

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF UKRAINE
SUMY STATE UNIVERSITY
Educational and Research Institute of Business, Economics and Management
Department of International Economic Relations

BACHELOR'S DEGREE QUALIFICATION PAPER

Specialty 292 «International Economic Relations»

on the topic "UKRAINE'S EUROPEAN INTEGRATION STRATEGY IN THE
CONDITIONS OF GLOBALIZATION"

Student 4 Course
(course number)



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Qualifying Bachelor's paper contains the results of own research. The use of the ideas, results and texts of other authors has a link to the corresponding source

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Sumy, 2023

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TASKS FOR BACHELOR'S DEGREE QUALIFICATION PAPER

(Specialty 292 "International Economic Relations")

student 4 course, group ME-92a.an
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Anastasiia Klemberh

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1. The theme of the paper is “Ukraine's European Integration Strategy in the Conditions of Globalization” approved by the order of the university from 11/05/2023 № 0484-VI
2. The term of completed paper submission by the student is 01/06/2023
3. The purpose of the qualification paper is to explore and analyze Ukraine's European integration strategy within the context of globalization.
4. The object of the research is the strategic approach and policies adopted by Ukraine to foster its integration with Europe, specifically examining how the process is influenced by the forces and dynamics of globalization.
5. The subject of research is Ukraine's approach to European integration, specifically focusing on the strategic measures and policies implemented by Ukraine in response to the challenges and opportunities posed by the processes of globalization.
6. The qualification paper is carried out on materials of State Statistics Service of Ukraine, data of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, the National Bank of Ukraine, etc.
7. Approximate qualifying bachelor's paper plan, terms for submitting chapters to the research advisor and the content of tasks for the accomplished purpose is as follows:
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(title, the deadline for submission)

Chapter 1 deals with: 1) the definition of European integration and its reasons in the context of globalization; 2) prerequisites of integration processes in Western Europe and the evolution of the idea of European unity; 3) the history of the establishment of Ukraine-EU relations, the reasons behind it and their objectives.

(the content of concrete tasks to the section to be performed by the student)

Chapter 2: Challenges and opportunities in the European integration strategy of Ukraine, 23/05/2023

(title, the deadline for submission)

Chapter 2 deals with: 1) the evaluation of the effectiveness of Ukraine's European integration strategy in the conditions of globalization; 2) the analysis of the challenges and obstacles Ukraine faces in implementing its integration strategy; 3) the positive and negative impact of Russian aggression against Ukraine on European integration.

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(title, the deadline for submission)

Chapter 3 deals with 1) the next steps of Ukrainian integration into the EU; 2) the reconstruction of Ukraine and the EU Solidarity.

(the content of concrete tasks to the chapter to be performed by the student)

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Chapter	Full name and position of the advisor	Date, signature	
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1	Professor, Doctor of Economics Fedir Zhuravka	16.04.2023	16.04.2023
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ABSTRACT

On bachelor's degree qualification paper on the topic
«UKRAINE'S EUROPEAN INTEGRATION STRATEGY IN THE CONDITIONS
OF GLOBALIZATION»
student Anastasiia Klemberh
(full name)

The main content of the bachelor's degree qualification paper is presented on 41 pages, including references consisted of 26 used sources, which is placed on 3 pages. The paper contains 1 table and 3 figures.

The European integration strategy is an important tool for the development and strengthening of the national economy and the political sphere of the country. Ukraine, as a country that has chosen the European path of development, is also actively implementing the European integration strategy in order to achieve its national goals and interests

The goal of the work is to study and analyze the main aspects of the European integration of Ukraine, taking into account the modern global context. The work is aimed at identifying achievements and problems that arise during the implementation of the European integration strategy, and highlighting ways to overcome these problems.

To achieve this goal, the work includes the following tasks:

- Detailed analysis of Ukraine's European integration strategy, its main principles and goals.
- Study of globalization trends and their impact on the implementation of the European integration strategy.
- Analysis of achievements and challenges faced by Ukraine during the process of European integration in the conditions of globalization.
- Determination of opportunities and potential advantages for Ukraine in the context of European integration and globalization
- Development of recommendations and proposals for the further successful implementation of the European integration strategy of Ukraine in the conditions of globalization.

The study is based on scientific and methodological approaches and tools that allow a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the chosen issue. To achieve the goal

of the work, the following methods and approaches were used: analytical method, comparative method, historical method, logical-analytical method, statistical method.

Scientific theories and concepts are used in the research, including theories of European integration, globalization, international relations, political science, and economics.

According to the results of the study the following conclusions are formulated:

1. The relations between Ukraine and the European Union have evolved significantly since Ukraine gained independence in 1991, leading up to a significant milestone in 2022 when the European Council granted Ukraine the status of a candidate for accession to the European Union.

2. The relations between Ukraine and the European Union have been significantly impacted by global dynamics, particularly the ongoing war with Russia.

3. Continued efforts, reforms, and alignment with EU standards are necessary to ensure Ukraine's successful integration into the European Union.

The obtained results and recommendations can be used to improve and successfully implement Ukraine's European integration policy in the context of globalization.

The competitive scientific paper on the topic "The correlation of the political regime and economic development of the country" was submitted to the All-Ukrainian competition of student scientific papers in the direction of "Economics and Economic Policy". The results of this scientific work were presented in theses and presented at the Student Scientific Conference "The First Step in Science" and published in a collection.

Keywords: EUROPEAN INTEGRATION OF UKRAINE, GLOBALISATION, INTEGRATION PROCESSES, THE EFFECTIVENESS OF UKRAINE'S EUROPEAN INTEGRATION, RECONSTRUCTION OF UKRAINE.

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INTRODUCTION

In the age-old origin of globalization processes that have covered the world, countries are trying to take a stable and promising position in the global economy and politics. In this context, the European integration strategy becomes an important tool for the development and strengthening of the national economy and the political sphere of the country. Ukraine, as a country that has chosen the European path of development, is also actively implementing the European integration strategy in order to achieve its national goals and interests.

The main focus of this bachelor's work is to explore how Ukraine implements its European integration strategy amidst the challenges of globalization. Ukraine's strategic geographical position places it at the intersection of major trade, economic, and political routes connecting Europe and Asia. This advantageous location offers Ukraine distinctive prospects within the realm of global growth and integration. The European integration strategy of Ukraine aims to foster stronger economic, political, and cultural bonds with the European Union, consequently unlocking fresh opportunities for the country's progress and advancement.

The European integration of Ukraine is an important stage in the development of the state, which opens new opportunities for the expansion of trade, economic and political relations with the countries of the European Union and other states of the world. Implementation of Ukraine's European integration strategy is of great importance for strengthening its place in the international arena, developing democracy and ensuring economic growth.

The conditions of globalization taking place in the modern world are one of the key factors affecting the implementation of Ukraine's European integration strategy. On the one hand, globalization creates new opportunities for the development of international relations and the attraction of foreign investments.

On the other hand, globalization can also become an obstacle to ensuring national security and economic development.

This bachelor's qualification work focuses on examining the fundamental elements of Ukraine's European integration strategy and how it is executed within the context of globalization. The research will analyze the key accomplishments and challenges that arise during Ukraine's European integration journey, while also proposing strategies to overcome these challenges and ensure the country's continued successful development in the era of globalization.

The significance of the subject matter in this qualification work stems from Ukraine's current pivotal phase in its history, following the attainment of candidate status for the European Union. This new stage of European integration comes in the wake of the Russian armed intervention, which, de facto, expedited the integration processes within Ukraine and fostered a pro-European unity among its people. The war resulted in a widespread "westernization" of Ukrainian society and solidified the belief in the inevitability and irrevocability of the country's path towards the EU. [1]

The goal of the work is to study and analyze the main aspects of the European integration of Ukraine, taking into account the modern global context. The work is aimed at identifying achievements and problems that arise during the implementation of the European integration strategy, and highlighting ways to overcome these problems.

To achieve this goal, the work includes the following tasks:

- Detailed analysis of Ukraine's European integration strategy, its main principles and goals.
- Study of globalization trends and their impact on the implementation of the European integration strategy.
- Analysis of achievements and challenges faced by Ukraine during the process of European integration in the conditions of globalization.

- Determination of opportunities and potential advantages for Ukraine in the context of European integration and globalization
- Development of recommendations and proposals for the further successful implementation of the European integration strategy of Ukraine in the conditions of globalization.

The object of research is the European integration strategy of Ukraine. The subject of the study is the implementation of the European integration strategy of Ukraine in the conditions of globalization.

The study is based on scientific and methodological approaches and tools that allow a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the chosen issue. To achieve the goal of the work, the following methods and approaches were used: analytical method, comparative method, historical method, logical-analytical method, statistical method.

Scientific theories and concepts are used in the research, including theories of European integration, globalization, international relations, political science, and economics.

The research also uses various sources of information, including scientific literature, statistical data, documents and reports of international and national organizations, Internet resources.

The work has great practical value, as its results and recommendations can be used to improve and successfully implement Ukraine's European integration policy in the context of globalization. The study of the implementation of the European integration strategy of Ukraine will allow to identify political challenges and opportunities arising in the process of integration. The results of the study can serve as a basis for the development of recommendations and strategies aimed at increasing the effectiveness of political decisions and ensuring the successful implementation of European integration efforts.

The work also includes an analysis of the economic consequences and benefits that accompany European integration. This may include an assessment of economic

growth, improved trade relations, attraction of foreign investment and other benefits arising from European integration. Such analysis can provide important guidelines for the formation of effective economic policies and strategies

The competitive scientific paper on the topic "The correlation of the political regime and economic development of the country" was submitted to the All-Ukrainian competition of student scientific papers in the direction of "Economics and Economic Policy". The results of this scientific work were presented in theses and presented at the Student Scientific Conference "The First Step in Science" and published in a collection.

Theses on the topic "Prospects for the development of the financial market of Ukraine taking into account the experience of the USA" were presented at the II scientific and practical conference "Prospects of the development of the new economy at the world, state and regional levels" and then published.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF UKRAINE'S EUROPEAN INTEGRATION STRATEGY

1.1 Definition and reason of European integration in the context of globalization.

European integration refers to the ongoing process of political, economic, and social cooperation among European nations with the aim of creating a unified and cohesive Europe. It involves the gradual merging and harmonization of policies, institutions, and legal frameworks across participating countries to foster closer collaboration and coordination. This integration process has been significantly influenced by the concept of globalization. [2]

At its core, globalization has created an interconnected and interdependent world, where the boundaries between nations become increasingly blurred. This global context has played a pivotal role in shaping the goals and objectives of European integration. The process of European integration recognizes the opportunities and challenges presented by globalization and seeks to navigate them effectively.

European integration is based on the principle of supranationalism, where decisions and actions are taken collectively by European Union member states and its institutions, rather than solely by individual nations. The integration process encompasses various dimensions, including the establishment of common policies, the creation of a single market with free movement of goods, services, capital, and people, the adoption of a common currency (the Euro in many EU countries), and the development of shared institutions, such as the European Commission, European Parliament, and European Court of Justice. [3]

The ultimate goal of European integration is to promote peace, stability, and prosperity among European nations, while also fostering a sense of shared identity and solidarity. It aims to overcome national barriers, facilitate cooperation, and address

common challenges in areas such as trade, security, migration, environmental protection, and social policy. It is important to note that European integration is an ongoing process, subject to continuous development and adaptation to new circumstances and challenges. [4]

Becoming a member of the EU is a multifaceted process that requires time and effort, as it entails fulfilling various criteria and adopting EU standards. Once an aspiring nation satisfies the membership requirements, it is obliged to incorporate EU laws and regulations across all sectors and domains, ensuring alignment with the established norms of the Union.

Any nation that meets the eligibility criteria has the opportunity to submit an application for membership. The criteria that need to be met, known as the 'Copenhagen criteria,' encompass essential elements such as a stable democratic system, adherence to the rule of law, a well-functioning market economy, and the acceptance of all EU legislation, including the adoption of the euro. When a country expresses its desire to join the EU, it submits a membership application to the Council, which subsequently requests the Commission to evaluate the applicant's capacity to meet the Copenhagen criteria. Following the Commission's assessment, the Council determines a negotiation mandate, initiating formal negotiations on a topic-by-topic approach.

The negotiations require significant time to conclude as candidate countries need to incorporate a substantial amount of EU rules and regulations into their national legislation. [5]

European integration encompasses the collaborative efforts among European countries, primarily referring to EU member states, to enhance cooperation through shared decision-making, legal systems, and political frameworks. The process of integration has steadily advanced since the aftermath of World War II, extending beyond the EU itself to include platforms like the Council of Europe. However, the EU remains the focal point of European integration, representing the most profound level of political, economic, and legal integration among nations globally. Within the EU,

the elimination of border controls, reduction of internal trade and investment barriers, and the adoption of a common currency are significant milestones that demonstrate the shared commitment towards deeper integration.

Among the most important reasons for European integration, the following can be distinguished:

- the need for peace and security. The new Europe and the countries of this Europe had to guarantee that the cruelty of both world wars would never happen again. Joint decision-making was supposed to be an obstacle to the emergence of new conflicts, and close political and economic cooperation was supposed to be a successful barrier to communism, which was gaining more and more momentum, as well as to the economic expansion of the United States in Europe;

- hope for economic development and well-being: Europeans sought economic stability and prosperity through cooperation within a united Europe. Globalization played a significant role in this aspiration. The integration efforts aimed to harness the benefits of globalization, including increased trade flows, foreign direct investment, and the establishment of a common market. By creating a unified economic framework, European countries aimed to optimize economic activity and foster trade throughout the entire continent. The common market was also designed to guarantee the free movement of persons, capital, goods, and services, leveraging the opportunities presented by globalization;

- maintenance of economic and political importance in the international arena: Europeans recognized that both world wars had significantly weakened the position of European countries globally. To regain their lost power and influence, close cooperation was necessary in economic and political realms. Globalization served as a catalyst for this objective, as it highlighted the increasing interdependence among nations and the importance of collective action to address global challenges. European integration allowed European countries to act as a unified bloc, enhancing their ability

to negotiate with other global powers and maintain their economic and political significance on the international stage. [6]

1.2 Prerequisites of integration processes in Western Europe and the evolution of the idea of European unity.

The concept of a unified Europe had been a long-standing preoccupation of European politicians, and it was only in the latter half of the 20th century that it found its practical realization. The movement towards integration gained significant momentum, particularly in Western Europe. This was largely attributed to the early establishment of a well-developed market economy, the relative proximity of economic, socio-political, legal, and cultural environments, and the relatively small size of the individual state territories. These factors accentuated the limitations of national borders and internal markets, prompting countries to engage in mutually beneficial collaborative endeavors. [7]

The initial phase of the European Union's formation spanned from 1951 to 1992 and commenced with the establishment of the European Communities.

On April 18, 1951, the Treaty of Paris was signed, marking the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which came into effect in July 1952. The treaty was initially valid for a duration of 50 years. The founding members of this new organization were France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. The agreement set forth the guiding principles for cooperation among the member nations, encompassing four key prohibitions:

- Prohibition on the imposition of import/export duties, along with any similar payments or quantitative restrictions, within the organization, specifically for coal and steel.

- Prohibition on the adoption of protectionist measures that could hinder competition.
- Prohibition on providing tax advantages or any other form of state assistance.
- Prohibition on imposing restrictions on market division.

These principles formed the basis of the cooperative framework among the member countries.

The Treaties of Rome, signed on March 25, 1957, marked a significant milestone in European integration. These treaties included the Treaty on the Establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Treaty on the Establishment of the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom).

In 1986, the Single European Act was signed, representing a key institutional reform. This act introduced the concept of a unified internal market built upon four fundamental freedoms: the free movement of goods, persons, capital, and services. Emphasizing the importance of ongoing democratization, the act aimed to further enhance the integration process within the European Union.

The second stage of European integration, spanning from 1992 to 2007, marked the creation of the European Union (EU).

On February 7, 1992, the Maastricht Agreement was signed, and it came into effect on November 1, 1993. The EU, as established by the Maastricht Treaty, is based on three pillars.

The first pillar encompasses broad powers, including the establishment of a common internal market, guaranteeing the free movement of persons, capital, goods, and services. It also involves the formation of a Customs Union and the development of a common trade policy

The second pillar focuses on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Its objective is to strengthen European unity and independence, fostering peace, security, and progress both within the continent and globally.

The third pillar pertains to cooperation in the fields of justice and internal affairs. It encompasses areas such as social welfare, environmental protection, and includes the Schengen Agreements. The Treaty of Amsterdam, signed on October 2, 1997 (entered into force on May 1, 1999), played a significant role in expanding the powers of the EU Court and strengthening the role of the European Parliament. It also introduced the concept of "closer cooperation," allowing individual member countries to pursue common goals in certain situations.

The Treaty of Nice, signed on February 26, 2001 (entered into force on February 1, 2003), introduced important provisions such as the European Charter of Human Rights. It emphasized the values of human dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, citizenship, and justice.

These treaties and agreements laid the foundation for the development and expansion of the EU during this stage of European integration.

On October 29, 2004, the Agreement on the Constitution of the EU was signed. However, it did not enter into force, as not all member countries ratified it. [6]

The third stage of European integration began in 2007 and remains ongoing. On December 13, 2007, the Lisbon Agreement was signed, officially entering into force on December 1, 2009. The agreement consists of two primary components: the Treaty on the European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Intended as a replacement for the European Constitution, which faced challenges in its adoption, the Lisbon Agreement focuses on institutional reforms within the European Union. It introduces the establishment of the position of the President of the EU, who serves a five-year term and represents the EU in international events. The agreement also includes provisions to streamline the number of European Commissioners and Members of the European Parliament.

Under the Lisbon Agreement, European governing institutions gain enhanced powers to address key issues, such as security, climate change, and migration. The

responsibility for diplomatic functions lies with the High Representative of the European Union for foreign policy.

While the new treaty is not formally referred to as a Constitution and does not mention the national anthem or flag, it retains all the essential resolutions for reforms present in the original document, known as the Euroconstitution.

The Lisbon Agreement marks a significant phase in the ongoing development of the European Union, shaping its institutional structure and decision-making processes. [8]

1.3 History of the establishment of Ukraine-EU relations, the reasons behind it and their objectives.

The history of relations between Ukraine and the European Union dates back to when Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union. After gaining independence in 1991, Ukraine began to cooperate with the EU within the framework of the TACIS Program (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange).

Ukraine's intention to develop relations with the European Union was first announced in the Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated July 2, 1993 "On the main directions of Ukraine's foreign policy". However, the final step towards establishing formal relations between Ukraine and the EU was the Partnership status, which was concluded in 1994. [9]

In 1998, Ukraine became a member of the Council of Europe, which increased the level of interaction between Ukraine and the EU. In 2004, Ukraine signed the Cooperation Agreement with the EU, which became the first document that recognized Ukraine's official status as a potential candidate for EU membership.

Later, Ukraine solidified and expanded its strategic direction towards European integration through the adoption of two key documents: the Strategy for the Integration of Ukraine into the EU on June 11, 1998, and the Program for the Integration of Ukraine into the EU on September 14, 2000. These documents set out a comprehensive roadmap for Ukraine's long-term goal of European integration.

Furthermore, Ukraine's commitment to European integration is reinforced by Article 11 of the Law of Ukraine "On the Basics of Internal and Foreign Policy," which enshrines the principle of pursuing Ukraine's integration into the European political, economic, and legal sphere, ultimately aiming for EU membership. [10]

The negotiation process between Ukraine and the EU, with the goal of concluding a new agreement, commenced on March 5, 2007. This significant step marked the beginning of formal discussions and dialogue between the two parties, further strengthening Ukraine's aspirations for closer ties with the European Union.

On September 9, 2008, an important milestone in Ukraine-EU relations was achieved at the Paris Summit. Ukraine and the EU reached a significant political agreement to pursue a future Association Agreement, characterized by principles of political association and economic integration.

Building upon the outcomes of the Ukraine-EU Paris Summit, both parties collaborated to develop and approve the Agenda of the Association in 2009. This agenda replaced the previous Ukraine-EU Action Plan and served as a guiding framework for implementing reforms in Ukraine, aligning the country with the future Association Agreement.

The negotiations for the Association Agreement reached a significant milestone at the 15th Ukraine-EU Summit held in Kyiv on December 19, 2011. During this summit, the negotiations were successfully concluded, and on March 30, 2012, the heads of the Ukrainian and EU negotiating teams initialed the text of the future Agreement.

The political part of the Association Agreement was signed on March 21, 2014, while the economic part followed on June 27, 2014. Notably, on September 16, 2014,

both the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the European Parliament ratified the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU simultaneously, showcasing the commitment from both sides. As of November 1, 2014, the agreement started being temporarily applied, marking an important step towards closer cooperation and integration between Ukraine and the EU.

The full Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU entered into force on September 1, 2017. This is an international legal document, which at the contractual and legal level establishes the transition of relations between Ukraine and the EU from partnership and cooperation to political association and economic integration. (9)

In 2014, the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine established free trade between the parties, cooperation in many areas, including politics, economy and culture, as well as mechanisms for cooperation and support in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Ukraine keeps continuing to support its European integration and carry out reforms necessary to approach EU standards. In 2020, Ukraine entered a new stage in the development of relations with the EU by signing the Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union (DCFTA).

Ukraine officially submitted its application for EU membership on 28 February 2022, followed by the European Commission issuing its opinion on the application on 17 June 2022. Shortly after, on 23 June 2022, the European Council granted Ukraine the status of a candidate for EU membership.

As part of the regular enlargement package, the European Commission was tasked with reporting to the Council on the fulfillment of the conditions outlined in its opinion on Ukraine's membership application. The Council will make further decisions once all the specified conditions have been fully met. During a special European Council meeting in February 2023, EU leaders acknowledged the substantial efforts demonstrated by Ukraine in aligning with the objectives associated with its candidate status for EU membership.

The leaders also encouraged Ukraine to fulfil the conditions specified in the Commission's opinion to advance towards future EU membership. [11]

The objectives and priorities of Ukraine's European integration strategy in the context of globalization trends aim to strengthen Ukraine's ties with the European Union (EU) and align its policies and practices with European standards. These goals include:

- **Membership in the EU:** Ukraine aspires to become a member of the EU by implementing political, economic, and social reforms to meet the membership criteria and aligning its legislation with EU norms and standards.
- **Economic Integration:** Ukraine aims to enhance economic integration with the EU through the establishment of a comprehensive free trade area and the alignment of its economic policies and regulations with EU standards. This involves harmonizing technical regulations, implementing competition policies, and improving the investment climate.
- **Strengthening Democratic Institutions:** Ukraine places significant emphasis on strengthening its democratic institutions, ensuring the rule of law, and protecting human rights. Reforms in governance, judiciary, public administration, and anti-corruption measures are crucial in this regard. [12]
- **Sectoral Cooperation:** Ukraine seeks to foster cooperation with the EU in various sectors, including energy, transport, agriculture, environment, research, and innovation. This entails aligning sectoral policies and regulations with EU standards, participating in EU programs and initiatives, and promoting sustainable development.
- **People-to-People Contacts:** Ukraine aims to facilitate people-to-people contacts, cultural exchanges, and educational cooperation with EU member states. This includes promoting student and academic mobility, cultural exchanges, and raising awareness of European values and diversity.
- **Regional Cooperation:** Ukraine actively participates in regional cooperation initiatives and formats, such as the Eastern Partnership, to enhance cooperation with

neighboring countries and deepen regional integration in areas such as trade, energy, and security.

- **Security Cooperation:** Ukraine seeks to strengthen its security cooperation with the EU, including closer collaboration in defense, counterterrorism, and cybersecurity. This involves aligning security policies, participating in EU security initiatives, and enhancing stability in the region.

These objectives and priorities are pursued to integrate Ukraine into the European community, foster economic development, enhance democratic governance, promote stability, and reap the benefits of globalization while addressing its challenges.

2. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF UKRAINE'S EUROPEAN INTEGRATION STRATEGY

2.1 Evaluation of the effectiveness of Ukraine's European integration strategy in the conditions of globalization.

External factors play a significant role in influencing European integration processes. Geopolitical dynamics, such as changes in power, regional conflicts and geopolitical tensions, can affect European integration processes. External actors, including major powers and neighboring countries, may have different or competing interests, which may affect cohesion and decision-making within the EU. Geopolitical considerations are often involved in the formation of common foreign and security policy, trade negotiations and EU enlargement.

The war waged by Russia against Ukraine has had a wide range of complex and multidirectional consequences. On one hand, the Russian armed intervention has de facto expedited the European integration processes in Ukraine and played a significant role in fostering pro-European unity among the Ukrainian people.

The Figure 2.1 shows that if a referendum on Ukraine's accession to the European Union were to be held in the near future, 79% of all respondents would vote for joining this organization, or 92% of those who are going to participate in such a referendum (7% and 4% would vote against, respectively). In March 2021, 59% of all respondents, or 80% of those who were going to participate in the referendum, intended to vote for joining the EU (26% and 17%, respectively, would vote against). [13]

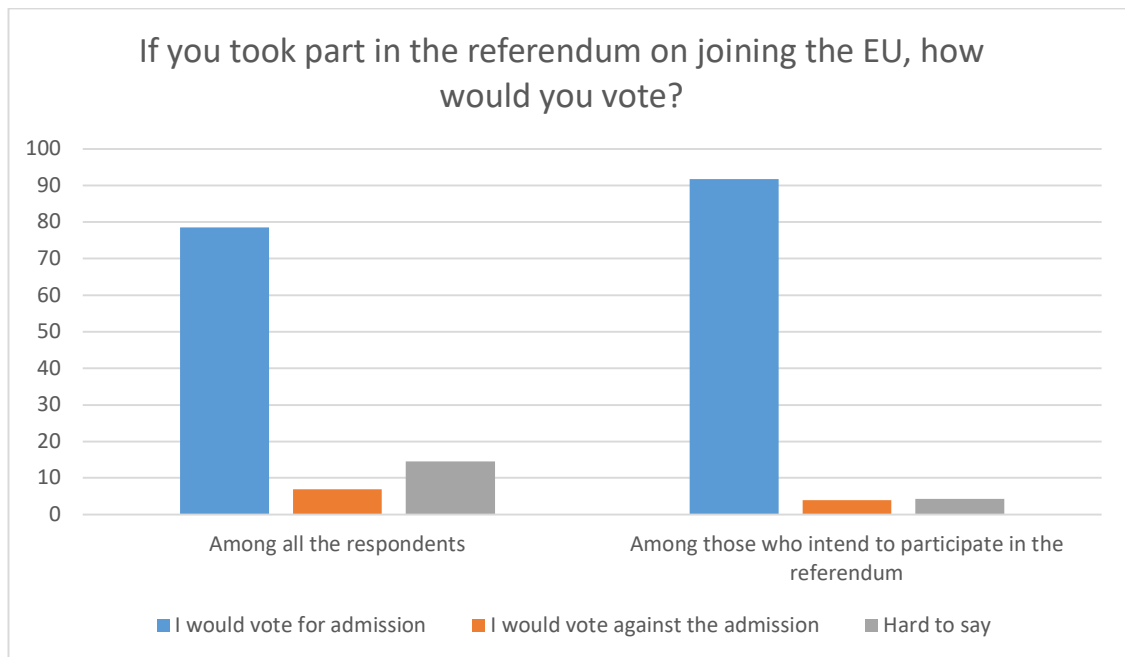


Figure 2.1 – People’s responses to a hypothetical referendum on Ukraine's accession to the European Union

Source compiled by the author on the basis of [13].

The decision to grant Ukraine the status of a candidate for EU membership serves as a testament to the consolidation of EU member states in supporting Ukraine and standing against Russia's neo-imperial aggressive policies. This decision holds significant political and security implications as Ukraine acts as a safeguard for the EU against the Kremlin's continental expansion. In fact, the stability of the political system and the future of the European Union somewhat depend on the resilience of the Ukrainian army in countering Russian aggression. [1]

However, it is important to acknowledge that the Russian expansion has also had negative repercussions on the European integration of Ukraine. The country has suffered immense human, financial, and economic losses as a result.

Despite the adversities and challenges faced, Ukraine's commitment to European integration remains steadfast. The war with Russia has highlighted the urgent need for stronger cooperation, mutual support, and collective security measures among EU

member states. The European Union has a vital role to play in supporting Ukraine's recovery, fostering stability in the region, and ensuring that the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity are upheld. [1]

Evaluating the effectiveness of Ukraine's European integration strategy is crucial to ensure a smooth and successful accession process for Ukraine. By assessing the strategy's effectiveness, policymakers and stakeholders can identify areas of progress, challenges, and necessary adjustments.

One of the primary goals of Ukraine's European integration strategy is to implement political and institutional reforms aligned with EU standards. The effectiveness can be assessed by evaluating the progress made in areas such as democracy, rule of law, human rights, and anti-corruption measures. Ukraine has taken steps towards these reforms, including constitutional amendments, anti-corruption legislation, and judicial reforms. However, challenges and implementation gaps remain, and further progress is needed.

On February 3, 2023, the 24th Ukraine-EU summit marked an important milestone in the relationship between the two entities. The summit witnessed a reaffirmation of the EU's commitment to deepen relations with Ukraine, building upon shared values and close and privileged ties. The significance of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU was highlighted as a pivotal instrument for strengthening and advancing Ukraine's integration into the EU. [15]

The EU reiterated its dedication to supporting Ukraine's ongoing European integration process. This affirmation underscored the EU's role in assisting Ukraine in implementing necessary reforms, fostering economic cooperation, and promoting political stability. The EU's commitment serves as a testament to its recognition of Ukraine's efforts and potential as a valuable partner in the European integration project.

Meanwhile, Ukraine emphasized its unwavering determination to meet the necessary requirements for initiating accession negotiations at the earliest opportunity. This clear statement from Ukraine demonstrates its dedication to fulfilling the

obligations and reforms needed to align itself with EU standards and values. It highlights Ukraine's aspirations to further integrate into the European Union, signaling its commitment to the values and principles of the EU.

The EU acknowledged Ukraine's significant efforts in recent months to achieve the goals necessary for EU membership. Despite the challenging circumstances, Ukraine's reform efforts were welcomed by the EU. The EU urged Ukraine to continue on this path and meet the conditions outlined in the commission's conclusion on Ukraine's membership application, with the goal of moving closer to EU membership.

It is crucial for Ukraine to implement judicial reform consistently and comprehensively, as recommended by the Venice Commission. Specifically, reforming the Constitutional Court and ensuring the selection of politically independent and qualified judges are vital steps. These reforms are necessary to enhance Ukraine's resilience and facilitate progress in the enlargement process towards EU membership.

EU representatives expressed their satisfaction with Ukraine's enhanced alignment with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and reaffirmed the shared commitment to uphold the principles outlined in the Association Agreement, notably in Article 7(2).

Additionally, notable progress was acknowledged in Ukraine's efforts to establish independent and effective anti-corruption institutions. The Figure 2.2 shows how the Corruption Perception Index has changed in Ukraine since 2013.



Figure 2.2 – Corruption Perception Index in Ukraine

Source compiled by the author on the basis of [14].

For instance, in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2022, Ukraine received a score of 33 out of 100, an increase of one point compared to previous years. This places Ukraine in the 116th position out of 180 countries. Notably, this is Ukraine's highest score since the introduction of the updated CPI methodology. Over the past decade, Ukraine has witnessed an improvement of 8 points in the CPI indicator. [14]

The progress made by Ukraine in the Corruption Perceptions Index over the past 10 years demonstrates that positive changes are attainable with political determination. During this period, Ukraine has witnessed a significant enhancement in its CPI performance, showcasing the effectiveness of its domestic anti-corruption system. However, when compared to global rankings, Ukraine's results indicate that there is still substantial work to be done.

These findings highlight the importance of continued efforts to combat corruption in Ukraine. While notable advancements have been made, sustained commitment and

ongoing reforms are necessary to further improve Ukraine's standing and foster a transparent and accountable society.

Furthermore, steps taken to align Ukraine's media legislation with EU standards, specifically regarding audiovisual media services, were recognized as a positive development.

The EU expressed its appreciation for Ukraine's intention to develop the National Acquis Adaptation Program (NAPAA) based on the Analytical Report on the Compliance of Ukrainian Legislation with EU Law, in line with the Commission's conclusion on Ukraine's application for EU membership. The EU stands ready to provide technical support to the Ukrainian government during this important step towards aligning Ukrainian legislation with EU law.

Both parties confirmed their commitment to fully utilize the potential of the Association Agreement, including the deep and comprehensive free trade area, to foster deeper economic and trade relations, thereby paving the way for Ukraine's integration into the EU internal market. [15]

The EU's obligations regarding the sectoral integration of Ukraine are presented in table 2.1 [27], which indicates the specific sectors for which additional EU decisions regarding the integration of Ukraine are provided for in the AA, and the deadlines for Ukraine's fulfillment of the relevant obligations. The adoption of these decisions should lead to the fact that in these sectors, Ukrainian business will not need additional permits, certificates or licenses to operate on the EU market.

Table 2.1 Sectoral integration of Ukraine into the EU internal market in accordance with the provisions of the Association Agreement

№	Area	Market	Regulations of the Association Agreement	The method of integration provided by the Association Agreement	The time provided in the Association Agreement for the fulfillment of obligations by Ukraine, from the

					moment of entry into force/start of application of the Association Agreement
1	Technical barriers	Industrial products	Article 57 UA, Appendix III	Conclusion of the Agreement on Assessment of Conformity and Acceptability of Industrial Goods	2 years* (until 31.12.2017)
2	Sanitary and phytosanitary measures	Agricultural goods	Articles 64, 66 UA, Appendices IV, V, IX	Decision-making on recognition of equivalence in various sectors of agro-industrial products	2021
3	Customs procedures	All goods	Art. 76.1 (c), 76.4 (b) UA, Appendix XV	Joining the common transit system	1 year (until 31.12.2016)
			Art. 76.1 (k), 80 (i) AA	Mutual recognition of authorized economic operators (AEOs)	3 years (until 31.12.2018)
4	Services	Financial	Art. 4(3) of Annex XVII, Supplement XVII-2	Provision of internal market regime	6 years (until 31.12.2021)
5		Telecommunications	Art. 4(3) of Annex XVII, Supplement XVII-3	Provision of internal market regime	4 years (until 31.12.2019)
6		Postal and courier services	Art. 4(3) of Annex XVII, Supplement XVII-4	Provision of internal market regime	2 years (until 31.12.2017)
7	Transport services	Automotive	Article 136 UA, Appendix XXXII(1)	The possibility of concluding a special agreement in the field of road transport	7 years (until 30.10.2021)

8		Railway	Article 136 UA, Appendix XXXII(2)	The possibility of concluding a special agreement in the field of railway transport	8 years (until 30.10.2022)
9		Internal water	Article 136 UA, Appendix XXXII(5)	The possibility of concluding a special agreement in the field of inland water transport	5 years (until 30.10.2019)
10		International sea	Art. 4(3) of Annex XVII, Supplement XVII-5, Annex XXXII(4)	Provision of internal market regime	6 years (until 31.12.2021)
11		Aviation	Article 137 of the Association Agreement	Decision within the framework of a separate Agreement on common aviation space	Not specified
12	Government Procurement	The public procurement market	Article 154 of Association Agreement, Appendix XXI	Opening access to the market to the extent determined by the provisions of the UA	Gradually, in five stages, during 6 months - 8 years (until 31.12.2023)
13	Energy	Natural gas market	Appendix XXVII	Not clearly defined in the Association Agreement	until 31.12.2019
14		Electricity market	Appendix XXVII	Not clearly defined in the Association Agreement	2021
15	Education	Labor market	Art. 432. of Association Agreement, Appendix XLII	Mutual recognition of qualifications and competences	Not specified

The EU commended Ukraine's reforms in simplifying customs procedures and trade, as well as its decision to join the Convention on Common Transit.

Ukraine expressed satisfaction with the EU's current attitudes and efforts aimed at including Ukraine in the European roaming space as early as possible. The EU acknowledged Ukraine's efforts to harmonize its telecommunications sector with European norms and encouraged the country to continue along this path.

2.2 Analysis of the challenges and obstacles Ukraine faces in implementing its integration strategy.

In June 1993, the European Council at its meeting in Copenhagen recognized the right of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to join the EU after they fulfill the requirements according to three criteria:

- Political: stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights and protection of minority rights;
- Economic: an efficient market economy;
- Membership: obligations arising from the fact of joining the EU, in particular the recognition of its political, economic and monetary goals.

An effective integration is possible only in countries that are geographically close, have a political interest in unification, and approximately the same level of economic development.

In recent years, Ukrainian society has changed significantly, in particular, changes have occurred in the spiritual, cultural and political values that have clearly evolved. Despite the fact that Ukraine has expressed a desire to integrate more closely with the European Union several challenges have emerged along the way. Mostly all of the challenges the country faces in its integration strategy are connected to the requirements of the EU that were stated above. [16]

One significant obstacle that Ukraine faces is the requirement for comprehensive reforms, especially in key areas such as the rule of law, corruption, and the judiciary system. An example of this is the criticism received by the law on the Constitutional Court from the Venice Commission. The European Union (EU) has consistently stressed the significance of these reforms as essential prerequisites for closer integration. While Ukraine has made progress in certain domains, additional efforts are still necessary to meet the rigorous standards set by the EU. [17]

Additionally, there are differences in priorities and interests among EU member states regarding Ukraine's integration. Some countries are more supportive of Ukraine's European aspirations, while others have expressed reservations or have concerns related to economic factors, migration, or energy dependence.

Ukraine has significant socioeconomic disparities, with regions experiencing varying levels of development. Integration requires reducing these disparities and ensuring a more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. However, achieving convergence across regions can be complex, requiring targeted investments and policies to address regional imbalances.

Corruption has long been a pervasive issue in Ukraine and poses a major obstacle to integration efforts. Despite the fact that Ukraine has already achieved significant success in solving this problem, there is still much to change and improve. The EU places a strong emphasis on good governance, rule of law, and anti-corruption measures. Ukraine needs to address these issues effectively to build trust and meet the EU's requirements. Eradicating corruption and improving governance structures require comprehensive reforms and a long-term commitment.

Unfortunately, while the media landscape in Ukraine has improved since 2014, the majority of media companies remain owned or influenced by political and vested interests (see the Table 2.2). [22]

Table 2.2 – Ownership of the biggest media channels in Ukraine

Owner	Media
Victor Pinchuk	ICTV, "Novyi", STB, M1, M2, OCE, ICTV Ukraine
Rinat Akhmetov	"Ukraine", "Ukraine 24", UFO TV, "Indigo", "Football 1", "Football 2".
Ihor Kolomoiskyi Gennady Bogolyubov	"1+1", "2+2", TET, "Plusplus", "1+1 International", "UNIAN TV", "Bigudi"
Dmytro Firtash	"Inter", K1, K2, NTN, "Enter film", "Pixel", ZOOM, "Inter+"

Freedom of the media also continues to be threatened by attacks against journalists, which remain relatively frequent compared with other democratic European countries: according to Ukraine's National Union of Journalists, roughly 100 Ukrainians employed in the media industry were physically assaulted in 2021. In 2019, Vadym Komarov – a journalist known for his coverage of corruption in Ukraine – died in hospital after being attacked by an unidentified assailant. [18]

Ukraine has taken notable strides in addressing gender-based violence, particularly after the government's commitment in 2019 to eliminate it by 2030. Efforts have been made to combat this issue and create a safer environment for women. However, progress towards achieving broader gender equality in the country has been relatively sluggish. This is evident in the findings of the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap report, which highlights the status of gender equality worldwide.

The latest report indicates that Ukraine's progress in terms of gender equality has remained stagnant, the Figure 2.3 shows how this indicator has changed through the years in Ukraine. In 2022, Ukraine's score slightly decreased to 0.707, indicating a slight regression compared to the previous year. [19] This suggests that the country still faces challenges in achieving gender equality. In the global ranking, Ukraine dropped a few places to 76th position. Although Ukraine fares better than Russia in terms of

gender equality, it still lags behind neighboring countries such as Belarus, Georgia, and Moldova.

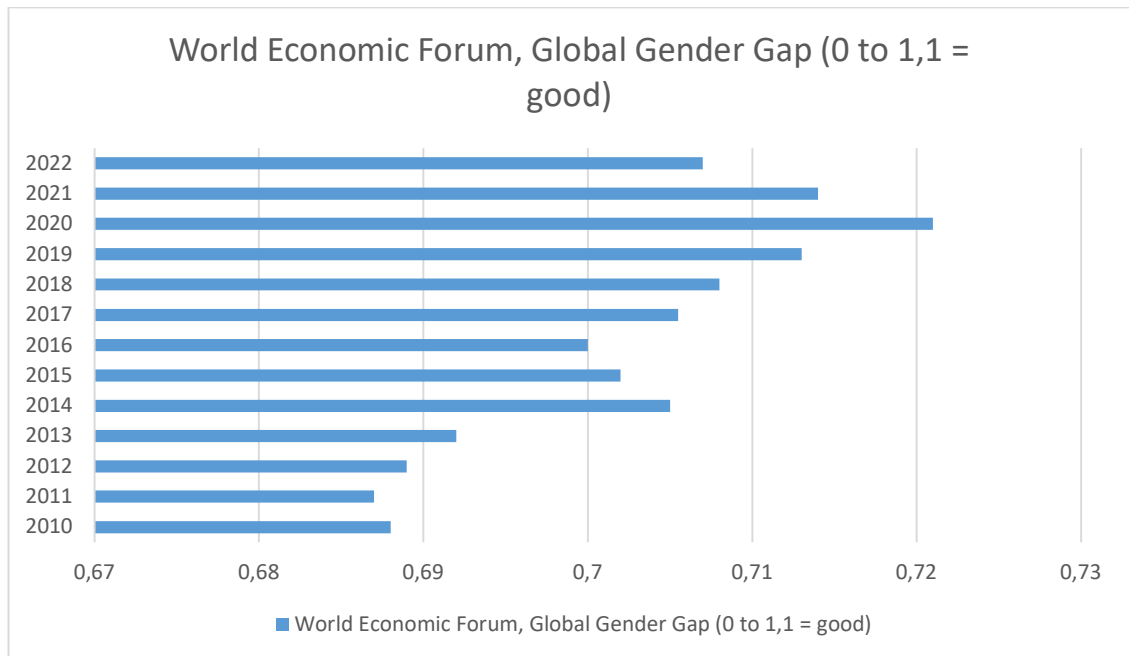


Figure 2.3 – World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap

Source compiled by the author on the basis of [19].

The score provided by the Global Gender Gap report takes into account various factors, including economic participation and opportunities, educational attainment, health and survival rates, and political empowerment. Stagnation in Ukraine's gender equality progress suggests that there is still work to be done in these areas to achieve a more balanced and equitable society. This may involve strengthening laws and regulations, improving access to education and employment opportunities for women, enhancing healthcare services, and empowering women's political participation.

The protection of marginalized groups from discrimination is a crucial aspect to consider when assessing the state of human rights in Ukraine. However, it is important to note that despite Ukraine's efforts, progress in this area has been stagnant in recent years, as indicated by Ukraine's ranking in the ILGA Europe's Rainbow Europe Index.

While Ukraine's Parliament has registered bills proposing protection against hate crimes based on sexual orientation or gender identity, the passage of these bills has not yet been realized. This highlights a gap between the proposed legislative measures and their implementation.

By addressing these issues and actively working towards the passage and implementation of legislation that protects marginalized groups, including the LGBTQ population, Ukraine can make significant strides in advancing human rights and fostering a society that values and respects the rights and dignity of all its citizens. [19]

Another challenge is the ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia. The annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 and the subsequent conflict in eastern Ukraine have created instability in the region. This conflict has not only diverted resources and attention away from European integration but has also raised concerns among some EU member states about Ukraine's ability to meet the conditions required for integration. After the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, this obstacle became more ambiguous and, to some extent, expedited Ukrainian European integration. However, further discussion on this matter will be presented in the subsequent subchapter.

Overall addressing all these challenges requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach from Ukraine's government, civil society, and international partners. It entails sustained efforts in political stability, anti-corruption measures, economic reforms, security, social cohesion, and effective communication strategies to ensure successful integration with the EU and other Western institutions. [16]

2.3 Impact of Russian aggression against Ukraine on European integration.

Ukraine-EU relations largely depend on the global situation. Therefore, complex and unpredictable global processes, crisis phenomena and challenges to one degree or

another affect the internal situation in the EU and Ukraine, as well as the quality and pace of European integration.

The large-scale war waged by Russia against Ukraine changed the picture of the world, led to a number of risks and threats, caused turbulent processes in the political, economic, and security environments, the consequences of which are now difficult to predict.

Russian aggression deepened the contradictions of the modern world, worsened the socio-economic situation at the regional and global levels. In particular, the increase in the cost of energy resources, the provoked crisis in the food market caused the increase in the price of consumer goods and, accordingly, a large-scale impact on the level of well-being of citizens of many countries around the world. [20]

The threat of global destabilization is the escalation of the conflict on the collective West-Russia axis. The war in Ukraine and the hybrid expansion of Putin's regime on the territory of the EU, nuclear blackmail and the aggressive neo-imperial policy of Moscow provoked an unprecedented sharp confrontation, which carries the danger of a military conflict between the Russian Federation and NATO, the outbreak of a world war with unpredictable consequences. [30]

Internal trends and processes in the EU affect both the specificity and atmosphere of the partnership between Kyiv and Brussels, as well as the prospects of Ukrainian European integration.

Throughout the recent history of Russian-Ukrainian relations, Russia has consistently and purposefully applied pressure on Ukraine to impede its path towards European integration. This pressure has been manifested through various means and tactics, ranging from political and diplomatic coercion to information warfare, economic blockades, and even the initiation of a large-scale war, leading to the occupation of Ukrainian territory. The current actions of the Kremlin towards Ukraine bear the hallmarks of genocide and seek to undermine Ukrainian statehood.

On the one hand, the Russian armed intervention de facto had the opposite effect – it accelerated the European integration processes in Ukraine and contributed to the pro-European unification of the nation. The war has effectively eliminated any prospects for eastern integration and has propelled widespread westernization of Ukrainian society. It has solidified the notion that there is no alternative to moving towards the EU and that this trajectory is irreversible. Moreover, the solidarity between Kyiv and Brussels in the face of the aggressor has grown stronger. The EU's decision to grant Ukraine candidate status for accession can be interpreted as a unified European response to Russia's neo-imperialistic policies.

However, it is important to acknowledge that the Russian expansion has had a detrimental effect on the pace of European integration, causing significant delays. The aggression unleashed by Putin's regime has inflicted immense human, financial, and economic losses on Ukraine. In fact, the war initiated by Russia stands as one of the deadliest conflicts in Europe since World War II. According to the United Nations, between February 24 and December 26, 2022, the civilian death toll in Ukraine reached 6,884, with 10,947 individuals sustaining injuries.

The economic consequences of the war for Ukraine have been dire and far-reaching. During a joint meeting of the Government, the World Bank Group, and the International Monetary Fund on October 13, 2022, President V. Zelenskyi lamented the critical extent of the country's economic losses. He stated, "This year, the Russian terror has led to a decline in the Ukrainian economy of more than a third. Additionally, the real incomes of our citizens have decreased by a third. Thousands of enterprises and infrastructure facilities have been destroyed, and millions of people have been internally displaced." [29] The magnitude of these losses has been staggering and has had a severe impact on Ukraine's economic stability.

On Figure 2.4, it can be seen that in 2022, the difference between revenues and expenditures was particularly large, indicating significant expenditures that exceeded

state revenues. In 2022, the difference became the largest, reaching -17.69% of GDP. [28]

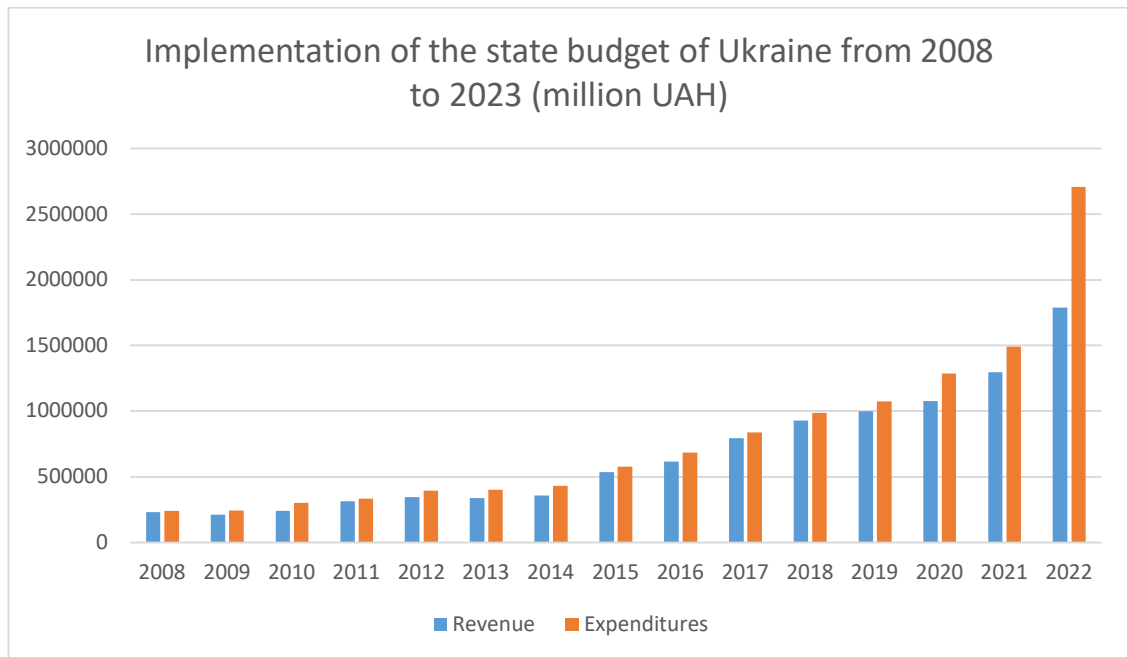


Figure 2.4 – Implementation of the state budget of Ukraine from 2008 to 2023 (million UAH)

Source: compiled by the author based on data from the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine

Therefore, a large-scale war, which threatens Ukrainian statehood, forces to significantly adjust the priorities of internal socio-economic development and foreign policy in general, to focus the main attention and resources on resistance to Russian aggression. This cannot help but affect the dynamics and efficiency of promotion in the European direction.

First, the war slowed down the pace of socio-economic reform within the framework of the implementation of the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement, and to one degree or another complicated the process of implementing the package of recommendations of the European Commission. In particular, it is said that: (a) the implementation of some areas of the Association Agreement is now critically complicated and should be carried out in peacetime; (b) pan-European norms regarding

the legislative regulation of individual internal political processes must be adapted to the conditions of martial law and the regime of hostilities.

Secondly, despite a number of important EU initiatives to liberalize trade with Ukraine and attract it to the internal European market, the war objectively reduced the interest and activity of European business partners in developing contacts with a warring country with a complex internal political situation that contains risks and dangers for prospective investments and business. On the other hand, European business is also in a difficult situation as a result of a number of problems discussed above. [20]

Thirdly, the war has transformed Ukraine into a long-term recipient of international donor aid. Approximately one-third of Ukraine's budget expenditures are covered by foreign financial support, and this trend is expected to persist in the coming year, emphasizing the country's reliance on external assistance.

Furthermore, as a result of Russian expansion and the prolonged war, Ukraine finds itself compelled to allocate significant political, diplomatic, financial, and personnel resources towards countering Kremlin's aggression on multiple fronts. Kyiv is compelled to maintain a sizable military presence along the 1,000-kilometer Russian-Ukrainian border, while continually increasing funding for military requirements. Presently, almost half of the budget is allocated to the defense sector, with 43% of military expenditures planned in the 2023 budget.

In essence, the Russian-Ukrainian "war of attrition" persists, which diverts attention and resources from the pursuit of European integration. Due to limited internal resources, the direction of European integration cannot be fully ensured. Meanwhile, the decisions and actions of Ukrainian authorities, as well as public attention and political discourse, are predominantly centered on the topic of war. [20]

3 A NEW STAGE OF MOVEMENT TOWARDS THE EU: CANDIDATE STATUS AND PROSPECTS FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

3.1 The next steps of Ukrainian integration to the EU

The successful progress of Ukraine towards European integration relies on several key factors: adhering to EU values and norms, implementing the European Commission's recommendations package, and effectively carrying out the necessary reforms outlined in the Association Agreement. In the latter months of 2022, the official focus of Kyiv was on implementing seven recommendations from the European Commission, which were a prerequisite for attaining candidate status.

Over the next two years, Ukraine aims to fully integrate into the EU's single market and effectively become a full member of the union. This ambitious goal requires substantial preparatory work from both the government and businesses involved. The country must engage in extensive preparations as negotiations for Ukraine's accession to the European Union progress. Part of this preparatory work involves aligning national legislation with evolving EU norms, which are subject to continuous changes.

Ukraine will continue its action plan to align its legislation with European directives under the framework of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) and the Association Agreement with the EU. However, due to the extensive war waged by Russia against Ukraine and other contributing factors, adjustments were deemed necessary. Consequently, an update to the plan has been decided for the years 2023-2024, with the aim of expediting Ukraine's economic integration into the European Union and ensuring access to the single market. [21]

Undoubtedly, a crucial pillar of integrating the domestic economy into the European single market is the establishment of a free trade zone with the EU. In April 2022, the European Commission took an unprecedented step to support Ukraine in the face of a full-scale Russian invasion. During this time, all tariffs on Ukrainian goods

were eliminated for a year, and a road transport agreement was signed. These measures played a significant role in preserving trade between Ukraine and the European Union during such challenging circumstances.

It is worth adding that it is not yet known for what period this regime will be extended. Taking into account Ukraine's intention to become a member of the single European market, the best option is the indefinite operation of duty-free trade or the extension of the validity period at least in the medium term. This will allow European business to plan its development in Ukraine for many years and help increase the volume of foreign investments, and domestic entrepreneurs will also get opportunities to implement long-term strategies.

One of the serious obstacles to the effective functioning of the free trade zone between Ukraine and the EU is technical barriers in trade in industrial products. It is not the first year that the government has been talking about its intention to sign the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptability of Industrial Goods (ACCA), the so-called "industrial visa-free regime", with the United Europe. [26]

In practice, the unification of markets will also take place thanks to the economic and infrastructural recovery of Ukraine. International financial institutions should be the key players in launching this process, but a major role is assigned to private capital, for which Ukraine's future membership in the EU will be an additional incentive to invest money in the domestic economy.

One more important element of uniting the Ukrainian market with the European market should certainly be the integration with the labor markets of Europe. And the full-scale war only accelerated this process.

The action plan for the further integration of the domestic economy into the single European market was approved by both the Cabinet of Ministers and the European Commission at the Ukraine-EU Summit. In addition, it should be added that Ukraine has had a free trade regime with the EU for almost a year, which will definitely be extended. [26]

In 2023, there is a possibility of initiating direct negotiations for Ukraine's integration into the European Union. The way Ukraine's domestic economy is portrayed within a united Europe will heavily hinge on the government's efforts to bolster specific industries during the ongoing war. Ukrainian businesses must not postpone their preparations and should proactively ready themselves for operating within the single European market starting immediately. [21]

3.2 EU Solidarity with Ukraine in the reconstruction process

The Recovery Plan of Ukraine is based on 5 main principles: Immediate start and gradual development; Building fair welfare; Integration into the EU; Reconstruction of the better than it was, on a national and regional scale; Stimulation of private investments.

The national program "Striving for integration into the EU" encompasses various areas of focus, including:

- Expanding market access to G7 and EU markets.
- Aligning Ukrainian legislation in the field of postal communications with EU regulations.
- Establishing specialized contact points of EU member states to facilitate joint customs control based on the "single window" principle.
- Implementing a pre-admission economic program.
- Facilitating the implementation of key reforms related to plant health and phytosanitary control to meet EU requirements within the framework of the Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area between Ukraine and the EU.

- Establishing a multi-cluster mechanism to foster economic partnership between Ukraine and the EU.
- Developing recommendations for the sequencing of provisions in EU Directives to be implemented into Ukrainian legislation concerning tax calculation, payment, and administration.
- Creating an English version of the Diya Portal, an online platform for public services in Ukraine.
- Harmonizing Ukrainian legislation with EU standards.
- Initiating and conducting negotiations for Ukraine's potential membership in the EU.
- Preparing for the commencement of the negotiation process regarding Ukraine's EU membership.
- Conducting studies to assess the conformity of Ukrainian financial market regulations with EU legislation.
- Evaluating the compliance of Ukrainian legislation on open data, access to public information, state data management, and usage procedures with EU regulations.
- Implementing communication projects to raise awareness about the EU and its objectives.
- Supporting civil society organizations engaged in monitoring and advocating for the European integration process in Ukraine.

These areas of work are designed to promote Ukraine's integration into the EU by aligning with EU standards, regulations, and practices, while also fostering cooperation and involvement of various stakeholders. [23]

Once the conflict in Ukraine comes to an end, a substantial global financial endeavor will be necessary to rebuild the country. The European Union is already providing significant support to bolster Ukraine's ongoing resilience, but additional assistance will be required in the medium to long-term. The objective is to reinstate the

foundations of a free and prosperous nation, firmly rooted in European values and seamlessly integrated into the European and global economy. This support will aid Ukraine in its journey towards European integration.

In response to Russia's aggressive war, the EU, its Member States, and European financial institutions have adopted a collaborative "Team Europe" approach, making available up to €50 billion in various forms of assistance. This includes substantial financial, humanitarian, emergency, budgetary, and military support.

An allocation of €37.8 billion is earmarked to reinforce Ukraine's overall economic, social, and financial resilience. Notably, an unprecedented financial support package of up to €18 billion has been designated for 2023. Additionally, approximately €12 billion in military assistance has been provided through the European Peace Facility and by Member States directly. [25]

While the conflict initiated by Russia persists, the full extent of Ukraine's reconstruction needs remains uncertain. Nevertheless, it is crucial to commence the design and formulation of the key components of this international effort at present. By proactively establishing the main building blocks, the groundwork can be laid for an effective and coordinated reconstruction endeavor once conditions allow.

On 25 October 2022, the European Commission and Germany, as the chair of the G7, co-hosted the International Expert Conference on the Recovery, Reconstruction and Modernisation of Ukraine in Berlin. The conference served as a crucial milestone, showcasing resolute backing from the EU and the global community towards Ukraine in response to Russia's unwarranted and unjust war of aggression. It also highlighted that the Commission and the international community will continue to support Ukraine beyond its immediate needs, and on its path to EU accession. [24]

The leaders of the European Union countries also agreed to create a Trust Fund for Solidarity with Ukraine. The corresponding decision was made at the summit in Brussels. The European Council invited its international partners to participate and called for preparations to begin without delay. She also called on the Commission to

continue providing technical assistance to help Ukraine implement the necessary reforms. [25]

CONCLUSIONS

The relations between Ukraine and the European Union have evolved significantly since Ukraine gained independence in 1991, leading up to a significant milestone in 2022 when the European Council granted Ukraine the status of a candidate for accession to the European Union. This process has been characterized by its arduous and persistent nature, marked by gradual progress and overcoming numerous challenges along the way. [10]

European integration is of great importance for Ukrainians, as it is clear evidence that Ukraine is an integral part of Europe and aspires to its future as a full member of the European Union.

In conclusion, Ukraine's successful progress towards European integration depends on adhering to EU values and norms, implementing the European Commission's recommendations, and carrying out necessary reforms outlined in the Association Agreement. The country aims to fully integrate into the EU's single market and become a full member of the union, which requires extensive preparatory work and aligning national legislation with EU norms. The establishment of a free trade zone with the EU is a crucial aspect of economic integration, and measures to eliminate tariffs on Ukrainian goods have played a significant role in preserving trade. Overcoming technical barriers in trade and integrating labor markets are also important for uniting the Ukrainian market with the European market. International financial institutions and private capital will contribute to Ukraine's economic and infrastructural recovery.

The action plan for further integration into the European market has been approved, and direct negotiations for Ukraine's integration into the EU may begin in 2023. Ukrainian businesses must be proactive in preparing for operating within the single European market.

Ukraine faces several challenges in its integration strategy with the European Union. These challenges include the need for comprehensive reforms in areas such as the rule of law and corruption, differences in priorities among EU member states, socioeconomic disparities within Ukraine, media ownership and freedom, gender equality, protection of marginalized groups, and the ongoing conflict with Russia. Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated approach from the government, civil society, and international partners, focusing on political stability, anti-corruption measures, economic reforms, security, social cohesion, and effective communication strategies. Overcoming these challenges is crucial for Ukraine to successfully integrate with the EU and other Western institutions. [16]

The relations between Ukraine and the European Union have been significantly impacted by global dynamics, particularly the ongoing war with Russia. This conflict has brought about complex and unpredictable consequences, affecting the internal situations in both the EU and Ukraine, as well as the progress and pace of European integration. The Russian aggression has deepened global contradictions and worsened socio-economic conditions, leading to increased costs of energy resources and food market crises, which in turn have had a widespread impact on the well-being of citizens worldwide.

Despite the challenges, the war has strengthened Ukraine's resolve to move closer to the EU, solidifying the notion that European integration is the only path forward. However, it is important to acknowledge that the war has also caused significant delays in the European integration process, with Ukraine suffering immense human, financial, and economic losses. The war has necessitated a shift in priorities towards countering Russian aggression, impacting the pace of socio-economic reforms and investment attractiveness. Furthermore, Ukraine has become heavily reliant on international aid and has had to allocate substantial resources towards defense and security. As a result, the focus on European integration has been somewhat diverted, but the aspiration for closer ties with the EU remains a key objective for Ukraine.

External factors, including geopolitical dynamics and the war with Russia, have significant implications for European integration processes in Ukraine. The conflict has both expedited European integration and presented challenges and setbacks. Despite these challenges, Ukraine remains committed to its European integration aspirations, and the EU continues to support Ukraine's reform efforts. Assessing the effectiveness of Ukraine's integration strategy is crucial to identify areas of progress and address implementation gaps. Key areas of focus include political and institutional reforms, judicial reform, anti-corruption measures, and media legislation. Both Ukraine and the EU recognize the importance of utilizing the potential of the Association Agreement and deepening economic and trade relations. Continued efforts, reforms, and alignment with EU standards are necessary to ensure Ukraine's successful integration into the European Union.

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