positive background for enhancing relations and solving problematic issues, however, absence of the specific strategic projects between the countries limits the possibility of

substantial changes in Kazakhstan's foreign policy stance towards Ukraine — the statements are mostly protocol and symbolic.

The main issues that Ukraine continues to resolve within the bilateral formats with the countries of Central Asia are concentrated mainly in the economic and humanitarian fields.

## Results

2019, as expected, has not become a year of a Ukraine's position restoration in Central Asia. The foreign relations stagnation and obstacles created by Russia to foreign economic relations between Ukraine and the countries of the region became a reality. The lack of a common agenda in relations with Central Asian countries and some objective difficulties in communication at the interstate level created a situation when the CA region fell out of the strategic perspective of the Ukrainian politics. In recent years, the volume of export and import operations, as well as transport and logistical opportunities between Ukraine and the countries of the region extremely reduced. A separate problem is the lack of direct flights between Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, which certainly complicates economic and humanitarian cooperation. Attempts to resume in 2019 direct flights to Uzbekistan and Tajikistan failed.

The Central Asian states' positions in voting for the "Ukrainian" resolutions at the UN also remain traditionally negative. For example, on December 18, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan voted against the UN GA resolution "Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine" (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan did not vote). During voting for the resolution "Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov" (9.12), Kyrgyzstan voted against, Kazakhstan abstained, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan did not vote.



# Black Sea Region

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3	3	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3	3	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	2	2	4	4
ACTIVITIES	3	3	4	4	4
RESULTS	2	3	3	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	C-	C-	C	B-	B-

In 2019, the Black Sea region remained one of the most important dimensions for Ukraine's national interests. Just like in 2018, Ukraine's attention was mostly focused on countering the Russian threat to free navigation, including overcoming consequences of Russia's policy towards the Ukrainian trade and navy fleets in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Ukraine's deeper cooperation with NATO countries and Georgia on the Black Sea issues developed further. In 2019, Ukraine presided in GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development.

# '15– '19

In five years, the Black Sea direction of Ukraine's foreign policy turned out to be the most vulnerable in terms of protecting national interests. The fact that it was on the list of the top priorities in foreign policy triggered proactive involvement of Ukrainian political institutions in tackling the problems. The key tasks were focused on challenges to Ukraine's sovereignty resulting from the annexation of Crimea and the Russian aggression in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, and regional international relations. Despite significant political interest at all levels of government, Ukraine's foreign policy efforts had restricted impact in terms of restoring its sovereignty over Crimea and deterring Russia's aggression. Still, Ukraine managed to build proactive support and engagement of the international community — primarily of NATO — in deterring further aggression in the region from Russia. Ukrainian government gradually developed some tactical steps as part of its strategic vision for the Black Sea perspectives, including the strengthening of its Navy and intensification of bilateral relations with the Black Sea countries — primarily under the GUAM framework, where Kyiv is a driver of regional cooperation.



## Political Interest / Engagement

As Russia expands its military presence in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, the key state and political institutions in Ukraine consistently focused on strengthening military security and legal support for Ukrainian interests in the region before and after the presidential and parliamentary elections. Presidents P. Poroshenko and V. Zelenskyy, representatives of respective Governments — primarily Vice Prime Ministers for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Foreign Ministers and Defence Ministers — and representatives of all political forces tackled the issues of effective regional policies on the nationwide and international levels. At the same time, the Black Sea region was not presented in election programmes during the presidential and parliamentary elections. Newly appointed FM Prystaiko consistently outlined the key priorities of foreign policy in the Black Sea region, including return of control over the Crimean peninsula, strengthening of cooperation within ODED-GUAM, development of cooperation with NATO and the EU in various sectors, in the framework of BSEC, cooperation with Turkey on a wide range of economic and political issues, restoration and strengthening of Ukraine's Navy.

The new Presidential Administration inherited a vision of the predecessors on the need to proactively engage the international community — primarily NATO — to solve the Black Sea security challenges. During the NATO-Ukraine Commission meeting on October 31, the Black Sea security was the key topic. Among other things, it was addressed in President Zelenskyy's statements on the need to strengthen battle readiness of the Ukrainian Navy in the Black Sea region in a joint effort with NATO. The issue of the Black Sea security was a focus in the presentation of the Priority Reform Aspects for the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces of Ukraine for 2019–2020 (December).

## Institutional Cooperation

In 2019, institutional cooperation between different state agencies, including the AP (OP), MFA, CMU, and VRU, was productive enough. The key measures to implement foreign policy in the Black Sea region, including preparation of the GUAM summit in Kyiv in December, took place as scheduled. Ukraine's presidency in ODED-GUAM in 2019 resulted in intense engagement of the President's Office, the Cabinet of Ministers and the Verkhovna Rada in the problems and prospects of regional development. Still, the transition from one presidential team to another, including on the level of the executive power and the legislature, formally affected the activities. Some extent of misunderstanding and weak coordination between the President's Office and the MFA happened in June 2019 over the implementation of the May 25 Order by the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea on immediate release of Ukrainian sailors and of the Ukrainian vessels captured by Russia in 2018 — it resulted in an open conflict between the newly elected President of Ukraine and then Minister of Foreign Affairs.

## Strategic Vision

The National Security and Defence Council's decision "On Emergency Measures to Protect National Interests in Southern and Eastern Ukraine, the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, and in the Kerch Strait" dated October 12, 2018, offered a framework for the protection of national interests in 2019. At the same time, the issue of Ukraine's Black Sea policy was not reflected in the foreign policy section of the President's Decree No 837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state". Other strategic documents mostly refer to the Black Sea region in the context of returning Crimea and challenges linked to its occupation.

## Activities

The issue of security in the Black Sea region remained the top priority for both government teams in 2019. Ukraine was in talks with international organizations to establish an international monitoring mission that could help Ukraine restore its sovereignty in the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea under Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration I. Klymush-Tsyntsadze. On November 24, at the Halifax International Security Forum, Defence Minister A. Zagorodnyuk discussed security in the Black Sea region with State Secretary of the German Federal Ministry of Defence B. Zimmer. In addition to the annual international exercises “Sea Breeze 2019”, the second exercises in the Danube between Ukrainian and Romanian Navies “Riverine-2019” took place in early September 2019.

In the economic sphere, S. Kubiv, Vice Prime Minister for Economic Development and Trade, stressed on the importance of increasing the portfolio of Ukrainian projects funded with the involvement of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank at the 13th Board of Governors meeting in Thessaloniki (10.02). Vice Prime Minister H. Zubko highlighted after the meeting with D. Rosati, Chair of the European Parliament’s Delegation to the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Association Committee, that the EU’s support is important for Ukraine in infrastructural projects in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov regions (February). The Black Sea issues were raised in the wider context of the Baltic-Black Sea initiatives. In particular, President Zelenskyy discussed an implementation of the Three Seas Initiative via the Baltic-Black Sea cooperation during his visit to Estonia.

Ukraine somewhat intensified its activities in the Black Sea region as a result of its presidency at GUAM-ODED in 2019. During that year, Kyiv hosted meetings of the Council of Permanent Representatives of Member-States and the Council of National Coordinators. On April 4, Kyiv hosted the meeting of the Working Group on Cybersecurity. During the 74th session of the UN GA in New York, GUAM foreign ministers discussed priorities of Ukraine’s presidency in the Organization for 2019 (26.09). On November 27, the Verkhovna Rada hosted the 12th session of the GUAM member-states Parliamentary Assembly. On December 12th, summit of heads of governments of the member-states took place in Kyiv, where

among other things, they agreed on the practical implementation of the FTA, and the 2nd Business Forum “Public-private partnership and cooperation in the implementation of the key GUAM projects in trade and transport” took place.

In 2019, Ukraine also chaired the Black Sea Littoral States Border / Coast Guard Cooperation Forum. On October 18, the 20th Forum took place in Antalya chaired by S. Deineko, Head of Ukraine’s State Border Guard Service. The Forum was attended by the heads of border and coast guard services from the Black Sea countries. The attendees assessed Ukraine’s chairmanship positively (successful Black Sea Hawk 2019 exercises were mentioned). Ukrainian delegations attended BSEC and PA BSEC scheduled events in line with the agenda, but without offering any initiatives.

## Results

The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea took a decision in favour of Ukraine (25.05) on the return of Ukrainian sailors and vessels captured by Russia in November 2018. Ukraine’s proactive cooperation with NATO in the context of the Black Sea security in 2019 resulted in the approved agreement on the new assistance package from NATO — known as the Black Sea Package, it develops NATO’s April programme on strengthening its presence in the Black Sea region as a result of Russia’s aggressive actions. Ukraine managed to strengthen its position via the UNGA Resolution 74/17 “Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov”. At the December summit of GUAM, heads of government of the member-states agreed on the implementation of the FTA and on the intents to mutually recognize Authorized Economic Operators between their customs administrations.







# INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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**OSCE**

**B+**  
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**United Nations**

**B**  
.....

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**Council of Europe**

**B+**  
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# OSCE

# B+

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4	3	4	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4	3	4	5
STRATEGIC VISION	4	4	4	4	4
ACTIVITIES	4	5	4	5	4
RESULTS	5	4	4	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B+	B-	B+	B+

In 2019, Ukraine's activities in the OSCE focused on countering Russia's aggression and dealing with the consequences of it, and on conducting presidential and parliamentary elections properly. The newly elected government continued the previous course while intensifying activities within the Trilateral Contact Group and interaction with the OSCE SMM to implement some articles of the Minsk Agreements. Ukraine managed to keep the attention on important issues thanks to close cooperation with the OSCE institutions and a series of visits of the President and members of the OSCE PA, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office from Slovakia, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and monitoring missions to Ukraine. Cooperation with the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine contributed to domestic reforms and the implementation of projects to stabilize the situation in Ukraine and overcome consequences of the conflict.

# '15– '19

In these five years, Ukraine was proactive within the OSCE framework, including in its Parliamentary Assembly. This reflected the key task of Ukraine's foreign policy — to stop Russia's war against Ukraine, including by means of the Trilateral Contact Group, the OSCE SMM and OSCE Special Representative, as well as overcoming conflict consequences via the Project Co-ordinator Office in Ukraine. Complementing this were the annual visits of ministers of foreign affairs of the OSCE chairing states, meetings of the Ukrainian leaders with the OSCE leadership and the participation of Ukrainian representatives in the OSCE events.

The key accomplishment of Ukraine in the OSCE was keeping its attention constantly focused on the Russian aggression and its consequences. Ukraine managed to accomplish adoption of resolutions condemning Russia's aggression and expressing support for Ukraine virtually every year. Ukraine was more successful in the OSCE PA framework than in the OSCE itself, what is due to the decision-making mechanisms — unanimous in the OSCE and majority in the OSCE PA. Using this mechanism, Russia blocked virtually any practical steps to solve the conflict, including the expansion of the OSCE SMM mandate and the OSCE Observer Mission (Gukovo, Donetsk), and its monitoring along the line of the Ukraine-Russia border and of the temporarily occupied Crimea. The OSCE remained the only international organization directly involved in the resolution of the conflict at various levels.

## Political Interest / Engagement

The work of the OSCE in 2019 remained in Ukraine's political focus at nearly the same level as in 2018 and did not change much after the presidential and parliamentary elections. Cooperation with the OSCE was not reflected in election platforms of the newly elected President Zelenskyy or in the programme of the Servant of People, the winning party. It was not mentioned in the programmes of the political parties that are in opposition, other than the European Solidarity, which spoke about holding elections in Ukraine according to the OSCE standards. At the same time, the newly elected parliament quickly selected the Ukrainian delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, which attended the fall session in early October. Ukraine thus retained political interest in the OSCE, but only in the context of elections and monitoring in Donbas.

## Institutional Cooperation

The work of different government agencies in Ukraine with regard to the OSCE was coordinated — they all demonstrated proper level of activity. Constant contacts with the OSCE were kept via Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna, work in the OSCE PA, interaction with the OSCE SMM, OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, OSCE/ODIHR and OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities. The MFA played the leading role in coordinating the work of government agencies. There were no discrepancies in the approach of different government agencies.

## Strategic Vision

Throughout 2019, Ukraine focused on maximum use of the OSCE tools to restore its sovereignty and territorial integrity, protect the rights of people in the occupied territories and to return Ukrainian hostages and prisoners. The Government's 2019 Priority Action Plan mentions the OSCE in the context of ensuring international support to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity

and condemning Russia's aggression. Ukraine insisted on expanding the OSCE SMM mandate to 24/7, what was approved by the Normandy Four leaders (9.12), however that requires a decision from the OSCE as well. Another aspect is the protection of the rights of national minorities in Ukraine, as well as rights of Ukrainians abroad and in the occupied territories as reflected in the Action Plan of the new Government — this intensified in the context of the visit of L. Zannier, OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities, to Ukraine in October.

## Activities

The priorities listed above were implemented via regular contacts with the leadership, institutions and missions of the OSCE, and via work at the OSCE Permanent Council, Ministerial Council and the Trilateral Contact Group. Ukraine hosted Chairman-in-Office M. Lajčák four times (in January, June, September, and November), including three visits to the conflict zone in the East. The priority issues for Ukraine, including Russia's violation of the OSCE principles, were regularly raised by Ukraine's Permanent Representative in Vienna at various levels in statements, declarations and speeches. Appointed to the office in July, Y. Tsymbaliuk continued this line of action. The issues listed above were the focus of the meetings of Ukraine's President and Minister of Foreign Affairs with the OSCE Chairman, and a meeting of the Minister with the OSCE Secretary General, the work of the Ukrainian parliamentary delegation at the OSCE PA session, speeches of Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs at various OSCE fora.

To attract more attention to the issues important for it, Ukraine initiated and organized a visit of a group of military advisors from 13 OSCE countries to the East to show them proofs and consequences of Russia's direct aggression. The effect was positive for Ukraine, but it was limited as it involved only 13 out of 57 OSCE countries.

In 2019, an important aspect of Ukraine's activities in the OSCE was conducting the presidential and parliamentary elections in line with the OSCE rules. This intensified contacts with the OSCE PA and ODIHR. In addition to that, Ukraine kept the OSCE PA's attention on the problem of the Russian aggression: PA President G. Tsereteli visited Ukraine twice, while the delegation of the OSCEC PA delegates studied consequences of the Russian aggression in the frontline city of Mariupol.

In the 26th session of the OSCE Ministerial Council, Chairman-in-Office Lajčák positively assessed Ukraine's efforts to solve the conflict in the East. In turn, Ukraine's Foreign Affairs Minister V. Prystaiko focused on Ukraine's priorities in the OSCE, continued violation of the OSCE principles and norms of international law by Russia, and the OSCE's efforts to politically and diplomatically counter Russia's aggression. An information event was held at the ministerial level titled "Ukrainians — Political Prisoners: A Path to Freedom" with former prisoners of the Kremlin, including O. Sentsov and R. Sushchenko, which attracted more attention to this problem at the OSCE.

Thanks to the activities of the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, the OSCE contributed to neutralizing the consequences of the conflict, to domestic reforms on the rule of law, good governance, human security and law enforcement, elections, cyber security and enhanced democratic control over law enforcement agencies, chemical security, mine awareness, dialogue among youth, protection of women's rights and safety, as well as gender equality and environmental protection. As part of the efforts to implement the Vienna Document, Ukraine inspected the areas of military activity in Finland in May. Units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the National Guard were inspected on Ukraine's territory in the areas of the Joint Forces Operation and the adjacent areas. The International Centre for National Guard Training in Kyiv Oblast was inspected too.

## Results

The key result of Ukraine's activity within the OSCE framework was a fact that the problem of Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the consequences of it stayed in focus of the OSCE as reflected by many visits of the OSCE top officials and their rhetoric in speeches in support of Ukraine. An important accomplishment of the Ukrainian delegation to the OSCE PA was passing of the Resolution on Militarization by the Russian Federation of the Temporarily Occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol, Ukraine, the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov at the annual session in July in Luxembourg. ODIHR and OSCE PA monitors mostly assessed Ukraine positively on the presidential and parliamentary elections. The OSCE Ministerial Council did not pass documents on Ukraine in December in Bratislava. Ukraine failed to accomplish complete fulfilment of its functions by the OSCE SMM and the expansion of its mission at the crossing points in Gukovo and Donetsk as a result of Russia's blocking.

# United Nations

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	4	4	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	5	4	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	4	4	4	4
ACTIVITIES	4	5	5	5	5
RESULTS	5	5	5	5	4
TOTAL SCORES	B	A-	B+	B+	B

Ukraine managed to keep its issues on the agenda of the UN institutions in 2019 and accomplish a positive result on important resolutions. Despite the lower political interest and less intense activities of ministries and MPs, Ukraine was proactively represented at the sectoral level, and had victories in international legal institutions of the UN system.



'15–  
'19

Ukraine's activities at the UN reached their high in 2016–2017, during its membership at the UN Security Council. More broadly, Ukraine proactively used mechanisms of the UN and its organizations to promote national interests, to defend its sovereignty and draw the attention towards the Russian aggression, receive humanitarian assistance. Until 2019, representatives of all branches of power participated proactively in the UN-led events regardless an absence of active political interest in the UN itself. At the same time, Ukraine's presence in peace operations and the interest in global issues on the UN agenda was moderate and did not match Ukraine's potential. The passing of three "Ukrainian" resolutions by the UN General Assembly and the Orders and Rulings of the International Tribunal and the Court of Justice are significant accomplishments.

## Political Interest / Engagement

In 2019, the trend towards lower political interest in the UN continued as a result of two election campaigns. Candidates for presidency and political parties running in elections did not pay attention to the UN agenda. Representatives of the European Solidarity party were the only ones that spoke about a UN peacekeeping mission in Donbas during the elections by contrast to the previous two years, when different parties mentioned this too. B. Tarasyuk, MP with Batkivshchyna in the VIII Verkhovna Rada, expressed support to multilateralism,

'19

which Ukraine should rely on in the context of the Russian aggression during the annual Inter-Parliamentary Union Hearing on the challenges to modern multilateralism together with the UN General Assembly (February, New York).

The UN-related issues were not mentioned in the extraordinary address of President Zelenskyy to the Verkhovna Rada in August, the inauguration speech of Foreign Affairs Minister Prystaiko before his appointment at the VRU in August or in the President's Decree No837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state".

At the same time, the attention Ukraine pays to the UN is reflected in the President's attendance of the 74th session of the UN GA in September, where he spoke about the Russian aggression and the overall crisis of international security as a result of the conflicts spreading, among other things. All other issues on the UN's agenda were not mentioned in the speech. Also, President Zelenskyy and representatives of various political parties welcomed the Order of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea on the release of Ukrainian sailors in May and the decision on the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice in Ukraine vs Russia cases.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

The issues on the UN agenda and Ukraine's activities within the UN framework do not cause any discrepancies between different branches of power. Different ministries and agencies are mostly focused on fulfilling their duties under the respective UN sectoral conventions. At the same time, the diverging responses of President Zelenskyy and Ukraine's MFA to Russia's reluctance to comply with the Tribunal order on the detention of Ukrainian sailors and vessels sent a confusing signal, which could have a negative impact on further decisions in favour of Ukraine.

A positive development was the simultaneous dismissal and appointment of Ukraine's new permanent representative to the UN in December, which ensured continuity at the top level.

## Strategic Vision

In 2019, Ukraine's strategic vision of its work in the UN did not change. The UN was mentioned in most of the current strategic documents of Ukraine, except from the Law on the Basics of Domestic and Foreign Policy. At the same time, cooperation with the UN and other international organizations was not reflected in the foreign policy section of the President's Decree No837/2019 "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" (November) or in the Government Action Plan by Prime Minister Honcharuk. The fulfilment of Ukraine's commitments under different UN conventions was not reflected either. Ukraine and the UN continued cooperation on the basis of the Ukraine-United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPF) for 2018–2022.

## Activities

Ukraine's activities in the UN framework have slowed down seriously. By contrast to the previous years, Ukrainian top officials did not participate proactively in the UN-led meetings and conferences in 2019. The key events at the UN where Ukraine's representatives spoke were on peaceful resolution of disputes, the international mechanism to help investigate crimes in Syria, sexual violence in conflicts, reform of the UN Security Council, protection of religious minorities in armed conflicts, information and communication technologies for sustainable development, regional disarmament, and UN peacekeeping operations.

In September, President Zelenskyy spoke at the UN General Assembly in New York and met with UN Secretary-General A. Guterres to discuss humanitarian support for Ukrainian citizens affected by the Russian aggression and the need of proactive monitoring of human rights violations in the temporarily occupied parts of Ukraine.

In February, Ukrainian MPs attended annual Inter-Parliamentary Union Hearing on the challenges to modern multilateralism, hosted by the UN GA at its headquarters in New York.

The UN meetings in New York attended by representatives of Ukraine included the UN GA meeting on oceans and the law of sea (10.12), the meeting on

information (18.10), the address of Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister S. Kyslytsya on the fifth anniversary of Russia's occupation of Crimea (15.03) and the UN Security Council open debate Investing in Peace: Delivering Quality Training & Capacity Building to Improve Safety and Security and Performance of UN Peacekeepers (7.05). In addition to this, Deputy Minister Y. Bozhko did a briefing titled Demilitarization, reoccupation and reintegration of Crimea and Sevastopol (Ukraine): Future Challenges organized by Ukraine's delegation to the UN (6.11) and O. Koliada, Minister on Veteran Affairs, Temporarily Occupied Territory and IDPs, spoke at the UN General Assembly (16.12).

Ukraine's official delegation led by Social Policy Minister Y. Sokolovska attended the International Conference on Population and Development ICPD25 (14.11, Kenya), where countries committed to stopping maternal mortality, struggle against violence against women and harmful practices on women and girls until 2030.

On July 16, the UN SC held a meeting on Ukraine's language law — especially its link to the Minsk Agreements — which most UN Security Council members opposed.

Ukraine's mission to Vienna traditionally cantered around the work within the OSCE framework, but it also focused on the work under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Among other things, G. Plachkov, Head of the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine, attended IAEA General Conference in September (see Nuclear Non-Proliferation section). Ukraine's delegation participated in the 56th session of the UN Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the peaceful use of the space in February and in the 18th annual meeting of the countries-signatories to the Hague Code of Conduct (HCOC) on non-proliferation of ballistic missiles.

Ukraine's permanent mission to Geneva was proactively involved in the activities of the respective Geneva-based institutions of the UN system. The priority of 2019 was an issue of human rights, including the rights of the indigenous people, as well as the issues of refugees, women's rights, protection of intellectual property, sustainable development and disarmament. Among other things, Ukraine initiated the Joint statement on the human rights situation in the illegally annexed Crimea announced at the 42nd session of the Human Rights Council on behalf of 41 countries. An exhibition on high-tech accomplishments

of Ukraine titled Innovative Ukraine: From Soul to Brain officially opened at the 59th Assembly of the Member States of WIPO with Ukraine's Trade Representative T. Kachka (3.10). Ministries proactively participated in sectoral events in Geneva. Social Policy Minister A. Reva attended the International Labour Conference in Geneva in June and Ukrainian delegation led by Acting Minister U. Suprun attended the World Health Assembly in May.

United Nations in Ukraine actively worked in cooperation with Ukrainian ministries and civil society, especially on assistance to IDPs, fight against domestic violence, gender equality, Sustainable Development Goals, human rights, and humanitarian assistance in Eastern Ukraine.

As of October 2019, Ukrainian military, police and civilian personnel was represented in six UN missions in Kosovo, Sudan, South Sudan, Mali, Cyprus and Democratic Republic of the Congo (the latter mission is the largest and the total number of personnel was 323 individuals). Military representation still prevails over the civilian stuff. Ukraine's mission to the UN cooperated with the Joint Peacekeeping Centre of Ukraine's Ministry of Interior Affairs where Ukrainian and UN personnel from around the world trains regularly.

## Results

In May, Ukraine managed to prevent a UN Security Council meeting on the Ukraine's language law counter to the insistence of Russia, which linked it to peace and security. On July 16, the meeting took place at the second attempt from Russia, but it focused on the overall security situation in Ukraine. Despite Russia's attempts to return to the language issue, other UN SC permanent members spoke about the need to end the occupation of Crimea and to release Ukrainian sailors.

Ukraine managed to receive UN GA support for two resolutions on Crimea and reinforce their content. For the fourth year in a row, the UN GA approved resolution on the Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine) (18.12). Co-sponsored by 38 countries, the resolution was supported by 65 states out of 193 and 23 voted against. The resolution demanded Russia to stop the policy of demographic changes in Crimea by moving its population there and by forcing the locals to leave, and statements on the unacceptable nature of receiving territories as a result of aggression were reinforced. For the second year in a row, the UN GA approved resolution on the Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as part of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov (9.12) with references to the Resolution 3314 (XXIX) of 1974 that defined the notion of aggression, and with a wider list of calls on Russia to avoid expanding its jurisdiction to nuclear objects, mobilizing citizens residing in the occupied territory to the Russian Army, exploiting military plants in Crimea and more.

For the first time, the conference of the UN Convention against Corruption (21.12, UAE) passed the resolution entitled Strengthening of International Cooperation on Asset Recovery and the Administration of Frozen, Seized and Confiscated Assets drafted by the Asset Recovery and Management Agency of Ukraine.

Accomplishments include the Ruling of the UN International Court of Justice confirming its jurisdiction on the two cases Ukraine vs Russia — on discrimination in Crimea and on countering the funding of terrorism.

In 2019, cooperation in the Ukraine-Japan-UN triangle continued through which the Government of Japan provided USD 2.8 mn on projects by four UN agencies in Ukraine, including UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOPS. All projects focus on humanitarian needs and restoration in the regions affected by the conflict in the East.

# Council of Europe

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	3	5	5	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4	5	4	5
STRATEGIC VISION	4	3	4	5	4
ACTIVITIES	4	5	4	4	4
RESULTS	4	5	5	5	3
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B	A-	A-	B+

Important issues in Ukrainian relations with the Council of Europe remain as follows: strengthening the rule of law, democratic institutions, human rights; reforms continuation and their successful implementation; Russian aggression, renewal and increased sanctions against Russia. In 2019, the position of Ukraine in the CoE was significantly undermined by the so-called “Russia’s return” scandal. The CoE Committee of Ministers lobbied for a renewal of the Russian delegation rights in the PACE, which, by a majority vote, approved the decision despite its contradiction with the institutional principles. This provoked the Ukrainian delegation protest in the PACE, curtailed political co-operation and, in general, created a risk of relations stagnation.

'15–  
'19

During the last five years, Ukraine's dialogue and relations with the CoE were firmly positive. The Ukrainian side consistently followed the CoE recommendations, and joint projects were successfully implemented. Ukraine felt full support from the organization. There was high political interest in cooperation in Ukraine. Institutional cooperation was at a rather high level, enabling effective implementation of projects aimed at strengthening reforms in Ukraine. 2016–2018 were the most active and positive for Ukraine in the CoE and the PACE. In 2019, there was some deterioration in relations, which can be to some extent explained by the problem of the Russian delegation return to the PACE.

## Political Interest / Engagement

In 2019, Ukrainian political and authorities' circles had a high political interest in interaction with the Council of Europe. All leading political forces and parliamentary groups, who remained unanimous on the problem of the Russian delegation return to the PACE (except for representatives of the "Opposition Platform — For Life"), paid some attention to Ukraine's policy in the CoE. As for the Verkhovna Rada, the Council of Europe is always on the agenda of political debate. Former and new heads of the Ukraine parliamentary delegation to the PACE (V. Arieu and Y. Yasko) paid special attention to this sphere, in particular to the rational of the PACE boycott by the Ukrainian parliamentarians.

'19



Both presidents, P. Poroshenko and V. Zelenskyy, and both CMU headed by V. Groysman and O. Honcharuk paid attention to the CoE. Relations and cooperation issues were among the priorities of the Vice Prime Ministers for European and Euro-Atlantic integration I. Klympush-Tsintsadze and D. Kuleba. It is also noticeably present in the activities of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin and V. Prystaiko.

## Institutional Cooperation

Effectiveness of institutional cooperation on the issues related to the CoE (including within the framework of the Council of Europe Action Plan for 2018–2021) is ensured by the Strategic Planning and European Integration Directorates in the involved ministries. The cooperation between the Verkhovna Rada, the CMU (first of all, the Ministry for Regional Development), and the Ukrainian President's Office in the part of CoE projects concerning decentralization is noticeable. The co-operation channels between the VRU, the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Court, and the High Council of Justice are traditionally effective in matters related to the CoE. Also, effective cooperation was established between the Verkhovna Rada and the National Council of Ukraine on Television and Radio Broadcasting. Within the framework of projects and initiatives related to the development of social human rights, cooperation is being established between the Ministry of Social Policy, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ombudsman of Ukraine, the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, and the Presidential Commissioner for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. During the year, the adequate cooperation was noticed between the Ministry of Justice, the Prosecutor General's Office, the Government Commissioner for European Court of Human Rights, in particular in a part of the criminal justice reform in Ukraine.

At the same time, the mechanism of the MFA regular informing by the territorial, departmental and interdepartmental authorities about the plans and results of the activities under the CoE, they participate in, needs to be significantly improved.

In December 2019, B. Tarasyuk was appointed a new Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the Council of Europe (replacing D. Kuleba in this post).

## Strategic Vision

The strategic vision of relations is defined by the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine for 2018–2021, which became the basis for the whole complex of relations between Ukraine and the CoE for the following years. The central and local state authorities and non-governmental organizations remain the key partners from the Ukrainian side. It is important that the Plan is in some degree synchronized with the achievement of the objectives of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. According to this Action Plan, the CoE will continue to support Ukraine in reforming the judiciary, law enforcement agencies, the court decisions enforcement, as well as in the area of decentralization and fight against corruption, protection of the rights of internally displaced people and in the issues of journalists' safety. This coincides with the essence of the provisions of the current Government of Ukraine Action Plan and regulations of the new president of Ukraine profile decrees.

## Activities

Many significant events, which occurred this year through cooperation between Ukraine and the CoE, were shadowed by the scandalous return of the Russian delegation to the PACE. First and foremost, it concerns the improvement of electoral law and procedures within the framework of the implementation of the Memorandum on Cooperation on strengthening the possibilities of the Commission to organize and hold elections by European standards (between the Central Election Commission of Ukraine and the CoE), the protection of human rights and the ethnic rights of the Crimean Tatars in the annexed Crimea.

The implementation of the 17 projects by CoE in Ukraine is ongoing, three of which are being implemented in cooperation with the EU.

As in previous years, activities of the Ukrainian parliamentary delegation to the PACE and the MFA of Ukraine in relations with the CoE were of high intensity, albeit with some difficulties from the PACE side.

At the end of June, the PACE, through the introduction of a contradictory novelty in the form of a sequestration rule on its competence, returned the delegation of the Russian Federation without any restrictions and fulfilment of the political and legal requirements previously defined by the PACE. Pushback from the Ukrainian delegation and a group of member states appeared to be insufficient. As a result, in protest, the Ukrainian delegation announced a demarche, joined by the representatives of the delegations of Georgia, Poland, Slovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, United Kingdom, and Sweden; the delegations agreed to co-ordinate their future work in the PACE.

In November 2019, the third Baltic Plus meeting (an informal group formed in the PACE from the national delegations of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, and Ukraine in response to the Russia's return to the Assembly) was held in Kyiv to discuss a joint action plan on restoring trust to the Council of Europe and the PACE. There will be consultations with individual delegates of the CoE countries on the format scale-up. Legal mechanisms that could be used in the group's activities were also discussed.

Contacts within the CoE Congress of Local and Regional Authorities were active. The Vice-President of the CoE Chamber of Regions Y. Svitlychna took part in all consultations and main Congress events. In mid-2019, the Day of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the CoE was held in Odesa within the framework of the 15th Ukrainian Municipal Forum with high-level representation (leaders of member-communities of the Association of Ukrainian Cities, representatives of parliament, government and relevant ministries, expert community, foreign partners).

The Permanent Delegation of Ukraine to the Council of Europe duly conducted its work.

## Results

Last year's "firm" forecasts regarding the positive outlook for cooperation and political support for Ukraine within the CoE failed, and the results turned out to be contradictory. On the one hand, on January 24, a Resolution on escalation of tensions around the Azov Sea and the Kerch Strait condemning Russian aggression was adopted, which, on the insistence of Ukraine, mentions that captured Ukrainians are a subject to "international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions". On April 10, the PACE adopted a resolution on challenges to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which included amendments not allowing the Russian Federation to return to the Assembly without its obligations fulfilling. On the other hand, on June 25, the PACE voted in favour of the resolution, which restored the powers of the Russian delegation.

The political atmosphere in the CoE changed significantly and is full of the trend of promoting further political detente and increasing cooperation with Russia. It is not necessary to rely on the unanimous understanding and support of this institution, and therefore Ukraine and its partners need to substantially increase their own and collective efforts.

Despite the Russian case, the Council of Europe still recognizes achievements in its projects launched in Ukraine aimed at developing the Ukrainian media environment, ensuring the rule of law, strengthening local democracy, decentralization reforms, establishing an anti-corruption court, etc. At the same time, the CoE points to Kyiv on a number of pressing issues regarding anti-corruption policy and judicial reform.





# MULTILATERAL INITIATIVES

.....  
**Human Rights**

**B-**  
.....

.....  
**Climate Change**

**C+**  
.....

.....  
**Nuclear Non-proliferation**

**D-**  
.....

.....  
**International Security**

**D+**  
.....



# Human rights

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4	5	4	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4	5	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	5	4	4	4	3
ACTIVITIES	4	4	5	3	4
RESULTS	4	4	5	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B	A-	B-	B-

In 2019, the UN, the Council of Europe, and the OSCE platforms remained the mechanisms used to promote human rights in Ukraine, as well as for Ukrainian citizens abroad, mostly illegally held in the Russian Federation, separate areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, and the annexed Crimea. At the same time, institutional cooperation and political involvement were influenced by the results of the 2019 electoral cycle and the rotation of elites, including those involved in human rights-related processes. In particular, changes to the composition of the Ukrainian delegation to the PACE and refraining from participating in the September session cut possibilities to influence the retention of the institutions' attention. At the same time, the MFA's great achievement was a decision of the International Court of Justice to extend the jurisdiction of the International Convention on the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination against the Russian Federation in the Crimea.



# '15– '19

For five years, Ukraine focused on human rights as a tool of diplomacy (initiating resolutions at the UN GA, the UN treaty bodies, the PACE, the OSCE Permanent Council, the Trilateral Contact Group negotiation process, etc.). The second dimension is the fulfilment of Ukraine's international legal obligations (going through the 2017 Universal Periodic Review, working with international partners to develop an action plan to ensure human rights in the reform process in Ukraine, launched in 2018 Human Rights Dialogue between Ukraine and EU), support for the protection of human rights in the framework of cooperation between Ukraine and the Council of Europe Office.

The National Human Rights Strategy and the Action Plan for its Implementation for 2015–2020 remain the main document reflecting the strategic vision on the human rights development in Ukraine. At the same time, human rights consolidation as a strategic direction for five years was not mentioned in Strategy-2020, annual addresses of the president of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada. Indirectly, certain aspects of human rights respect, related to the Russian Federation armed aggression aftermaths, had some place in the rhetoric of the President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy (an emphasis on the release of prisoners of war was part of public speeches in 2019).

## Political Interest / Engagement

During January-April 2019, as in the previous years, the representatives of the Verkhovna Rada of VIII convocation showed consistent activity. The most active were the MPs, who represented Ukraine in the PACE, as well as in the Minsk process, in particular in the humanitarian subgroup (Solidarity PPB, Batkivshchyna, and People's Front groups).

There is no direct mention of human rights in the programmes of the political parties that took part in the elections, as well as in the programs of the majority of candidates for the post of the president of Ukraine. In the VRU of IX convocation, the representatives of the Parliamentary Committees on Human Rights, De-occupation and Reintegration of the temporary occupied territories and the AR Crimea, National Minorities and Ethnic Minorities ("Servant of the People", "Voice", "European Solidarity" groups and independent MPs) were quite consistent on human rights initiatives related to the Russian aggression aftermaths, as well as on non-discrimination, gender equality, and minority rights.

Both presidents addressed the issues of release of the Ukrainian prisoners of war in separate areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and Crimea, as well as of support of the Crimean Tatars rights, and consolidation of international support in the corresponding direction.

## Institutional Cooperation

As in the previous years, the Ministry of Justice coordinated the action plan for the implementation of the National Strategy on Human Rights. Therefore, the interaction between the Ministry of Justice, the MFA, the MIA, the Ministry of Temporary Occupied Territories, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Ombudsman's Office on fixing and investigating human rights abuses in the temporarily occupied territories remained stable, including concerning interaction with international partners (in particular, setting up joint working groups with the ICRC).

At the same time, due to the elite rotation caused by the 2019 electoral cycle, coordination between the institutions in the foreign policy dimension of human

rights protection developed unevenly, compared to 2015–2018. In particular, there was a lack of an agreed position between the Office of the President of Ukraine and the MFA on the communication of the Order of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea on 25.06.2019 and the ways to release the Ukrainian sailors — prisoners of war.

In addition, due to refusal of the new Parliamentary delegation to take part in the autumn session of the PACE as well as an inability of the previous delegation, which repeatedly proved its effectiveness during 2015–2019, to participate in it, it was the first time they temporarily lost the opportunity to influence drafting of resolutions condemning Russia's actions in Crimea and separate areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

## Strategic Vision

As in the previous years, the National Strategy on Human Rights and the Action Plan for its Implementation for 2015–2020 remain to be the main documents outlining the strategic vision of human rights protection. Developing of the indicators for evaluating strategy implementation remains relevant. This would allow evaluating not only the quantitative but also the qualitative implementation of the Strategy.

The Honcharuk's Government programme, in the foreign policy section, provides for the protection of the Ukrainian citizens abroad.

## Activities

In 2019, the MFA continued its efforts to secure a case brought by Ukraine to the UN International Court of Justice to recognize the jurisdiction of the International Convention on the Financing of Terrorism, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination against the Russian Federation.

As in the previous years, they continued the negotiation process on release or exchange of illegally detained Ukrainian citizens in separate areas of Donetsk

and Luhansk regions, Crimea and the Russian Federation. A positive trend is an involvement of the experienced representatives of the civil society organizations in the negotiation process within the framework of the Minsk Agreements despite the change of their affiliation (involvement of V. Lutkovska, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights in 2012–2018, in the humanitarian group in the Minsk Process).

As in 2015–2018, human rights violations caused by the Russian aggression remained in the focus of the EU-Ukraine Human Rights Dialogue. In particular, it was constructive to outline the ways to ensure respect for human rights and to mitigate the humanitarian aftermaths of the illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, to ensure the voting rights of IDPs, their full access to health care, social facilities and other state services, and separation of pension payments from an IDP status. Outlining of the legislative changes paths, allowing international partners to make direct contributions to the humanitarian demining fund, was another achievement too.

Strengthening of the anti-discrimination policies, including the vulnerable groups' rights, electoral legislation reform in line with the OSCE-ODIHR requirements, law enforcement agencies' reform, and fight against gender-related violence remained to be a demonstration of the consistent cooperation, launched in 2018 within the framework of the EU-Ukraine human rights dialogue.

## Results

The decision of the International Court of Justice to extend the jurisdiction of the International Convention on the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (8.11) can be named an undisputed achievement of the year and the five years.

The coherence of the MFA's activities is traced in the adoption of the next resolution "Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)" by the UN General Assembly in December.

Despite the high importance in the humanitarian dimension of the fact of returning citizens to Ukraine (7.09 and 29.12.2019), which were illegally detained in the Russian Federation, annexed Crimea and separate areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, what is a significant achievement of the parties involved in the negotiation process within the humanitarian subgroup of the Trilateral Contact Group, there is a number of questions on the legal dimension evaluation of these processes. In particular, despite the Order of the UN International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea on the release of prisoners of war dated 25.05.2019 (to be released within a month of the Court's order), their release and return to Ukraine in September occurred in an exchange mode, what violates the Court's decision.

# Climate Change

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	3,5	2	2	2	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	2	4	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	2	2	3	3
ACTIVITIES	4	4	4	4	4
RESULTS	3	2	3	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	C+	D+	C	C	C+

The year of 2019 saw a merger of two ministries into the Ministry of Energy and Environmental Protection of Ukraine. The process of preparing the second Nationally Determined Contribution and the National Energy and Climate Change Plan for 2021–2030 has begun. Work on implementing climate-related requirements of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement continued.

'15–  
'19

Political parties and the Parliament have not paid much attention to climate change over the last five years. Members of the respective parliamentary committee make the only exception. At the same time, cross-profile cooperation between ministries and international partners has intensified. The Ministry in charge gave higher priority to climate policy. The implementation of Ukraine's international commitments has been delayed, but in recent years, the first important strategic documents on climate policy have been developed in cooperation with international organizations.

The end of the decade was marked by the beginning of the review of strategic documents on climate change. The process of preparing the second Nationally Determined Contribution and the National Energy and Climate Change Plan for 2021–2030 has begun; the review of the 2035 Energy Strategy is underway. Work is still in progress on the implementation of the climate change requirements under the Association Agreement. The review and development of the documents will demonstrate Ukraine's willingness to work on climate policy for the next 10–15 years.

## Political Interest / Engagement

During the parliamentary elections, five political parties supported the Environmental Security Agenda prepared by a number of NGOs, but the programmes of the key parties did not pay due attention to this issue. In 2019, the relevant Ministry focused on climate policy and the implementation of international commitments.

'19

The new parliament held parliamentary hearings entitled “Environmental Policy Priorities of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine for the Next Five Years”, during which some participants raised the issue of Ukraine’s international commitments on environmental protection. However, no political party stated their intention to change state climate policy in the context of the Paris Climate Agreement.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

The Ministry of Natural Resources continued its systemic efforts to develop climate policy and continued to cooperate with other public offices in approving draft regulations. A working group was set up to work on the second Nationally Determined Contribution. Other ministries are also involved in its work. Since the Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources merged, the joint operation of the system is currently under development. Cooperation with other central executive bodies is being carried out separately, however the process has slowed down due to a change in the structure of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the need to create a new system of work. The issue of establishing a new Interagency Commission on Climate Change and the Preservation of the Ozone Layer was proposed for public discussion. Work on incorporating the climate component into sectoral programmes and regulations of other executive bodies continues.

## **Strategic Vision**

It was stated at the beginning of the development of the Nationally Determined Contribution that the 2035 Energy Strategy would be revised and that the development of the National Energy and Climate Change Plan for 2021–2030 would be synchronized. The Concept of Ukraine’s Green Energy Transition by 2050, which was initiated by the Ministry of Natural Resources, is being prepared for consideration. The documents will rely on a single vision for Ukraine in terms of directions. The approved objectives presented in the documents must be



consistent with those of the Paris Agreement. Most work related to climate policy is carried out because of international commitments and with international support, not always initiated by Ukraine.

Adopted back in 2018, the Low Carbon Development Strategy by 2030 remained at the level of the Cabinet of Ministers' protocol decision and did not have much impact on policy development overall in 2019..

## Activities

The Ministry of Natural Resources and subsequently the Ministry of Energy continued to cooperate with international and domestic partners. In particular, it took part in the development of the Paris Rulebook in accordance with the Paris Agreement and in general in negotiations on climate protection. Ukraine was also involved in the work at the Energy Community level.

At the national level, a number of regulations pertaining to the Law “On the Principles of Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of Greenhouse Gas Emissions” were developed but yet to be approved.

The Interagency Working Group on Targeted Environmental (Green) Investment Projects held two meetings. The Ministry put the issue of creating an Interagency Commission on Climate Change and the Preservation of the Ozone Layer for public discussion.

The new composition of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine held parliamentary hearings entitled “Environmental Policy Priorities of the VRU for the Next Five Years” (November), which were initiated by the respective parliamentary committee and supported by the Ministry and individual MPs. During the hearings, the Minister of Energy and Environmental Protection and MPs from the respective parliamentary committee said that climate change was a topical issue for Ukraine.

Ukraine's official delegation headed by O. Orzhel, the Minister of Energy and Environmental Protection, took part in the UN Climate Conference in Madrid to present Ukraine's position on the development of the Paris Rulebook.

Two Nationally Determined Contributions are being developed under the Paris Climate Agreement, which, according to commitments, should be more ambitious than the previous one, which envisaged a 60% reduction from the level of 1990 by 2050. Work is underway to create a National Energy and Climate Change Policy for 2021–2030. A statement on the revision of the 2035 Energy Strategy was made.

## Results

The Ministry and the respective committee adopted the basic legislation on climate policy in accordance with the EU Agreement on the regulation of ozone-depleting substances and fluorinated greenhouse gases and on the principles of monitoring, reporting and verification of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Ministry of Energy and Environmental Protection won the case, which called for the abolition of the methodology for calculating the amount of compensation for losses caused by excess emissions. Last year's methodology was declared invalid by the court, limiting the ability to control compliance with international commitments to reduce emissions.

The National Cadastre of Anthropogenic Emissions from Sources and Absorption of Greenhouse Gases Absorbers in Ukraine for 1990–2017 was approved.

# Nuclear Non-proliferation

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	3	3	3	1
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3	3	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	3	2	2	1
ACTIVITIES	4	4	4	3	2
RESULTS	4	3	3	3	1
TOTAL SCORES	B-	C+	C	C	D-

During the reporting period, Ukraine's foreign policy on non-proliferation was even more passive than last year and was aimed at avoiding elaboration of any independent position on global issues. On the practical side, special attention was paid to the fulfilment of international commitments on physical protection, export control and non-proliferation.

'15–  
'19

Ukraine's non-proliferation policy over the last five years should be described as rather ambiguous. On the one hand, there were no particular changes as its foreign policy vector was stable and sustainable. Ukraine fulfilled its obligations under international treaties in full, working systematically within international institutions to strengthen the NPT regime. In the international arena, Ukraine mostly aligned its position with that of the USA and the EU. Ukraine has significantly improved its ability to control exports and counter illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials. Active cooperation with international partners in these areas took place.

On the other hand, one can point out a rather passive nature of Ukraine's non-proliferation policy, which is reflected in the absence of its own vision of strategic issues of non-proliferation and arms control. In particular, this concerns both the lack of a clear position on the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the formal refusal of the MFA of Ukraine to recognize its membership in the INF Treaty. The latter looks rather strange, given that for many years Ukraine had been involved in the implementation of the INF Treaty and that in 1991 it passed the succession law under which it is a party to all treaties signed by the USSR.

’19

## Political Interest / Engagement

Compared with previous years, Ukraine's interest in nuclear non-proliferation has declined significantly. In fact, it was limited to a mention of Ukraine's nuclear disarmament in President V. Zelenskyy's speech to the UN General Assembly in September 2019. In particular, the President noted that having disposed of one of the largest nuclear arsenals in human history, Ukraine did not gain respect but lost territories and continues to lose people. Therefore, there has been a rather pessimistic opinion about the role of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in Ukraine's security since 2014. Political parties also mentioned the loss of nuclear potential in the context of calls to replace the Normandy negotiation format with the so-called Budapest+.

As far as arms control is concerned, one may note Ukraine's certain neglect of its role in major arms control treaties signed by the USSR. In particular, instead of forming a clear position on destroying the INF Treaty (after the USA and the Russian Federation pulled out of the Treaty), Ukraine officially waived its membership in the Treaty, noting that it had implemented it voluntarily. This statement was an unpleasant surprise not only for other members of the INF Treaty (the USA, Russia, Belarus) but also negatively affected the image of Ukraine as a responsible state, which once passed the law on the succession of international treaties.

## Institutional Cooperation

In 2019, institutional cooperation took place in the manner foreseen by the law. Particular attention should be paid to the launch of the Working Group on Prevention and Counteraction to the Financing of the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction at the State Financial Monitoring Service. It had its first meeting on 24 April and gathered representatives of public offices and law-enforcement agencies involved in the anti-proliferation system. This institutional cooperation will enhance national capacity to prevent and counter the financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism.

## Strategic Vision

Ukraine's strategic vision on non-proliferation obviously lacks clarity. There is still no state position regarding the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons signed last year. Ukraine even abstained from voting for the document. There is a certain correlation between the state position on non-proliferation and the general solidarity of Ukrainian positions with those of the USA and NATO. In particular, the MFA of Ukraine formed its position on destroying the INF Treaty several months after this happened only in response to the significant criticism of the Ministry's passive position by civil society. This position (as a state that does not consider itself a member of the Treaty) looked rather as an excuse for the actual reluctance to develop any strategy in this regard and fully reflected support for the US position.

According to the 2019 Annual National Programme under the aegis of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, the key events should focus on efforts to effectively control arms and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In particular, it states Ukraine's intention to improve the procedure of state export control over international transfers of military and dual-use goods, including by means of introducing digital technology.

## Activities

A number of events in 2019 focused more on discussing non-proliferation issues rather than on specific/practical decisions. One of the events, where Ukraine presided, was this year's Conference on Disarmament in Geneva (21.01), which looked for ways to make this body more effective. The Ukrainian delegation attended the 18th annual Regular Meeting of the Subscribing States to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (3.06, Vienna). Odesa hosted the fourth meeting of the Team for Exchange of Information on Technical Assistance to Ukraine in the Area of Radiation and Nuclear Security of the Group of Seven initiative "Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction" (4–5.09). The Ukrainian delegation took part in the plenary meeting of the Missile Technology Control Regime in Auckland,

New Zealand (9–11.10). Kyiv hosted a meeting of the Ukrainian-US Working Group on Non-Proliferation and Export Control (21–22.11), which discussed issues of non-proliferation, control over proliferation, strategic export control and border security.

In addition, the Ukrainian delegation took part in the discussion of non-proliferation issues within the UN framework, in particular in the general debate of the UN GA First Committee (11.10) where it emphasized its clear support for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the need for its further strengthening. Ukraine also expressed its concern about the risk of wider nuclear weapons proliferation as a result of the INF Treaty collapse.

Ukraine continued to formulate its foreign policy agenda on non-proliferation through the prism of the Budapest Memorandum, which terms were violated. Thus, in preparation for the 2020 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, the Ukrainian side used this argument to draw attention to the undermining of the UN security system and the need for further coordinated action to counter threats to international security caused by Russian policy.

Ukraine continued its active cooperation with the IAEA to strengthen non-proliferation guarantees. The Ukrainian delegation headed by G. Plachkov, head of the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine, participated in the 63rd session of the IAEA General Conference (Vienna), which stressed the IAEA's position on the 1995 NPT safeguards and the 2000 Additional Protocol to the Safeguards Agreement. In particular, it was stated that they remain in full force, including with regard to nuclear facilities and materials located in the occupied territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. Based on the results of the reporting year, the IAEA confirmed the granting of an "extended conclusion" to Ukraine, which attests to the exceptionally peaceful nature of all nuclear activity in Ukraine.

## Results

As in previous years, Ukraine's foreign policy in the area of non-proliferation was mostly aimed at fulfilling its obligations under the existing international agreements without initiating new activities. At the same time, 2019 saw a significant decrease in Ukraine's political interest in non-proliferation. Ukraine's position on key non-proliferation events was in solidarity with the US and the EU positions.

Ukraine continued to focus its attention in the international arena on the crisis of the security guarantees' system as a result of the breach of the Budapest Memorandum by some signatory states, as well as on the need to revise the security guarantees' system and formulate a new agenda on the matter.

Some of the important achievements include the opening of the educational and scientific laboratory "Nuclear Security" at the Heat and Power Engineering Faculty at the National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute" and the beginning of a new Master's programme "Physical Protection, Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials". As a result, Ukraine is expected to enhance its scientific and institutional capacity to counter threats of nuclear proliferation, terrorism and illicit trafficking in nuclear materials.



# International security

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3	3	2	2
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3	3	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	2	3	3	2	2
ACTIVITIES	3	4	4	4	3
RESULTS	3	3	3	3	2
TOTAL SCORES	C	C+	C+	C-	D+

In 2019, international security issues were virtually absent from Ukrainian politics. Activities were limited to political statements and traditional cooperation with the UN and NATO. Most international security problems lacked a well-articulated state position.

'15–  
'19

International security issues were not on the agenda of Ukrainian foreign policy and enjoyed limited political interest only in the framework of cooperation on issues of Russian aggression against Ukraine and other states. Ukraine has lost its position as a mediator in the Transnistrian conflict. Despite statements about Ukraine's increasing participation in peacekeeping operations under the auspices of various international organizations, the total number of its personnel has remained unchanged. The peak of Ukrainian activity and involvement in international security happened in 2016–2017, when Ukraine was a non-permanent member of the UN SC. For the most part, Ukraine's activities and results are limited to its efforts in the UN, OSCE and NATO..

## Political Interest / Engagement

In 2019, international security issues virtually disappeared from the Ukrainian agenda. Neither political parties nor presidential candidates paid any attention to them, at most raising them through the prism of Russian aggression against Ukraine and Russian actions in other regions. Neither the President nor the erstwhile candidate for Minister of Foreign Affairs, V. Prystaiko, in their speeches to the Verkhovna Rada in August presented the Ukrainian position on the main issues of the international security agenda, focusing instead on Ukrainian security only.

'19

During his speech at the opening of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly, President V. Zelenskyy spoke about a connection between international security and sustainable development, Russian aggression in Ukraine, and the consolidation of the international community for punishing violators of the UN Charter. Unlike last year, the President did not raise other security issues on the global agenda.

During 2019, the greatest attention in general words was paid to security in the Black Sea region, which the President, representatives of the MoD and different types of military forces, and others spoke about in their speeches on various platforms. In particular, during the visit of the North Atlantic Council to Kyiv, President V. Zelenskyy stressed that Ukraine and NATO would continue to jointly strengthen security and stability in the Black Sea region (October).

In its official statements, the MFA drew attention to a terrorist attack in Kenya (January), an escalation in the Republic of Sudan and an armed attack on residents in the Republic of Mali (June), an air strike on the centre for illegal migrants in Libya (July), the termination of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union (August), attacks on Saudi Arabia's energy infrastructure facilities (September), and the start of the Turkish military operation in north-eastern Syria (October).

## **Institutional Cooperation**

Institutional cooperation on international security remained sporadic in 2019. Most of the work was coordinated within the frameworks of cooperation with international organizations (the UN, OSCE, and NATO).

## **Strategic Vision**

The strategic vision of international security issues and Ukraine's involvement in resolving them in 2019 has not changed significantly. Documents adopted in previous years address these issues mainly in the format of subregional security or the Euro-Atlantic course of the state. In particular, the new leadership of the MoD

of Ukraine identified security in the Black Sea region as a priority area for the reform of the MoD and the Armed Forces in 2019–2020, which in particular provided for the creation of regional alliances and increased cooperation with NATO.

## Activities

Ukraine's international efforts to support peace and security in 2019 continued to decrease, concentrating within the UN and NATO missions. At the same time, political involvement even in traditional regions was minimal. Despite numerous speeches by Ukrainian representatives at the UN debate on “improving safety and performance of the UN peacekeepers” (for example, in New York on 7 May), Ukraine's practical engagement remained at a very low level.

As of 2019, representatives of the Ukrainian Armed Forces (a total of 346) were present in nine international peacekeeping operations, namely in the UN mission in DR Congo, Kosovo, South Sudan, Mali, in the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei, the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, the KFOR, and NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, as well as the Joint Peacekeeping Forces in the security zone of Moldova's Transnistrian region. Forty-two representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs took part in four UN missions in South Sudan (28 persons), DR Congo (5), Cyprus (7), Kosovo (1) and in the OSCE mission in Kosovo (1).

As part of a working visit to the NATO HQ in Brussels on October 25, Ukrainian Minister of Defence A. Zagorodnyuk took part in a meeting of the North Atlantic Council at the level of Defence Ministers of the states, which contributed to the NATO Training and Advisory Mission in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

The delegation of Ukraine spoke at the UN General Assembly debate on the International Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic (23.04), during which, in addition to pledging continued support to the mechanism, it also said that it was inadmissible for Russia to veto the Syrian investigations in the UN SC.

Ukrainian representatives at the UN and the OSCE responded to the escalation of the security situation or human rights violations due to the unresolved conflicts in Moldova and Georgia, and actively participated in discussions on disarmament

and non-proliferation. Traditionally, much attention was paid to the IAEA events concerning the issues of radiation security and the militarization of the Black Sea region (see section on Nuclear Non-proliferation).

The delegation of Ukraine also participated in the 18th Annual meeting of the countries that signed the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (3.06, Vienna), where it drew attention to the challenges of preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction due to the continuation of a military ballistic programme by DPRK and Syria, as well as Russia's withdrawal from the INF Treaty.

In 2019, the MoD and the MIA actively participated in international exercises, thus facilitating better training and coordination. In particular, Ukrainian representatives participated in NATO multinational exercises, such as Cyber Coalition 2019 (Estonia, December), Saber Junction 2019 (Germany, September), Rapid Trident 2019 (Ukraine, September), Platinum Eagle 2019 (Romania, September), Riverine 2019 (Danube, September), Combined Resolve XII (Germany, August), Sea Breeze 2019 (Ukraine, July), etc.

Navy leadership took part in the 12th Regional Seapower Symposium of the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions in Venice, which, in particular, discussed ways to clarify the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea to ensure its relevance to the current situation at sea. In addition, the delegation of the Ukrainian Navy and representatives of the Romanian Armed Forces discussed further development of bilateral cooperation and strengthening of the current regional security system in the Black Sea region (November, Romania).

Air Force Commander Lt-Gen S. Drozdov spoke at the conference "Air Power in Eastern Europe", a forum for Eastern Europe Air Force Commanders (December, Austria).

In 2019, the number of attendances and especially speeches by MPs, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and other ministers, and presidents at large-scale international security forums and conferences decreased, but they were present in Munich, Riga, Halifax, London, and Kyiv and so on. Delaying the decision on Ukraine's participation in NATO Engages 2019 (London, December) until the last moment could have negative consequences for the country's image.

Ukraine has conducted almost no activity on resolving international conflicts. Even in the Transnistrian settlement, where Ukraine is the guarantor of security, activity was limited to the OSCE statements, as well as a failed attempt to negotiate during the political crisis in Moldova, which happened as a result of the parliamentary elections and the formation of a new government. As for Georgia, the MFA only issued statements saying that Ukraine would not recognize the so-called “presidential elections” in the occupied territory of Abkhazia, Georgia and in connection with the 11th anniversary of Russia’s armed aggression against Georgia (August).

Ukraine continued to share experience on combating hybrid threats and building resilience with partners at the state and expert levels.

## Results

In practice, Ukraine’s international security performance is limited to its activities within international organizations, primarily the UN, and cooperation with NATO (see relevant sections). Ukraine’s focus on its own security in the context of Russia’s continuing aggression has limited its involvement in the settlement of other conflicts and cooperation in the fight against terrorism, illegal migration, participation in peacekeeping activities, and the development of a political position on the main issues of the international security agenda.

At the 63rd IAEA General Conference (September), Ukraine co-authored five important resolutions.



# CONSOLIDATION OF INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT ON COUNTERING RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	5	3	4	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	4	4	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	5	5	5	4
ACTIVITIES	n/a	4	4	4	3
RESULTS	n/a	4	4	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	B+	B	B+	C+

2019 demonstrated the existence of dangerous trends in the erosion of Ukraine's international support in its countering Russian aggression. Due to certain domestic and foreign policy factors, the Ukrainian strategy of expanding the international support circle and increasing the pressure on the Russian Federation policy, in its previous form, became obsolete. Nonetheless, the EU and Ukraine's international partners extended anti-Russian sanctions and restrictive measures once again, and NATO continued to support Ukraine in resisting Russian military aggression. The Russian delegation's return to the PACE was a major defeat for the Ukrainian diplomacy. Ukraine continued its active work within the UN and international courts to condemn Russia's actions in Crimea and Donbas region.



'15–  
'19

While summarizing the five-year efforts of the Ukrainian state to consolidate international support on countering Russian aggression, it should be noted that, in general, national diplomacy effectively accomplished unprecedented in its history tasks. Russian aggression against Ukraine continues to emerge against the backdrop of conflicting norms of international law and cumbersome procedures for its application. In this reality, they managed to form an effective coalition of international support within the UN, the EU, NATO and several other international organizations. At the same time, there is still no consolidated counteraction strategy. Political transit within Ukraine weakened Ukraine's position, imposing of sanctions needs more efforts, and the international partners' calls for dialogue intensifies. The main challenge is to maintain the "nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine" strategy.

## Political Interest / Engagement

2019 once again demonstrated that Ukraine's international support for countering Russian aggression is an integral part of protecting and safeguarding the Ukrainian state. Despite the domestic political complexities of "transit of power" and changes in authorities' political rhetoric in assessing the causes, currents and methods of countering Russian aggression, the course on engaging the international community and international support remains. The course for deepening military and political cooperation in the transatlantic community

'19

format is equally unchanged (despite some road map revisions). At the same time, it is worth noting a certain “chilling” by the new government officials regarding the assessment of counteraction to Russian influence on international public platforms and the change of political rhetoric towards greater pragmatization in relations with Russia.

With a few exceptions (European Solidarity, Voice), the Ukrainian political parties did not turn into institutions of communication with donors of international support for Ukraine, they remain “political machines” for domestic political struggle and do not pay enough attention to the foreign policy aspect of solving the Russian aggression problem.

An important element in the consolidation of international support in countering Russian aggression is the inheritance of Ukraine’s course to join the EU and NATO, as confirmed by the President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy in his special address to the Verkhovna Rada and by the Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko in his speech at the Verkhovna Rada (29.08).

## **Institutional Cooperation**

During the year, significant personal and political changes, driven by the presidential and parliamentary elections, led to changes in the consolidated and coordinated position of the Ukrainian authorities in countering Russian aggression. The Office of the President of Ukraine and its authorized advisers played a significant role in communication with international partners, to a negative impact on institutional cooperation in consolidation and implementation of foreign policy strategies. One of the negative manifestations of the institutional disbalance and miscommunication in the implementation of foreign policy decisions was a public conflict between the MFA and the Office of the President on the response to the Russian MFA’s note on release of the Ukrainian navy sailors (27.06). Differences in interpretation of the agreed “Steinmeier formula”, developed by the results of the “Normandy Four” advisers’ meeting (2.09), also caused some problems between the MFA and the OPU.

The election of the new president of Ukraine, as well as staff replacement both in the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Foreign Affairs and Interparliamentary Cooperation and in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in some way affected the “heredity” of domestic and foreign policy courses in countering Russian aggression.

## Strategic Vision

Facilitation to international support attraction to Ukraine remained a strategic direction within the framework of political and legal instruments to counter Russian aggression. In the strategic package (Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy”, Law of Ukraine “On National Security of Ukraine”, National Security Strategy of Ukraine, Military Doctrine of Ukraine, Strategy of Ukraine-2020, Strategic Defence Bulletin of Ukraine, Presidential Decree of Ukraine “On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state”, Governmental Action Program for 2019–2024) targeted directions of interaction and strategic integration of Ukraine with the key security and political systems of the modern world, which currently serve as key international donors for further development of the Ukrainian state, were formulated.

An important step in implementing the policy in this direction was made by the introduction of the Presidential Decree “On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state” (dated 8.11), according to which the Cabinet of Ministers must take measures to strengthen Ukraine’s international support for restoring Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as for ensuring continued international support for the country’s strategic course to full membership in the European Union and in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

## Activities

Ukraine's effective presence in the international institutions (the UN, the OSCE, the PACE) and development of diplomatic, military and political cooperation with key partner-countries — the North American and EU countries — remain to be a strategic direction in the implementation of consolidating Ukraine's international support in countering Russian aggression. At various levels, both President V. Zelenskyy and Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko emphasized that the liberation of the Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia should take place in a purely diplomatic and political way, with the involvement of broad support of the international community in countering Russian aggression. During the previous year, the President of Ukraine held a significant number of meetings with leaders of Ukraine's key partner-countries and international organizations (the EU, NATO, etc.), where they traditionally raised a question of supporting Ukraine in countering Russian aggression and extending sanctions pressure on Russia to full emancipation of the Ukrainian territories.

Close communication with partners in the framework of cooperation with NATO and the EU is of particular urgency. Among other things, the following events were important in terms of enhancing Ukraine's international support in countering Russian aggression in 2019: the 21st EU-Ukraine Summit (8.07); the meeting of President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy with Vice President of the United States M. Pence (1.09) and President of the United States D. Trump (25.09), during which the parties focused on providing military and technical assistance to Ukraine; a meeting with UN Secretary-General A. Guterres where international support for Ukraine was discussed (26.09); meetings with NATO Secretary General E. Stoltenberg (24.09 and 31.10) to discuss deepening partnership and joint actions to strengthen security and stability in the Black Sea region.

## Results

2019 demonstrated the presence of the international support for Ukraine in countering Russian aggression and the ability of the Ukrainian diplomacy to retain that support, despite the great difficulties associated with significant personal and political changes both in the country as a whole and in the state institutions that develop and implement foreign policy, in particular. The main achievement of the Ukrainian diplomacy, despite certain risks, was to maintain an international “sanction consensus” in countering Russian aggression — both personal and sectoral anti-Russian sanctions were mainly kept and prolonged throughout the year. The return of the Russian delegation to the PACE added largely negatively to it.

Adoption by the European Parliament a resolution on the future EU relations with Russia (12.03) calling for a revision of the current Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and a restriction on cooperation with Russia, became an important achievement of the Ukrainian diplomacy in 2019. On May 25, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea issued an order requiring the Russian Federation to immediately release the Ukrainian naval vessels, return them under Ukrainian control, and immediately release detained Ukrainian sailors and allow them to return to Ukraine. On November 8, the UN International Court of Justice issued an important decision in the case of Ukraine vs the Russian Federation, which finally rejected Russia’s objection to jurisdiction and agreed with Ukraine that its claims were duly submitted to the Court. All of Ukraine’s claims on financing terrorism in Ukraine and racial discrimination in Crimea will now be a subject to substantive hearings.

Following the results of the 21st EU-Ukraine Summit (8.07), an additional agreement was signed between the Government of Ukraine and the EC to amend the agreement on financing the “EU Support to the East of Ukraine” project.

On August 2, UN Secretary-General A. Guterres presented his report “Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine”, which was developed for the first time to implement the same-name 2018 UN General Assembly resolution 73/263.

# ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4	4	4	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3	4	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	4	3	5	3	4
ACTIVITIES	3	4	4	4	4
RESULTS	2	4	4	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	C+	B-	B+	C+	B

Return to the nationwide discourse an issue of raising the status of economic diplomacy by restoring a separate ministry responsible for Ukraine's foreign economic policy within the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine is one of the results of the change of power in Ukraine. This step resolves the main problem of national economic diplomacy of the past several years concerning a single decision-making centre.

'15–  
'19

Over the last five years, foreign economic activity has continued to remain under the influence of certain large oligarchic groups, it was controlled by numerous administrative bodies and limited by imperfect legislation. There is no strategic vision on trade relations with Russia. There has been no cooperation with certain regions and leading international economic and financial organizations.

## Political Interest / Engagement

A significant change from the previous periods was a growing role of economic diplomacy in political programmes of the leading parties that made it to the Verkhovna Rada of the IX convocation. In particular, the manifesto of the Servant of the People party, which represents the vision of President V. Zelenskyy's policy and has formed a single-party majority, sets a goal of launching a "commercial diplomacy" programme to promote Ukrainian goods to global markets. This approach is a follow-up to statements by President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy, Prime Minister O. Honcharuk and Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko on the need to pragmatise and economise Ukraine's foreign policy activities. In particular, during his endorsement by the VRU, V. Prystaiko spoke about developing relations with Africa, Asia and Latin America in terms of trade and assistance to exporters. Other parties, which made it to the VRU, also paid attention to economic diplomacy. After S. Zalischuk was appointed an adviser to the Prime Minister, she also called economization of diplomacy as a priority.

'19

## Institutional Cooperation

As a logical extension of goals stated in the manifesto of the Servant of the People party, the Government's programme sets the task of protecting interests of Ukrainian exporters, providing diplomatic and trade mission support for certain business contracts, facilitating favourable trade and economic regulations, lifting trade barriers and restrictions, and improving the terms of international trade.

To a large extent, the fulfilment of these goals was entrusted to T. Kachka, who was appointed Trade Representative of Ukraine in September 2019 (prior to that, the duties of Trade Representative had been assigned to the First Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade, who held many other functions). The efforts by the Export Promotion Office of Ukraine, along with the steps aimed at launching the Export-Credit Agency in Ukraine, have laid an institutional basis for achieving these goals.

Intergovernmental mixed commissions held meetings throughout the year. On 15 November, the CMU approved chairs of the Ukrainian part of the joint intergovernmental commissions on cooperation.

## Strategic Vision

At the end of 2019, plans were announced to amend the Export Strategy of Ukraine adopted in late 2017. In order to expand it, in July 2019, the Government approved Ukraine's Strategy for the Development of Exports of Agricultural, Food and Processing Industry Products until 2026, as well as an action plan and measures for its implementation.

The likelihood of the UK leaving the EU led to the development of a draft FTA with this country.

As the government in Ukraine changed at the end of 2019, it raised the issue of updating the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. In October 2019, the CMU approved amendments to the EU AA, which foresees an increase in duty-free quotas for poultry exports to the EU as of 2020. The Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin became applicable to bilateral trade between Ukraine and the EU as of 1.01.2019, which will facilitate exports to the EU.



The foreign policy section of the President's Decree No 837/2019 has a separate clause talking about economic diplomacy and representation of Ukraine's foreign economic interests abroad.

The MFA is also developing a state-of-the-art public-private partnership system to support national business abroad, in particular by introducing systemic changes to the structure of the Government's foreign economic bloc and entrusting the MFA with both foreign policy and foreign economic functions.

## Activities

Newly-appointed Trade Representative of Ukraine T. Kachka has prioritized Ukraine's dialogue with major players in international trade: the USA, the EU and China. To this end, in November 2019, he conducted meetings of the USA-Ukraine Trade and Investment Council and the Association Committee in Trade configuration, and later visited China. The UK remained in his activities focus with a view to signing an FTA after Brexit.

The practice of trade missions visiting countries continued in 2019. The Export Promotion Office of Ukraine organized and held six trade missions: to the UAE (March), India (April), Israel (July), Germany (July), the UK (July), and Georgia (September). In addition, four joint stands were presented at the fairs in the UAE, the UK, South Africa and Canada. The Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture held meetings of 15 joint intergovernmental commissions on cooperation.

In the course of the year, Ukraine and the EU held continuous negotiations on the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA) (the first three sectors). In November, the Government ensured the full-scale operation of a website showing the progress in the implementation of the economic part of the EU Association Agreement.

The opening of the Innovation and Investment Promotion Office in Jerusalem was announced at the end of the year. It will focus on promoting innovation and investment in high technologies.

Also, at the end of 2019, the GUAM countries agreed to focus on deepening economic cooperation and creating instruments for the FTA functioning.

## Results

The FTA agreement with Israel was signed in January 2019, but early elections to the Israeli parliament led to a crisis with forming a majority, which hindered the ratification of the agreement.

In 2019, Ukraine continued a trend of the previous years, seeking to boost foreign trade. By the end of the year, exports of goods has increased by 5.8%, imports by 6.3%, reaching USD 110.84 bn with a negative balance for Ukraine. A 21.4% increase in agricultural exports compensated a decrease in exports of metallurgical goods (10.6% down), and machine-building products (3.1% down). The most significant increase was seen in revenues from grain exports (by USD 2.2 billion), which is 33.6% more than during the same period of 2018. This was achieved due to bigger exports of these products to China (overall, exports to China increased by 70%).

The quantitative manifestation of Ukraine's European integration path was an increase in exports to the EU by 4.4%, making the EU a leading export destination (41.8% of Ukraine's total exports). In addition, on November 26, the European Parliament ratified an agreement on higher Ukrainian poultry exports to the EU.

# PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4	4	4	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3	4	5	5
STRATEGIC VISION	5	3	4	4	4
ACTIVITIES	5	4	5	5	5
RESULTS	4	3	4	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	B+	C+	B+	B+	B+

In 2019, Ukraine continued to develop public diplomacy by coordinating efforts of the MFA Department of Public Diplomacy, the Ukrainian Institute, the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation and others. An important task here is to ensure its sustainable and systemic nature, which is to be provided by a strategy of public diplomacy, which has not been presented yet. The cultural and image components became dominant in 2019, with Ukraine being represented at a number of cultural events of international importance. There are now Ukrainian-language guides in a number of museums, and international media and airports have changed the spelling to Kyiv. However, there is still a lack of proper support for the academic and expert components, in particular mobility programmes for researchers and scientists, while grant support for Ukrainian NGOs have not been outlined. The foreign offices of the Ukrainian Institute and Ukrainian language courses abroad have not been launched.

# '15– '19

The period of 2015–2019 saw a true breakthrough in Ukraine's public diplomacy, which is a fairly new direction in the country's foreign policy. From individual initiatives, this direction has evolved to become institutionalized and is slowly gaining a systemic character. This was facilitated by the establishment and active efforts of the MFA Department of Public Diplomacy, an establishment and launch of the Ukrainian Institute and the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation. The issue of the Ukrainian Institute's foreign offices has not been resolved yet.

Given that this area is new for Ukraine, political interest and involvement in it are quite moderate. So far, not everyone in political establishment adequately understands the potential and impact of public diplomacy, as well as its necessity, especially in the face of hybrid warfare. Proper interagency cooperation was not always the case. Although a monitoring study of culture and information centres in foreign diplomatic offices was carried out in 2018, a model of the Ukrainian Institute's cooperation with them has not been finalized. The launch of Ukrainian language courses abroad, which programmes should be developed by the Ministry of Education and Science, has not been scheduled either.

Still, a whole number of strategic documents have been adopted, reflecting the tasks and importance of public diplomacy, including the Concept of Ukraine's popularization in the world and promotion of Ukraine's interests in the global information space, the Information Security Doctrine of Ukraine, the Law "On Diplomatic Service", the Sustainable Development Strategy "Ukraine-2020" and others. The Strategy of the Ukrainian Institute and the Strategy of Public Diplomacy are still being developed and have not been presented yet.

’19

## Political Interest / Engagement

Election programmes of presidential candidates and political parties did not explicitly present their vision of public diplomacy. The issue was indirectly raised by P. Poroshenko (in the context of Ukraine seeking to become a top-10 most popular cultural and travel destination in Europe) and Y. Tymoshenko (in the context of the need to develop Ukrainian culture centres abroad and sponsor the translation of Ukrainian literature). During the elections, Hromadyanska Position Party (Civic Position) emphasized the need to promote Ukrainian history, culture, World Heritage sites and tourist itineraries, while the European Solidarity party called for coordinated efforts by diplomatic corps, business and diaspora. Among the political parties represented in the Verkhovna Rada of the IX convocation, public diplomacy is mentioned in the programmes of European Solidarity (in the context of the importance of communicating Ukraine's position abroad, building its positive image, combating propaganda, etc.) and Voice (in the context of the effectiveness of realistic cultural policy).

The head of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs VIII convocation, H. Hopko, paid considerable attention to public and cultural diplomacy. In particular, she initiated a roundtable on cultural diplomacy in February. Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration I. Klympush-Tsintsadze mentioned the importance of this direction. V. Prystaiko discussed cultural diplomacy in his speech to the Verkhovna Rada before his appointment as a Minister of Foreign Affairs.

## Institutional Cooperation

To accomplish the tasks of public diplomacy, the MFA cooperated with the ministries of culture, information policy, youth and sports (now the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of Ukraine), as well as embassies, the Ukrainian Institute, and others. As a result of interaction between the MFA Department of Public Diplomacy, the Ministry of Information Policy and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, promotional publications were distributed abroad and an information campaign was held for the Third International Ukraine Reform Conference in Toronto (2–4.07).

A multimedia database for the use by Ukraine's embassies was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Information Policy, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, UkraineInvest, Export Promotion Office, the Ukrainer and Discover Destination UA projects. Ministries and agencies continue to promote the Ukraine NOW brand together.

## Strategic Vision

The Law “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy” does not explicitly mention public diplomacy, however the foundations of foreign policy highlight the tasks of strengthening Ukraine's international authority and ensuring its integration into the European and international space. The National Security Strategy speaks about creating conditions for Ukraine's integration into the single European space. The Military Doctrine, for its part, includes direct reference to public diplomacy.

The promotion of Ukraine in the world, furthering its interests in the global information space, and creation of the Ukraine's brand are discussed in the Sustainable Development Strategy “Ukraine-2020”. Also, the tasks of public diplomacy are reflected in the Concept of Ukraine's popularization in the world and promotion of Ukraine's interests in the global information space, the Information Security Doctrine of Ukraine, the Law “On Diplomatic Service”, the Medium-Term Plan of Priority Government Actions until 2020. A separate clause in the foreign policy section of the Presidential Decree 837/2019 “On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state” is dedicated to cultural diplomacy and information support for foreign policy activities.

The Strategy of the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation for 2019–2021 was approved in February. The work on the strategy of public diplomacy in Ukraine, as well as the strategy of the Ukrainian Institute, has not been completed yet.

## Activities

The MFA Department of Public Diplomacy continued its work in 2019. The Ukrainian Institute began by carrying out projects, mostly in the cultural domain though. Following two competitions for the EKSTER Artistic Residence Programme, 21 Ukrainian artists and curators went on art residencies to 10 countries. As part of the Cultural Year Ukraine-Austria 2019, the Ukrainian Institute carried out 35 cultural and art projects, including the modern art exhibition “Ukraine between Fire and Fire. Ukrainian Art. Five Years after the Maidan”, the open-air festival of electronic music and visual arts “Ukrainian Night”, and so on. A group of Ukrainian musicians performed for the first time at Austria’s largest music festival “Waves Vienna”, while Ukrainian street art was presented at “Calle Libre”, an international festival for urban aesthetics.

With the assistance of foreign diplomatic missions, more than 30 events were held to promote Ukrainian filmmaking abroad, in particular at the Cannes Film Festival, the International Film Festivals in Toronto and Haifa, and others. Ukraine had its national stand at the 69th Berlin International Film Festival (7–17.02). Ukrainian Week was held in Gdansk (7–16.11). Ukrainian theatre projects were presented at two festivals in Poland (August) and Germany (October). A Ukrainian delegation visited Milan Design Week (8–14.04) and Hybrid Art Fair 2019 in Madrid (13–28.09).

There were Ukrainian stands at international book exhibitions and fairs, including in London (12–14.03), Paris (14–18.03), Bologna (1–4.04), Abu Dhabi (22–26.04), Prague (9–12.05), Warsaw (23–26.05), Vienna (6–10.11), Frankfurt (16–20.10), Montreal (20–25.11), Sofia (10–15.12), etc.

A project “Through cultural diplomacy towards the economic independence of Ukraine” was launched. The work was carried out as part of the initiative “Ukrainian-language audio guides in the world’s leading museums”. The launch of a programme for the development of Ukrainian studies abroad was announced.

The Ukrainian Cultural Foundation has been in full operation to internationalise Ukrainian culture. In 2019, it received 2,059 applications from all regions, except for Crimea. It is telling that the largest increase in the number of applications, 352%, was recorded in the international cooperation competition.

Efforts to promote the Ukraine NOW brand and the #CorrectUA campaign continued. Information and image campaigns were held, including #JusticeForMH17, #SelfieWithFlag, #UAINdependence2019, #LetMyPeopleGo, #StopNordStream2. The Diplomatic Cultural Club continued its work. A new composition of the Public Council at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was formed (10.05).

NGOs continued to be active in this direction. In particular, with the support of the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, Internews-Ukraine published a collection of Ukrainian intellectuals' essays "Ukraine in Histories and Stories", which was presented in European capitals with the assistance of embassies among others. The Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism" continued its practice of organizing bilateral expert forums with neighbouring countries (Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, and Belarus) and foreign journalists' visits to Ukraine (from Romania, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic). The seventh and eighth "Global Ukrainians" forums were held in New York (26–27.01) and Kyiv (22–23.11).



## Results

In the past year, Ukraine was represented at a large number of cultural events of international importance. As part of the budget programme aimed at supporting Ukraine's positive image abroad, foreign diplomatic missions held 326 events, including 190 image projects.

International projects supported by the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation were carried out in partnership with organisations from 15 countries, reaching an audience of about 5 million people. Thanks to participation in international book fairs, Ukrainian publishers signed dozens of contracts.

The MFA has been active in Twitter diplomacy. As a result of the #CorrectUA online campaign, a number of international media holdings, airlines, airports, and international organisations changed the spelling of the names of the capital and other cities of Ukraine. Ukrainian-language audio guides are now available in the National Museum of Poland, the Austrian Belvedere gallery, the Polish Jewish History Museum POLIN, the Royal Castles in Warsaw and Krakow (Wawel).

In 2019, 88 non-government experts took part in important debates abroad (for example, representatives of the Majlis participated in events in the Austrian Parliament and the Chatham House in the UK, former political prisoners O. Sushchenko and O. Sentsov took part in international events in Slovakia, France, and Poland, etc.). However, mobility programmes for researchers and scientists have not been announced, and grant support for public diplomacy projects by Ukrainian NGOs has not been outlined. The foreign offices of the Ukrainian Institute and Ukrainian language courses abroad have not been launched.

The development of strategic narratives remains an urgent problem. Neither a strategy of public diplomacy of Ukraine nor a strategy of the Ukrainian Institute have been presented yet.

# UKRAINIANS ABROAD

	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	n/a	3	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	n/a	4	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	n/a	4	4	4
ACTIVITIES	n/a	n/a	3	3	4
RESULTS	n/a	n/a	3	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	n/a	n/a	C+	C+	B-

The Ukrainian authorities did not leave Ukrainians abroad without attention as evidenced by the country leadership's meetings with representatives of the diaspora and the implementation of the State Programme for Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad until 2020. Communication has been established with Ukrainian diaspora organisations to promote Ukraine and Ukrainians, protect Ukraine's interests in the world, and draw attention to important security issues, especially in the light of Russian aggression. However, interaction with the diaspora often lacked systemic approach and was largely declarative.

'15–  
'19

Cooperation with Ukrainians abroad increased in 2015–2019, primarily due to the Russian aggression and strengthening of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration policy. Ukraine adopted the State Programme for Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad until 2020, opened the Ukrainian Institute, created a separate department at the MFA, and boosted foreign diplomatic missions' efforts in this area.

The issues of dual citizenship and assistance to migrant workers remain unresolved. There are no programmes to protect the national identity of people of Ukrainian descent in the post-Soviet space, as well as of Ukrainians in Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia.

## Political Interest / Engagement

The country's leadership maintains political interest in Ukrainians abroad, understanding the importance of this cooperation for pursuing Ukraine's foreign interests and forming its positive international image. In particular, President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy noted in his inauguration speech that it is necessary to step up cooperation with representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora and urged 65 million Ukrainians all over the world to build a new, successful and strong Ukraine. The foreign policy section of the President's Decree "On urgent measures for reforming and strengthening the state" (8.11) pays special attention to cooperation with Ukrainians abroad, in particular it talks about "pursuing

'19

the effective foreign policy of Ukraine aimed at satisfying the national-cultural and linguistic needs of Ukrainians abroad, protecting their rights as national minorities in other countries”.

The 2019 election process in Ukraine showed that political parties and their leaders also care about Ukrainians abroad. This was especially evident in the statements and election programmes of Servant of the People, European Solidarity, Voice and Svoboda parties. The main issues raised during the election campaign were regularity of contacts with the diaspora, economic and investment cooperation, protection of the rights of migrant workers, and dual citizenship.

## **Institutional Cooperation**

The National Commission on Ukrainians Abroad, which comprises representatives of the central government, including a number of ministries, the Presidential Office, the VRU, and NGOs, continues to operate in Ukraine. The Commission grants, denies or cancels a status of the Ukrainian abroad. The composition of the Commission was updated on December 24. Priority tasks and measures on institutional cooperation with organisations of Ukrainians abroad, in particular those of information and explanatory nature, terms of their implementation, and ways of financing are regulated by the State Programme for Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad until 2020, which is coordinated by the MFA and implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Information Policy, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, a number of regional state administrations, and the Kyiv city state administration.

## **Strategic Vision**

The issue of Ukrainians abroad is mentioned in official strategic documents. The Constitution of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy” highlights the task to meet the national-cultural

and linguistic needs of Ukrainians living abroad. The Strategy for Sustainable Development “Ukraine 2020”, the Doctrine of Information Security of Ukraine and the Concept of Ukraine’s Popularization in the World and Ukraine’s Promotion in the Global Information Space focus on sustainable communication with the Ukrainian diaspora and use of its potential to promote Ukraine and Ukrainians. The basic principles of cooperation with the Ukrainian diaspora are regulated by the National Concept of Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad and the Law “On Ukrainians Abroad”. The State Programme for Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad until 2020 is in force.

However, the existing official documents pay no attention to the interests of Ukrainian migrant workers whose numbers are constantly growing. The Law “On External Labour Migration” (2015) defines the legal and organizational principles of state regulation of external labour migration, however, it only offers a framework and is of declarative nature. Therefore, it needs to be amended, as currently it neither imposes any sanctions for the failure of the state to fulfil its obligations, nor it finances the declared support for migrant workers.

## Activities

Meetings with diaspora representatives, which were organized at various levels in Ukraine and abroad, were important for cooperation with Ukrainians abroad. In particular, President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko met representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora during his visits to the USA (20.02) and Poland (22.02), while President V. Zelenskyy did this during his visits to Canada (03.07), Turkey (07.08) and the USA (24.09). President V. Zelenskyy met the President of the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC) P. Grod (20.05 and 23.08). Several meetings between the UWC leadership and representatives of Ukraine’s central government took place in September.

V. Zelenskyy’s failure to meet representatives of the Ukrainian community during his visit to Poland (31.08–01.09) prompted representatives of 49 diaspora organisations from around the world to sign an open letter, in which they expressed their dissatisfaction and concern. Representatives of the diaspora held rallies in Paris on the eve of the Normandy Four meeting (09.12), calling on

V. Zelenskyy not to make concessions to V. Putin. The diaspora responded to all events that were important for Ukraine's international position, in particular they supported demands to counteract Russian aggression, release captive sailors and Ukrainian political prisoners in Russia, approve and recognize the autocephaly of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine in the world; recognize the 1932–1933 Holodomor as an act of genocide, etc.

The MFA and its diplomatic missions continue to handle most work with Ukrainians abroad, treating it as a separate area of activity. The Ukrainian Institute launched its own projects on establishing international cultural ties and creating opportunities for Ukrainians' interaction with the world in 2019.

## Results

Communication is underway with the Ukrainian diaspora to promote Ukraine and its interests in the world and draw attention to important security issues, especially in the light of Russian aggression; to defend Ukrainians' rights, in particular by demanding a fair trial of V. Markiv in Italy, a release of captive sailors and political prisoners of the Kremlin in Russia. The efforts taken by the culture and information units of foreign diplomatic missions are important because they hold a large number of cultural events with the participation of NGOs run by Ukrainians abroad.

A positive result is an implementation of the State Programme for Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad until 2020, which received UAH 147 million of state funding in 2019. Most of the money is spent on the activities of the Ukrainian Institute. In 2019, the National Commission on Ukrainians Abroad granted the status of a Ukrainian abroad to 320 persons. However, such a small number means that the process is overly bureaucratic and offers no real benefits to members of the Ukrainian diaspora.

Results of cooperation with Ukrainians abroad in 2019 are virtually tantamount to efforts of embassies in this regard. There have been complaints about the mechanisms and conditions of funding under the State Programme for Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad until 2020, which limits its accessibility and effective use.



# Foreign policy scores 2015–2019

Foreign policy directions	General Score					Political Interest	Institutional Cooperation	Strategic Vision	Activities	Results	
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019						
G-7 COUNTRIES											
United Kingdom	B-	B+	B+	B+	B+	4	5	5	4	4	
Italy	-	B-	C+	C+	C+	3	3	3	4	3	
Canada	B+	B+	B+	A-	B+	5	4	3	5	5	
Germany	B	B+	B-	B+	B+	4	5	3	5	4	
USA	A-	A-	A-	A-	B+	5	4	5	4	4	
France	B+	C+	C+	B-	C+	5	3	2	4	3	
Japan	-	B-	B	C+	B-	3	3	3	5	4	
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION				B	B-	B+	3.7	4.2	4.3	4.7	4.0
European Union	A-	B+	B+	A-	A-	5.0	4.5	5.0	5.0	4.0	
Political Dialogue	-	A-	A-	A-	A-	5	4	5	5	4	
Economic Cooperation	-	A-	A-	A-	A-	5	5	5	5	4	
Eastern Partnership	C+	C+	B-	B-	B	3	4	4	5	4	
European Energy Community	C+	C-	C-	C+	B-	3	4	4	4	4	
NATO	B+	A-	A-	A-	B+	4	4	5	4	4	
BILATERAL RELATIONS											
Belarus	-	B-	B-	B+	B+	3	5	4	5	4	
Georgia	-	C-	B-	B-	B-	4	3	4	4	4	
Israel	-	C	C+	B-	B+	4	5	3	4	5	
Iran	-	C-	D+	D-	E+	1	1	2	1	1	
China	-	C-	B-	C+	C	3	3	4	2	3	
Lithuania	-	B	B+	A-	B+	5	4	4	4	5	
Moldova	-	C-	C+	B-	C	2	3	3	4	3	
Poland	B+	B+	B-	B+	B+	5	4	4	5	4	
Romania	B-	C+	B-	B-	C	3	3	3	3	3	
Slovakia	-	B-	B-	B-	B-	3	4	3	4	4	
Turkey	B-	A-	B+	B	C+	4	4	2	4	3	



Foreign policy directions	General Score					Political Interest	Institutional Cooperation	Strategic Vision	Activities	Results
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019					
Hungary	-	C+	C-	C-	C-	3	3	2	3	3
Czech Republic	-	-	-	-	B-	3	4	3	5	4
Russian Federation	-	C-	C+	C+	C	3.7	3.3	2.7	3.0	2.3
Political relations	-	B-	C+	C+	C-	4	3	3	3	1
Economic relations	-	C-	C-	C+	C+	3	4	3	3	3
Energy relations	-	D+	C	C-	C	4	3	2	3	3
REGIONAL COOPERATION										
Asia-Pacific Region	C+	C-	C	C+	C	3	3	2	4	3
Middle East	C-	C	C	B-	C+	3	3	2	4	4
Western Balkans	-	C	C-	B-	C+	3	3	3	4	4
Baltic States	B	B-	B+	B+	A-	5	4	4	5	5
Northern Europe	-	C	C+	B	B	4	4	3	5	4
Latin America	D	D+	D+	C-	C-	3	2	2	4	3
South Asia	-	C-	C-	C+	C+	4	3	3	4	3
Sub-Saharan Africa	D+	C-	D+	C-	C-	2	2	3	3	3
Central Asia	-	D+	D-	D	D+	2	3	2	3	2
Visegrad Four	B	B	C+	C+	C	3	2	4	3	3
Black Sea Region	C-	C-	C	B-	B-	4	3	4	4	3
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS										
OSCE	B+	B+	B-	B+	B+	4	5	4	4	4
United Nations	B	A-	B+	B+	B	3	4	4	5	4
Council of Europe	B+	B	A-	A-	B+	5	5	4	4	3
MULTILATERAL INITIATIVES										
Human Rights	B+	B	A-	B-	B-	4	4	3	4	4
Climate Change	C+	D+	C	C	C+	3	3	3	4	4
Non-Proliferation	B-	C+	C	C	D-	1	3	1	2	1
International Security	C	C+	C+	C-	D+	2	3	2	3	2
CONSOLIDATION OF INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT AGAINST RUSSIAN AGGRESSION	-	B+	B	B+	C+	3	3	4	3	4
ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY	C+	B-	B+	C+	B	5	3	4	4	4
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	B+	C+	B+	B+	B+	4	5	4	5	4
UKRAINIANS ABROAD	-	-	C+	C+	B-	4	3	4	4	3
TOTAL	B-	C+	B-	B-	C+	3.50	3.50	3.24	3.90	3.50

# Recommendations



1. Develop the Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine as a backbone document, which should identify the main priorities, principles, and directions of the country's foreign policy. This document should outline not only the main tasks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in the medium term, but also a system of coordination and guidelines for all branches of power.
2. Elaborate, on the basis of the Strategy, separate regional concepts / roadmaps of Ukraine's foreign policy with a view to a targeted strategic and comprehensive approach towards promotion of the Ukrainian national interests in these regions. These documents should include political, security, military-technical, economic, humanitarian, and consular dimensions, in particular:
  - Ukraine's Neighbourhood Policy;
  - The Black Sea Concept of Ukraine's Foreign Policy;
  - A Single Concept Of The Development Of Ukraine's Relations With The Asia-Pacific Region;
  - A Concept of Ukraine's Relations with Latin America and the Caribbean.

## EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

3. Introduce a verification procedure by the Government Office for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of draft laws for compliance with the EU legislation and Ukrainian commitments under the Association Agreement during the consideration by the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine's EU Integration.
4. Within the framework of the Eastern Partnership, focus on promoting the A3 format and channel efforts of the main stakeholders (the Vice Prime Minister, the MFAs, the Verkhovna Rada, the Government Office) into
  - a consolidation of position within the country on the basis of proposals formally submitted by Ukraine during structured consultations. It is advisable to initiate a process of wide-ranging discussions with a view to fleshing them out with specific content and expanding initiatives;

- an introduction of a mechanism of continuous consultations between the three AA signatory states (Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova) at the level of representatives of the MFAs, the Ministries of Economy, Parliaments, and experts. Key priorities include deepening sectoral cooperation and fuller integration into the energy union, a single digital market, regional and transport policies, infrastructure, a single European network of transactions;
  - an increasing support for the initiative among the EU member states. In doing so, it is necessary to work with both traditional supporters of Ukraine and to intensify activities of official and public diplomacy in the countries, which are likely to oppose the deepening of the existing framework of cooperation.
5. Suggest to France, Germany, and Poland to hold consultations in the format of the Weimar Triangle plus Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia on the future development of the EU's relations with the Association Agreement signatory states.
  6. Establish the post of the Special Representative of Ukraine for Energy Policy, who would have an authority to engage in a dialogue with state authorities and the EU and to coordinate the implementation of commitments, taking into account national interests and energy security issues.
  7. Ensure a certification of the energy transmission system operator as an entity responsible for the ENTSO-E integration process. By September 2020, develop an integrated energy and climate plan until 2030, which should take into account the economic development strategy and lay the foundations for its decarbonisation by reducing fossil fuel consumption, improving energy efficiency, increasing the share of renewable energy and environmental responsibility of businesses and the population.
  8. Continue communication with European politicians, especially German ones, to prevent a withdrawal of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from the EU Gas Directive's jurisdiction.

## EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION

9. Ensure regular parliamentary control by holding parliamentary and / or committee hearings, in particular on the implementation of annual national programmes under the auspices of the NATO-Ukraine Commission and other issues on the NATO-Ukraine agenda.
10. Initiate the elaboration of a Joint Declaration of the next NATO PA session (regardless of whether Kyiv manages to keep hosting it), which will emphasize Ukraine's progress in reforming the security and defence sector and adapting NATO standards, while separately accentuating the prospect of future NATO membership.
11. Enhance practical cooperation in the framework of the NATO-Ukraine Platform to study the experience of combating hybrid warfare with an involvement of the think-tank experts. In view of a possible adjournment of an international conference on combating hybrid threats, it is advisable to consider preparing relevant analytical materials jointly by Ukrainian and foreign experts, as well as holding a number of online events.
12. Complete the procedures for joining the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence and consider joining other such centres of excellence.
13. Strengthen cooperation on building resilience, in particular on the possible development of the Black Sea Resilience Strategy.

## INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

14. To neutralize the Russian insistence on holding elections in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions (ORDLO), it is advisable to intensify work with the ODIHR on determining conditions, under which such elections may take place, and on assessing the situation in the uncontrolled

territories, and its compliance with the OSCE requirements and standards for free and democratic elections.

15. Intensify dialogue within the **Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE** with other delegations of partner countries on the catharsis, rehabilitation, and preservation of a value-oriented approach to the Council of Europe's activities.
16. Analyse the list of priority topics on the agenda of the **Council of Europe and PACE**, which could help Ukraine enlist more partners (for example, environment).
17. Enhance the participation of representatives of ministries and the Verkhovna Rada in international forums and meetings under the auspices of the **United Nations**, which will not only promote Ukraine's position in the international arena but also boost its image of a country that is ready to participate in settling international issues.
18. In addition to the protection of Ukrainian interests, the list of priorities of work within **the UN system** should be expanded to include nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear safety, food security, environmental protection, protection of civil society and children during conflicts, fight against domestic violence, gender equality, achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, protection of cultural heritage and indigenous peoples, reform of the UN Security Council.

## COUNTERACTION TO RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

19. Update the Government Programme with regard to institutional support for consolidating international support for Ukraine in countering Russian aggression and ensuring international proceedings as a way of combating Russian aggression.

20. Develop a comprehensive vision for harnessing the capabilities of international organizations to improve the coordination of actions among Ukrainian government offices to counteract Russian aggression and restore Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Separately highlight the parliamentary dimension of such activities and measures to involve the non-governmental sector.
21. Intensify political dialogue with Latin American, Sub-Saharan, and Asian countries to support Ukraine's position in countering Russian aggression during the voting at the UN. This dialogue can take place both through consultations at various levels, including at the parliamentary level, and by identifying priority issues for the countries concerned, where Ukraine can support their initiatives within the UN institutions in return.
22. Coordinate efforts and initiatives at international platforms with Georgia to counter Russian policy, condemn Russian aggression, and remind the world about the existing unresolved territorial issues.
23. Within the framework of bilateral relations, deepen cooperation with countries that potentially support resolutions of the UN bodies, the Council of Europe, and the OSCE in support of the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the prevention of human rights violations in the occupied and annexed territories of the Russian Federation.

## ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

24. Modernize the existing system of managing the economic component of Ukraine's diplomatic activity by concentrating foreign economic policy functions in the hands of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to more effectively institutionalize economic diplomacy (in particular through trade missions and strengthening the economic sections of diplomatic missions abroad).

25. Establish a permanent representative office (mission) of Ukraine to the World Trade Organization in Geneva and develop Ukraine's proposals on the reform of the World Trade Organization.
26. Organize consultations with business representatives of the G7 countries on the main problems of their work in Ukraine.

## UKRAINIANS ABROAD

27. Review mechanisms and conditions for funds allocation under the State Programme for Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad by 2020, make them more transparent and accessible to NGOs.
28. Initiate a broad public and expert discussion, including with the involvement of representatives of diaspora organizations and business associations, to address the issue of dual citizenship at the legislative level.
29. Update a status of a Ukrainian abroad, simplify the procedure for its granting and expand the benefits for its holders.
30. Draw up a list of countries where issues of a status of the Ukrainian migrant workers and a protection of their rights require legislative and organizational support, consult with the governments of these countries to address the most pressing issues, and update the outdated legal frameworks accordingly. In particular, pay particular attention to the social protection of Ukrainian citizens working in the Visegrad countries, which can be considered in the framework of the V4+Ukraine meeting at the level of relevant ministries.



## REGIONAL COOPERATION

31. Explore the issue of Ukraine's joining the **Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)**, which will provide access to a dialogue platform between the EU and more than 20 Asian countries. Cooperation within ASEM will allow Ukraine to join promising economic, financial, infrastructure and humanitarian projects. The benefits of using ASEM to revitalize contacts with economic partners are obvious as the countries participating in this forum account for a significant proportion of Ukraine's foreign trade. On the other hand, restrictive access to traditional export markets leads to the geographic diversification of Ukrainian exports, preparedness for changes in the situation in international markets, and a search for new promising markets.
32. In the **Asian region**, pay greater attention to the high-level political dialogue with Bangladesh, Indonesia, India, Malaysia, Pakistan, and South Korea. Step up government-level approaches to economic cooperation in dealing with South Korea, Vietnam, and Indonesia.
33. Intensify the cultural and educational dimensions of cooperation with the countries of **South Asia**, which can have a positive effect on the political component of relations between Ukraine and regional states. Students from South Asian countries, who come to study in Ukraine and later return home, can play a role of the so-called "ambassadors" of Ukraine to improve its image. Accordingly, promote alumni associations similar to those the United Kingdom and the United States have around the globe.
34. Consider opening a new embassy of Ukraine in **Sri Lanka**, which would also be responsible for the Maldives, as currently the Embassy of Ukraine in Delhi covers six countries (Bangladesh, the Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan), which is overmuch for one mission.
35. Continue efforts in international courts to overturn the Russian decision to restrict the transit of Ukrainian goods in order to counter the Russian blocking of transit of Ukrainian goods to **Central Asian** countries.

36. Actively host events and take part in international events in the **Central Asian** states in order to enter new markets, demonstrate the potential and capabilities of Ukrainian companies, as well as to study the prospects for work and peculiarities of regional markets.
37. Intensify public diplomacy in the **Central Asian** region, including through the organization and holding of expert discussions, conferences, student exchanges, education of students from the countries of the region in Ukraine, etc.
38. Considering high interest in attracting investment from the **Middle East** and its importance for the Ukrainian economy, it is advisable to intensify and supplement efforts to promote Ukraine's investment opportunities by publishing a list of privatization assets on the websites of the Ukrainian diplomatic missions, online maps of investment contact points, and other documents about investment opportunities and procedures, in particular in the Arabic language.
39. Deepen a dialogue with the **Middle East** (in particular the UAE and Qatar) on cooperation in renewable energy within IRENA and promote investment in green energy and recycling.
40. In the context of pursuing the strategic objective of expanding distribution markets for Ukrainian products and given significant trade with the **Middle East**, consider the possibility of initiating FTA negotiations with Egypt and the Gulf states (in particular with Saudi Arabia). For the same purpose, it is advisable to intensify contacts with Oman and Bahrain.
41. Form interparliamentary friendship groups with Egypt and Qatar as soon as possible to intensify interparliamentary ties with the **Middle East**.
42. Step up Ukraine's participation in regional cooperation formats, including the Three Seas Initiative, the Central European Initiative, the South-East European Cooperation Process, the Regional Cooperation Council, which will provide an additional opportunity to defend national interests in **Southeast Europe**.

43. Restore interparliamentary contacts and create interparliamentary cooperation groups with all countries of the **Balkan region**, which will contribute to the achievement of Ukraine's foreign policy goals.
44. Intensify high-level contacts with the **Western Balkans** by arranging visits of the Ukrainian leaders to the countries of the region. In addition, given the process of NATO enlargement through the acceptance of the Western Balkans, it is advisable to maintain ongoing communication at the level of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and create permanent formats for studying the experience of the Balkan countries, which have recently joined the Alliance, and securing their support.
45. Restore a priority of Ukraine's economic cooperation with **Western Balkan** countries by holding bilateral business forums and through Ukrainian companies' participation in national economic forums.
46. Consider holding parliamentary committee hearings on the current state and prospects for interstate relations with the **Baltic countries**.
47. Extend the Five Capitals train to **Tallinn** and develop a promotion campaign for it.
48. Initiate consultations at the level of deputy foreign ministers regarding the proactive elaboration of priorities for the Polish presidency at the **Visegrad Four** (as of 1 July 2020), including by resuming the V4+Ukraine format. Suggest a Visegrad Four summit to be held in Ukraine, thus demonstrating strong political contacts and solidarity between the states.
49. During a **V4 + EaP** meeting, the MFAs of Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia are advised to once again come up with a proposal to strengthen support for the partner countries, which signed the Association Agreements. A political statement by the Visegrad Four countries may have an additional positive effect on Ukrainian diplomats' further work with the European institutions.

50. Initiate resuming of meetings of the **Georgia-Moldova-Ukraine** Interparliamentary Assembly and intensify bilateral interparliamentary dialogue. Commit to acting as a “locomotive” for Georgia and Moldova in the EaP and A3. Pro-European NGO platforms are most organically capable of carrying out the role of the “driving force” in promoting A3.
51. Initiate as many bilateral and multilateral international security measures in the **Black Sea region** as possible to increase the presence of Western partners in southern Ukraine and the Northern Black Sea as a factor of indirect containment of the escalation of the Russian Black Sea Fleet aggression. The main priority should be for Georgia, Romania, and Turkey.
52. Bring to completion an initiative on creation of the international monitoring mission that would help Ukraine to restore its sovereignty in the **Sea of Azov and the Black Sea**.
53. Make a more active use of the political opportunities of the **ODED-GUAM**, in particular with a view to forming a common position at international platforms, as well as to a possible participation of the organization in negotiations on accession to the Three Seas Initiative.
54. In the **BSEC**, raise the issues of Russia blocking merchant navigation in the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov, putting obstacles by means of closing maritime zones, which has a negative impact on maritime, trade, and economic development in the Black Sea.
55. Appoint Ukraine’s ambassadors to Sweden, Finland, and Iceland (non-resident) to intensify communication with the **Nordic countries**.
56. Develop a plan at the interagency level to promote Ukrainian exports in **Northern Europe** and stimulate investment from the region in the Ukrainian economy.

57. Organise official visits by the President or Prime Minister of Ukraine to **Latin American** countries.
58. Intensify the process of establishing groups of friendships with **Latin American** countries in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the IX convocation and hold a roundtable on cooperation with countries of the region with participation of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture.
59. Urgently appoint ambassadors to countries of **Sub-Saharan Africa**, as there are vacancies in five of the six Ukrainian embassies in the region (in particular, for over nine years in Ethiopia). Analyse the possibility of expanding the network of Ukraine's diplomatic missions on the African continent, in particular by opening a new diplomatic mission in DR Congo and Cote d'Ivoire.
60. Prepare and hold a state visit by the President of Ukraine to countries of **Sub-Saharan Africa**.
61. Research the possibility of the official involvement of Ukraine and other EaP members in the **EU-Africa Alliance**.
62. Boost the work of Ukrainian embassies in **Africa** to inform the African business community about investment, trade, economic, tourism, and education opportunities in Ukraine.

## BILATERAL RELATIONS

63. Intensify interparliamentary dialogue in order to find additional channels of communication and develop a positive image of Ukraine in **Belarus**.
64. Consider using additional instruments of rapprochement between Ukraine and **Belarus** through multilateral cooperation projects under the EaP, the opportunity for which opens up through its policy review.

65. Initiate bilateral military exercises with **Georgia** to share military/combat experience, including at the level of law-enforcement agencies in the context of the fight against organized crime, etc.
66. Groups for interparliamentary relations with **G7 countries** should initiate meetings with various political parties, including those where not all members fully support Ukraine's position on maintaining sanction pressure on the Russian Federation, in order to fully convey Ukraine's position.
67. Promote an active dialogue with the **United Kingdom** in the military sphere and defence industry, especially between the Navies. Consider attracting British investment or joint production in defence industry projects.
68. Increase cooperation with the **United Kingdom** on cybersecurity, national and global resilience, as well as strengthen the cooperation of intelligence and special services, in particular in the fight against terrorism and money laundering.
69. Arrange a visit by the Ukrainian parliamentary friendship group to **the UK**, taking into account the change of its composition in both countries.
70. Insist on an active dialogue on improving visa regulations and not extending the unilateral visa-free regulations for **UK** citizens for 2021 in the absence of significant changes in the current situation.
71. Resume the work of the Joint Intergovernmental **Ukrainian-Estonian** Commission for Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, which has not met since 2013.
72. Consider approbation of the Estonian Kaitseliit's experience by the Defence Ministry of Ukraine for territorial defence forces with the participation of **Estonian** experts in some of the mentioned regions: Odesa, Sumy, Kharkiv, Kherson, Chernivtsi, and Chernihiv.

73. Initiate joint roundtables for both countries' MPs, experts, and diplomats to discuss **Israeli** experience in developing the economy, defence, and public administration in difficult security conditions.
74. Given the decline in interparliamentary cooperation and **Israel's** significant lobbying potential to promote Ukraine's interests in the world, hold meetings at the level of the interparliamentary friendship groups in 2020.
75. Intensify negotiations on the extension of the FTA with **Israel** to include the services sector (after Israel ratifies the Agreement) and intensify the coordination of procedures for the opening of innovation centres, as agreed during the meeting between the President of Ukraine and the Prime Minister of Israel.
76. Develop and implement at the level of the MFA a separate roadmap for the development of political dialogue with **Iceland** and ensure appropriate funding.
77. Consider the creation of an interparliamentary group of friendship with **Iceland**.
78. Study the feasibility of introducing the position of a diplomatic adviser of Ukraine in charge of the issues concerning the **Italian Republic** (in accordance with Decree of the President of Ukraine No 1901 dated December 31, 2005), since the Italian side very often prefers to use this model in communication with its Ukrainian counterparts, in which the diplomatic adviser is of the same rank as the ambassador, which can increase the effectiveness of intergovernmental coordination of efforts between the MFA and other ministries in cooperation with Italy.
79. Hold a regular meeting of the Ukrainian-**Italian** Council for Economic, Industrial, and Financial Cooperation, which has been postponed for quite some time (not held in the last three years).

80. The Ukraine-**Italy** Interparliamentary Friendship Group, together with the Free Markiv association of MPs, should initiate a visit of their Italian counterparts to Donbas in 2020. This will help a bigger number of Italian politicians to understand Ukraine's position on Donbas and Crimea.
81. Increase cooperation with **Italian** regional parliaments, taking into account the influence of the Italian regions and the setting of the Italian political agenda. This cooperation can take place both at the interregional level and at the level of individual ministries of Ukraine and its diplomatic missions abroad.
82. Study **Italy's** experience in the use of renewable energy sources, which can help Ukraine to find new areas of energy cooperation. In addition, work with Italian investors to explain the legal changes to the "green tariff" regulations, which have raised their concerns.
83. Develop the image projects for cultural diplomacy focusing on **Italian** society. Joint modern-day success stories of Ukrainians and Italians (business, fashion, visual arts, music, and so on) can be useful in this regard.
84. Hold a press tour of Ukraine for representatives of the **Italian** media, which would include a visit to eastern Ukraine.
85. Intensify communication between the Embassy of Ukraine in **Italy** and the large local Ukrainian community, including by using new channels of communication.
86. Identify long-term priorities for cooperation with **Canada**, for example in the area of high-tech cooperation, development of Ukraine's security capacity, joint educational and scientific programmes, etc.
87. Resume negotiations to join the ETA+ programme that simplifies visa regulations, which was put on hold because of elections and the formation of a new government in **Canada**.



88. Focus on the promotion and encouragement of mutually beneficial cooperation with **China** in joint ventures, investment attraction, technological, and scientific cooperation, cooperation in energy, oil and gas, infrastructure and civil aviation. It will be important to ensure the patronage of the President and Prime Minister of Ukraine over joint projects in the above-mentioned areas.
89. Arrange visits to **China** by the President and Prime Minister of Ukraine.
90. Intensify cooperation with **Lithuania** in digital economy and innovations.
91. Initiate projects concerning joint cultural heritage with **Lithuania** and create joint Ukrainian-Lithuanian information projects.
92. Approve a composition of the Ukrainian delegation to another round of negotiations with **Moldova** on the Dniester hydroelectric complex.
93. Intensify political dialogue at the level of German states, use opportunities for establishing partnerships with individual **German** cities.
94. Consider a possibility of opening diplomatic missions in **Oman** and **Bahrain**.
95. Arrange a meeting between the heads of government of Ukraine and **Poland** and the next meeting of the Ukrainian-Polish Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation to establish mutually beneficial cooperation for the sake of implementing the task of making Ukraine's foreign policy more pragmatic and economy-oriented.
96. Resume the work of the Ukrainian-**Polish** Partnership Forum (a civil expert forum, which last met in 2018). The work of the forum will be a proof of the Ukrainian MFA transparent approach towards important directions in Ukraine's foreign policy.

97. Flesh out the existing mechanisms of interparliamentary cooperation: the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Verkhovna Rada, the **Lithuanian** Seimas, the **Polish** Sejm and Senate, as well as the Parliamentary Assembly of Ukraine and Poland, which require the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to join forces.
98. Expand military-political cooperation with **Romania**. For example, join (as an observer) regular trilateral Turkish-Polish-Romanian military-political consultations at the level of foreign ministers.
99. Analyse the possibility of creating a Ukrainian-**Romanian** battalion (with the possibility of involving third parties, for example, Bulgaria or Poland), following an example of the Ukrainian-Polish- Lithuanian Brigade.
100. Speed up the launch of a Danube ferry link between Orlivka and Isaccea, which is expected to facilitate cross border cooperation between Ukraine and **Romania**.
101. Approve a draft agreement (an exchange of notes) between the Government of Romania and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on the opening of a new international checkpoint on the Ukrainian-Romanian state border between Bila Tserkva (Transcarpathian Region) and Sighetu Marmatie.
102. Develop a roadmap for strategic partnership with the **USA**, outlining priority goals and tasks in this direction.
103. Improve institutional dialogue between the MFA and the President's Office on fleshing out the agenda of relations with the USA, including on the organisation and holding of visits at various levels.
104. Enhance the information component in dialogue with the **USA** to improve and support Ukraine's image in the country, including by means of public and expert diplomacy.

105. Pay attention to the work with **Serbia** to overcome its negative position on international support for Ukraine in its counteraction to Russian aggression, as well as a position of the Serbian Orthodox Church.
106. In dialogue with the new **Slovak** government, pay attention to irregular meetings of intergovernmental commissions, including the Intergovernmental Mixed Commission on Economic, Industrial, and Research-and-Development Cooperation, which last met as long ago as in 2013.
107. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and foreign diplomatic missions in **Turkey** should improve analytical work to thoroughly study real threats and potential risks due to the Turkey's rapprochement with Russia.
108. Develop a strategic vision for the development of partnership with **Turkey** in the medium term (5–10 years).
109. Continue negotiations on a free trade area with **Turkey** in order to sign a mutually beneficial Agreement and retain the positive trade balance.
110. Develop joint projects of strategic nature in the energy, transport sectors, and defence industry, which can offer an alternative to **Turkey's** cooperation with Russia in these directions.
111. Develop a vision for Ukrainian-**Hungarian** relations that would reflect Ukraine's strategy for relations with neighbouring states, which are the EU and NATO members. Developing a strategic vision for relations with Hungary will give an opportunity to find a way out of the current "simmering conflict" faster, as well as to build a predictable good-neighbourly relationship based on national interests.
112. Given a possible visit by **French** President E. Macron to Ukraine in 2020, it is necessary to develop a draft agenda for the development of bilateral relations in the medium term, paying particular attention to the institutionalization of political, economic, and cultural dialogue at various levels.

113. Launch a permanent dialogue at the level of the heads of government of Ukraine and the **Czech Republic**, taking into account the results of Czech Prime Minister A. Babis's official visit to Ukraine. Ukraine's readiness to positively settle the "Yamburg debt" may give an additional incentive to enhanced intergovernmental cooperation. The Czech suggestion that the debt may be settled if Czech Republic is granted ownership of their Embassy in Ukraine is worth considering.
114. Resume active interparliamentary cooperation, including high-level contacts between the speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the heads of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the **Czech Republic**. Organise a visit to the Czech Republic in 2020 for the speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Parliamentary diplomacy may help the efforts to secure the Czech parliament's recognition of the Holodomor in Ukraine as an act of genocide.
115. Translate the practice of interregional cooperation between the regions of Ukraine and the **Czech Republic** from the western regions of Ukraine to central and southeastern ones.
116. Launch permanent cooperation in the format of a Ukrainian-**Czech** forum, reserve funding in the budgets of foreign ministries in order to hold it in 2021.
117. Audit the legal framework for bilateral cooperation with **Japan** in order to rekindle and increase political interest on the part of Ukrainian officials and MPs.
118. Study **Japanese** experience in using technology in public administration within the framework of the "Country in a Smartphone" programme and health reform.
119. Tighten control over the targeted use of **Japanese** investments.

## PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

120. Complete the development of the Strategy of Public Diplomacy of Ukraine, which must clearly outline ideas and messages concerning the promotion of Ukraine's image and its attractiveness that should be shared with the world, and identify the priority tasks and directions of work (sectors and locations). Separate attention should be paid to the institutions and instruments expected to be used in this direction, ensure consistent, not leftover, financing to guarantee its sustainable and systemic operation.
121. Analyse how Ukraine is perceived by countries, cooperation with which is strategically important to Ukraine and its national interests. Special attention should be paid to neighbouring states, a dialogue with which has been complicated by the language provisions of the Law "On Education". Using this analysis of Ukraine's current image, it will be possible to more effectively assess the efficiency of Ukraine's public diplomacy against specific indicators. This will also result in more cost-effective spending on the sectors in demand.
122. Complete the work on the Strategy of the Ukrainian Institute and plan an expansion of its operations in terms of public and expert diplomacy.
123. In addition to the cultural mobility programme that has already been launched, the Ukrainian Institute should develop a system of competition-based grant support for Ukrainian scientists and experts to enable them to do research and present themselves abroad, take part in international academic conferences and expert forums, as well as in educational events. This programme will facilitate the development of Ukrainian studies, advance the professional level of Ukrainian scientists and experts, and present Ukrainian products to scientists and experts affiliated with Ukrainian rather than foreign institutions, which will boost the international presence of Ukrainian science and expertise.

124. Develop a transparent system of grant support for Ukrainian NGOs with international focus in order to strengthen expertise and analysis. This initiative will ensure the synergy of Ukrainian public diplomacy actors and make them more sustainable.

## MULTILATERAL INITIATIVES

125. Review the 2009 Peacekeeping Strategy of Ukraine, which is outdated and does not reflect the current situation. In particular, pay attention to the following: deeper engagement in the UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System; expansion of opportunities for the use and creation of multinational peacekeeping contingents; Ukraine's participation in the EU's peace operations; and broader engagement of women in peacekeeping activities.
126. Create a joint (the MFA, the MIA and the MoD) register of former participants in **peacekeeping operations**, who may be involved in seconded positions in international organisations.
127. Appoint a new special representative of Ukraine for the Transnistrian **conflict settlement** and elaborate Ukraine's position as a mediator. Hold consultations at the level of the MFA with the participation of the Vice Prime Minister for Reintegration of the Republic of Moldova on the prospects for the Transnistrian conflict settlement.
128. Appoint an ambassador at large, who will oversee new **global challenges** in order to monitor, analyse, and coordinate Ukraine's position.
129. Boost the participation of Ukrainian official representatives in the biggest **security forums** in order to present the Ukrainian position and be among security providers rather than security consumers. The failure to understand the importance of public participation in influential international non-governmental forums results in Ukraine's absence from international discourse.

130. Using the experience of implementing the National **Human Rights** Strategy, make sure that the updated Strategy and action plan include clear performance and control targets. Public offices (the NSDC, the MoD, the Security Service of Ukraine, and the MFA) should integrate the Strategy's human rights approach.
131. Improve coordination of actions among the parliamentary committees, which are most involved in ensuring the protection of **human rights**, including in terms of international law (the Committee on Human Rights, De-occupation, and Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories in Donetsk, Luhansk Regions and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the City of Sevastopol, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Interparliamentary Cooperation, the Committee on Legal Support for Law Enforcement, the Committee on Ukraine's Integration into the EU).
132. Enhance communication with partners and Ukrainian society about achievements in the area of **human rights** and explain their significance, in particular with the help of the media.
133. Approve the regulatory framework for the systemic reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by the Ukrainian industry as part of the fulfilment of Ukraine's international commitments on **climate change** and in line with the Law on the Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification of Greenhouse Gases.
134. Create an environment conducive to private international **green investment** in the national economy at the level of both state-owned and private companies, which will facilitate the implementation of Ukraine's approved policies.

<b>AA</b>	Association Agreement
<b>AFU</b>	Armed Forces of Ukraine
<b>ANP</b>	Annual National Program “Ukraine-NATO”
<b>APU</b>	Presidential Administration of Ukraine
<b>ATO</b>	Anti-Terrorist Operation
<b>ATO/JFO</b>	Anti-Terrorist Operation / Joint Forces Operation
<b>BPP</b>	Petro Poroshenko Bloc
<b>BSEC</b>	Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation
<b>CEE</b>	Central Eastern Europe
<b>CMU</b>	Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine
<b>CoE</b>	Council of Europe
<b>CSF EaP</b>	Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum
<b>CSP</b>	Civil Society Platform
<b>DCFTA</b>	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area
<b>DPRK</b>	Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of the Congo
<b>EaP</b>	Eastern Partnership
<b>ECFR</b>	European Council on Foreign Relations
<b>EFTA</b>	European Free Trade Association
<b>FTA</b>	Free Trade Agreement
<b>G-7</b>	Group of Seven
<b>GUAM</b>	Organization for Democracy and Economic Development “Georgia — Ukraine-Azerbaijan-Moldova”
<b>IAEA</b>	International Atomic Energy Agency
<b>IDP</b>	Internally displaced persons



<b>MEDT</b>	Ministry of Economic Development and Trade
<b>MFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>MinTOT</b>	Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs
<b>MIA</b>	Ministry of Internal Affairs
<b>MoD</b>	Ministry of Defence
<b>MPs</b>	Members of Parliament
<b>NATO PA</b>	NATO Parliamentary Assembly
<b>NBU</b>	National Bank of Ukraine
<b>NSDC</b>	National Security and Defence Council
<b>ODIHR</b>	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
<b>OPU</b>	Office of the President of Ukraine
<b>ORDLO</b>	separate territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions
<b>OSCE PA</b>	Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>OSCE SMM</b>	Special Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>PACE</b>	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
<b>RES</b>	Renewable energy sources
<b>UN GA</b>	General Assembly of the United Nations
<b>UN SC</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>V4</b>	Visegrad Group (Visegrad Four)
<b>VRU</b>	Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
<b>UNDP</b>	the United Nations Development Program
<b>UNICEF</b>	the UN Children's Fund
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organization

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# **Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”**





The Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism” is a network-based nongovernmental analytical centre, the goal of which is to participate in providing democratic ground for developing and implementation of foreign and security policies by government authorities of Ukraine, implementation of international and nationwide projects and programs, directed at improvement of foreign policy analysis and expertise, enhancement of expert community participation in a decision-making process in the spheres of foreign policy, international relations, public diplomacy.

The activities of the “Ukrainian Prism” are:

- provision of sustainable collaboration between the expert community and the bodies of executive and legislative power of Ukraine, which are involved in the development and implementation of the foreign policy of Ukraine;
- research on the foreign policy, diplomatic service, international relations and security, development and publication of respective recommendations;
- assistance to the state authorities of Ukraine in spreading reliable information about Ukraine abroad, creation of public diplomacy channels.
- facilitating improvement of legislation, which regulates foreign and security policy of Ukraine, the basics of diplomatic service and public diplomacy.
- informational, organizational and consulting support of public authorities, civil society organizations, educational establishments and other subjects of foreign policy and security issues.

The Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism” is officially registered as a nongovernmental organization in 2015, while analytical work and research had been carried out within the network of foreign policy experts “Ukrainian Prism” since 2012.

At present, the organization united more than 15 experts in the sphere of foreign policy, international relations, international security from different analytical and academic institutions in Kyiv, Odesa, Kharkiv, Chernihiv and Chernivtsi, as well as associate experts in Ukraine and abroad.

**Friedrich Ebert  
Foundation**

**FRIEDRICH  
EBERT  
STIFTUNG**



Friedrich Ebert Foundation is the oldest political foundation of Germany, which has had rich social-democratic tradition since the day of its foundation in 1925. The foundation was started as a political will of Friedrich Ebert, the first democratically elected president of Germany, whose name the Foundation bears.

The key activity of our political Foundation is the implementation of basic ideals and values of social democracy: freedom, justice, solidarity. The Foundation operates in close connection with social democrats and organizations of independent trade unions. As a non-profit, the Foundation organizes its activity on the principles of independence and self-governance.

The Foundation fosters the development of:

- free society, which is based on the principles of solidarity and gives all its citizens the opportunity to participate in the political, economic, social and cultural life, regardless of their background, gender or religious beliefs;
- active and strong democracy, sustainable economic growth and decent job opportunities for all citizens;
- welfare state with developed education and health system, which at the same time strives at overcoming poverty and provides shelter against endeavours and hardships that citizens have to face during lifetime;
- a state that holds responsibility for peace and social progress in Europe and the whole world.

The Foundation supports and enhances the ideals of social democracy, in particular by means of:

- political awareness-building with the aim of strengthening the civil society. Political awareness-building programs of the Foundation in Germany are focused on motivating citizens, developing their independence, informing and teaching them best practices of active participation in political life, activities of trade unions and civil society. We promote citizens' participation in discussions on social issues and in decision-making processes;

- political consultations. The foundation holds strategic research on main issues of economic, social and educational policies, as well as on the ways of further development of democracy. Due to engagement of academic circles and active politicians, the Foundation creates conditions for a broad discussion on the issues of building a fair and sustainable economic and social pattern in certain countries, Europe and the whole world;
- international collaboration. Due to international offices of the Foundation, which carry out their activities in more than 100 countries of the world, the Foundation supports the policy of peaceful collaboration and human rights protection, promotes creation and reinforcement of democratic, social and constitutional bodies. The Foundation is in favour of independent trade unions and strong civil society. Within the framework of European integration process the Foundation actively promotes socially-oriented, democratic and competitive Europe;
- support for talented youth by providing scholarships, in particular to students and post-graduates from underprivileged families or migrants;
- preservation of collective social democratic memory. Archives and libraries of the Foundation, as well as works on contemporary history allow to preserve the roots of social democracy and trade unions, at the same time they are information sources for conducting social-political and historical research.

At present, there are head-offices of the Foundation in Bonn and Berlin. Besides, in Federal Republic of Germany the Foundation has 6 educational centres as well as 12 county and regional offices. Apart from that, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation possesses its own library in Bonn, which comprises 650 000 volumes. "The Archives of Social Democracy" of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Bonn includes the biggest collection of materials from the history of the European labour movement..



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