

UKRAINIAN PRISM: FOREIGN POLICY 2016



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This analytical study represents a systematic and comprehensive analysis of over forty directions of the Ukrainian foreign policy in 2016 – 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 the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (Parliament) and other Ukrainian institutions, involved into the creation and implementation of foreign policy of Ukraine.

The reference to the author and the analytical study are obligatory in the cases of complete or partial use of its materials.

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Dear friends,

We are pleased to present you the second issue of the annual analytical paper "Ukrainian Prism: Foreign Policy 2016", which is a systemic evaluation of the foreign policy of Ukraine. The experts of the Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism" in partnership with the Regional Representation of Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Ukraine have evaluated the progress in implementation of the foreign policy of Ukraine during the last year, taking into consideration holistic approach and core principles of democratic governance.

This year the methodology has been improved in the light of the last year's expert discussions, as well as based upon the results of numerous presentations of the report at the analytical and academic institutions in Ukraine and abroad. You can notice the increased number of geographical and functional directions of the Ukraine's foreign policy, which have been analyzed.

Bearing in mind the fact that the year of 2015 is considered as a "starting point" and a "zero year" for evaluation process, in 2016, due to some factors of internal and external character, performance indicators have somehow decreased. The external factors comprise global and regional political transformations, and as for the internal factors, the experts mentioned the decreased level of coordination in terms of taking and implementing foreign policy decisions, as well as the lack of strategic approach to their formation.

Majority of the previous year recommendations have been not duly reflected in the intentions and activities of the Ukrainian high officials, which indicates the necessity to intensify advocacy work of the expert community.

We hope that the mentioned analytical report will be of practical interest for experts, diplomats, government and public leaders, who engage with the foreign policy of Ukraine.

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METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH



Research methodology

In the course of its own methodology development, the working group of the “Ukrainian Prism” carefully studied experience of the foreign policy evaluation of the separate countries and international institutions 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). None of these methodologies is multi-purposed, and their principles directly depend on peculiarities of the object under research. They reflect either peculiarities of particular member states in the EU foreign policy (ECFR) or internal aspects of the Czech Republic governing (AMO). That is why after the methodological consultations with the ECFR experts, it was decided to develop own methodology taking into account Ukrainian conditions and particular elements of the existing methodologies of the Western colleagues.

This research methodology of the Ukraine’s foreign policy takes into account actual foreign policy situation, disadvantages and advantages of the constitutional division of powers in terms of the 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 the relevant mass media materials.

The current research covers the year 2016 in the sections on political interest, institutional cooperation, activities and results in each direction. Evaluation of the strategic vision is based on the whole bunch of the respected documents, which are relevant on a day of evaluation. Moreover, there is a comparison of each direction with the results of 2015.

Foreign policy directions of Ukraine

For the assessment, 45 directions of the Ukraine’s foreign policy were selected and divided into the following thematic blocks:

- Relations with the G-7 states (USA, Canada, Japan, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy);
- European integration (EU, Eastern Partnership, Visegrad Four, the European Energy Community);
- Euroatlantic cooperation;
- Bilateral cooperation (the Russian Federation, China, Poland, Romania, Turkey, Georgia, Moldova, Iran, Belarus, Israel, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia);

- Regional cooperation (the Black Sea Region, Asia-Pacific Region, Baltic States, Northern Europe states, Central Asia, Middle East, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, Western Balkans, South Asia);
- International organizations (the UN, Council of Europe, OSCE);
- Multilateral initiatives (international security, nuclear non-proliferation, climate change, human rights);
- Economic diplomacy;
- Public diplomacy;
- Build-up of the international support on countering Russian aggression.

Assessment indicators of the 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 between 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 on a particular direction during the evaluated year.

Each of the five key indicators shall be assessed at 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 happens in the evaluated year, parliamentary fractions' statements, statements of political parties' leaders, the Coalition Agreement, 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, a Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada, the President of Ukraine, election programs of presidential candidates if elections happens in the evaluated year, 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 – the 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 of a foreign policy direction that has not acquired a form of the political position, interviews, blogs or articles in 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, 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-fractions statements, statements of the parliamentary delegations to the parliamentary assemblies of the international organizations, decisions and letters of the Verkhovna Rada), organization of the Parliamentary hearings.

2. Institutional cooperation

The basis for the analysis: statements and resolutions of the Chairman 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 to the realization of a certain direction, press releases on results of development or realization of joint initiatives.

Points:

- 1 point – there are documented facts on confrontation of some institutions to others in policy development or conflicts between Ukrainian institutions or different branches of power in implementation of a particular direction of foreign policy, failure of coordinating bodies' activities;

- 2 points – a lack of cooperation and coordination between certain bodies involved in implementation of a particular direction of the foreign policy, but without any competition or conflicts;
- 3 points – individual facts of non-system cooperation, which are not based on agreed positions, coordinating documents, and is 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 the respective documents aimed to 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, Strategy “Ukraine-2020”, Energy Strategy 2035, strategic bilateral agreements, action plans, operational plans for the implementation of 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, which the Ukrainian foreign policy actors are tasked, but formulated in general terms and listed with other priorities, thus 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 presence of up-to-date bilateral (multilateral) medium-term documents, which are agreed and meet the current interests.

4. Activities

The basis for the analysis: Reports of the MFA of Ukraine, 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 the Ukraine's diplomatic missions.

Points:

- 1 point – de facto absence of activities connected with the implementation of the relevant direction of 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 the Ukraine's ambassador in the respective country for more than half a year;
- 3 points – along with diplomatic, trade and economic relations there are multilateral or “on the sidelines” meetings; a relevant direction of foreign policy is implemented in a reactive manner;
- 4 points – visits of the MFA leadership, the Parliament Chairman, 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 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 a level of the 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 on interdepartmental level;
- 4 points – active political dialogue, partial support of the Ukraine's position, signing of bilateral and multilateral agreements, and implementation of decisions agreed during the previous visits at the top level;
- 5 points – full support of the Ukraine's position, increasing trade turnover, results' correlation with available strategic, operational and program documents regarding implementation of a relevant direction of the foreign policy; state and official visits of the President of Ukraine; existing of the 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 indicators, a direction's general score shall be identified by calculating an arithmetic mean value. General score (rating) shall 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 the 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 shall be calculated by obtaining an arithmetic mean value of the general scores in all directions of foreign policy under the research. Overall rating shall be calculated similarly to the assessment of relevant directions of foreign policy.

FOREIGN POLICY OF UKRAINE IN 2016

C+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	3+	3+
Institutional cooperation	4-	3+
Strategic vision	3+	3
Activities	4-	4+
Results	4-	3+
General score	B-	C+

Political engagement

In 2016 interest of the main political actors towards the foreign policy sphere mainly concentrated on issues connected with the international support consolidation to counter Russian aggression, separate aspects of the international trade and foreign economic activities, EU Association Agreement implementation, implementation of the visa liberalization dialogue requirements, cooperation with NATO and key foreign states.

As in previous years, the main document which states a position of the President of Ukraine concerning main directions of the foreign policy, has been Annual Address of the President to the Verkhovna Rada (September 2016). This year, Address's points were accompanied by the Presidential Speech at the XII Meeting of the heads of the diplomatic missions of Ukraine abroad in August 2016. Among others, the President P. Poroshenko in both speeches emphasized the following important directions for the realization of the foreign policy of Ukraine: cooperation with NATO member-states, consolidation of the international support in countering Russian aggression in Ukraine, enhancement of the sanctions pressure towards Russia from the partners' side, release of the Ukrainian political prisoners at the territory of Russia and occupied Crimea. Cooperation with the EU in defense and economic spheres was also mentioned as a priority, as well as successful finalization of the visa-free dialogue, support of the reforms.

In the Governmental Action Plans, main tasks in the sphere of the foreign policy and foreign economic activities focused at the same priorities, which were stated at the Presidential agenda. In the A. Yatsenyuk Governmental Action Plan for 2016, around 20 points were mentioned regarding to some extent the foreign policy, which indicated a search of the international support to counter Russian aggression and to conduct reforms, promotion of the Ukrainian economic and image interests in the world, cooperation with NATO and the EU, etc. Moreover, such directions as reform of the diplomatic service and development of the public diplomacy were mentioned. V. Groysman Governmental Action Plan for 2016 includes five main directions: update of the approaches towards NATO integration, development and support to export, investments attraction, popularization of Ukraine in the world, modernization of the consular service. Countering Russian aggression could be named as a separate overarching direction.

More or less consolidated position of the Verkhovna Rada, in a form of references or statements, also concerned topics, connected with the mentioned above priorities of the foreign policy of the state. For example, in 2016, VRU addressed the world community, separate international organizations concerning countering armed aggression of the Russian Federation and its consequences, violations of the Crimean Tatars rights, creation of the international tribunal for investigation of the MH17 flight catastrophe, about threats to the lives of the Ukrainian hostages at the territory of the Separate districts of Donetsk and Lugansk regions (ORDLO). Among others, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in its ordinances insisted on implementation of the visa-free regime with the

EU, as well as prevention of constructing politically-motivated gas pipelines bypassing Ukraine. Together with the Polish Seim, the Declaration of memory and solidarity was adopted, as a response to the politically-triggered statements by both chambers of the Polish Parliament. The most active in stating positions on behalf of the legislative body of the state were representatives of the Bloc Petra Poroshenko and Narodnyy Front parliamentary fractions.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to point a certain selectivity in the questions of the foreign policy of Ukraine on the part of the main political actors. Any of the political forces in their official statements or programs did not propose a systematic approach towards the foreign policy, officially formalizing of the strategic priorities, strategies concerning separate directions of the foreign policy. A certain reactivity could be noticed, concentration inclusively at the urgent issues, which required crisis management.

General score for the Political interest/engagement can be estimated as “4-“.

Institutional cooperation

Similar to the issue of political interest, in 2016, the inter-institutional cooperation in the sphere of the foreign policy of Ukraine has been happening mostly within the priority directions, sometimes based on the existed coordinating mechanisms, sometimes in a format of problem-oriented meetings and working groups. However, within the studied year, the overall expert score for the level of coordination has decreased.

If in the previous period (2015) all ministries were developing a publicly available action plans for implementation of the Cabinet of Ministers' Action Program and the Coalition Agreement, and reported according to them quarterly, so in 2016, the new system of planning and reporting has been introduced (Government of V. Groyzman), which had a more general character, which does not provide a full picture for analyzing the inter-institutional interaction.

In 2016, the most coordinated directions were European and Euro-Atlantic integration, countering Russian aggression. Creation of the post of the Vice-Prime-minister on European and Euroatlantic integration and appointment of I. Klympush-Tsintsadze, positively influenced the continuing institutionalization of the European and Euro-Atlantic direction of the foreign policy. In July 2016, Commission for coordination Euro-Atlantic integration under the President of Ukraine was created. In September, the Government expended staff and functions of the Governmental Office on European and Euro-Atlantic integration. It was also announced about establishing a Mechanism for coordination NATO Trust Funds realization. Among the negatives, one should name the fact that in the mid of 2016, the Governmental Office has been without leadership within few months due to the restructuring and change of the managerial team.

It is necessary to mention cooperation between the Ukrainian institutions in the framework of building-up international support to counter Russian aggression. Despite the fact, that a format and a level of efforts' coordination is not fully open information, cooperation between the President of Ukraine, Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, MFA, separate embassies, Verkhovna Rada, parliamentary delegations to PACE, PA NATO, PA OSCE allowed to reach certain results on prolongation of sanctions against Russia by the USA, the EU, Canada and other partners, reaction concerning violation of the human rights in the Crimea, file a lawsuit against Russia in international courts, creation of the system to fight disinformation and release of the Ukrainian hostages.

Holding in August XII Ambassadorial with the participation of the President of Ukraine, Prime Minister of Ukraine, Heads of the respected committees of the Verkhovna Rada can be considered as a positive example of the different actors of the foreign policy realization positions checking. At the same time, came as a surprise not-invitation of the general consuls of Ukraine to this meeting, considering one of the three main priorities announced at this meeting – protection of the Ukrainian citizens abroad. Also, the question is raised by the inability of the MFA to organize its internal work, resulting in vacant positions of deputy ministers and a number of heads of the foreign missions. Unofficially, such negative practice has been explained in different manners: from lack of financing and experienced candidates to delaying at the level of approval by the Administration of the President of Ukraine.

Positive examples of the cooperation between the MFA, Ministry of Culture and some diplomatic missions were seen during realization of the cultural diplomacy projects. Less successful in 2016 in terms of coordinating the set tasks, was economic diplomacy, despite the elaboration by the European Commission and hearings by the European Parliament of the Proposal for a regulation on the introduction of temporary autonomous trade measures for Ukraine, which was accompanied by the inter-institutional cooperation between the MFA, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of the Agrarian Policy and the VRU.

However, a significant negative to the integral scoring of the institutional cooperation was brought by the disbalanced actions of the President, Cabinet of Ministers and VRU while meeting commitments within a framework of the visa-free dialogue, in particular adopting necessary legislation and creation of the special institutions to fight corruption. Separately can be mentioned a slow pace of the Parliamentary voting on legislative drafts, which have a priority meaning for implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU. By the end of the year, there were 46 “eurointegration” drafts law, which were at the VRU consideration.

If to speak not only about priority vectors, but generally about the system of coordination in all directions of the foreign policy of Ukraine, so the situation is less optimistic. Concerning separate directions, first of all regions and exact directions of the bilateral cooperation, so information about inter-institutional cooperation is absent or a level of coordination is inappropriate for the successful realization of the Ukrainian interests.

General score for the institutional cooperation can be estimated as “3+”.

Strategic vision

The main problem, which does not allow to integrally evaluate tasks and results of the foreign policy of Ukraine, is an absence of a single structured strategic document, which would define priorities of the state's foreign policy for the mid-term perspective, as well as tasks and resources, which are necessary for their realization. As a result, most of the foreign policy directions of Ukraine are left out of the necessary attention, that in its term lead to the ineffective realization of the Ukrainian interests.

As for now, priorities, which are taken up with the foreign policy actors of Ukraine, in their majority are enshrined in the existing strategic documents. They are partially articulated in position papers (Annual Address of the President to the Verkhovna Rada) and operational documents (Priority Actions Plan of the Government for 2016). At the same time, during the studied period, a positive practice to elaborate governmental actions plans for the Strategy of sustainable development "Ukraine – 2020" has not been continued, as it was in 2015.

In the sphere of the European integration, the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU continued to be the main document, including come into force from 1 January 2016 a part on the DCFTA and appropriate Governmental plan for its implementation for 2014-2017. However, considering unfavorable external conditions, expectations for the final ratification of the Association Agreement were not fulfilled in the studied period.

In 2016, a number of strategic documents were adopted, which add to the already existed documents in some directions, mostly in the sphere of security and defense. Here we can name adoption of the Strategic Defense Bulletin and Concept of the State Targeted Program of the reform and development of the military industrial complex till 2020, which envisage adaptation to the NATO standards and intensification of cooperation with NATO member-states.

Concept of the Ukraine's popularization abroad and promotion of the Ukrainian interests in the international information sphere was adopted, at the same time, its action plan should be elaborated only in 2017.

Failed to be finalized in 2016 a work over the National export strategy. Most of the geographic directions have been left without concrete definition of the Ukrainian vision and appropriate action plans.

General score for the strategic vision can be estimated as "3".

Activities

Comparing to the previous period, this indicator of the foreign policy received the highest marks. This can be explained, first, by the continuation of the work on priority directions, where Ukraine has already had certain achievements. Second, traditionally, the foreign policy work, which cannot be characterized by the high level of the strategic vision or institutional engagement, but were happening based on internal and institutional plans, has continued.

Most actively, the Ukrainian side were building its relations and took foreign policy steps in directions of the Euro-Atlantic integration, cooperation with international organizations and G-7 states.

Within the cooperation with NATO, additional measures were taken to enhance coordination and planning of the joint work. In the end of 2016, a new procedure for preparing Annual National Programs of cooperation with NATO was adopted by the Presidential decree, which also includes new principles for implementation and interpretation. Also, a draft of the State public outreach program on the Euro-Atlantic integration was elaborated.

In cooperation with the G-7 states, as well as neighboring states, Ukraine received additional support to counter Russian hybrid aggression. At the bilateral level, agreements in the defense, security and trade spheres dominated (the USA, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Poland and Belarus).

Wide range of activities were taken by the Ukrainian authorities to develop economic diplomacy, international trade. Ukraine launched DCFTA with the EU, initiated Proposal for a regulation on the introduction of temporary autonomous trade measures for Ukraine. Aiming to expand international trade, Free Trade Zone agreement was signed with Canada, and negotiations on FTZ establishing continued with Turkey and Israel, a number of business forums in the leading countries took place, chambers of commerce created.

The work of the heads of the diplomatic missions abroad has increased significantly concerning explaining the Ukrainian state position towards visits of the foreign politicians to the occupied Crimea, necessity to maintain and enhance sanctions against Russia, reaction to the provocations (Embassies in Italy, Germany, Poland, the USA, France, representatives to NATO and Council of Europe).

The work of the Ukrainian delegations to PACE, PA NATO, PA OSCE can be evaluated positively, where the Ukrainian position has been delivered to the international community. The Ukrainian delegation to PACE on repeated occasions disrupted plans of the pro-Russian leadership of this institution to return the Russian delegation. Symbolic is the October resolution of PACE, which laid on Russia full responsibility

about observance or violations of the human rights in the Crimea and Donbas. Special attention should be paid to the activities of the Permanent Representation of Ukraine to the UN and the work of the Ukrainian delegation in the UN Security Council.

General score for the activities can be estimated as “4+”.

Results

The most tangible for Ukraine result, considering changes of the international political context, was a securing of the joint transatlantic position on continued pressure against Russia. Consolidation of the international support to counter Russian aggression became one of the most tangible results of the Ukrainian diplomacy.

In particular, in 2016 the EU, the USA, Canada and others' sanctions were continued and increased. This can be considered as a result of the joint actions by the head of the state, heads of the government, members of the Parliament and diplomats, who used different instruments of influence.

OSCE Germany Chairmanship did not bring breakthrough in implementation of the Minsk agreements. The idea of the OSCE police (armed) mission also did not receive considerable development. At the same time, release of the Ukrainian hostages and political prisoners, who were captured in Russia, is an important achievement of 2016 in terms of countering Russian aggression. The most well-known and public were release processes of N. Savchenko and G. Afanasyev, where different institutions were involved.

Work of the Permanent Representation to the UN also brought its positive results, when in the end of the year, the UN GA Resolution “Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)” was adopted.

In the context of the Russian Federation actions, in 2016 it is also necessary to mention Ukrainian work with the international courts, in particular with the European Court of Human Rights and International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, as well as active work of the General Prosecutor Office on assets recovery and cooperation with the respected European and international structures.

Allocation during the NATO Warsaw Summit in July 2016, a complex package of support for Ukraine in 13 spheres and 40 targeted directions can be considered as an important result of the cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic direction, as well as significant attention, which was dedicated to Ukraine in the Final Declaration. Launch or enhance of the eight NATO Trust funds, also gave a possibility to widen level of cooperation with NATO member states, including non-military dimension. NATO leadership time and again made statements about the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

In terms of the European integration, accomplishments were not so conclusive, as had been expected in the beginning of the year. The referendum results in the Netherlands in April 2016 did not allow finishing the ratification process of the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine, while the internal political challenges inside of the EU prevented from receiving visa-free regime by the end of the year, as it was numerously announced by the Ukrainian authorities. Herewith, as a positive moment can be named establishing of the internal procedures and institutions within the implementation of the VLAP, which facilitate anti-corruption activities. Uneasy bilateral dialogue resulted in numerous change of the dates for the Ukraine-EU Summit, as well as put under the question disbursement of the next tranches of the macro-financial assistance for Ukraine. However, the EU has remained the biggest partner in terms of the financial assistance for Ukrainian reforms, including a reform of the local administration and state service. In general, in the end of the year, the European Commission published a report, where positively characterized implementation of the Ukrainian reforms, in particular in the framework of the AA. Meetings of the joint bodies took place on the level of governmental, parliamentary and civil society institutions in the framework of the Association Agreement.

Ukrainian export in most of the cases has continued decrease comparing to 2015. Introduction of the Russian embargo for the Ukrainian goods added problems, and also difficulties in transit through the Russian territory to the third countries. Though, the dominant role of the EU as the main trade partner has consolidated. Among the EU member states, Ukraine mostly exported to the neighboring Hungary, Romania and Poland. Outside of the EU, the biggest trade partners in exporting Ukrainian goods were Egypt, Turkey, China, India, Belarus and Saudi Arabia.

The least successful for the opinion of this research authors were relations of Ukraine with Russia, Central Asian states, China, Iran and Moldova. Unsatisfactory was work of the Ukrainian side in participation in the European Energy Community and in the climate change issues, even despite the ratification of the Paris Treaty.

General score for the results can be estimated as “3+”.

General score of the foreign policy of Ukraine in 2016 is “C+”.

G-7 COUNTRIES

United Kingdom

B+

Italy

B-

Canada

B+

Germany

B+

USA

A-

France

C+

Japan

B-

UNITED KINGDOM

B+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	5
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	2	3
Activities	5	5
Results	4	4
General score	B-	B+

In 2016, relations with the United Kingdom were maintained at a significant level through British active support of Ukraine in the conflict with Russia, participation in security and defense cooperation and ongoing involvement in internal reform processes. The UK's course toward leaving the EU restricts the influence of the state on European processes and policies, including those concerning prolongation of sanctions and perspectives of the Ukraine's European integration, and thus raises questions again about the need to determine limits of strategic bilateral relations.



Political interest/engagement

Political interest was characterized by the United Kingdom's consistent support of Ukraine, its reforms and European integration. Active participation of the UK in the development of the Ukrainian army is positively perceived and commented. Dynamic inter-parliamentary cooperation contributes to the general interest of Ukrainian lawmakers, but such interest is not reflected in any party documents and programs.

Institutional collaboration

Since the beginning of 2016, Ambassador N. Halibarenko regularly met with the UK officials that simplified coordination of efforts and made it possible to maintain on-going channels of communication with Kyiv. Contacts at the highest level were supported by interagency communication, primarily by the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Office the Prosecutor General, as well as interparliamentary cooperation (Ukrainian MPs' delegations paid four visits to London and the UK lawmakers paid a visit to Ukraine). In 2016, there were no interinstitutional conflicts that would adversely affect the development of bilateral relations.

Strategic vision

The main strategic documents of Ukraine do not refer to the UK, mentioning only European and North Atlantic integration in general. However, the UK's decision to leave the EU urges to review this approach and to update the basic documents of bilateral cooperation, effective since the early 1990s. The exception was signing of the Memorandum on Defense Cooperation (March 17), designed for the next 15 years.

Activities

Despite the crisis associated with voting for Brexit, and change of the government, cooperation and bilateral visits remained high. On February 10-11, the Minister of Foreign Affairs P. Klimkin paid a working visit to London, and on 14-15 September, the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs B. Johnson visited Kyiv. There were active contacts at the multilateral forums: On 8-9 July 2016 at the Warsaw Summit there were meetings of the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom D. Cameron, as well as of the ministers of foreign affairs and defense. At the meeting of the foreign ministers of the OSCE member countries P. Klimkin had a working meeting with the new Secretary of State B. Johnson (September 1); Defense Minister S. Poltorak had several meetings during the working visit to London on 7-8 September. In the frames of active inter-parliamentary cooperation, Ukrainian MPs paid several visits to London. On 16-19 October, the members of the UK Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs visited Ukraine. As for contacts of the President of Ukraine with the new UK Prime Minister T. May, the leaders confined themselves to telephone communication (August 1).

In the field of opposing Russian aggression, Ukraine tried to get the UK's support to enhance the Budapest Memorandum in international format and create an international platform for discussion of the Crimean problem, monitoring human rights violations in the Crimea and de-occupation of the Crimea.

Regarding the security sector, on 21-24 February, Ukrainian-British military and political consultations were held in London that culminated in the signing of the Cooperation Plan between the Ministries of Defense in 2016, number of trainers and scope of training events increased. In 2016, in the field of reforms, the UK assisted in reforming the fight against corruption, diplomatic service, judiciary, tax system, customs, and development of parliamentarism.

In addition to the systematic collaboration with the UK's officials, the Ukraine's ambassador was active in the media environment through taking part in public events, referring with the open letter to the UK's media about the controversial publications, as well as the British government to terminate propagandist work of G. Phillips.

Results

Ukraine remains one of the foreign policy priorities for the UK in Europe. Britain stands with strong support of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, including the Crimea, maintains tough stance on keeping the sanctions and supports European integration of Ukraine, has a tough stand toward Russia in the international organizations and forums (NATO, G7, cooperation with Ukraine in the UN Security Council).

Initiatives on training, reforming and assisting the Armed Forces of Ukraine deepen and expand; the UK is the second contributor (only after the USA) to the OSCE SMM. The main document signed in 2016 was the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on defense cooperation (March 17). Expanding cooperation in the security field provides for doubling the aid to the Ministry of Defense, an additional grant of 2 million pounds for the project on demining in the East, expanding commitment to training Ukrainian military to next March, strengthening cooperation of the General Staffs. Among the achievements is the UK's enhanced support for reform process: expanding more than twice technical assistance to Ukraine in 2016 (up to 12 million pounds); new assistance to reform the judiciary and customs is announced. Still volumes of bilateral trade in goods and services continue reducing, while investments from the UK slightly increased.

ITALY

B-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	3
Institutional cooperation	n/a	3
Strategic vision	n/a	4
Activities	n/a	4
Results	n/a	4
General score	n/a	B-

In 2016, Ukraine and Italy intensified political cooperation and slightly reduced economic relations. The government of Italy continues to support the common European policy towards Ukraine. At the same time, bilateral cooperation is also strengthened, especially in security and military medicine areas. Currently, the leadership of Italy is a reliable partner of Ukraine that supports our European integration initiatives.



Political interest/engagement

Political interest in Italy on the part of Ukrainian government was apparently connected with the fact that traditionally good relations between Rome and Moscow could create obstacles to Ukraine's European integration.

The President of Ukraine (as well as MFA) and members of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine were among the prominent Ukrainian political actors who showed their interest in Italy. The agenda of meetings of P. Poroshenko, the President of Ukraine, and M. Renzi, the Prime Minister of Italy, as well as meetings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs level involved strengthening cooperation between the two countries in the field of security, preservation of the sanctions regime against the Russian Federation, economic interaction between the two countries and European integration of Ukraine. Those deputy groups (factions of Bloc of Petro Poroshenko, the People's Front Party and the Self-Help Party) that showed activity in Italian direction promoted interests of economic nature and Rome's support of the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Both actors are characterised by reactive position concerning external initiatives. Development of bilateral relations between governments and parliaments to provide Ukraine with support on the issues of territorial integrity of Ukraine on the part of Italy as a member of the EU and the Big Seven was their joint priority.

Institutional cooperation

Activities of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Italian direction were both active and effective. For example, Kyiv managed to repeatedly make the government prevent initiatives of several pro-Russian members of the central and local parliaments concerning recognition of the annexation of the Crimea. Rome also supported European integration efforts of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

It also stands to mention preparation of memorandums and implementation of joint programmes of the Ministries of Defence and Healthcare. These programs had very limited interaction. However, they contributed to the emergence of the inter-institutional cooperation between the two countries.

Strategic vision

The strategic vision of interaction between Ukraine and Italy is expressed in the Road Map of Cooperation Between Ukraine and Italy for 2016–2017. Elements of strategic interaction are also present in the draft Memorandum of Understanding Between the Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Republic and Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (it was concluded in 2016, but is still unapproved). If this document becomes effective, Kyiv and Rome will intensify their dialogue at the level of political parties, which may have positive implications for further integration.

Activities

Institutional cooperation between Ukraine and Italy is limited, though it has positive dynamics. In 2016, there was a noticeable revival of inter-parliamentary relations between the two countries, as well as bilateral cooperation between Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Ministries of Defence and Healthcare. Even though the implementation of the Road Map of Cooperation Between Ukraine and Italy is inactive, joint actions of Kyiv and Rome were quite noticeable. Above all, it stands to mention the revival of inter-parliamentary relations between the two countries. The visit of an official delegation of the Ukrainian Parliament to Rome was made in May 2016 as part of this process and led to concluding the draft of Memorandum of Understanding Between the Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Republic and Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

The President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko met Prime Minister of Italy M. Renzi twice during the year (in March and in July 2016). Each time the two leaders discussed cooperation between the two countries in the field of security, preservation of sanctions regime against the Russian Federation, the economic interaction between the two countries and European integration of Ukraine.

It is worth to separately mention the strengthening of the bilateral cooperation between the Ministries of Healthcare. Memorandum of Cooperation between Ministries of Healthcare intensified interaction of the countries in the field of children and military medicine, while the State Service of Ukraine on the Affairs of War Veterans and ATO Participants launched a programme under which Italian orthopaedic companies provide their services to Ukrainian veterans.

Results

The foreign policy of Ukraine regarding Italy was not very active, although it had obvious positive dynamics. The Government of Italy remained a consistent European partner of Ukraine that supported a common policy of the EU concerning the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the sanctions regime against Russia.

This year, not without the influence of Kyiv, the Italian power elites reached a consensus concerning support of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. This is proved by both repeated statements and actions of the Prime Minister of Italy M. Renzi as well as statements of spokespersons of the Chamber of Deputies of Italy. In addition, the Italian Parliament did not support the rescinding of sanctions against Russia in 2016.

Negative results of this year that are worth mentioning include a continuous decrease of economic relations and sporadic attempts of the regional parliaments of Italy to support the annexation of the Crimea and rescind the sanctions regime against Russia. The last year trend of reduction of trade turnover between the countries continued in 2016.

CANADA

B+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	4	5
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	5	5
Results	5	5
General score	B+	B+

In 2016, the relations between Ukraine and Canada saw a considerable intensification of the high- and top-level political dialogue, owing to substantial support the new Canadian government provided for security and defence sector reforms in Ukraine, and active development of economic co-operation. The Free Trade Agreement between Canada and Ukraine was signed, and a series of bilateral interagency agreements were prepared.



Political interest/engagement

In 2016, the political interest in Canada was seen on the high level. The main political messages from the Ukrainian side included the questions regarding the support of the Ukrainian reforms by Canada, defence capacity, enhancement of trade, economic and investment cooperation, visa liberalization, fighting the Russian aggression.

In their statements, the heads of government repeatedly referred to the strategic nature of the bilateral relations. The Government's Plan of Priority Actions for 2016 contained a reference to Canada in the context of the measures for optimization of the Ukrainian consulates abroad (establishing the Ukrainian consulate in Vancouver).

Institutional cooperation

In 2015-2016, the government showed a notably proper organization of preparations for the Free Trade Agreement signing, as well as the conduct of the Canada-Ukraine Business Forum in Toronto in June 2016. To organize the official visit of the Canadian Head of Government J. Trudeau to Ukraine in July 2016, additional inter-institutional work on the part of the Presidential Administration, Cabinet of Ministers, and Parliament of Ukraine was required. In 2016, the Ukrainian Vice Prime Ministers S. Kubiv and I. Klymush-Tsintsadze repeatedly led government delegations to Canada, thereby indicating the Ukrainian side's increased attention to the dialogue.

In autumn, the President of Ukraine and the Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine have repeatedly proposed simultaneous ratification of the Free Trade Agreement during their communications with the Canadian side that showed a coordinated position of the Head of State and the Head of Government with the Parliament in this regard.

The appointment of Andrii Shevchenko as an Ambassador of Ukraine to Canada in late 2015 further enhanced the co-operation. The embassy and its head were actively engaged in holding meetings and activities with the Canadian side involving the Ukrainian Vice-Prime Ministers.

Strategic vision

Despite the statements politicians made on the strategic nature of relationships, the existing long-term documents do pay insufficient attention to Canada (the Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy", Ukrainian National Security Strategy, Military Doctrine of Ukraine, Strategic Defence Bulletin of Ukraine, etc.). At the same time, these documents refer to Canada generally in terms of "extending cooperation with NATO countries", and "advisory and consultative, information and financial support to the defence forces by the partner nations." So, this was the basis for work on the bilateral agreements at the level of defence ministers.

The Free Trade Agreement with Canada may be considered a strategic instrument in the economic field; however, as of end-2016, it was not ratified by both Parliaments.

Activities

The year was marked by active communications on the top level—specifically, during the official visit of the Prime Minister of Canada to Ukraine in July and the call of P. Poroshenko to J. Trudeau in October 2016.

Active cooperation was seen on the international level; it was aimed at preparing and signing the FTA with Canada, as well as implementing a number of projects of bilateral horizontal cooperation between individual ministries. Specifically, the Memorandum on the cooperation in the field of geology and mineral resources was signed between Ukraine and Canada; the Cooperation Agreement between the defence ministries of Ukraine and Canada was prepared too.

The Canada–Ukraine Business Forum was held in Toronto in June, where the Ukrainian side was represented by the delegation headed by First Vice-Prime Minister of Ukraine S. Kubiv, and the Canadians—by the Prime Minister J. Trudeau. The heads of two governments met in Kyiv in July, and the Free Trade Agreement was signed in their presence.

At the beginning of 2016, then First Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine A. Parubii visited Canada, and the Parliament of Canada created a “group of friendship with Ukraine”, which is the second largest of the available relevant groups.

The Ukrainian side paid special attention to the communications with the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada. In October, the Ukrainian officials attended the XXV Congress of Ukrainian Canadians.

Results

Canada fully supported the Ukrainian position in the conflict with Russia, as evidenced by numerous statements of the head of the Canadian government J. Trudeau and the Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Dion. In 2016, the sanctions against Russia were toughened. However, the important political statements of the government and Foreign Ministry in support of Ukraine have always been taken under the pressure of the active pro-Ukrainian parliamentary group, overcoming the resistance of the bureaucracy of liberals that differs from the unconditional support of the previous Conservative Government of S. Harper.

The organization of J. Trudeau’s official visit to Ukraine and the signing of FTA, which by the end of 2016 had not been ratified by both parties, may be considered a diplomatic achievement.

The financial support Canada launched in 2014 is also worth noting. In February, CUTIS (CDN 13.5 million) project was launched to increase exports from Ukraine to Canada and investments from Canada to Ukraine. In October, the Canadian

government planned to allocate CDN 8.1 million for further financing of the Ukrainian internal affairs authority reform projects.

The work of the Canadian training mission Unifire, under which 200 Canadian soldiers train the Ukrainian military on the Yavorivskiy firing range and at the Kamianets-Podilskiy Training Centre, is a positive step too.

GERMANY

B+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	3	4
Activities	5	5
Results	4	4
General score	B	B+

In 2016, there was a continuing active political dialogue between Ukraine and Germany on the initiative of both parties. The dialogue in the Normandy format, as well as economic cooperation, remained traditionally lively. Both countries supported the Minsk agreements as the only possible solution to the conflict in the eastern Ukraine, but during 2016, the governments expressed somewhat different positions regarding sequence of implementation of these agreements.



Political interest/engagement

In 2016, the political interest of the various political actors to relations and cooperation with Germany remained one of the highest compared to other EU member states. President of Ukraine and executive authorities agree that Germany is a reliable and strategically important partner, especially in the context of the German presidency in the OSCE. Ukraine pays significant attention to the need to release Ukrainian hostages, support sanctions against Russia, and counter Russian information propaganda. In this context, activity and the high level of the meetings of the group on inter-parliamentary relations with Germany should also be noted. A somewhat different position on the Minsk agreements as one of the key issues on the agenda is expressed by the political parties. However, the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy expressed the view that “there are ones who disagree with the position of Germany, but there are none who underestimate it”.

Institutional cooperation

In terms of consistency of political positions, both the President of Ukraine and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, and other subjects of the foreign policy worked to strengthen the Ukrainian-German relations. In particular, to execute the plan of the government priority actions in 2016, the 2nd Ukrainian-German Economic Forum and Forum “Prospects of Ukrainian-German trade and investment cooperation in the field of e-commerce” were held in October. During the year, there were meetings of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on European Integration together with representatives of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine to strengthen trade relations. However, it is worth noting the lack of coordination and heaviness from Ukraine’s side to use unbound financial loan of EUR 500 million.

Strategic vision

There are no specific provisions on Germany in the general strategic documents. However, the Energy Strategy of Ukraine till 2035 indicates the plan of Ukraine’s entry into the European energy market through implementation of Gas Interconnectors projects, particularly with Germany, as well as the plan to prepare purchase of gas at virtual trading points (VTP) of the EU countries, including Germany. There were no bilateral complex agreements approved in 2016, but it should be noted that in March 2016 an intergovernmental agreement on the establishment of German-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry was ratified.

Activities

Ukraine-Germany dialogue was actively held both at the highest political and inter-institutional levels. This applies to the talks in the Normandy format and working visits of the President of Ukraine, representatives of ministries and MPs. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P.Klimkin visited Berlin repeatedly to discuss key aspects of the implementation of the Minsk agreements and the “road map” of visa-free dialogue. In spring 2016, Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman discussed prospects of economic cooperation during his visit to Berlin. This visit was primarily aimed at presenting the program of the new government and involvement of German business to invest in Ukraine. It is worth special noting the 9th Meeting of the Ukrainian-German High Level Group on economic cooperation. In addition, Ambassador of Ukraine A. Melnyk worked actively with German politicians and the public to promote Ukrainian interests.

Results

On the results of the work in 2016, Ukraine remained in the focus of German foreign policy in Eastern Europe. Also through constant hard work of implementation of foreign policy in Ukraine, Germany holds the opinion that complete implementation of the Minsk agreements remains a precondition for the lifting of the anti-Russian sanctions, and prosperous stable Ukraine is a prerequisite for a stable security environment in Europe and an important mean of pressure on Russia. In 2016, a joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry was launched, numerous technical assistance projects in the field of sustainable economic development, energy efficiency, decentralization and democracy building are being implemented. The following protocols on cooperation and common goals with Germany were signed: by the Ministry of Regional Development (Implementing provisions of the Leipzig Charter “Cities of Europe towards Sustainable Development”), by the Ministry of Education (Way of cooperation, selection procedures and timing for selecting joint research projects). Apart from that, in November 2016, Germany allocated EUR 72 million for the second phase of the project on modernization of transforming substations and implementation of projects to strengthen local government, as well as construction and renovation of dwellings for IDPs. Based on the results of the 9th meeting of the Ukrainian-German High Level Group, German State bank KfW allocated Ukraine funding for the modernization of four power substations in the east of Ukraine.

UNITED STATES

A-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	5
Institutional cooperation	5	5
Strategic vision	5	5
Activities	5	4
Results	4	4
General score	A-	A-

In 2016, Ukraine perceived the US as its main strategic partner, coordinated with it the issues of both foreign and domestic policy. There were intensive intergovernmental and interagency contacts, contractual framework of relationships has been enhanced. Due to the US position, Ukraine relied on the strong support of the international community in security issues and countering Russian aggression. But the election of the 45th President of the United States provided a significant element of uncertainty in bilateral relations.



Political interest/engagement

In recent years, orientation on the strategic nature of relations with the US has been a permanent feature of the Ukrainian foreign policy. The Ukrainian side had great hopes for 2016 as the last year of Barack Obama administration in the White House. During bilateral meetings, Ukraine tried to gain even greater US support in security issues and countering Russian aggression. Statements of Ukrainian politicians emphasized on strengthening transatlantic unity to save the consolidated position of the West on sanctions against Russia for continued aggression in Donbas and occupation of Crimea. By efforts of MFA and the Embassy of Ukraine, a noticeable information and diplomatic campaign was held in order these issues remained among priorities of the US administration. During Washington Nuclear Security Summit, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko called for the introduction of effective security guarantees by the nuclear powers to countries that have no such arsenal.

Institutional cooperation

The US has been playing a leading role in countering Russian aggression in the international arena, supporting internal reforms in Ukraine, military-technical cooperation. It involves intensive intergovernmental and interagency contacts, and extensive use of advisory and consulting assistance from the United States. The issue of strengthening relations with the US is one of the consolidate factors of cooperation between Ukrainian institutions.

Strategic vision

In 2016, the US-Ukraine legal framework was supplemented by "the Concept on development of Partnership between Ministry of Defence of Ukraine and Department of Defence of the United States for five years" and the Strategic Defence Bulletin – both are fundamental documents in the restructuring of defense and security sector in accordance with NATO standards. The adoption of these documents follows the policy of the bilateral relations development, stated in "United States-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership" 2008.

Activities

In 2016, there was an intensive dialogue at the highest political level. During the visits to foregoing summit on nuclear safety and General Assembly's regular session, P.Poroshenko met with the US President B. Obama, the Vice President J. Biden, the Secretary of State J. Kerry, a number of other high-ranking officials, as well as one of the US presidential candidates – H. Clinton. The standing topics for talks were implementation of the Minsk process arrangements, the situation in Donbas, internal reforms, including fight against corruption. The progress of reforms in Ukraine facilitated difference elimination in bilateral relations, and demonstrated

that the Ukrainian government considers the US calls to internal changes with full responsibility. It is worth noting two negative aspects in the relationship at the highest political level: B. Obama did not pay a visit to Ukraine during his last year in the White House and Ukrainian high officials had not kept a position of neutrality during the election campaign in the United States, showing more predisposition to a Democratic candidate.

In 2016, there was also an intensive dialogue between the Ukrainian government and the State Department, the Department of Commerce, the US Department of Defense. At the beginning of the year, further US assistance was made conditional to overcoming the crisis of the new government formation in Ukraine and especially the situation with an appointment of a new Prosecutor General of Ukraine. This negative factor was eliminated with the appointment of V. Groysman as a Prime Minister. Then the new head of the government visited the United States, where he had numerous meetings with representatives of the US executive branch. The Ukrainian side had repeatedly articulated a desire to strengthen bilateral dialogue and made efforts towards the conclusion of a comprehensive bilateral agreement on security. But in Washington, the main emphasis was primarily made on the processes of internal reforms in Ukraine. In 2016, M. L. Yovanovitch was appointed as the new US Ambassador to Ukraine.

Results

United States were actively involved in the internal life of Ukraine – from supporting reforms to assistance in highly specialized cases such as the murder investigation of the journalist P. Sheremet. 2016 was a year of providing a record high US financial help to Ukraine (658 million US dollars). The largest amount of support accrues to the Ministry of Defence – the reform of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (335 million US dollars in 2016), the supply of equipment and technology, joint exercises and training. An important area of cooperation was also coordination of the Ukrainian and the US positions in the international arena, including the UN, the OSCE, and G7. During 2016, there was a further expansion of the US sanctions' lists against Russia. Ukraine managed to enlist the United States support in international financial institutions – disbursement of the IMF next tranche, as well as providing regular \$1 billion US dollars loan guarantee. The agreement on mutual assistance between customs administrations was signed in the area of trade regulations. Ukraine-US Open Skies Agreement entered into force in January 2016. So, despite the fact that the policy of B. Obama on Ukraine described as a "strategic restraint", Ukraine achieved meaningful positive results in bilateral relations.

FRANCE

C+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	5	4
Strategic vision	3	2
Activities	5	4
Results	4	3
General score	B+	C+

After the long-awaited normalization of 2015, the bilateral relationships between France and Ukraine have stabilized, and its content is almost entirely determined by the needs of the Normandy format and Minsk process, and was influenced by the approaching presidential elections. Some economic activities are being developed, but there is a need in substantial progress on improving investment climate for the breakthrough.



Political interest/engagement

The political and public interest in relationship with France continued to be at a high level through the Normandy process and pro-European policy, but there were more negative reactions this year, particularly concerning France's pressure on the constitutional amendments and holding elections in the occupied territories, voting in the National Assembly and the Senate on sanctions against Russia, problems with issuing visas to Ukrainians before Euro 2016, back-peddalling of the visa-free regime, and pro-Russian lobby activity. Ukrainian media widely reported on the French election campaign with a focus on the possible consequences for Ukraine.

Institutional cooperation

Likewise in 2015, in 2016 the tandem of the President and the Foreign Ministry dominated in relations with France, with contacts at lower levels (Deputy Foreign Minister O. Zerkal and A. Dezir), visit of the French Special envoy J. Audiber on January 18-19, meeting of the Deputy Foreign Minister S. Kyslytsya with French Ambassador (March 1, May 6). However, there was a failure of cooperation between the parliaments. Despite the friendship groups and the official statement of the Verkhovna Rada, both houses of the French Parliament adopted a resolution on lifting sanctions against Russia (on April 28 – by the National Assembly, on June 8 – by the Senate), and an enlarged delegation of the French parliamentarians visited the occupied Crimea (on July 29-31). The fact that 10 members of the France-Ukraine friendship group voted for the resolution in the Senate underlines the depth of misunderstanding. The launch of the joint Ukrainian-French intergovernmental commission on economic cooperation announced for 2016 was postponed for 2017. There was active work from the embassy and of the diaspora's side (1st Forum of the Ukrainian and French-Ukrainian associations and initiatives, on January 23), conference dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster (Senate, April 27) and "Ukraine, out of war" (National Assembly, June 28).

Strategic vision

The strategic documents are not considered separately bilateral relations between Ukraine and France. Declaration of the Heads of the states, signed on April 22, 2015, continues to be the basic framework of bilateral relations. This document determined only short-term priorities for cooperation.

Activities

The last two years show a high intensity of the Ukrainian-French relations with dominating issues related to the 'Normandy format' activities. The "Normandy" meetings took place nearly each month (at the level of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – on March 3, May 11; at the level of presidents – on April 15, August 16, October 13), and

after one year break the 'Normandy Four' Summit took place on October 19. Though, the differences in the Ukrainian (priority of security, need for the OSCE, the UN or the EU missions) and in the French positions (adoption of Constitution amendments by Ukraine, laws on elections and electoral calendar) were managed to overcome only in the end of the second half of the year.

Outside of the "Normandy" direction there were several working visits of the Ukrainian (P. Klimkin on May 24, P. Poroshenko on June 21, V. Groysman on October 27-28) and of the French sides (J.-M. Ero on February 23, representatives of the National Assembly D.Orua and R. Povro on December 1-2), where issues of a visa-free regime between Ukraine and the EU, intensify economic cooperation and progress of reforms in Ukraine were raised.

An important part of the Ukrainian diplomacy was a response to the negative effects: request to the Embassy to cancel a showing of the propaganda documentary "Ukraine, masks of revolution" (31 January, to no avail); Ambassador's letter to the mayor of Nice, who hosted a delegation from the occupied Crimea (March); Embassy's comment on the statement of Senator N.Goulet on existence of IDIL training camp in Ukraine (on March 31); the Verkhovna Rada's appeal to the Senate asking them not to accept the recommendation to abolish the sanctions (on 31 May); Embassy's comments and MFA's statement on voting for the lifting of sanctions in the National Assembly and the Senate (on April 28 and June 9); Foreign Ministry note to the Embassy of France, appeal of MP I. Gerashchenko, appeal of P. Poroshenko to F. Hollande in the context of problems with visa issuance for Ukrainian fans for Euro-2016 (June); MFA statement in connection with the visit of French deputies to the occupied Crimea (on July 29) and more. The MFA also reacted with the statement on the terrorist attack in Nice (July 15).

The involvement of France in the reform process has remained relatively low, limited to some initiatives in the field of decentralization and civil service reform. Striving to intensify economic activities was reflected in the French-Ukrainian business forum on October 28, activity in the defense sector was demonstrated by the Ukrainian-French consultations in the field of defense planning and defense policy (March 17-19), some initiatives in education were successful.

Results

Although Ukraine became one of the France's foreign policy priorities in 2016, these relations were derived from the active involvement of France and the French President F. Hollande personally to resolve the conflict within the Normandy format / Minsk process. Neither switching to a new level of cooperation nor overcoming original limits of the Franco-Russian relations happened in 2016, and many misunderstandings and demarches by various French actors worsened the climate of bilateral relations. Despite the accepted invitation, the visit of the French President F. Hollande to Ukraine did not take place. However, Ukrainian diplomacy managed to maintain

support of France for keeping the sanctions, the Association Agreement, the release of hostages, and also to some extent ease the pressure on introduction of amendments to the Constitution and urgent preparations for the elections. Despite some occasional activities, information policy in France remains too weak to prevent Russian influence. There was no breakthrough in investment or privatization, but exports from France increased significantly due to the FTA (50%). Out of the signed bilateral agreements the most significant were the following: an agreement between the company “Engie” and JSC “Ukrtransgaz” on the possibility for the first company to store gas in the Ukrainian underground storage (October 28) and the Plan of bilateral cooperation between the Ministry of Defense, the General Staff of the Armed Forces and the General Staff of the French Republic for 2017 (November 16). A good result was a fitting of the arch over the fourth reactor of the Chernobyl, built by French companies with financial participation of France (the second largest contributor).

JAPAN

B-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	3
Institutional cooperation	n/a	3
Strategic vision	n/a	3
Activities	n/a	5
Results	n/a	5
General score	n/a	B-

Over the past 25 years, 2016 can be called one of the most fruitful for Ukrainian-Japanese relations, reflected in a revival of activity at both presidential and governmental levels, led to the signing of important documents. Ukrainian side considers energy efficiency projects, renewable energy, transport infrastructure, recycling, water purification and ensuring quality drinking water, development of health sector and provision of quality health services as promising directions for Japanese investments, and makes significant efforts to increase the investment attractiveness.



Political interest/engagement

2016 marked the revival of the Ukrainian political interest in Japan as a donor country, which, particularly, reflected in the Analytical Report to the annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada. It is about providing financial assistance to support democratization in Ukraine, humanitarian goals and needs of displaced persons, reconstruction of Bortnychi aeration station etc. However, the Government Action Plan for 2016 mentions only the necessity of creating a Japanese version of the Ukrinform website. During the year, there were regular statements of the Prime Minister of Ukraine (A. Yatsenyuk and V. Groysman) and various Ministers on sustained cooperation between Ukraine and Japan, as well as readiness for further extension.

Institutional cooperation

Relevant institutions carry out coherent work within the framework of implementation of Japanese direction of the Ukraine's foreign policy. The ratification in February 2016 (adopted in December 2015) of the Agreement (in the form of an exchange of notes) between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of Japan with respect to Japanese ODA Loan Agreement with Ukraine for the Economic Reform Development Policy Loan (II): Contributing to economic and fiscal stabilization in Ukraine through support for institutional reform is representative of it.

Strategic vision

It seems strange, but Japan has no mentions in Ukrainian strategic documents, except rare cases: the necessity to consider lessons of the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant in Japan (Energy Strategy of Ukraine till 2030). The main directions, forms and mechanisms of cooperation on a range of bilateral and international issues were outlined in a joint Ukrainian-Japanese statements in 1995 and 2005 and the Joint Statement of the President of Ukraine and the Prime Minister of Japan on global partnership between two countries (18 January 2011). These documents define priorities of cooperation between Ukraine and Japan, outline implementation of short- and mid-term program priorities, but need updating.

Activities

2016 was quite intense on various visits at the level of ministries, agencies and state leadership. Among them, the most significant are: official visit of the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko to Japan (4-7 April 2016); meeting of the Minister of Energy and Coal Industry of Ukraine I. Nasalyk with Japanese delegation within a pilot project on the replacement of a steam turbine at Trypilska TPP (June 21, 2016, Kyiv); participation of the Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine in the sixth meeting of the Coordinating Council for Economic cooperation with Japan and

the Committee for Business Cooperation with Ukraine of Japan Business Federation “Keidanren” (October 22, 2016, Tokyo) with the presentation of key reforms in Ukraine; meeting of the Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko with the Chairperson of Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense of the House of Councilors of the Parliament of Japan M. Sato (February 22, 2016, Tokyo) on the further development of bilateral cooperation, including on the inter-parliamentary level.

In addition, there were regular meetings at the ministerial level with the Embassy of Japan to Ukraine, regular consultations on implementation of previously agreed projects.

Results

By the end of this year there was a ratification of the Agreement (in the form of exchange of notes) between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of Japan on providing financial assistance to Ukraine worth ¥ 36.969 billion yen (approximately 300 million US dollars), as co-financing tied to the World Bank’s project. During the official visit of the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko to Japan (4-7 April 2016), a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan was signed. It was the first bilateral document on cooperation in these areas between Ukraine and Japan since the Ukrainian independence.

For realization of the projects to demonstrate Japanese technology, the Government of Ukraine adopted the Resolution (№ 293 from March 30, 2016) on import of energy-efficient materials, equipment and components.

The active position of Japan and willingness to deepen cooperation is worth noting.

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION



EUROPEAN UNION

B+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	5	5
Institutional cooperation	4	4+
Strategic vision	5	5-
Activities	4	5-
Results	5	4
General score	A-	B+

	General score	Political interest/engagement	Institutional cooperation	Strategic vision	Activities	Results
Political dialogue	A-	5	4	5	5	4
Economic cooperation	A-	5	5	5	5	4
Visa-free dialogue	B+	5	4	4	4	4

POLITICAL DIALOGUE

In 2016, a series of factors of internal and external nature thwarted implementation of the ambitious agenda between the EU and Ukraine. In the midst of the difficult economic situation, the backpedalling process of reforms needed to create the Eurointegration assumptions became more obvious. Delays in implementation of the EU obligations in terms of the Association Agreement (AA) ratification and providing specific support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine also, to some extent, overshadowed the general consensus on the need for rapprochement of the Ukraine-EU relations.

Political interest/engagement

In the year of 2016, the EU integration course of Ukraine for the third year in a row was marked by the unconditional consensus among all branches of the power, although due to a number of the processes inside the union, the Analytical Report of the President's Annual Address to the VRU says: "After the UK referendum regarding the EU membership, the EU membership as an ultimate goal of the European integration is losing its absolute value. Instead, instrumental aspects of cooperation between Ukraine and the EU to carry out internal reforms and modernization increase their importance to a significant degree".

The President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs played the most important role in promoting the Ukraine-EU dialogue. The Parliament stance remained active on the issue of harmonization of the Ukrainian legislation with the EU norms and standards, as well as deepening the dialogue with European partners. Despite the general pro-European mood of the legislative branch, especially at the top level, during the year, there were a few cases of blocking adoption of legislative acts; attempts to amend draft laws in the second reading for their "loss of value" from a perspective of the European integration benefit; separate MPs' destructive criticism of both the European integration policy in general, and actions of the Ukrainian government in this field in particular.

Due to the extremely high interest of the European Community to the reform process in Ukraine as a prerequisite for integration into the EU structures and markets, the Cabinet of Ministers was also assigned a significant role. Given the change of V. Groyzman's position from the Chairman of the Rada to a position of the Prime Minister, as well as A. Parubiy's changing positions, from the NSDC Secretary to the Head of the VRU, for several transitional months there was a certain blurring of powers in the country leadership's statements in terms of the EU.

However, at the end of the year, we can state a balance of the mandates among Ukrainian leaders regarding the role, place, political interest and involvement in the European integration process.

Institutional cooperation

Institutionally the European integration direction was reinforced by increasing capacity of the existing structures, in particular, of the legislative power after signing of the respective agreement with the European Parliament and unfolding new forms of cooperation. In the new government, a position of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration was introduced, the office of whom is still being organized, in parallel with the painful process of a dissolution of the Government Office for European Integration. The National Reforms Council was reorganized. The Strategic Advisory Group for support of Ukrainian reforms under the President and Prime Minister was created, as well as the Group to support reforms with involvement of foreign advisers, including European ones. This, in its turn, should become the basis for establishing a Coordination Office of reforms implementation with an active support of the EU and the EBRD.

Strategic vision

According to the policy papers, "ensuring Ukraine's integration into the European political, economic and legal space for the purpose of the EU membership" is one of the key principles of the Ukraine's foreign policy, and the AA is a tool and a road sign that gives our country the opportunity to become a full-fledged EU member in the future. Despite the clear confirmation of both the European integration vector and tools to achieve this goal in the policy documents, progress towards Ukraine's membership in the EU on the basis of the Action Plan on the AA implementation and the Association Agenda was rather slow during 2016. Among the obstacles were also a domestic political crisis that led to the change of the government, the difficult economic situation, and a number of external factors.

Activities

In the spring, after more than a half-year absence, the newly appointed Representative of Ukraine to the EU M. Tochicky, who is also Ambassador of Ukraine to Belgium, commenced the duties of the Ambassador. The intensity of contacts at the high and highest political level during visits, regular telephone conversations and in the frames of international forums indicates the unprecedented attention of the Ukrainian authorities to the EU. In the course of 2016, only the President visited Brussels for 4 times, not to mention heads of departments, ministers, deputy ministers on European integration, and Ukrainian MPs. However, there were unexpected turn of events and disappointments. For instance, rather "modest" were the results of the 18th EU-Ukraine summit, which was even postponed from spring to autumn by mutual agreement of the parties due to the lack of specific results of the political dialogue. In December, at the Association Council's meeting, the delegation was headed by the First Deputy Prime Minister instead of the Prime Minister.

Results

In terms of the internal commitments on the EU integration, there were steps in the right direction in a reform of public administration, justice, energy, decentralization, public procurement and civil security systems.

As for the external aspects, unfortunately, as of early December, Ukraine was unable to close neither an issue of final ratification of the AA by the Netherlands, nor define a format of the police mission or provide substantial military aid to counter Russian aggression, nor create an international coalition on de-occupation of the Crimea. Saving a consensus on the continued sanctions against Russia can be considered as a real success, which, however, was more fueled by Russia's actions in Syria and investigation results on the shooting down of the MH-17 plane. Providing to Ukraine targeted cheap loans and non-repayable assistance for cross-border infrastructure programs and reform of the state service should be named.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

2016 was a year of sustaining previous trends in economic cooperation between Ukraine and the EU. Assistance from the EU, continuation of the sanctions against Russia and a comprehensive application of the DCFTA remain the main points of the agenda for Ukraine. Implementation of the DCFTA belongs to tasks of internal reforms, but directly influences the overall framework of bilateral cooperation. These tasks are implemented with varied success, the implementation pace of reforms in Ukraine continues to be the major obstacle in achieving a higher level of the relationships.

Political interest/engagement

2016 showed the political consensus and all signs of priority of Ukraine's cooperation with the EU in the foreign-policy agenda. Main actors' attention focused on the DCFTA issues, but not limited to them. The proclaimed official positions cover a wide range of economic relations with the EU (small and medium businesses, financial services, digital economy, transport, cross-border cooperation, social policy, etc.). Granting the EU support to the sanctions economic policy regarding Russia and providing financial assistance to Ukraine are consolidating factors in the foreign policy efforts.

Institutional cooperation

In the current year, the governmental authorities has retained a unanimous position on the economic cooperation with the EU, based on the agreements reached in previous years. Interinstitutional cooperation is carried out in such formats as the Council for Export Promotion, the Export Promotion Office, a well-established dialogue of the

authorities with the EU-UA CSP, the associations and business associations, Chamber of Commerce and others also play an important role. Problems of the progress of the DCFTA implementation, in terms of which the Ukrainian authorities had disagreements, belong to the domestic agenda, but they do affect the general context of foreign relations with the EU. At the bilateral level there is a continuing cooperation with the Support Group of the European Commission to Ukraine.

Strategic vision

The strategic vision of economic cooperation with the EU is based primarily on the UA provisions of the part of the DCFTA, the main implementing document of which is the Action plan of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine for 2014-2017. The plan of the government's priority actions for 2016 in this area focuses on domestic tasks. Overall the year was marked by a lack of strategic documents adopted in the field of economic cooperation with the EU, also, the process of elaborating the National Export Strategy remains at the consultation stage. In this context, it is indicative that Ukraine introduced an embargo on timber exports and increased export duties on scrap metal, which was negatively perceived by the EU due to the non-compliance of such activities with the AA.

Activities

The year of 2016 was characterized by a continuing dialogue of the Ukrainian authorities and the EU at various platforms – from the Ukraine-EU Summit and the Association Council to the working meetings at the ministerial and experts levels. Activities in the economic field of the pro-European policy related to counter the Russian aggression, and, additionally to measures on continuing the sanctions regime, they covered promoting of the EU additional trade preferences provision, supporting economic reforms in Ukraine, and using the European programs to stimulate economic development.

In the DCFTA context, main attention was focused on issues of tariff liberalization for Ukrainian goods, expanding quotas, using of the EU geographical indications, customs issues. An application to join the Regional convention of Pan-Euro-Med preferential rules of origin was filed and a dialogue on concluding the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products was initiated.

Results

The main outcome in the field of economic cooperation with the EU was provisional application of the AA in the DCFTA part since January 1 with the simultaneous termination of the regime of the EU autonomous trade preferences for Ukraine. This process should be completed by the ratification of the AA by the Dutch Government based on the negative results of the referendum. The Ukrainian exports to the EU

increased in 2016. The important achievement of the Ukrainian diplomacy on the "economic front" is the EU decision, which extended sanctions against Russia till March 2017.

The domestic context of slow implementation of economic reforms and adaptation of the AA economic provisions did not have a crucial negative impact on the bilateral relations. Ukraine officially joined COSME, the EU programme for small and medium-sized enterprises, while the agreement on the Common Aviation Area remained unsigned. Financial and technical assistance, as well as the EU sector budget support in the framework of the programs concluded earlier, keep on, but Ukraine has not received the second tranche of the macro-financial assistance in the amount of 600 mln EUR.

VISA-FREE DIALOGUE

Visa-free dialogue in 2016 was for the Ukrainian society one of the most sensitive and meaningful areas of the Ukraine-EU cooperation, being high on a political agenda and in the focus of public attention. Meanwhile, the result of implementation of the dialogue criteria for visa-free regime was obtained by considerable efforts, much later than expected and was mostly prompted by a continuous pressure and monitoring of the reforms fulfillment from the civil society, international partners, the EU, etc. On the other hand, Ukraine perhaps for the first time has managed to complete the "homework", as the EU recognized, and is now expecting the EU to fulfill its obligations.

Political interest/engagement

Visa-free dialogue in 2016 was among the key priority topics of the Ukraine's cooperation with the EU. The task to achieve visa-free regime remained in the focus of the public attention and among the priorities of the political agenda. It fueled active engagement of all domestic stakeholders, as well as mobilization of the political will to carry out respective reforms – first of all, by including respective issues into the agenda of the state authorities and the Verkhovna Rada. A characteristic feature of the high engagement of the political and civil society actors to visa-free reforms was that actually several groups of actors have been present – specific pro-reform actors (governmental officials, MPs, NGOs etc), who also tried to use the visa-free leverage to achieve quality reforms in the respective sectors, as well as actors, who were mostly interested in a certain goal, not taking into account a positive impact of the reforms for the country in general, and actors, who defended a minimal set of the VLAP.

Institutional cooperation

Despite formally coordinating role of the MF, which was quite a success, there were problems with concerted cooperation of the Ukrainian governmental bodies and the EU. Thus, the Ukrainian governmental authorities' mechanism acted inconsistently, there was a visible lack of mutual trust (for example, by the Parliament towards the executive branch, and often even within the executive branch itself). Not sufficient attention was paid to establish routine mechanisms for VLAP's criteria implementation. Often, underestimation of the scope of content and volume of tasks, formal understanding of criteria has been noted. Generally, it is warranted to say that the Ukrainian government underestimated the meaning of reforms required under VLAP, or started off with a more formal approach to their implementation.

Strategic vision

In Ukraine, visa-free regime was considered, first of all, as a powerful political dividend for its masterminds, being rather detached from the broader context of reforms. This is confirmed, for example, by the fact that the VLAP's sectors reforms were carried out mostly due to a visa-free regime perspective, while no strategic vision of the respective reforms was developed in the context of the Association Agreement, Chapters II and III of which also contain tasks in the area of political reforms and justice, freedom and security. Meanwhile, Ukraine generally treated visa-free regime as an important task. This can be, for example, confirmed by the successful efforts to establish political commitment to enable visa-free regime on condition if the VLAP in the Association Agreement is fulfilled.

Activities

The activities to implement the VLAP during 2016 were vigorous, but not always consistent with the tasks. Such tasks were reflected in the sixth, the last EC report on the fulfillment of the VLAP. Main efforts were focused on fighting corruption and dispelling perception of Ukraine by some of the EU countries as a source of illegal migrants and asylum seekers. The actions on informing citizens on what the liberalization of visa-free regime with the EU actually means and what are contents and a goal of implemented reforms within the Action plan were underperformed. These matters still remain relevant.

Results

Ukraine managed successfully complete its visa-free homework, a proof of what is a launch by the European Commission in April 2016 of the legislative initiative to provide a visa-free regime for Ukraine, as well as further procedural steps of the European institutions. Meanwhile, the hard-won outcome was achieved much later than expected at the beginning of the process, and later than Ukrainian officials, first of all, the President, used to promise. The activities of the country's top authorities in advocacy for the visa-free regime for Ukraine was accompanied by continuous and systematic setting of unreasonably high hopes for citizens, as biased and untimely dates of the visa-free regime enabling were proclaimed.

The process of fulfilling the VLAP commitments in 2016 was a powerful tool to implement the necessary domestic reforms in areas of document security, migration management, public order and safety, ensuring fundamental human rights and freedoms. Important changes were introduced in an anti-corruption sphere – anti-corruption bodies were established and electronic declaration system was launched. It is worth to note that in the process of commitments fulfilling, a timeliness of completion matters as well as its full implementation. If Ukraine would not procrastinate with the VLAP implementation, it could have avoided becoming a hostage of the adverse internal political situation in the EU. Thus, Ukraine shares some responsibility for the "unfavorable coincidence". However, it does not repel the argument that providing a visa-free regime to Ukraine is a matter of the EU ability to comply with its political commitments.

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

C+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	2
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	3	2
Activities	3.5	4
Results	4	4
General score	C+	C+

As a part of the European Neighbourhood Policy, the Eastern Partnership is represented in Ukraine through the lens of the overall European integration and specific opportunities with few to no ties to the Eastern Partnership. In 2016, Ukraine's activities and results under the Eastern Partnership are mostly positive. However, the Ukrainian side hardly has any strategic vision of its own for the further development of the policy and its format, preferring to base it on the EU's suggestions.



Political interest/engagement

Considering Eastern Partnership as a part of the European Neighbourhood Policy, we find ourselves in a rather unusual situation—the main Ukrainian foreign policy decision-makers prefer to limit any mentions of it. Instead, the focus in the context of European integration generally lies in the opportunities provided by Eastern Partnership as a bilateral initiative, such as the Association Agreement, Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas, Energy Community, Common Security and Defence Policy, visa-free travel, etc. From the multilateral standpoint, leitmotifs of bilateral relations with partner nations as a part of Eastern Partnership prevail over the umbrella initiatives too.

Institutional cooperation

In 2016, opposition was seen in the President—Parliament—Government triangle during the implementation of the steps required to leverage the EP's opportunities (adoption of anti-corruption legislation under the Visa Liberalization Action Plan, for instance). The government-level institutional cooperation was enabled through the coordination mechanism of the Government Office for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and Deputy Ministers for European Integration, as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The authorities focused largely on the internal reforms to reap the benefits offered by the Eastern Partnership, but not to create new ones. External interactions still had the format of informal ministerial dialogues (one of which took place in Kyiv), meetings as a part of thematic platforms and their panels, EURONEST, CORLEAP, and cooperation with the Civil Society Forum (including the Ukrainian national platform).

Strategic vision

The vision of the development of relations with the EU and partner nations under the Eastern Partnership is not represented in a separate strategy, such as the joint working document Eastern Partnership—Focus Attention on Key Priorities and Results proposed by the European Commission and European External Action Service. In 2016, the European Neighbourhood Policy review revealed no significant improvements in the prospects of using new instruments and mechanisms. The proposal of the Foreign Minister to establish the EP Common Economic Space may be considered a strategic one, even though no other participating country supported it. Ukraine builds its policy on reacting to others' moves, reducing it to the tactical use of EP's opportunities still aiming primarily at implementing the Association Agreement, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas and visa-free travel deals.

Activities

In 2016, the activities under the Eastern Partnership initiative were carried out at the level of political dialogue, while still having specific outlines within various instruments. In the bilateral context, the activities were about engagement in the implementation of the Riga Summit's resolutions, specifically those tackling security issues, implementation of the flagship initiatives, economic cooperation, and illegal migration. Among the multilateral activities that were a success in 2016 are the Moldova—Ukraine and Belarus—Ukraine EP Territorial Cooperation Programmes, as well as four Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes with EU countries. Cooperation with the Eastern Partnership countries was primarily addressing the issues within the bilateral agenda—take, for instance, removal of trade barriers with Moldova and Belarus.

Results

The main achievements under the Eastern Partnership initiative were achieved in the bilateral context. Since January 1, the Association Agreement as pertaining to the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas deal came into effect on a provisional basis, with the simultaneous termination of the autonomous trade preferences. Ukraine officially joined Europe's programme for small and medium enterprises (COSME). In the transport field, the decision to extend the Trans-European Transport Network to Ukraine made, while the Joint Aviation Space Agreement was not signed. The EU kept providing assistance under the previous programmes. The positive steps include the cross-border cooperation development and promotion of flagship initiatives, including that through the EU's aids allocated for four priority areas: support for institutions and efficient governance; market opportunities; mobility; and co-ordination. In 2016, no fundamental projects were implemented in Ukraine under the aegis of the Eastern Partnership within the multilateral context.

VISEGRAD GROUP

B

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	4	3
Strategic vision	4	5
Activities	4	4
Results	4	4
General score	B	B

In 2016, the relations between Ukraine and the Visegrad Group countries still showed mutual interest, as proven by the institutional cooperation between Ukraine and these countries in all spheres of public life, which are already legally framed, and by the specific examples of cooperation in the region. The V4 countries are active in the European space and in their relations with Ukraine. They continue to assist in reforming various sectors of the Ukrainian State, but Ukraine remains a rather passive recipient of external aid.



Political interest/engagement

The Visegrad Group (V4) countries are considered a successful example towards European integration, and an undisputed benchmark for Ukraine. This is noted in Ukrainian politicians' speeches and interviews regarding the level of economic and social development desired by Ukraine. The V4 countries are also referred to in the Insight Report to the Annual Address by the President of Ukraine to Verkhovna Rada "On Internal and External Situation in Ukraine in 2016." It is emphasized that "deeper partnership with the Visegrad Group countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary) is beneficial to the development of energy cooperation between Ukraine and the EU owing to the diversification of energy supply sources. ... The comprehensive integration of the Ukrainian gas transportation system into the Central Europe Pipeline System is currently a priority." At the same time, development the Baltic and the Black Sea cooperation system based on the cooperation with the V4 countries is expected.

Institutional cooperation

In general, institutional cooperation with the V4 countries is insignificant. The effective area of cooperation is Ukraine's focus on the European integration, within which the state authorities carry out coordinated activities for the compliance of the state policy with the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU. The states cooperate to ensure the visits of senior officials of both countries. The institutional cooperation in response to V4's initiatives, in particular, Visegrad for Ukraine, is gathering pace. As a part of this initiative, Ukraine held two energy efficiency meetings at the level of deputy ministers/state secretaries of V4 and Ukraine in Lviv on February 25, 2016, and on the SME development promotion in Vinnytsia on April 12, 2016.

Strategic vision

The official strategic documents continue referring to the Visegrad Group countries in terms of the important areas for Ukraine—social, defence, security, and energy sectors. Thus, the Ukrainian National Security Strategy emphasizes that Ukraine will continue cooperation with V4 for national security in the foreign policy area at the sub-regional level, and the economic security requires moving the Ukrainian social standards closer to the level of Central and Eastern Europe. The Concept for the Development of Defence and Security Sector of Ukraine dated March 14, 2016, referred to the neighbouring countries, including V4 countries, in cooperation with which we must organize joint operational protection of the state border. Another strategically important area of cooperation is the energy sector. Thus, the Strategy for Sustainable Development "Ukraine 2020" and the Energy Strategy of Ukraine up to 2035 indicate the need for the Ukrainian energy systems' integration into the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas (ENTSO-G), which includes our direct neighbours from V4.

Activities

The foreign policy towards the Visegrad Group countries is carried out at all levels and in different formats. The dominant format is active bilateral relationships, ensured primarily by the work of the Ukrainian embassies in the V4 capitals. In 2016, our senior officials held numerous meetings with their V4 colleagues. Besides, telephone conversations at the top level, as well as bilateral consultation and communications, were seen. The relationships in the V4+ format are not so active. However, there were a series of events, the most important of which are as follows: The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin took part in the conference of foreign ministers in the V4 + Eastern Partnership format (Prague) on May 3-4, 2016; Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine V. Muzhenko attended the meeting of chiefs of general staff in the V4 + Ukraine format on June 10, 2016; the Economic Forum was held in Krynica-Zdroj on September 6-8, 2016, where prime ministers of the V4 countries and Ukraine were able to negotiate both within the joint meeting and individual meetings.

Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has a Deputy Group on International Relations for each V4 country, the Interparliamentary Assembly of Ukraine and Poland, which includes around 21 representatives from each country, is also active. Ukrainian deputies meet with their partners from V4. The Polish side launched an initiative to create the Interparliamentary Assembly of the so-called “Carpathian Strategy” countries—V4 + Ukraine + Romania. And Ukraine can get an “observer” status at V4.

Results

In 2016, the foreign policy towards the Visegrad Group countries was quite efficient, albeit still having room for improvement. Despite enormous pressure from Russia and pro-Russian lobbies in these countries, V4 is an important political and economic partner for Ukraine. Ukraine is less dependent on Russian gas now. The V4 countries fully support the Ukraine’s ambitions regarding the European integration; it is they who constantly demanded to grant the visa-free travel to the Ukrainian citizens, and demanded to prevent the construction of Nord Stream-2 gas pipeline as a politically motivated Russian project.

Ukraine is extending the cooperation in the security field—in the first half of 2016, the Ukrainian military together with their V4 colleagues were involved in the operational duty of the EU group “Helbrok” and V-4. The Note of Accession of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine to the Technical Agreement between the V4 defence ministries was signed on June 6, 2015. The document establishes the basis for Ukraine’s cooperation with EU Combat Tactical Group formed by V4. The Economic Forum held on September 6-8, 2016, had not only to the political but also economic consequences—Ukrainian entrepreneurs got an opportunity to establish contacts with their “Visegrad” counterparts. During 2016, the V4 countries also provided substantial humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, helping treat wounded Ukrainian fighters and rehabilitate children affected by the battle action in Eastern Ukraine at the host countries’ expense.

Among the negative consequences is still low trade turnover between the countries. Ethno-political (Rusyn movement and the autonomous status of Hungarians in Transcarpathia) and historical (negative attitude on the Polish side towards the Ukrainian nationalists active during the World War II) issues remain unresolved. Another concern is the fact that most initiatives come from our partners and with their financial assistance; Ukraine is focused on solving its domestic problems and is passive in responding to external challenges.

EUROPEAN ENERGY COMMUNITY

C-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	4	3
Strategic vision	4	3
Activities	4	3
Results	3	2
General score	C+	C-

2016 was marked by a significant drop in progress in the reforms of the energy sector of Ukraine in terms of its cooperation and responsibilities as a member of the Energy Community. This is due to both factors beyond Ukraine's control, such as the Stockholm arbitration, and the growth of populism among Ukrainian political actors. The law on the national energy regulator was the only significant success, while laws on electricity market, utility metering regulation, promoting energy efficiency were voted down once again. Oil market has remained unregulated; there were hardly any reforms of the coal sector; a new energy strategy is being developed at a very slow pace; government programmes supporting energy efficiency for the population have been cut back.

Most of the problems of the energy sector have continued into 2017, including the Stockholm arbitration, split of Naftogaz of Ukraine JSC, reforms in the electricity market and the coal sector, cutting back and monetization of subsidies, launching new programmes on energy efficiency, further equalization of energy prices for all consumers.



Political interest/engagement

In the absence of large-scale elections, there were no changes in political interest in the energy sector at the political platform level. However, it became a key element of political debate and media battles involving a lot of populism in the interpretation and evaluation. In the Parliament, a group of MPs from different political forces committed to promoting implementation of the provisions of European energy legislation into the Ukrainian one under the guidance of the relevant committee was created, and only continuous control by the public and the Energy Community experts keeps the new laws in force, although it cannot always guarantee their passage through Parliament, as is seen from legislation relating to energy efficiency. It must be acknowledged as a key direction to enhance the energy security of Ukraine by many international institutions and experts. Some of the important energy issues were actively interfered by the President, although they do not fall within his purview.

Institutional cooperation

Poor coordination among central executive bodies of Ukraine resulted in rather inefficient cooperation with the Energy Community; prepared draft documents were usually sent back for approval or revision either at the government or the parliament level with the risk of their further amendments constituting significant changes for the worse. Line ministries (Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Regional Development) and agencies (State Agency of Energy Efficiency and Energy Saving, State Service of Geology and Mineral Resources of Ukraine) compete for influence on government policies and the actual situation in the energy sector, but have no expertise and are in no hurry to use EU assistance (Association4U) and achievements of NGOs in the drafting of laws and their implementation.

Strategic vision

As of the beginning of December 2016, Ukraine has not developed any vision for the energy sector which would take into account obligations of Ukraine as a member of the Energy Community and the Paris Agreement regarding the sector and the time frames. Backstage nature of the energy strategy development is associated with a high risk of inconsistencies and disharmony in energy sector development, and persistent influence of oligarchs reduces the attractiveness of Ukraine as a partner and potential market for European companies.

Activities

During the year, the leaders of Ukrainian ministries and departments took part in the meetings of the Energy Community dealing with the new EU legislation for the energy sector, the state and peculiarities of implementation of the obligations by each state, the dynamics of the energy market in the EU and member countries of the Energy Community, etc.

Results

On 24 November 2016, Ukraine and EU drafted and signed the Memorandum of Understanding on a Strategic Energy Partnership between Ukraine and the European Union together with the European Atomic Energy Community. It meets the requirements of the Association Agreement on cooperation development, but does not impose specific obligations on either party.

The adopted law on the national energy regulator became a difficult compromise between reformist forces and oligarchs; together with the failure to approve laws on the electricity market, commercial utility metering, energy efficiency of buildings, as well as the veto on the environmental laws, it makes up for a very mediocre results of the yearlong activities of the public authorities.

EUROATLANTIC INTEGRATION (NATO)

A-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	3	5
Strategic vision	5	5
Activities	5	5
Results	5	5
General score	B+	A-

Issues of Ukraine-NATO cooperation remained crucial to foreign and security policy of Ukraine in 2016. Despite the different approaches of some political parties to the issue of further integration, cooperation between NATO and Ukraine only deepened and occurred at all levels – presidential, parliamentary and of executive power. Establishing a position and active coordination by the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, as well as decisions taken at the Warsaw Summit, make it possible to give a high rating to the respective direction.



Political interest/engagement

The issue of cooperation between Ukraine and NATO is one of the most essential in the foreign policy agenda. Government Action Plan for 2016, the annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada in 2016, the agenda of the Committee on Foreign Affairs have numerous appeals to the Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine and reform of the security sector in accordance with NATO standards. In the Verkhovna Rada, an inter-factional association "Euroatlantic space for Ukraine" was established (April 2016). Ukraine started working on development of the National Program of cooperation with NATO, which emphasized the high level of political interest in this area. Meanwhile grade "4" is due to a fundamental difference in the vision of future membership in the Alliance and the relevant statements of leaders of some political parties that argued against Ukraine's membership (O. Liashko, Opposition bloc).

Institutional cooperation

In 2016, grade for the institutional cooperation improved, primarily through the introduction of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration position, foundation of the commission on coordination of the Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic Integration and an announcement about establishing the coordinating mechanism of the implementation of the NATO Trust Funds, which operates within the Government office for European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

There was a cooperation and joint events on the level of the Parliamentary committees, first of all Committees on European Integration, on National security and Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Strategic vision

NATO gained a significant place in strategic documents of Ukraine, where the focus devoted to issues of bringing the Armed Forces of Ukraine to NATO standards and strengthen military and political cooperation with its member states. Special attention is paid to the issue of NATO in the National Security Strategy of Ukraine and Military Doctrine of Ukraine, adopted in previous years. State program of reforming and developing the Defense-Industrial Complex for the period till 2020 and the Strategic Defense Bulletin of Ukraine are worth noting among the documents of strategic nature that detailed and deepened vision of the Euro-Atlantic course of the country in 2016.

Activities

Ukraine's participation in the Warsaw Summit was the main event of the year. Activities of Ukraine on cooperation with NATO, an active pace at all levels – presidential, parliamentary, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and others. Regular visits, joint trainings, preparation for signing road maps and other documents, activity of the NATO advisors in Ukraine – all this formed the agenda of cooperation. Besides, the activity is not limited to issues of defense cooperation. For the first time Ukraine was presented at the Annual Conference of the NATO Committee on gender perspective (June 2016). MPs actively participated in the meetings of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, met with representatives of NATO both in Ukraine and during visits to Brussels.

Regularly meetings of the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Technical Cooperation were held, a meeting between Ukrainian Chief of the General Staff and Chiefs of Defence was conducted (May 2016), Ukrainian delegation attended the 50th Meeting of the Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD). The President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko pursued numerous negotiations with NATO Secretary General E. Stoltenberg. Seven meetings of the NATO-Ukraine Commission were held, particularly at the presidential and governmental levels.

Ukrainian peacekeepers has continued their participation within NATO missions in Kosovo and Afghanistan. In addition, foreign instructors trained five Ukrainian battalions according to NATO standards.

Despite the active cooperation and activities of Mission of Ukraine to NATO, it should be noted that the absence of its Head for one and a half year, negatively affects the level of communication.

Results

Among the main results that allow to give the highest point, it is worth mentioning the coordination of Partnership Goals within the framework of the Alliance Program "The Planning and Review Process" (March 2016), Joint statement of NATO-Ukraine Commission at the presidential and governmental levels at the NATO Warsaw Summit (July 2016) and the decisions taken during it, including a new Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine to reform the defense sector.

In addition, it stands to mention the approval of a number of internal documents, that contribute to the Euro-Atlantic integration, particularly Decree of the President of Ukraine on new annual national programs development procedure with NATO, decision on establishment of the Commission for Coordination of Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine as a subsidiary body under the President, adoption of the Strategic Defense Bulletin etc.

BUILD-UP INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT IN COUNTERING RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

B+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	5
Institutional cooperation	n/a	4
Strategic vision	n/a	5
Activities	n/a	4
Results	n/a	4
General score	n/a	B+

2016 demonstrated that international support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine retained. Despite the considerable efforts of the Russian Federation to remove and contain restrictive sanctions in response to its military aggression against Ukraine, sanctions has not only been preserved, but also extended. However, for a number of policy changes and electoral processes in Western partner-states of Ukraine, there is a high risk of reducing international support to Ukraine in combating Russian aggression in the near future.



Political interest/engagement

In general, the issue of international support in countering Russian aggression is a key point because of the inability of Ukraine to oppose Russia by itself. The increased and deepened international support for Ukraine is a strategic task facing the country's diplomatic service. The Analytical Report to the annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada in 2016 allocates a separate section to the national foreign policy priorities, implementation of which is considered through the search of new allies, realization of the strategic partnership and diversification of foreign relations. It certainly should create foreign infrastructure of international support for Ukraine in its countering Russian aggression. Counteraction to Russian aggression was mentioned in the action plans of the both Ukrainian governments in 2016, as well as in the communications and statements of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, groups of deputies and parliamentary delegations to the international organizations.

Institutional cooperation

In 2016 Ukrainian authorities actively cooperated on consolidation of international support for counteraction to Russian aggression. The following successful examples of institutional cooperation can be mentioned: actions to support release of the Ukrainian political prisoners (N.Savchenko etc.), advocacy for prolongation of sanctions against Russia, including platforms of international organizations. Support of civil society (both domestically and of the Ukrainian diaspora) should be also noted. Despite a willingness of Western partners to possibly increase international assistance to Ukraine (including military), the high level of corruption in local government and state institutions, uncertainty of Western partners on the Ukraine's possibility to adopt effectively and absorb greater level of assistance and support keep this surge of support/assistance back.

Strategic vision

In terms of external military aggression of the 'nuclear' state, Ukraine should build effective foreign policy strategy and instruments for build-up/receiving international support. Generally, current authorities chose the correct strategic direction for obtaining this support, because now Ukrainian state has no (and most likely will not have) strategic allies beyond the West. Strategic and regulatory framework (The Law of Ukraine "On the basis of domestic and foreign policy", National Security Strategy of Ukraine, Military Doctrine of Ukraine, Strategy "Ukraine-2020", Strategic Defence Bulletin of Ukraine) formulated specific areas of cooperation and strategic integration of Ukraine with key security and political systems of the modern world, which currently are the international donors of the Ukrainian state existence.

Activities

The first after the Revolution of Dignity (22-24 August 2016) Ambassadorial, is an important step in forming international support in countering Russian military

aggression. Within the framework of the meeting, Ukrainian ambassadors met with the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko, the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine A. Parubiy, the Prime Minister V. Groyzman, the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine I. Klymush-Tsintsadze, officials of the MFA, heads of other state institutions, members of the Ukrainian World Congress, media specialists and experts in the field of cultural diplomacy. During the meeting, the key areas of work with the international community for were identified: 1) consolidated countering Russian aggression in Donbas and occupied Crimea; 2) strict compliance of non-recognition policy of the annexation of the Crimea and Donbas and their de-occupation; 3) keeping political and sanctions pressure on the aggressor. Another important point of the meeting was the presence of the Polish President A. Duda.

However, against the backdrop of military aggression, the ambassadors are not appointed to a significant number of European countries (embassies headed by Charge d'affaires), which is a bad signal to our European partners. There is a certain amount of "political appointments" among the ambassadors. It does not improve the level of diplomatic work in these countries and Ukrainian diplomatic service in general. Similarly, the Mission of Ukraine to NATO is headed by Charge d'affaires E. Bozhok, that does not contribute to the development of relations with a key security institution in the world considering declared Euro-Atlantic aspirations of Ukraine.

Results

2016 was a year of continued international support of Ukraine in countering Russian aggression; personal and sectoral restrictive sanctions against Russia are prolonged by all international partners, who had already contributed to resistance to military aggression of Russia. Similarly, western partners did not recognize the legitimacy of the Russia's elections and their results in occupied Crimea. Important achievements of the Ukrainian diplomacy are: 1) European Parliament resolution of 4 February 2016 condemning "the unprecedented levels of human rights abuses perpetrated against Crimean residents, most notably Crimean Tatars as an indigenous people of Crimea and the severe restrictions on the freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly". 2) PACE resolution on October 12, 2016 placed full responsibility on Russia for guaranteeing or violation of human rights in Crimea and Donbas. This resolution, among other things, stated that "international pressure, including sanctions, must be maintained until the Russian aggression has ceased and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders has been fully restored". 3) positive vote on draft resolution on human rights violations in the occupied Crimea at the Third Committee of the UN GA, which confirmed the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the Russian annexation of Crimea, the adoption of resolution on human rights in Crimea by the UN General Assembly on 19 December 2016.

However, a number of electoral and political developments in the partner states of Ukraine, leading to the rotation of political elites, creates some uncertainty for the level and effectiveness of international support for Ukraine in its confronting Russian aggression next year.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

	General score
Belarus	B-
Georgia	C-
Israel	C
Iran	C-
China	C-
Lithuania	B
Moldova	C-
Poland	B+
Romania	C+
Slovakia	B-
Turkey	A-
Hungary	C+
Russian Federation	C-

BELARUS

B-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	3
Institutional cooperation	n/a	4
Strategic vision	n/a	4
Activities	n/a	4
Results	n/a	3
General score	n/a	B-

In 2016, the Ukraine–Belarus relations have traditionally stayed on the fairway of the official Minsk’s strong military and political dependence on Russia. In its relations with the neighbour, Ukraine tried to find support in the security field and actively develop trade and economic relations. However, Belarus’s certain actions, such as the UN General Assembly vote in December 2016, is still indicative of considerable differences in the foreign-policy goals of both countries.



Political interest/engagement

In 2016, the references to Belarus were of reactive nature due to the Belarusian side's certain actions. On the parliamentary level, the Ukrainian deputies' attention was drawn to the fact that Belarus introduced travel bans for people's deputies I. Huz and I. Herashchenko and voted against the resolution of the UN General Assembly initiated by Ukraine, as well as security risks. Among people's deputies, First Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada I. Herashchenko and Chairperson of the Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko, PPB member I. Fryz, as well as D. Tymchuk and I. Huz from People's Front paid most attention to Belarus.

The Analytical Addendum to the Annual Address by the President of Ukraine contains the reference to Belarus as an important partner in military and technical cooperation, development of the Baltic and the Black Sea cooperation, and trade intermediary under the Russian sanctions. Also, its important role in arranging the Minsk process was admitted.

Institutional cooperation

Institutional cooperation in the Belarusian direction was significantly enhanced in 2016, primarily owing to the need to address bilateral trade restrictions and look for a response to the Russian sanctions in the Ukrainian economic field. The activities of the High-Level Working Group headed by the Ukrainian Trade Representative N. Mykolska from the Ukrainian side in 2015–2016 made it possible to coordinate the activities of the Government's Economic Bloc. Secondly, the signing of the roadmap for economic cooperation was being prepared in 2016. The coordination meeting of the Ukrainian members of Intergovernmental Commission with the participation of relevant ministries was held in October. Third, the current condition of the security sector also called for coordination of the Ukrainian authorities' actions. However, in terms of demarcation of the Ukraine–Belarusian border, such cooperation was not always characterized as positive. Thus, due to delay in funding the demarcation works by the State Service of Ukraine for Geodesy, Cartography & Cadastre, the disparity occurred in the activities performed by the Ukrainian and Belarusian sides. This situation has even become a prerequisite to engaging the Ukrainian MPs in finding solutions to this problem.

Strategic vision

Some long-term strategic Ukrainian documents (Military Doctrine of Ukraine) contain references to the threats that may come from Belarus. But these references are in discord with the system vision of “privileged partnership” with the neighbour as stated in the Analytical Addendum.

The medium-term operating roadmaps are typical for bilateral relations; they determine the directions of economic cooperation. The latest Roadmap for Development of Bilateral Co-operation in 2017-2020 was adopted in November 2016, replacing the document adopted in 2013 by the government of Mykola Azarov.

Activities

The Foreign Minister of Belarus Vladimir Makyey traditionally visited Ukraine in 2016. During his meetings with the President of Ukraine, the issues of trade and economic cooperation enhancement were raised. In September, the Belarusian side made the rotation of the head of the Belarus's diplomatic mission to Ukraine, appointing I. Sokol.

A number of private and public events regarding the security issues in relations with Belarus were held with the participation of the parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs. However, the meetings with the Ambassador of Belarus and political appeals from the leadership of Verkhovna Rada and the relevant committee to support the Ukrainian resolution at the UN in November and December did not lead to the desired outcome.

In November, Minsk held the 24th session of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Ukrainian Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation under the common chairmanship of Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine H. Zubko and Deputy Prime Minister of Belarus V. Semashko.

Two states actively cooperated in the context of border guard services based on the Cooperation Plan for 2015-2016 adopted in 2015; the demarcation commission was working too. In February, the ratification of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Border Commissioners was completed, and the first meeting was held.

Results

Although Belarus plays an important role in the facilitation of the Trilateral Contact Group, its official position on the issues of territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine is under the influence of Russian Federation that in the public space leads to the steps regarded by the Ukrainian side as hostile. In 2016, the Ukrainian side had no impact on building this position and did not always successfully use diplomatic channels to mitigate the Belarusian authorities' actions. The absence of the Ambassador of Ukraine in Belarus for a long time has undermined the political dialogue.

The relations are still focused on the economic component. The prepared Roadmap for 2017-2020 outlines the areas to enhance cooperation, especially in the engineering sector. Traditionally, Ukraine strategically depends on the supplies of Belarusian fuel to the domestic market. Over 8 months of 2016, the turnover reached USD 2.3 billion, 9 % up year-on-year, but Ukraine still has a negative balance of almost USD 1 billion.

GEORGIA

C-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	2
Institutional cooperation	n/a	3
Strategic vision	n/a	3
Activities	n/a	3
Results	n/a	3
General score	n/a	C-

In 2016 the dynamics of Ukrainian-Georgian relations did not meet the existing potential and previously declared political interest in development of cooperation because of some "warming" in Georgian-Russian relations and involvement of the representatives of the former Georgian government to the Ukraine's governing. Intensification of cooperation in the transport sector can be considered as the only positive aspect, which will contribute to the overall realization of the transit potential of both countries.



Political interest/engagement

The level of political interest in the development of bilateral cooperation with Georgia traditionally considered as high, due to the common European integration aspirations and a similar vision on solutions of regional and security issues. However, recently, the Georgian direction of the Ukraine's foreign policy is not defined as a priority and absent in complex policy documents (Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, statements made by the Head of the Government, agenda for sessions of the National Security and Defense Council).

In addition, constant provocative statements by the former President of Georgia and Governor of Odessa region M. Saakashvili on the activities of the Georgian authorities create a negative background for the development of the Ukrainian-Georgian relations. In particular, in October 2016 Ukrainian embassy received Georgian MFA note of protest caused by the intervention in the internal political processes in Georgia by the head of Odessa State Administration M. Saakashvili.

Institutional cooperation

In 2016, the Georgian direction of the foreign policy was not reflected in the Government Action Plan, in the decisions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the National Security and Defense Council. Cooperation between agencies was sporadic (e.g. in the activity of Ministry of Infrastructure and regional state administrations).

Strategic vision

In previous years, Ukraine and Georgia have developed a solid legal basis for effective cooperation at the intergovernmental, interdepartmental and interregional levels. The main documents are the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between Ukraine and the Republic of Georgia (1993) and the Declaration on the development of strategic relations between Ukraine and Georgia (2005), which assumes establishing of strategic relations between Kyiv and Tbilisi. However, the regulatory framework of bilateral cooperation between Ukraine and Georgia has not been significantly updated since 2013. The exception is signing of the Agreement between the Ukrainian Government and the Government of Georgia on the organization of international direct rail link through the ports of Ukraine and Georgia on September 13, 2016.

Recent strategic documents have no direct reference to cooperation with Georgia, but the National Security Strategy of Ukraine assumes active use of GUAM (Georgia is one of the member-states) to protect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state, implementation of economic and energy projects.

Activities

During 2016, there was a decline of political contacts at the highest level (no high-level bilateral visits) that influences the agenda of bilateral relations. There has been no a head of the Ukrainian Embassy in Georgia for more than a year and a half. As a result, Ukraine's foreign policy towards Georgia was limited by the level of ministries and regional state administrations. In particular, it is necessary to stress the meeting of the Minister of Defence S. Poltorak and the Chief of the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces V. Muzhenko with the Chief of the General Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces V. Kapanadze (4 July) to discuss the prospects of deepening military cooperation between the two countries and sharing experience on countering Russian aggression. Special attention is given to the visit of the Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine V. Omelyan to Batumi on September 13-14 to participate in the International Maritime Forum 2016.

At the same time, the Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman during a meeting with the heads of the embassies of the GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development member states (July 5) expressed a wish for the resumption of the Ukrainian-Georgian intergovernmental commission on trade and economic cooperation, whose last meeting was in April 2013.

Results

The results of the Ukrainian-Georgian cooperation are controversial. On the one hand, Kyiv and Tbilisi take measures to deepen military cooperation and joint implementation of the existing transit potential. In particular, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of Georgia signed the Agreement on the setting up a direct international rail link through the ports of Ukraine and Georgia, which provides rapid creation of reliable transit transport bridge between Europe and Asia, especially with the participation of Ukraine in the implementation of the "Silk Road Economic Belt". On the other hand, lowering of the interest of both countries government circles to maintain regular contacts at the highest level can be noticed, as well as cautious backing of Georgia for the Ukrainian position in the conflict with Russia. These processes are occurring against the backdrops of a gradual reduction in mutual trade.

ISRAEL

C

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	3
Institutional cooperation	n/a	3
Strategic vision	n/a	1
Activities	n/a	4
Results	n/a	4
General score	n/a	C

In 2016, political leaders of Ukraine and Israel, not only declaratively mentioned the deep historical ties between the countries, but also expressed considerable interest in intensifying mutual cooperation. According to the long-term interests of Ukraine in Israel, some success has been achieved, such as stimulation of activities aimed at creating FTA area, signing several agreements in legal, social and economic spheres, active political dialogue continued. However, the need for more active use of the existing potential of cooperation and bringing bilateral relations to a strategic level should be noted.

Political interest/engagement

Interest in cooperation between Ukraine and Israel is mostly on the level of political leaders' speeches and is unsystematic. During a meeting with the delegation of Knesset in September this year in Kyiv, the deputy speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament O. Syroyid stressed that, considering the dynamic development of Israel in a context of the constant security instability, its experience is especially important for Ukraine, particularly in defense, medicine and public administration. The President of Ukraine talked about the high level of mutual understanding, positive trends in relations and importance of supporting the country on the international level during his official visit to Israel in September 2016. Ditto the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy during his meeting with the Ambassador of Israel to Ukraine E. Belotsercovsky (18 July).

The heads of relevant ministries emphasized trade, investments, agriculture, adoption of high technology, environment, healthcare, infrastructure as key areas of interest. In general, the Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman specified the strategic importance of relations between the countries and noted the high level of economic cooperation during a meeting with the head of the Israeli Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation S. Elkin in Kyiv in October 2016.

Israel was paid little attention in the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada in 2016. The country was mentioned in the general context of the necessity to diversify cooperation, where Israel is a part of the Middle East vector. It is noted that the interest determined by "possible Israeli assistance in attracting investments, obtaining the latest technology and know-how, use of lobbying potential of the state."

Institutional cooperation

Coordination of state institutions in 2016 was largely directed to perform one specific task – creation of the free trade zone. In this context, coordination of cooperation in the triangle "Cabinet of Ministers – Parliament – President" is worth noting. At the executive level, the necessity of FTA with Israel was indicated in the Action Plan of the governments led by A. Yatsenyuk and V. Groysman. Also at the executive level, the intergovernmental committees and a number of ministries (namely Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources) engaged in practical implementation of deepening cooperation in different fields. At the legislative level, the Parliament, including the Committee on Foreign Affairs, contributed to the ratification of bilateral agreements.

Strategic vision

The strategic documents of foreign policy of Ukraine have not any references to Israel. The main document regulating relations between the countries is Memorandum of Understanding and the Basic Principles of Cooperation between Ukraine and Israel signed on 12 January 1993, which is not a basis for the strategic vision of the current state of relations.

Activities

This year, the activity of Ukraine regarding Israel was primarily aimed at recovery pulse of cooperation in specific areas. In October, the Ninth meeting of the Joint Group on trade and economic cooperation was held. The Deputy minister of Economic Development and Trade N. Mykolska visited Israel to discuss the opportunity of bringing Ukrainian trade mission to the country. In March, Minister of Agriculture O. Pavlenko paid a working visit to Israel in order to discuss joint research programs in the agricultural sector and partnership with the Center for International Development "MASHAV". The celebration of the 25th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between Israel and Ukraine deserves a special attention. For this occasion, Tel Aviv hosted the international conference «Invest and Trade in Ukraine» on 21-22 September. However, there is insufficient use of military and technical cooperation and cooperation in the field of government reform.

At the parliamentary level, the visit of delegation of the Verkhovna Rada in March and a joint meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group "Ukraine – Israel" in Jerusalem in July should be noted. On November 24, the Head of the Knesset Y. Edelstein, led the delegation of the Knesset to visit Ukraine for participation in the Forum "Ukraine – Israel 2016". It was the first official visit of the head of the Knesset in 23 years.

Activities at the highest level had ceremonial nature, particularly, in autumn 2016, Israeli President R. Rivlin paid an official visit to Ukraine on occasion of the 75th anniversary of the tragedy in Babi Yar. He also delivered his speech in the Parliament and had a meeting with the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko. At the same time the negative reaction of Israel on the Ukraine's voting in the UN SC for the Resolution on Israeli settlements on occupied territories should be mentioned. As a consequence, a visit of the Prime-Minister of Ukraine that had been already planned was postponed.

Results

In 2016, several bilateral agreements were concluded, including the signing and ratification of the Agreement on Temporary Employment of Ukrainian Workers in Specific Labor Market Sectors of the State of Israel. Ukraine and Israel also signed an Agreement on Employment of Relatives of the Staff of Diplomatic Missions. As a result of the Ninth session of the Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, the Parties signed a protocol stating the key areas of cooperation and the decision to establish a working group on environment and water management. In August, after the meeting, the Prosecutor General of Ukraine and Minister of Justice of Israel signed a memorandum of understanding on judicial cooperation between the agencies. In July, after the 3rd round of negotiations on the FTA area the Parties signed the joint report, where they agreed sections on customs procedures, trade and settlement of disputes.

According to the State Statistics of Ukraine, for 9 months of 2016 the volume of trade between Ukraine and Israel amounted to 637.2 million US dollars and decreased by 10 % compared to the corresponding period of 2015. However, the trade balance is positive and amounted to 320 million US dollars.

IRAN

C-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	3
Institutional cooperation	n/a	3
Strategic vision	n/a	1
Activities	n/a	4
Results	n/a	2
General score	n/a	C-

Ukraine benefited to some extent after sanctions against Iran had been lifted, and reached certain results in bilateral relations in 2016, despite the absence of statements about priority of the Iranian direction in its foreign policy. The greatest interest of Ukraine in Iran is the Iranian energy procurement, while Iran is particularly interested in construction of nuclear power plants and development of Iran's aircraft building industry with the help Ukrainian experts.

Political interest/engagement

Iran is not mentioned neither in political and election programs of parties represented in the Parliament of Ukraine of the VIII convocation, nor in the text of the coalition agreement. Iran is mentioned in Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada in 2016 repeatedly, particularly in the sections on issues of global security (positively assessed the Iran's implementation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and deterioration of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia marked as a negative factor). Bilateral relations of Ukraine and Iran are rated as promising and profitable for our country.

Iran did not appear in the statements of the President of Ukraine, the Prime Minister of Ukraine and the Chairman of the Parliament, but cooperation with it was discussed at the sessions of the Verkhovna Rada and at the meetings of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. In addition, First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine S.Kubiv during his meeting with the Ambassador of Iran to Ukraine and Moldova M. Beheshti Monfared in May 2016 noted that "Ukraine considers Iran as one of the priority partners in the Middle East region and focuses on the development of bilateral relations". Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations and the MFA also often pay attention to Iranian issues.

Institutional cooperation

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine, the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs are involved in development of the Ukrainian-Iranian relations. There is no complete coordination between these institutions, although the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Iranian Joint Commission on Economic and Trade Cooperation coordinates their activities. Thus, the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs has repeatedly requested the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to propose, and the Cabinet of Ministers to adopt lifting sanctions against Iran immediately after the decision of the UN Security Council in 2015. Only in July 2016, Ukraine partially lifted sanctions imposed against Iran for the development of military nuclear program.

Strategic vision

Although in 2016 the representatives of several Ukrainian ministries demonstrated understanding of the necessity to develop relations with Iran, particularly in the energy sector, the country was not mentioned in any strategic documents. This lack of strategic vision on Iran can be attributed to the fact that key documents were adopted in 2015, when Iran had still been under international sanctions and comprehensive cooperation between Ukraine and Iran was not possible. The nature of the Ukrainian-Iranian relations has begun dramatically change only since from 2016.

Activities

Generally, Ukraine's foreign policy in the Iranian direction can be estimated positively. In 2016, Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Iranian Joint Commission on Economic and Trade Cooperation resumed its activity after a twelve-year break. In response to the lifting of sanctions in 2016, Iran expressed official support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine, and stated that any third country cannot affect the development of the Ukrainian-Iranian relations.

In 2016, a bilateral political dialogue at the highest level was restored. Political consultations on the level of Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs were held in Kyiv on 26-27 October 2016. There were three official visits of the Ukrainian ministers to Tehran: two visits of the Minister of Energy and Coal Industry and one of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. During the MFA visit, (May 2016) Iranian side expressed their willingness to host the President of Ukraine.

In bilateral relations with Iran, Ukraine is interested in trade and economic cooperation, especially in energy sector. Ukraine expressed its interest in import of Iranian oil and gas. Subsequent to the lifting of international sanctions against Iran and as a result, of the energy ministries' negotiations, the question of bilateral cooperation in civilian nuclear energy and the heat power-stations construction in Iran have been raised. Today Ukraine actively supplies to Iran agricultural products, engineering products, helps to develop the aircraft building industry. In turn, Iran exports to Ukraine fruits and vegetables, and takes interest in promoting Iranian pharmaceutical company in Ukraine. However, in general there is a reduction in bilateral trade. According to the State Statistics of Ukraine, for the first 6 months of 2016 compared with the corresponding period in 2015, Ukraine's export to Iran fell by 35%, and import – by 6%.

Results

2016 drove Ukrainian-Iranian relations from the deadlock. In particular, as a result of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Iranian Joint Commission on Economic and Trade Cooperation, the Memorandum of Understanding was signed. It is the road map for near- and mid-term perspectives. Bilateral meetings at the ministerial level in 2016 were more intense and more effective than in previous years. The main achievement of Ukraine is reach of accommodation with Iran on expansion of mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation in different areas. However, despite intensive contacts during 2016, two countries have not signed any contracts.

In addition, the positive potential of the Iranian-Ukrainian cooperation is not realized. The issues of bank payments between Ukrainian and Iranian parties that emerged during the implementation of sanctions remain unresolved. In addition, the visa issue is still an open point. The information sphere is also underfulfilled, as Iranian media still provide only a pro-Russian point of view on Ukraine. However, Iran needs Ukraine to some extent, and Ukrainian leadership should try to avail of it in the future. Iran uses cooperation with Ukraine in order to provide better quality higher education to the students, improve relations with the EU, make it clear to Russia that Iran is not dependent on it and Moscow should be ready for more concessions in negotiations for any matters with Tehran.

CHINA

C-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	3.5	3
Institutional cooperation	4	3
Strategic vision	3	2
Activities	3.5	3
Results	4	2
General score	B-	C-

After a certain intensification of relations in 2015, political and interagency dialogue with China entered a long-term hiatus. Only a significant bilateral interest in the business environment and potentially important position of Ukraine in the One Belt, One Road project keep these relations from being frozen completely.



Political interest/engagement

Despite the declared level of strategic relations and developed basis for negotiations, Ukrainian establishment did not show any significant interest in intensifying political cooperation with China in 2016. Normalization launched in relations between Ukraine and China in 2015 has not continued to any significant extent, and political dialogue has remained sporadic. Interest of Ukrainian political figures in China was episodic and declarative. In the Address of the President of Ukraine, cooperation with China as a geopolitical power was recognized only from the standpoint of economic cooperation.

Institutional cooperation

Parliamentary group of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Interparliamentary Relations with China include a remarkable number of MPs – 237 – but the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Verkhovna Rada hardly ever addresses China. Exceptions include the initiative to establish a coordinating body to develop strategy for Ukraine joining the One Belt, One Road project in the Verkhovna Rada. However, this level of coordination should obviously be created by the relevant institutions of the Cabinet of Ministers. Some impetus for the relations was provided by the appointment of the new Chinese Ambassador to Ukraine Du Wei. He immediately established relations with Volodymyr Groysman, the Prime Minister of Ukraine, and Andriy Parubiy, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. At the end of 2016, Du Wei participated in the first Silk Road Forum in Kyiv attended by Ukrainian officials.

Strategic vision

In 2013, a number of strategic documents were signed with China, but their implementation was put on pause ever since, de jure due to the delay in the next meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission on Cooperation, de facto because of the lack of political will. Moreover, Ukraine has not yet approved the export strategy on trade and economic relations with China (under the Law of Ukraine On State Financial Support for Export), nor has it introduced visa liberalization for citizens of China.

Activities

Apart from a brief meeting between Petro Poroshenko and Xi Jinping at the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, there were no high-level political contacts. Although it is long overdue, scheduled meeting of the bilateral intergovernmental commission on cooperation was not held. China seeks to translate bilateral relations with Ukraine into a purely pragmatic, economic plane, avoiding controversial political issues. Its interest in the development of safe and cost-effective transport routes to Europe dictates interest in Ukraine joining the One Belt, One Road initiative and creating a free trade zone with Ukraine. Ukraine views these two initiatives very differently. Despite being rather cautious concerning the later, Kyiv took tries to act proactively in relation to

implementation of the international transport corridor and has even already prepared a draft of the Ukraine–China Roadmap for joint establishment of the economic zone of the Silk Road. Earlier that year, a test train consisting of 10 cars and 20 containers was sent from Illichivsk to China via Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan.

Results

China negatively perceived a noticeable revival of Ukraine's relations with Japan, a regional rival of China – for instance, 2017 was declared the Year of Japan in Ukraine. Interpreting Ukrainian position, Beijing is in no hurry to invite Ukraine to the financial cooperation between China Central and Eastern Europe in 16+1 format.

In the prior period, Ukraine lacked proactivity, resulting in Belarus assuming a leading role of the transport and logistics hub for Chinese goods in Eastern Europe. There are still significant risks of failure to perform previous important contracts (signed in 2013) as they contain corruption component of the former regime of Victor Yanukovich. A striking example is an outrageous case of the State Food and Grain Corporation of Ukraine.

Lack of substantial improvement in business relations with China is a result of the lack of transparent rules for business or investment protection in Ukraine. Moreover, trade relations with China are extremely skewed: even though China ranks second in terms of turnover among all economic partners of Ukraine (2015), the Ukrainian share in international trade in China is less than 0.1%. In the first nine months of 2016, the trade turnover between the countries amounted to slightly more than USD 4.5 billion, which is twice as less than five years ago. This negative trade balance is USD 1,866,000,000. China makes no secret of its interest in Ukrainian technology. Selling AN-225 Mriya to China showcased vulnerabilities in the state system of intellectual property protection.

LITHUANIA

B

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	4
Institutional cooperation	n/a	3
Strategic vision	n/a	4
Activities	n/a	5
Results	n/a	4
General score	n/a	B

In 2016, Ukraine managed to maintain cooperation with Lithuania at the appropriate level, despite some threat of its weakening, reflected particularly in criticisms by the Lithuanian side of corruption in Ukraine. Partially this happened due to the 25th anniversary of the renewal of diplomatic relations between the states, in the frames of which several additional bilateral agreements were signed at the level of ministries and the Road map on strategic partnership development for 2017–2018. The Russian factor continues to be an impetus for bilateral ties and cooperation in defense, economic and energy fields. Ukraine assigns an important role to Lithuania’s mediation in terms of European integration (the Association Agreement, free trade zone and visa liberalization).

Political interest/engagement

The Ukraine's interest in cooperation with Lithuania is reflected in foreign policy statements of the main state officials. Most often, there were meetings of the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko and Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine I. Klymush-Tsintsadze with the Lithuanian representatives. The position on Lithuania is clear: Ukraine and Lithuania are strategic partners facing common threats from Russia (in the context of the armed conflict in the eastern Ukraine, to encourage the extension of the EU sanctions against Russia and implementation of the Minsk agreements).

Though there are no references to Lithuania in the Annual Address of the President to the Verkhovna Rada in 2016 or decisions of the National Security Council, Lithuania plays an important role of a negotiator with the EU and NATO to deepen cooperation (in case of EU this initially refers to ratification and implementation of the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement, economic cooperation within the DCFTA and the Action Plan on Visa Liberalization).

Institutional cooperation

Meetings between Ukrainian and Lithuanian politicians are most often carried out in a 'mirrored mode' – when the presidents of states, representatives of ministries or representatives of parliaments are involved in a meeting. The Second Ukrainian-Lithuanian Economic Forum was an event, which was attended by the presidents and ministers at the same time. The Forum aimed at promoting the entry of Ukrainian manufacturers into the European market through Lithuania.

Strategic vision

Relations with Lithuania are of the strategic importance for Ukraine, which is confirmed by biennial Roadmaps. It is worth noting that this approach started in 2008, and in 2014 cooperation intensified. On December 12, the new Roadmap on strategic partnership development for 2017-2018 was signed. Ukraine still needs Lithuania's facilitation of the Ukrainian interests in the EU and NATO to implement the Minsk agreements. However, there are no mentions of strategic cooperation specifically with Lithuania in the key documents (National Security Strategy, Military Doctrine of Ukraine, Strategy "Ukraine-2020" and other common strategic documents).

Activities

The institutional cooperation between Ukraine and Lithuania, not least due to media attention, is visible on the level of the two states' presidents. The annual meetings of the Council of Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania were supplemented by regular exchanges of visits and official meetings during international events. The less

noticeable but still regular were meetings of the members of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the Sejm and Senate of Poland and the Permanent Ukrainian-Lithuanian Commission on European integration (with the participation of the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine and representatives of the MFA, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Healthcare of Ukraine).

Many initiatives at the level of ministries were launched: the Ministries of Culture of Ukraine and Lithuania are implementing a Program of cooperation for 2016-2020; three new bilateral cooperation agreements were signed by the 25th anniversary of the renewal of the diplomatic relations between Ukraine and Lithuania (environment, healthcare, human resources). Ukraine continues practice of involving Lithuanian experts for consultations (in particular, the International Advisory Council was established at the level of international experts and politicians for reforms' implementation).

The most notable sectoral cooperation was in the defense field (through mediation of Lithuania periodically there were joint exercises with NATO military and separately for the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian brigade LITPOLUKRBRIG, transfer of unused ammunition to Ukraine), in the cultural field (implementation of the comprehensive bilateral project "Lithuania-Ukraine: Cultural partnership 2016" and events dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the renewal of the diplomatic relations), and in economic cooperation to allow the Ukrainian companies enter the EU markets (meeting of the Lithuanian-Ukrainian Business Council and the second Ukrainian-Lithuania Economic Forum).

Results

Lithuania supports the Ukraine's position in the EU and NATO. In bilateral relations during 2016, main tasks set at the eighth meeting of the Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania were implemented – from strategic areas of the European and Euro-Atlantic cooperation to the measures on rehabilitation of wounded soldiers, humanitarian aid, supporting IDPs, granting scholarships to students and pupils. The rates of exports and imports for Ukraine and Lithuania have stabilized, with a specific growth of exports (up to 104.6% by a ratio of the first 9 months of 2015) and decrease of imports (91.5%).

MOLDOVA

C-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	4
Institutional cooperation	n/a	2
Strategic vision	n/a	3
Activities	n/a	3
Results	n/a	2
General score	n/a	C-

The lack of a strategic vision of bilateral relations, their dependence on the political situation does not allow to put a high grade to the Moldovan direction of the Ukrainian foreign policy.



Political interest/engagement

The Analytical Report to the annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada mentioned Republic of Moldova (RM) in the context of NATO support for strengthening military capabilities of countries neighboring Russia, and in the light of coordinating efforts to counter the hybrid war with the Russian Federation.

As for the statements of politicians, there were calls to consider the lessons of Moldova (April statement of then Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy on necessity to prevent Ukraine from the "Moldovan scenario"), an insular interest in cooperation (Ambassador of Ukraine to Moldova I. Hnatyshyn statement on economic zone "Reni-Giurgiulești-Galați" to combine the potential of ports), the statement of the Prime Minister on the need to resume practical work of the Joint Ukrainian-Moldovan Intergovernmental commission on trade and economic cooperation and appeals to establish free trade zone between GUAM states. In autumn, tone of the statements changed. The Chair of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Foreign Affairs, H. Hopko said that in case of the pro-Russian candidate victory in Moldovan presidential elections, Ukraine could get a source of Russian destabilizing influence in its neighbor, while MP from "Petro Poroshenko Bloc" I. Friz urged not to recognize the elections in Moldova, as they were rigged. Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration of Ukraine K. Yeliseiev noted "the dynamics of Ukrainian-Moldovan relations will depend on the willingness of the new leadership of Moldova to develop cooperation based on respect for the territorial integrity of Ukraine, including the non-recognition of the annexation of Crimea". The President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko, commenting on the election of I. Dodon, expressed hope that the policy of the new president would be pro-Moldovan and pro-European.

Institutional cooperation

In terms of institutional cooperation, 2016 recorded a lack of cooperation and coordination between the various bodies involved in implementation of the foreign policy in a particular direction. However, without evidence of competition or conflicts.

As in the case of political engagement, the shift was outlined in autumn. In November the 2nd Interagency meeting on topical issues of bilateral relations with participation of I. Hnatyshyn, the Ambassador of Ukraine to Moldova, was held at the MFA of Ukraine.

Strategic vision

The Law "On the basis of domestic and foreign policy," National Security Strategy and the Strategy "Ukraine-2020" have no references to the Republic of Moldova. In the Military Doctrine, the Republic of Moldova is mentioned in the context of threats – "presence of the Russian troops in the Transnistrian region of Moldova could be used

to destabilize the situation in the southern regions of Ukraine", as well as military and political challenges – "... incomplete legal definition of state borders of Ukraine with Russia, Belarus and Moldova". The Energy Strategy of Ukraine till 2035 mentions the need "to conclude the necessary contractual framework and implement appropriate measures for electricity market integration between Moldova and Ukraine until 2018".

Activities

Despite the shortage of institutional cooperation and strategic vision in relations, 2016 showed relative dynamics in the Moldovan direction: the meeting of Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy with the Vice Prime Minister of Moldova V. Osipov in April, the visit of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs delegation to the Republic of Moldova in May, the meeting of the President of Ukraine and the Prime Minister of Moldova P. Filip in October (on the border "Palanca – Majaky – Udobnoe"). A meeting of co-chairs of the Intergovernmental Commission on trade and economic cooperation in November reached an agreement on the provision of a "green corridor" for the withdrawal of Russian troops and ammunition, illegally staying in the Transnistrian region of Moldova etc.

Results

Among the results of the 2016 are the meeting of co-chairs of the Intergovernmental Commission on trade and economic cooperation; reaching an agreement on the abolition of restrictions on some groups of goods import from Ukraine to Moldova from 1 January 2017; some progress in the process of state boundary demarcation; signing the Protocol on cooperation in the sphere of education by 2020.

Republic of Moldova also maintains solidarity with Ukraine on integrity and inviolability of the state borders of Ukraine. However, the turbulence of the last quarter, the recall of Ambassador I. Hnatyshyn for consultation in late October 2016 are indicators that prevent from the high grade of results.

POLAND

B+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	5	5
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	4	3
Activities	4	5
Results	5	4
General score	B+	B+

In 2016, security cooperation, promotion of reforms and active upholding of common interests on the global stage intensified. Vulnerabilities include political and institutional instability and lack of common ground in historical issues.



Political interest/engagement

In 2016, political involvement and interest in relations with Poland were high and defined by active European, Euro-Atlantic and security cooperation, involvement of Poland in the reform process and active response to the historical policies at different levels of government and society (the Parliament, civil society, media).

Institutional cooperation

There is a tendency to institutionalize cooperation at different levels with the meetings of Presidential Advisory Council, Polish-Ukrainian parliamentary group of the Polish Sejm and Senate, the Interparliamentary Assembly of Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland, Intergovernmental Coordination Council on Interregional Cooperation. However, cooperation institutions remain vulnerable to internal political challenges: Mikhal Dvorchyk, the head of the Polish-Ukrainian group, became the main lobbyist of the decision on establishing the July 11 as the Day of Remembrance of Polish Victims of Genocide Committed by the UPA, and after voting, Borys Tarasyuk stepped down as the Chairman of the Parliamentary Group on Interparliamentary Relations with Poland (new co-chairmen were elected in October). There was a difference between the responses to the above decision by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Verkhovna Rada: while the former sought to mitigate the consequences, the Parliament's reaction was stronger. Due to the resignation of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine, the Mixed Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Development failed to meet in March, government consultations in Warsaw and the Polish-Ukrainian consultations at the level of Foreign Ministers were postponed. Ukrainian-Polish Partnership Forum sessions were not resumed.

Strategic vision

Ukraine does not have a public strategy for the development of relations with Poland. This creates a skewed situation, as Witold Waszczykowski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, clearly emphasized the main directions and principles of Polish policy towards Ukraine in his annual speech on the priorities of Polish foreign policy (January) and his policy article (September). Joint Declaration of the President of Ukraine and the President of the Republic of Poland as of 24 August and Joint Statement of the Presidents as of 2 December cannot replace the missing strategic document.

Activities

There were bilateral contacts at every level. Polish President Andrzej Duda came to Kyiv in celebration of the 25th anniversary of independence, and Petro Poroshenko attended Warsaw in his official capacity in December. Witold Waszczykowski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, visited Ukraine in September 2016. There were numerous meetings between the Presidents (13 February, 1 April, 6 July) and Ministers of Foreign Affairs (18 January, 13 February, 19 March, 9 December) at multilateral events. There were visits by Andriy Parubiy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada, Volodymyr Groysman, Prime Minister, Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadze, Vice Prime Minister, Olexandr Turchynov, Head of the National Security Council, meetings and visits by ministers and officials from the Ministries of Defence, Education, Youth and Sports, Energy, Infrastructure, Health, State Border Guard Service and others.

Interaction between parliaments dominated by historical policy issues was active but not coordinated. The Polish parliament ignored the Verkhovna Rada's proposal on the joint statement on the events in Volyn in favour of unilateral decisions (as on 7 and 22 July in the Sejm and Senate, respectively); the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine responded with the statement. In addition, the reconciliatory Declaration of Memory and Solidarity was adopted by the Polish and Ukrainian parliaments on 20 October.

Reform process was supported by the direct involvement and participation of Polish advisors and managers of state enterprises, as well as through advisory and technical support of public administration reforms, fight against corruption, decentralization, local government, education reforms, etc. Border Guard Service management was actively discussed (implementation of joint control, allocation of the USD 100 million loan); the embassy addressed the issue of immigration to Poland (up to 1 million citizens) and responded to xenophobic incidents and memorial destruction incidents.

Results

The Polish government continues to support Ukraine in its European and Euro-Atlantic direction and countering Russian aggression. Poland tried to involve Ukraine into regional cooperation (Visegrad Group format + participation of Ukraine in Krynica Forum, invitation to the meeting regarding Intermarium in Dubrovnik); although the results are limited so far. Ukraine is included in the 10 top-priority countries receiving aid under the Polish Development Assistance Programme for 2016-2020.

Important results were achieved in defence: on the sidelines of the NATO Summit in Warsaw, the Ministries of Defence signed the Agreement on Cooperation in Defence, Protocol amending the Agreement on Military and Technical Cooperation, Memorandum of Understanding between the State Space Agency of Ukraine and The Polska Grupa Zbrojeniowa SA (Polish Armaments Group). Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade was launched.

Economic relations improved; there was an increase in mutual investments and trade exchanges intensified, despite the pressing issue of protection and guarantees for Polish investments. The Agreement on Cooperation between the Association of Ukrainian Business in the Republic of Poland and the International Society of Polish Entrepreneurs in Ukraine was signed in May.

Dialogue of Ukrainian and Polish historians regarding the complex issues of common past was restored, symbolic gestures were made, joint events have been held. However, the understanding is still a distant prospect: beside the decisions of the Polish parliament, politicians failed to reach an agreement on a joint celebration of the anniversary of Mykhailo Hrushevsky attended by both presidents, a controversial film Volyn was released, and the attitude of Poles towards Ukrainians has worsened.

ROMANIA

C+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	4	3
Strategic vision	3.5	3
Activities	4	4
Results	4	3
General score	B-	C+

In 2016 the positive dynamics of relations between Ukraine and Romania remained. In April 2016, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko visited Romania. Romania has consistently supported Ukraine on bilateral level and in international organizations.



Political interest/engagement

In the programs of the parliamentary political forces, there are no mentions about relations with Romania. There are also no direct referring to Romania in the Coalition Agreement. As to the mentioning in the declarations of factions and leaders of political parties, during 2016 the allusions about Romania appeared in declarations of the leader of the faction "Narodny Front" M. Burbak, who co-chairs the interparliamentary group «Ukraine – Romania» and in speeches of the Chair of Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko. Mentions had positive connotations.

The Analytical Report to the annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada in 2016 noted that "strengthening relations with Romania gets strategic nature to Ukraine". This is a significant step forward compared to the atmosphere of mistrust and competition, which has dominated the bilateral relations for the long time.

Besides, there is a lack of interest in Romania by political parties, but the interest and involvement at the level of the state and leaders of some factions can be observed.

Institutional cooperation

In 2016, a Protocol on the renewal of the Ukrainian-Romanian Joint Presidential Commission was signed. In particular, during 2016 there were working visits at the level of the Mixed Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Romanian Commission on national minorities.

In addition, in September 2016, the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU) signed a protocol on cooperation with the Anti-Corruption General Directorate of the Ministry of Interior Affairs of Romania on preventing and combating corruption – foundations for this were laid during the visit of the Head of the NABU A. Sytnyk to Romania in 2015.

However, visits of the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Transport and Infrastructure of Romania were deferred, although Parties had preconcert on them in 2015. The visit of the Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament to Romania did not happen too. Among the reasons is changing of the governments in Ukraine and Romania.

Strategic vision

There is no direct mention of Romania in any Ukrainian documents of strategic nature (see the previous year).

However, in 2016 the work on updating the legal framework of bilateral cooperation continued. In particular, such documents as Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of Romania on joint patrolling of the state border, Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of Romania on cooperation in military transportation, the Agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of Romania on abolishment of payment for national visas.

Activities

In 2016, the President of Ukraine, Foreign Minister of Ukraine, and Minister of Defence of Ukraine visited Romania.

The cooperation is getting better in security area. The process of approval of the draft intergovernmental agreement on military-technical cooperation between Ukraine and Romania continues. Activities of the Embassy of Ukraine to Romania remained effective. But it is difficult for diplomats to maintain the level of interest to Ukraine in the Romanian media compared to 2015, due to both a general tendency of reducing attention to Ukraine and Ukraine's limiting representation to the level of Charge d'Affaires. The Previous Ambassador of Ukraine to Romania was recalled on March 11, 2016

Results

Based on the results of work in 2016, we can mark out that Romania supported Ukraine's positions both on the bilateral level and in international forums. However, due to internal rotation in Ukraine and Romania, a number of visits of officials were postponed or were not held at all. It has been no appointment of ambassador within 9 months, which prevented from rapprochement of nations and bringing to the level of strategic partnership.

SLOVAKIA

B-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	4
Institutional cooperation	n/a	3
Strategic vision	n/a	3
Activities	n/a	4
Results	n/a	4
General score	n/a	B-

In 2016, it became possible to retain positive dynamics of Slovak-Ukrainian relations, increase cooperation in the energy sector and humanitarian field, and keep Slovakian support to political and security issues. At the same time, a problem of insufficient interest of the Ukrainian diplomacy to Slovakia, fragmentation of cooperation continues to exist.



Political interest/engagement

Interest of the Ukrainian political establishment in Slovakia focuses mainly at the energy field – reverse flow of natural gas from this country. Moreover, hopes for cooperation with Slovakia were associated with awareness of the role Slovakia played in the all-European processes, in particular through its EU presidency in the second half of 2016. Finally the official documents and speeches refer to Slovakia as an example of economic reforms model, prevalently in the context of the need to adopt the Visegrad group's experience.

Slovakia was considered as a partner in the implementation of the reforms announced by the government of A. Yatsenyuk and the present government of V. Groysman. For example, it refers to reforming the customs service, anti-smuggling, and cooperation with customs authorities of the neighboring countries. Priorities on energy efficiency stated by the government is also a strategic direction of the Ukrainian-Slovak cooperation – implementation of the EU legislation on energy efficiency of buildings, attraction of private investments in increasing energy efficiency of public and municipal property.

Institutional cooperation

Institutional cooperation continues to be the weakest link of Ukraine's foreign policy. There is a lack of coordination and duplication of functions of several ministries, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade in terms of economic diplomacy. Some institutions, intended to promote interests of Ukraine in Slovakia, are of formal character only (the Slovak-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce, the Ukrainian Cultural Center in Bratislava). After the legal collisions (e.g. since autumn 2016 the Slovak Migration Police introduced the practice of requesting from Ukrainian nationals an additional certificate of good conduct for the territory of Donbass and the Crimea in addition to standard Ukrainian documents), there was no prompt response of the respective Ukrainian authorities (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, etc). Government authorities demonstrate poor awareness of legal and other problems, which Ukrainian citizens face in Slovakia.

Strategic vision

In general, insufficient interest of the Ukrainian diplomacy to Slovakia continues to be a problem. Cooperation with Slovakia does not stand out as a special priority in the general strategic documents of Ukraine. Currently there is any bilateral framework document, which outlines the action plan of bilateral cooperation. This direction is formulated in general terms, although, due to the current political situation, Slovakia happened to be in the center of the Ukrainian political discourse. The Analytical Report to the Annual Presidential Address to the VRU stresses the importance of entering into regional security structures of the states that have similar goals and objectives in the field of security, among which Slovakia is mentioned as an important

partner in effectively combating the hybrid war from the Russian Federation. The most specific tasks lie in the energy sector: The Energy Strategy – 2035 focuses on the need to increase gas transportation capacity from Slovakia, to implement the projects of gas interconnectors.

Activities

Activities on the Slovak direction reflected the Ukraine's general interest in cooperation with this country in specific sectors. There was a notable political dialogue in such areas as ensuring energy security by consolidated efforts, finalization of granting a visa-free regime to Ukraine, and providing humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. In 2016, the meetings of the Presidents, Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers of Ukraine and Slovakia took place. For the first time since 2013 there was a meeting of one of the intergovernmental commissions (on transborder cooperation).

Unfortunately, an incident with the Embassy of Ukraine in Slovakia had a negative impact on the promotion of Ukrainian interests in Slovakia, when a family member of the Embassy diplomat was arrested and the scheme of smuggling cigarettes was revealed. As a result, the head of the diplomatic mission was withdrawn, and in the second half of 2016 the embassy awaited for a new head.

Results

Although there were no specific diplomatic "breakthroughs", results of the Ukrainian-Slovak dialogue in 2016 is mostly positive. The Ukrainian question managed to stay stably in the Slovak agenda. Given the presidency of Slovakia in the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2016, it is important that assistance to Ukraine, including the introduction of a visa-free regime with the EU, was included in the Slovak priorities and Slovak partners pressed this issue, sometimes through resistance from high officials of other EU countries.

The issue of opposing the implementation of the Nord Stream-2 project continued to be the common denominator of cooperation in the energy sector. In 2016, the Vojany-Uzhhorod pipeline started operating in two directions, which enables use of the Ukrainian underground storage facilities in the Ukraine-Europe direction. The target rate on "restructuring of natural gas imports", in particular by increasing reverse flow capacity in the direction of Slovakia-Ukraine up to 54-57 million cubic meters per day, declared in the government's program for 2016, has not been fulfilled. The idea of the "great reverse" was not interesting for the Slovak side, and the whole issue is not only the subject of the Ukrainian-Slovak relations, it concerns the relevant Slovak-Russian agreement.

TURKEY

A-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	5
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	3	5
Activities	4	5
Results	4	4
General score	B-	A-

Political contacts with Turkey in 2016 were extremely active. Cooperation intensified in strategic areas, particularly in the defense industry field. Economic cooperation remained the traditional engine of cooperation, but negotiations on the FTA area have not been completed.

Political interest/engagement

Ukrainian politicians regarded Turkey as a key economic partner and strategic ally. Turkey continued to appear in the Government Action Plan of A. Yatsenyuk and V. Groysman, particularly in the context of the priority task – signing the free trade agreement. The humanitarian component of cooperation, in particular, protection of Crimean Tatars rights in the occupied peninsula, is also in the focus of the Ukrainian authorities. One of the bending elements of cooperation is considered a joint counteraction to the threat from Russia (Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada). Accelerating preparations for the introduction of the free trade area, cooperation in the energy sector etc. are named as priorities. In the political discourse, Turkey is also mentioned in the context of a possible implementation of the Russian project pipeline "Turkish Stream" that would threaten Ukrainian energy security. It is important that interest to Turkey, which had revived after the deterioration in the Turkish-Russian relations in October 2015, has remained after the normalization of relations in summer 2016.

Institutional cooperation

Against the backdrop of intensifying political contacts between Ukrainian and Turkish authorities, the ties between Ukrainian and Turkish institutions and stakeholders strengthened. The definition of specific tasks and responsible actors on the Turkish direction allows delivering an algorithm of necessary actions to ensure a good level of institutional cooperation among the authorities of Ukraine. In this case, the Embassy of Ukraine in Turkey plays an important coordinating role.

Strategic vision

Available in Ukraine institutional and conceptual framework suggests that there is a necessary strategic vision of the key role the Republic of Turkey possess among the Ukrainian priorities. Strategic documents focus on several dimensions of relations with Turkey: economic, humanitarian, political and security. We can talk about consistent and full inclusion of Turkey in the Ukrainian foreign policy framework instead of fragmentary cooperation in the past. The symbol of the special role of Turkey became the Ukrainian initiative of deoccupation of Crimea – "Geneva +", which provides Turkish participation. Turkey-Ukraine High Level Strategic Council operates and holds annual meetings between the Presidents of two countries. Joint Declaration adopted on the last meeting in March 2016 is an ambitious agenda of the Ukrainian-Turkish partnership.

Activities

In 2016 a high activity of the political dialogue was observed, among all other things a visit of the Prime Minister of Turkey A. Davutoğlu to Ukraine, two visits of the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko to Turkey, including participation in the meeting of High Level Strategic Council, a visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin. Negotiations on the FTA area were held. The countries created a joint group on coordination of military and technical cooperation for the implementation of projects on production of armored vehicles, missiles, aircrafts, etc., creating of joint ventures with Turkey, raising Turkish investments in the military and industrial complex of Ukraine. Economic cooperation with representatives of business structures was built up (Turkish and Ukrainian business forum in Kocaeli). The parties set up transport connection as a priority (according to the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine, the number of flights between the Turkish and Ukrainian cities should be increased to 26 flights, including the flight Kyiv – Ankara, in addition to the existing 35).

Results

The measure of success of cooperation can be regarded as Ukraine's achieving goals in Turkish direction. 2016 brought new strategic assets. Restoring dialogue with Russia did not affect the position of Turkey in a non-recognition of the annexation of Crimea and condemnation of human rights violations of Crimean Tatars (although Turkey has a dual policy concerning Russia). Turkey acted as a co-sponsor of resolutions on human rights violations in the Crimea in the UN Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee. Second, in 2016 it was managed to emphasize the military and industrial sector, particularly in the form of creation of a joint group, as it was mentioned earlier. For example, in October, Ukrinmash and Turkish Havelsan Hava Elektronik Sanayi signed an agreement on joint production of radar systems.

Economic cooperation opens new horizons, although turnover has not yet stabilized to the level of 2013 and the first half of 2016 decreased compared to the corresponding period of 2015 by 17%. Trade Missions, which were supposed to establish in 2016 in eight countries, including Turkey, were not created. Negotiations on a Free Trade Zone Agreement was supposed to complete in 2016 (according to a joint declaration of Turkey-Ukraine High Level Strategic Council). However, the process continues to slow. The variant proposed by the Turkish partners to Ukraine is not profitable for our country (Ukrainian side insists on agricultural sector coverage, but Turkey denies it).

HUNGARY

C+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	3
Institutional cooperation	n/a	2
Strategic vision	n/a	2
Activities	n/a	5
Results	n/a	4
General score	n/a	C+

2016 showed that Ukraine and Hungary can cooperate even when their positions on some issues differ. Unfortunately, Hungary policies continue to focus on the Transcarpathian region. In turn, Ukrainian officials perceive relations with Hungary in the light of Ukraine's European integration policy and are in the position of recipients of assistance. The main achievement of the Ukrainian-Hungarian relations was the preservation of Hungary's official position on non-recognition of the annexation of the Crimea and sanctions against Russia.



Political interest/engagement

Hungary, along with other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, is seen as an example and a partner on the path of European integration. In particular, the President of Ukraine and other top officials mentioned the necessity to follow their successful experiences in their speeches. Thus, the analytical report to the Annual Address of President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada “On Internal and External Situation of Ukraine in 2016” mentions Hungary several times as a partner; it focuses on the need for joint efforts in countering hybrid threats from Russia as well as the need for regional security association, and emphasizes the importance of joint participation in diversification of energy supply sources.

Institutional cooperation

Institutional cooperation with Hungary as a whole is rather weak. The only effective area of cooperation is Ukraine’s European integration course, under which state authorities carry out coordinated activities for ensuring compliance of state policies with Ukraine-EU Association Agreement. There have been cooperation efforts in order to arrange visits of senior officials of both countries. Institutional cooperation at the regional level, mainly in the Transcarpathian region, has intensified.

Strategic vision

Hungary is not mentioned separately in official policies, but when considering areas important for Ukraine as models to achieve the desired level of economic and social development, countries of Central and Eastern Europe are the ones that are brought up. For instance, the National Security Strategy of Ukraine emphasizes that Ukraine will continue cooperation with B-4 (which includes Hungary), and that ensuring the economic security also requires bringing Ukrainian social standards to the level of those of Central and Eastern Europe. Another strategically important area of cooperation is energy. For example, the Strategy for Sustainable Development “Ukraine-2020” and the Energy Strategy for the period until 2035 emphasize the need for integration of Ukraine’s energy systems into the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas (ENTSOG), which includes Hungary.

Activities

Hungary’s foreign policy is carried out mainly in the form of intensive bilateral relations. On 30 May 2016, Liubov Nepop was appointed as the Ukrainian Ambassador to Hungary, which greatly intensified the Ukrainian presence in Hungary. There was a significant number of meetings, consultations and bilateral contacts, including those at the highest level: President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko met Hungarian President János Áder (22 September 2016, 3 October 2016) and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán (17 March 2016, 20 October 2016); there were meetings between the leaders of

both governments, as well as between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and officials of various government departments. The Prime Minister of Ukraine Volodymyr Groysman visited Hungary in his official capacity on 24-25 November 2016. On 24 February 2016, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Pavlo Klimkin came to Hungary with a working visit. Key topics on the agenda included Ukraine's European integration and security and defence of Ukraine under threat from Russia, as well as development of border infrastructure, economic, environmental development, scientific, cultural and educational cooperation. The newly appointed Ukrainian Ambassador to Hungary held about 20 meetings with Hungarian officials and gave 16 interviews to Ukrainian, Hungarian and other foreign media, and published two articles of her own. Ukrainian MPs held meetings with their counterparts from Hungary: Ukraine-Hungary Inter-Parliamentary Group met on 22 November 2016 in Budapest, Ukrainian-Hungarian Business Forum took place on 25 November 2016 in Debrecen (Hungary).

Results

In 2016, foreign policy in regards to Hungary was active and fruitful, ensuring that, despite the availability of the strong pro-Russian lobby and European migrant crisis, Hungary has provided Ukraine considerable assistance in various areas, continued to be a consistent partner of Ukraine, supported sanctions of the EU against Russia despite claiming unreasonableness and poor efficiency of these sanctions. Ukraine's European integration efforts are fully supported by Hungary. Hungary cancelled payment for national Hungarian visa for Ukrainians. The Agreement on the Border Infrastructure Development was signed: Hungary is to allocate 50 million euros for the construction of two roads in the Transcarpathian region. There is active cooperation in the energy sector. As regards education, Educational Exchange Programme for 2016-2018 was adopted. An important success in military cooperation is participation in joint military exercises and availability of NATO language programmes for Ukrainian military in Hungary. Hungarian government allocated USD 3,600,000 of humanitarian aid. In addition, treatment and rehabilitation has been provided to soldiers injured during ATO in Donbas; 700 children affected by the fighting in eastern Ukraine improved their health. In economic terms, at the end of January-September 2016 compared to the same period in 2015, trade turnover between countries increased by 11% (it should be noted that it had decreased by 33% in 2014-2015).

RUSSIA

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	2	3+
Institutional cooperation	5	3+
Strategic vision	5	3
Activities	3	3-
Results	1	1+
General score	D+	C-

	General score	Political interest/engagement	Institutional cooperation	Strategic vision	Activities	Results
Political relations	B-	4	4	5	3	1
Economic cooperation	C-	4	4	2	3	1
Energy relations	D+	3	2	2	2	2

POLITICAL RELATIONS

2016 proved long-standing status of the Russian hybrid aggression against Ukraine. In the long-term, Russian military expansion and occupation of Ukrainian territory will be strengthened by Russian foreign policy aimed at delegitimization of Ukrainian state and political institutions. Bilateral political dialogue will remain blocked by mutual inability to move over fundamental negotiating positions on the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Political interest/engagement

In general, there is a strong consensus in the Ukrainian political scene on the tangibility of Russian threats to Ukrainian statehood: no parliamentary political force declares “pro-Russian” foreign policy in their political programmes. During 2016, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted a series of resolutions denouncing continuous military aggression against Ukraine, the ban on Ukrainian public organizations in the Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia; it does not recognize the legitimacy of the elections to the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation of the seventh convocation by Ukraine, etc. The analytical report to the Annual Address of President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 2016 put an increased focus on the “Russian Issue” (Russia is mentioned 387 times). The name of the report itself, Strengthening National Security of Ukraine under Russian Hybrid Aggression, provides relevant public and political involvement in the strategy of countering external expansion and neutralizing Russian threats from the doctrinal point of view.

Institutional cooperation

Continued Russian aggression against Ukraine, on the one hand, blocks the smallest possibility for effective international dialogue at the institutional and political level and focuses such communications on quasi-institutional level – international mediation platforms (UN, PACE, OSCE, etc.) – and multilateral semi-official formats (Normandy, Minsk etc.), and, on the other hand, strengthens the internal political dialogue regarding pragmatic understanding of impact of the Russian by Ukrainian state and political institutions. The polygon of Ukrainian state and political institutions has reached quite a high level of institutional coordination and cooperation on the “Russian Issue”.

Strategic vision

In the context of military aggression and destroyed bilateral legal framework, vision of political dialogue between Ukraine and Russia is focused on the rollback of political and diplomatic cooperation, disposal of regulations governing the bilateral cooperation that may be terminated. Official policies (Law of Ukraine On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy, National Security Strategy of Ukraine, Military Doctrine of Ukraine, etc.) regard the Russia as a significant and long-term threat to Ukraine. Given the Russian military aggression and the occupation of certain sovereign territories of Ukraine, the Strategic Defense Bulletin of Ukraine was implemented by the Decision of the National Security Council and the Presidential Decree Ukraine as on June 6, 2016, which, undoubtedly, will scale back the bilateral cooperation even more.

Activities

Given the very limited political and diplomatic framework of bilateral cooperation, diplomatic embassies of both countries operate at the level of the chargé d'affaires. However, under difficult conditions of Russian security services constantly taking political hostages from among Ukrainian citizens, diplomatic activities and activities of Ukrainian consular institutions remain the main institutional component for pressing bilateral issues (exchange of POWs, representing the citizens of Ukraine in Russia, etc.).

Results

2016 was a year of continued political and military aggression against Ukraine and further collapse of political-diplomatic dialogue. At the same time, following taking Ukrainian citizens hostage in Russia, liberation of several of them may be considered a certain diplomatic breakthrough. A major achievement is the extension and expansion of sanctions against Russia by the international partners of Ukraine. The report on the ICC prosecutor on bilateral military conflict and occupation of Crimea and Sevastopol is very promising in terms of the international legal process. A significant breakthrough is the adoption of Resolution on Human Rights Violations in the Occupied Crimea at the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly, which is the next step of the consolidation of the Russian status as an invader state. In the long-term, however, bilateral political dialogue remains blocked by Russian military-political aggression against Ukraine.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

2016 saw the efforts to redefine foreign policy regarding economic cooperation with Russia. In the absence of a defined economic strategy, Ukraine's actions are limited to response to the use of financial and economic leverage by Russia. Despite escalation in confrontation, discriminatory policies and their negative consequences, Russia continues to play an important role for the Ukrainian economy.

Political interest/engagement

At the official level, there is political consensus and understanding of the nature of the Russian hybrid war against Ukraine, which extends to the economic cooperation as well. Section Objectives and Tools of Economic Countering Hybrid Threats of the Annual Presidential Address to the Verkhovna Rada "On Internal and External Situation of Ukraine in 2016" includes paragraph Rethinking the Principles of Economic Cooperation with Russia, which name accurately reflects the current state of economic relations with Russia. The decrease Russia's influence on the Ukrainian economy is considered primarily in the context of transforming the model of socio-economic development and diversification of Ukraine's international economic relations.

Institutional cooperation

Implementation of economic measures towards Russia is marked by consistent positions of the foreign policy actors (National Security and Defence Council, the Verkhovna Rada, the President, Cabinet of Ministers, National Bank of Ukraine, Security Service of Ukraine). Institutional cooperation helps maintain an adequate level of international consensus regarding extension and expansion of the sanctions against Russia. At the same time, Ukraine's use of economic sanction tools requires better levels of cooperation and institutional support, in particular, to minimize the possibility of their circumvention.

Strategic vision

Economic strategy concerning Russia has not been officially documented. There are no domestic sectoral policies or national export strategy that would define the areas of economic development considering the curtailing of cooperation with Russia. Authorities act diplomatically, mainly responding to the economic challenges created by Russia. On the one hand, the response measures are focused on reducing Russian economic leverage, but on the other hand, they have negative impact on Ukrainian economy resulting from the loss of traditional markets. There is no answer to the key question of how direct economic relations with the country-aggressor should be developed, as relations with Russia were and still remain deep. Significant impact on the both vision and activities in this area has civil society committed to resist the Russian aggression, particularly in the economic aspects.

Activities

Economic confrontation between Ukraine and Russia has intensified. Ukraine's actions are mostly a response to the Russia's cancellation of the free trade zone since 2016, putting food embargo and the ban on the transit of Ukrainian goods to the CIS countries through the territory of Russia. Response measures include the use of personal special economic and other restrictive measures, cooperation with the international community to continue sanctions and the activities of the WTO to eliminate the trade barriers imposed by Russia, as well as enforcement of international obligations of the WTO member.

In 2016, Ukraine refused to pay the total of USD 3.075 billion on bonds issued in late 2013 as part of the assistance from Russia in exchange for refusal of the Ukrainian side to sign the Association Agreement with the EU. The Russian government submitted a claim to the English court, and Ukraine, in turn, appealed to the court objecting the claim. Along with Sberbank of Russia, restructuring of the loans of Ukravtodor and CB Pivdenne in the amount of USD 367.4 million guaranteed by the state were approved.

Results

In 2016, confrontation with Russia in financial and economic sphere was taken to a new level, including, in particular, the use of discriminatory trade policies. In response to the Russia's actions, Ukrainian sanctions were expanded and extended to the end of 2017, a ban on direct air links under the Russia's claim regarding Ukraine's USD 3 billion debt is in force. Her Majesty's High Court of Justice has appointed the proceedings for January 2017. The trade war caused rollback of the economic relations. According to the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine, in 2016, measures taken by Russia resulted in the losses for the Ukrainian economy in the amount of approx. USD 1 billion; investment volumes, export and import continue to decline, even though the Ukrainian economy dependence on the Russian market remains high.

ENERGY RELATIONS

In 2016, Ukraine continued its course to reduce dependence on Russian energy and cooperation in the energy sector. Throughout the year, natural gas was not imported, electricity was imported at a minimum level, and supplies of nuclear fuel and technology cooperation were further reduced. At the same time, under the influence of both internal and external factors, the threat related to the supply of coal and, therefore, operation of certain parts of the thermal power generation system, continued to deepen, keeping Ukraine vulnerable to the Russian hybrid aggression.

Political interest/engagement

Successful diversification of gas and nuclear fuel supplies from non-Russian sources against the backdrop of continuing Russian aggression withdrew expanding energy cooperation with Russia from the political agenda. Most actors openly declare further rollback of cooperation with Russia in the energy sector, considering energy as a major Russian leverage; however, there are efforts to maintain existing dependencies which resulted in attempts to block operation of Naftogaz of Ukraine and Energoatom, coal imports from non-Russian sources or sources uncontrollable by Russia. Some politicians continue to use the issue of increasing energy prices to protect cooperation with Russia, however, without tangible results.

Institutional cooperation

During 2016, there was a lack of coordination of state authorities and companies in the context of strengthening the energy security of Ukraine due to the backstage race for the redistribution of spheres of influence in certain sectors. The Parliament has not adopted laws designed to promote energy efficiency, provide oil and gas production incentive, reform electricity market and the coal industry. Some actions of government institutions put accumulation of gas reserves and maintenance of the NPPs at risk. National Energy and Utilities Regulatory Commission introduced dubious tools for supporting coal generation at the expense of nuclear industry. Cabinet of Ministers attempted to cover up unsuccessful accumulation of coal reserves at the expense of Naftogaz of Ukraine.

Strategic vision

During 2016, the Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry of Ukraine failed to develop a new energy strategy that would take into account threats to the energy security from the Russian Federation, international obligations under the Energy Community and the Paris Agreement, global energy trends. Thus, there is no state strategy for the energy sector development or consistent energy foreign policy and diplomacy; short-term interests of certain business groups continue to prevail, and opportunities to expand

cooperation with neighbouring EU countries and sustainable balanced development of the national economy are being lost. Only Ukrigasvydobuvannya and Energoatom have implemented programmes to reduce dependence on Russia.

Activities

On 24 November 2016, Ukraine and EU signed the Memorandum of Understanding on a Strategic Energy Partnership. Despite its declarative nature, this document is a definite step to further rollback of cooperation with Russia in the energy sector. In 2016, there were two tripartite meetings on gas issues between Ukraine, EU and Russia; however, neither of them has made a positive change in the dynamics of the relationship between Naftogaz of Ukraine and Russia's Gazprom. Hearings on the gas supply and transit contracts as of 2009 started in the Stockholm Arbitration Court instead, and the parties are unwilling to negotiate a settlement agreement.

The Antimonopoly Committee of Ukraine has fined Gazprom for the systematic abuse of dominant position in the Ukrainian market. On 5 December 2016, the Economic Court of Kyiv confirmed the validity of this decision of the AMCU. An agreement between Ukrtransgaz and Polish gas transmission network operator Gaz-System S.A. on the construction of the connecting pipeline allowing Ukraine access to supplies of liquefied natural gas and increasing the capacity from the Polish side by 5 billion m³ per year was signed.

Results

In 2016, energy relations with Russia continued to decline. This was caused by the unwillingness of the Kremlin to abandon the use of energy as a leverage and further reduction of energy consumption in the domestic market of Ukraine due to rising prices, stagnating production and the first results of energy saving measures.

Along with progress in the gas and nuclear sectors, situation in the field of electricity and coal, oil and oil products remains problematic; there is an urgent need for the creating a national strategy for energy sector development that would take into account security, environmental, economic and social factors.

ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

B-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	4	3
Activities	3	4
Results	2	4
General score	C+	B-

2016 was quite a contradictory year for the economic aspect of diplomatic activity of the country. On the one hand, the free-trade zone with the EU started functioning, and the free-trade zone agreement with Canada was signed in July. Verkhovna Rada has never ratified the latter though. Moreover, within a year, the Cabinet never managed to solve the traditional Ukrainian institutional dispute between the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning the leading role in foreign economic activities of the country, while Verkhovna Rada never adopted legislation required to establish of the export credit agency.



Political interest/engagement

While being closely connected to the general economic development of the country, economic diplomacy issues have never been the major ones in programs of the leading political parties. In this context, the emphasis is mostly made on voicing the intent to foster execution of the policy for export expansion (primarily those of finished products will go up rather than raw materials) and import substitution in any way possible as well as to enhance the active role of the state in the global struggle for resources, investment and markets.

These points are quite logical in terms of encouraging electorate. However, they do not take into account obligations of the country to the World Trade Organisation and other international economic organisations that Ukraine is the member of, making such points quite populist, especially as they are not based on the real export capacity of Ukraine, first of all, concerning the rhetoric of these parties on fulfilling obligations imposed on Ukraine by the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement.

Institutional cooperation

Appointment of the new Cabinet in April 2016 resulted in restoration of the post of the Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration within the Government, and revision of provisions concerning the structure of joint intergovernmental commissions in August 2016, according to which the heads of Ukrainian parts of these commissions were assigned.

The new Regulation on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine was approved on 30 March 2016, which, however, mostly reduplicated the previous Regulation adopted in 2011 in its part concerning the tasks of economic diplomacy according to which the task of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine was to participate in providing implementation of the state foreign economic policy within its powers, thus keeping duplication of functions of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade duplicated.

Strategic vision

Without a National Foreign Economy Strategy and a National Export Strategy, strategic priorities of economic diplomacy lack clear systematic character. Some kind of strategic direction of the economic diplomacy development is set out in the Strategy of Sustainable Development “Ukraine 2020”, and the Cabinet Action Plans approved based on this strategy. We should note that unlike the Action Plan on implementation of the Cabinet Action Programme for 2015 that contained clear enough targets for economic diplomacy for the near future (for example, regarding conclusion of a number of free-trade agreements taking into account national interests of Ukraine),

the Government Action Programme for 2016 was more focused on protecting interests of domestic exporters. At the same time, the abovementioned paragraphs provided quite structured vision of economic diplomacy tasks concerning promotion of domestic products.

Another document that outlined the strategic vision of the economic diplomacy development was the annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 2016. The Analytical Report, attached to the Address, emphasised the need to speed the work on signing FTA agreements with Turkey and the quickest possible entry into force of the FTA with Canada.

Activities

Despite the explicit blackmail on the part of the Russian Federation, there were no shifts in the start date of the FTA with the EU. In response to this move, the Russian Federation extended to Ukraine the ban on import of certain (mostly food) goods into its territory and the ban on transportation of such goods through its territory starting January 1, 2016. Such actions were the evidence of strengthening of economic component of the hybrid war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

Given that such move of the Russian Federation clearly violated the WTO rules and commitments taken by the Russian Federation after joining the Organisation, Ukraine addressed a complaint concerning actions of the Russian Federation to the WTO's Dispute Settlement Committee, which resulted in start of the examination of the issue that was assigned code DS512.

In general, 2016 was marked with quite vigorous activity of N. Mykolska, the Trade Representative of Ukraine, who used to constantly comment in the information space on both issues of losses due to the limits introduced by the Russian Federation and the EU's signals concerning Ukraine's breach of the terms of the Association Agreement.

Apart from trade, large proportion of the activities of the leadership of Ukraine in 2016 was devoted to the issue of attracting investment. In August, the President of Ukraine created the National Investment Council, though its composition has not been formed by the end of the year. In addition, in October, the Cabinet created the Investment Promotion Office.

Results

As to the results of the economic component of the national diplomatic activity, 2016 was marked with the beginning of operation of the free-trade area with the EU. Despite a short period from the beginning of functioning of the FTA, Ukraine managed to achieve revision of provisions of this agreement regarding increasing quotas for duty-free import of certain agricultural products, which will contribute to the growth of exports from Ukraine to the EU for almost USD 200 million, according to various estimates.

In the part of activities regarding expanding the presence of domestic producers in the foreign markets through concluding free-trade area agreements, 2016 was quite controversial. On the one hand, Ukraine signed the agreement with Canada on establishing a free-trade area in July 2016 with its ratification draft law submitted by the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine at the end of 2016 as urgent. On the other hand, despite the statements regarding signing corresponding agreements with Turkey and Israel being expressed since the beginning of the year, no other agreements were concluded. In addition, no institutional basis for promoting exports from Ukraine was created within the current year, while investment promotion structures in Ukraine remained on paper.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

	General score
Asia-Pacific Region	C-
Middle East	C
Western Balkans	C
Baltic States	B-
Northern Europe	C
Latin America	D+
South Asia	C-
Sub-Saharan Africa	C-
Central Asia	D+
Black Sea Region	C-

ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

C-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	3.5	3
Strategic vision	2	2
Activities	4	2
Results	4	3
General score	C+	C-

The dynamic economic development of the Asia-Pacific region, the existence of large markets for Ukrainian products continue to go almost unnoticed in the Ukrainian foreign policy. Ukraine did not succeed in creating comprehensive strategy for the development of relations with the Asia-Pacific region despite the fact that it necessity was discussed at different governmental levels. The agreements signed in 2016 are rare and are mainly declarations of intention. Despite a number of top level visits to the region, 2016 has been not marked as a positive one in dynamics of relations.

Political interest/engagement

Low-level activity of Ukrainian politicians in the Asia-Pacific region, indicative for the previous year, retained in the 2016. Japan received most references on the political level and has become a key partner of Ukraine in the region. In addition, a dialogue with Malaysia was notable from political positions in 2016, where the investigation into the cause of the Malaysian flight MH17 catastrophe in Donetsk region served as a central element of cooperation. However, taking into account the number and importance of the countries in the region that political interest was inadequate.

Institutional cooperation

In 2016, the executive branch has not shown active cooperation between ministries and agencies in implementation of the regional policy on APR. Some progress can be attributed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Phytosanitary Service of Ukraine, thanks to which permits for the export of the Ukrainian agricultural products to Indonesia (the adoption of Indonesia's new legislation in this area makes it possible too) were quickly obtained. The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine organized a meeting of the Ukrainian part of the Ukrainian-Vietnamese Intergovernmental Commission pursuant to the agreement between the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko and the Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyễn Tấn Dũng. However, the volume of work on the executive power in the Asia-Pacific direction actualizes the establishing of regional coordination structures within the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

Strategic vision

In Ukraine's strategic documents, APR is almost not mentioned, except of the Military Doctrine, where this region was identified as an important one in the context of the world security environment. Indirectly the strategic tasks for the Ukrainian policy in the region defines Strategic Defence Bulletin of Ukraine approved this year by the presidential decree: the main tasks of reforming the state military security require comprehensive assistance from NATO. The current shape of cooperation within the Alliance enables to drum up NATO partners' support, including partners in APR. The Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine I. Klympush-Tsintsadze during the meeting of Heads of the foreign diplomatic institutions of Ukraine stated that "assistance from NATO countries and NATO partners especially such as Sweden, Finland, Australia and Japan (which show interest in providing practical support for Ukraine through NATO) – is the first priority task for Ukrainian diplomacy."

The strategic importance of the integrative approach to cooperation between Ukraine and the Asia-Pacific region was mentioned in the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada "On internal and external situation of Ukraine in 2016". It highlighted the importance of "cooperation with

regional and trans-regional unities", the necessity of approaching markets of ASEAN within the shortest possible time and joining investment projects of the association. The urgent tasks of the Ukrainian politics in the region are considered the appointment of the Permanent Representative to the ASEAN Secretariat and participation in the trans-regional forum "Europe – Asia".

Activities

The President of Ukraine paid a state visit to Indonesia (5-7 August) and official visits to Japan (5-7 April) and Malaysia (3-5 August). The visits were designed to solve several problems: try to extend support to Kyiv in the confrontation with Moscow, to increase investment in the Ukrainian economy and provide Ukrainian producers with an access to the regional markets, primarily food markets. These same issues were discussed during the meetings of P. Poroshenko with the leaders of Japan, New Zealand and Malaysia in the course of the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2016.

Foreign Minister of Ukraine P. Klimkin met with his Malaysian counterpart A. Amano twice. The key question of discussion was the investigation of the MH-17 crash. In January 2016, the Agreement between Ukraine and Malaysia on Prolongation of residence of Malaysian personnel in Ukraine in the interest of the catastrophe investigation came into force. Ukraine enlisted the support of Japan, Australia and the Republic of Korea over the legitimacy of Russia's transit restriction, announced at the WTO General Council on February 24 and July 27, which is an important aid in the process of appealing against the actions of Russia, which, according to our government have led to direct losses amounting to 0.4 billion US dollars.

Results

Ukraine was able to provide some progress in dealing with a number of regional states. A number of agreements was signed with regional countries (Malaysia – "On Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Extradition and the Avoidance of Double Taxation" (4 August 2016). One of the most significant results of the Ukrainian policy in the APR is essential strengthening of the state's position in the regional markets of agricultural products. In 2016, Ukraine joined the four largest suppliers of wheat to Indonesia (1.2 million tons). Negotiations on the return of Ukrainian dairy products to the market of Japan (the beginning of deliveries expected in autumn 2017); Ukrainian companies started supplying dairy products to China (positive decision on access of the Ukrainian manufacturers to the Chinese market was approved in September 2015). Indonesia abolished visas for Ukrainian citizens for short-term visits, and Ukraine has begun consultations with Indonesia on free trade area agreement.

MIDDLE EAST

C

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	2	3
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	1	2
Activities	4	4
Results	4	3
General score	C-	C

Ukraine's policy on the Middle East in 2016 showed some interest of the Ukrainian side in broader cooperation with countries of the region. However, the lack of a clear strategy in this direction makes the use of full potential of possible cooperation impossible. The activation of bilateral contacts with a number of countries in the region such as Qatar, Kuwait, UAE, Jordan should be noted. Ukraine drew more attention to regional security issues and their impact on the international system due to its non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council in 2016-2017.

Political interest/engagement

The Middle East was not a priority direction for Ukraine's foreign policy. Occasional unsystematic nature of interest in this area may be noticed. Interest to the events in the region and issues of cooperation was observed in the speeches and statements of some politicians. Most often, the region was mentioned in the context of wider international security. The President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko, Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council O. Turchynov, Minister of Foreign Affairs P. Klimkin in their speeches expressed concern about the security situation in the Middle East and drawn attention to the global threats it brings, especially on the issue of terrorism. Special attention was paid to the Syrian crisis due to its significant escalation in 2016. In particular, during the high-level meeting of the UN Security Council, the President of Ukraine condemned aggressive actions of B. Assad regime and Russia in Syria and called to comply with the Geneva communiqué and the UN SC Resolution 2254 on settlement of the situation. The national leadership has repeatedly emphasized the interconnection of security problems of Ukraine and Syria, mostly in the context of Russia's aggressive policy.

Periodically, an interest in regional and bilateral cooperation was demonstrated in general statements. The Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman marked this direction as particularly promising for cooperation during a meeting with Arab countries ambassadors to Ukraine in June 2016. The necessity of a deeper foreign policy analysis of the Middle East was highlighted by some MPs including R. Chubarov. Extending cooperation with some countries in the region such as Qatar, Kuwait, UAE, Egypt, Lebanon was on the agenda of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

The Middle East was also mentioned in the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada in 2016. Special attention is paid to the problems of regional security. There is no Middle East countries in the list of the strategic partners of Ukraine. However, clearly indicated the need to work in new areas, among which the Middle East is one of the most important. The most interesting for cooperation are Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco.

Institutional cooperation

The level of coordination between Ukrainian governmental institutions on the Middle East cannot be marked as high, mainly because of the lack of a clear strategy. However, there is a high level of cooperation between the Presidential Administration and the MFA in identifying specific tasks in this area and their implementation. Other state institutions were also involved in activities concerning the region of the Middle East, for example, in 2016 by the decision of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and after approval by the Parliament, parliamentary groups on inter-parliamentary relations with Egypt, Kuwait, and UAE were established, although there is no data on their performance.

Strategic vision

The Middle East is not mentioned in the main strategic documents defining the foreign policy of Ukraine, which proves the absence of a strategic dimension in relations. Declarative reference to the Middle East is present in the Law of Ukraine "On fundamentals of domestic and foreign policy", where the interest of Ukraine in developing cooperation with the region, namely the OPEC countries, referred only to the economic sphere. In the general context of security problems, the Middle East mentioned in the Military Doctrine, which states a destabilizing role of local conflicts.

Activities

Activities of Ukraine in the Middle East direction may be considered on several levels. Firstly, this year's foreign policy is partly determined by Ukraine's membership in the UN Security Council, within which Ukraine took part in the discussion and search for solutions to the conflict in Syria, Libya, Iraq and Yemen.

Secondly, the activities took place in the practical dimension of relations, namely through visits and meetings of officials aimed at building relationships in key areas of cooperation (trade, energy, investment, infrastructure, culture). Thus, on June 26, 2016, the Prime Minister V. Groysman held the first ever meeting with the ranking members of the Arab embassies in Ukraine to discuss the agenda of bilateral cooperation, as a result of which, the decision to organize Ukrainian-Arab Economic Forum in 2017 was made. During the UN General Assembly, the President met with Emir of Qatar to discuss the prospects of boosting trade and economic cooperation. The second round of political consultations Kuwait – Ukraine was held in November 2016 in order to discuss issues of political and economic cooperation. It is worth to name activities of MPs, whose delegations visited Qatar, Kuwait, UAE and Saudi Arabia.

The main activities were carried out in the framework of the MFA and diplomatic missions of Ukraine. MFA were issuing statements concerning the country's position on important events in the region (condemnation of terrorist attacks in Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Afghanistan, France, tough statements on Syria bombing and so on). Activities of the Embassies of Ukraine in Kuwait, Qatar, Egypt, Jordan are especially noteworthy. Their heads held regular meetings with politicians, officials and business representatives of these countries to prepare the basis for a higher level of cooperation.

Results

Certain results were achieved at both regional and bilateral levels. Among the practical steps of cooperation are the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers to liberalize visa requirements for citizens of Qatar, a memorandum on cooperation in the development of the port industry with the UAE, the agreement between "Antonov" and Taqnia Aeronautics (Saudi Arabia) on the coordination of aircraft manufacturing. At the meeting of the Group on relations with Qatar and Kuwait, it was decided to hold Economic Forum "Ukraine-GCC" in February 2017. Such events point on positive trends in the development of cooperation with the Middle East. It meets the goal of diversification of the directions of the international activities of Ukraine.

Particularly noteworthy are the successes in the field of cultural diplomacy. Ukrainian Sunday school in the UAE and "Ukrainian house" in Jordan were opened. The greatest success in this area was signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine and Arab cultural center in Ukraine. Thanks to it, Ukraine started UA TV broadcast in the region.

Regarding trade relations, according to the State Statistics of Ukraine for 9 months of 2016 the volume of trade between Ukraine and the Middle East (excluding Israel, Turkey, Iran) amounted to 3.8 billion US dollars. Export comes to 3.6 billion US dollars (13.9% of total export), import – 263.6 million US dollars (1% of total imports). It shows an export surplus of Ukraine's foreign trade in the Middle East direction (3.3 billion US dollars). Important to note the increasing trading volume with Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain and Morocco, compared to the same period of 2015, but these activities still have not reached a pre-crisis level.

WESTERN BALKANS

C

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	2
Institutional cooperation	n/a	3
Strategic vision	n/a	2
Activities	n/a	4
Results	n/a	4
General score	n/a	C

In 2016, Ukraine's attention to the Western Balkans slightly grew, as evidenced by the high-level visits, intensification of economic cooperation with certain countries and strengthening of defending Ukraine's national interests in the region. The determining factors of the policy concerning the region were as follows: three of seven countries of the region being NATO members and two of them being the EU members; attitude of the countries of the region to the policy of the Russian Federation; presence of Ukrainian contingent within KFOR in Kosovo; search for new opportunities of economic and energy cooperation. Lack of Ukraine's integrated approach to the Western Balkans was compensated by the trend of building relationships in the context of European integration and international support for Ukraine in its opposition to Russian aggression.



Political interest/engagement

Ukrainian political interest in the Western Balkans as an important springboard for its struggle against the expansion of the Russian Federation was non-consolidated, it showed no clear position or relied on the proper economic basis. The region was mentioned in political declarations only indirectly. It was absent in the Annual Address of the President to Verkhovna Rada in 2016, but it was referred to in the attached Analytical Report, but only as the direction of Russian expansion. Political statements include references to the region in the context of the experience of European integration and conflict resolution, strengthening of economic cooperation and protection of Ukraine's interest on an international level. The parliamentary level also lacks integral interest in the Western Balkans, with attention focused on individual countries and their support in the struggle against Russian aggression primarily during votings in international organisations and parliamentary assemblies thereof.

Institutional cooperation

Western Balkans are not fully covered with diplomatic missions of Ukraine. Four of seven countries in the region have the full-fledged embassies (embassies in other countries operate concurrently). Accordingly, the level of Ukraine's cooperation is higher with countries with diplomatic institutions that coordinate institutional cooperation. Inter-parliamentary cooperation develops unevenly. Friendship groups for Albania, Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia and Montenegro were created in Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Macedonia friendship group was placed on record but was not formed, while for Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) there is no such group at all. The attitude of Ukrainian authorities towards the development of relations with the region is corresponding, although it is rather connected with limited vision of the policy regarding the Western Balkans than the agreed position. Thus, the region is mentioned neither in A. Yatseniuk's Government Programme nor in B. Hroisman's Government Programme. Joint initiatives are fragmentary and primarily related to the economic sector (holding business forums) and participation in international events in the region, such as meetings of parliamentary assemblies.

Strategic vision

Western Balkans are not among strategic priorities of Ukraine. Ukraine's peacekeeping activity in the region can be distinguished indirectly, including participation of Ukrainian contingent in KFOR in Kosovo, which is defined in the National Security Strategy as "participation in NATO operations to maintain peace and security". The elements of Ukraine's strategic vision of the Western Balkans that are not recorded in the strategic documents may include the following: Ukraine's interest in developing constructive relationship with the region in the area of protecting its national interests on both European and global levels; non-recognition of independence of Kosovo in exchange for Serbia's support of territorial integrity of Ukraine; receiving assistance

from more developed countries of the region (Slovenia, Croatia); further development of economic cooperation. Lack of strategic vision caused situational approach and absence of significant achievements concerning the Western Balkans.

Activities

Ukraine's foreign policy concerning the Western Balkans in 2016 was better than in previous years, though it was differentiated through the prism of the international importance of those countries. Most attention was paid to the EU and NATO member states, which was shown by with the visits of the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko to Slovenia on November 8 and the Prime Minister of Croatia A. Plenković to Kyiv on November 20–21. They confirmed Ukraine's interest in the region in terms of the international support for Ukraine, the European integration and economic cooperation. The visit of the Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine I. Klympush-Tsintsadze to Serbia on July 28–29 took place in the context of visiting Ukrainian peacekeepers in Kosovo. Other visits of Ukrainian delegations and officials of various levels to the region were of international nature, such as participation in the 62nd Spring Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Albania, REGEX 2016 international manoeuvres in BiH, the Autumn Session of the OSCE NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Macedonia and the 8th Energy Community Oil Forum in Serbia. In the bilateral level, we can mention cooperation with Slovenia on humanitarian demining as well as with Croatia on relief of the conflict consequences.

Results

The main results in the relations with the Western Balkans in 2016 were achieved with Slovenia and Croatia. Ten bilateral documents were signed in total, including the Joint Declaration of the Presidents of Ukraine and Slovenia and Ukraine-Croatian agreement on cooperation in the area of preventing catastrophes. The most significant results achieved include international support of Ukraine by the majority of the countries in the region, Slovenia and Croatia's assistance in arranging humanitarian demining, rehabilitation of Ukrainian military men and children, training of Ukrainian psychologists. Ukraine Support Working Group was established in Croatia. Holding business forums with Macedonia, Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia facilitated the growth of trade turnover of Ukraine with the countries of the region on average by 15 %. The attempt to promote the work on the FTA Agreement between Ukraine and Serbia, which would also improve interstate relations in general, failed. Not all countries in the region provided Ukraine with the expected support in its opposition to Russian aggression. For example, a resolution concerning Crimea proposed by Ukraine at the UN General Assembly received no support from Serbia (voted against) and BiH (abstained). It speaks for insufficiency of political and informational activities and the need to promote the economic factor.

THE BALTIC STATES

B-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	3	4
Institutional cooperation	4	3
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	5	4
Results	5	4
General score	B	B-

In 2016, Ukraine has strengthened cooperation with the Baltic states. Relations with each of the three countries intensified, some institutions, which work had been interrupted, resumed their activities. Among the important areas of cooperation remained supporting the territorial integrity of Ukraine and disapproving the Crimea annexation at the international level. Still, the Baltic states' experience needs greater attention from the Ukrainian government, first of all, to study the experience of introducing Euro-integration reforms. The most dynamic cooperation among the three countries is with Lithuania. It outruns Estonia and Latvia both in directions and volumes of activities, and in foreign trade with Ukraine.

Political interest/engagement

There is an increasing political interest of Ukraine in cooperation with the Baltic states and the regional entities, which they are members of, in addition to the EU. (In particular, the Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman welcomed the deepening of interaction in this format at the meeting with the NB8 leaders – Nordic Baltic Eight). The Baltic countries' experience is seen as an example for Ukraine. There were more interdepartmental meetings compared to previous years. Representatives of the Baltic States consult to individual ministries and departments; there are extra visits, and participation in international thematic conferences. There is a request from the Ukraine's side and the Baltic countries' interest to support an issue of visa liberalization and security policy. In their turn, the Baltic countries highlight the importance of combating corruption and reforming the judicial system.

Institutional cooperation

Cooperation between Ukraine and the Baltic states is mainly of inter-industrial character. For example, the Government action plan for 2016 refers to Latvia as one of the countries whose experience should be adopted to get Ukrainian forestry enterprises on the right track. Similarly, the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration I. Klympush-Tsintsadze held a meeting with the foreign ministers of the Baltic countries to facilitate ratification of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU in the Dutch Parliament. On the other hand, an example of inter-institutional coordination may be the September visit of the Vice-Chancellor of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, in the course of which the Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine, the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the Head of the department of the Presidential Administration discussed cooperation with Estonia; likewise there was a visit to Tallinn of the Ukrainian delegation consisting of MPs – members of the VRU Group for Interparliamentary Relations with the Republic of Estonia (meetings in the Parliament, Ministry of Finance, Centre of Eastern Partnership, Chamber of Commerce, etc.).

Strategic vision

There is almost no overt mention about either the region or the Baltic States in the texts of the main strategic documents. Still, given the fact that these three countries have coordinated positions on Ukraine that fully satisfies the Ukraine's request in terms of the foreign and domestic policy (including European integration, Ukraine's territorial integrity and de-occupation of the Crimea, release of hostages and Ukrainian citizens, illegally detained in Russia, implementation of reforms), the partnership should be deemed as of the strategic nature. There is coordination of Ukraine and the Baltic States' activities in terms of the pressure on the EU states regarding the sanctions against Russia – as a motive to stop aggression in the eastern Ukraine and prevent it in the Baltic States. The military cooperation plan was discussed. The closest and

best-planned relations out of all three countries are with the Republic of Lithuania, although cooperation with each of the three Baltic States at various levels is unfolding (ministries, parliaments, presidents, non-governmental cooperation).

Activities

2016 was the year of a number of important multilateral meetings. In particular, it is worth noting the February and October joint working visits of the Heads of parliaments of the Nordic and Baltic countries to Ukraine. Most bilateral agreements were signed between Ukraine and Lithuania, which have the most strategic and comprehensive character.

In 2016, the number of meetings and agreements increased for each of the countries. The Baltic States' advisors help Ukrainian government to implement reforms (justice, economic, agrarian, land, cultural). Representatives of these countries regularly participate in meetings of the parliamentary committees and inter-ministerial meetings of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (H. Hopko, B. Tarasyuk), the Committee for Informatization and Communications, the VRU Group for Interparliamentary Relations with the Republic of Estonia (B. Bereza), etc.

In mid-December, the Ukrainian-Latvian intergovernmental commission on economic, industrial and scientific-technical cooperation resumed activity, and signed a protocol on economic, industrial and scientific-technical cooperation, on cooperation in specific sectors. A series of bilateral agreements of Ukraine with Estonia are being implemented. In mid-December, three new documents were signed with Lithuania, as addition to the Roadmap of strategic partnership development for 2017-2018.

Instructors from the Baltic States assist in the training of Ukrainian military, exchange of experiences and rehabilitation of the wounded take place. Due to cooperation with the Baltic countries, there has been an increase of the Ukraine's participation in NATO initiatives, training public communication specialists, outreach of the Ukrainian broadcasting on the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine and foreign broadcasting.

Results

In 2016, new ambassadors of Latvia and Estonia to Ukraine were appointed. The Baltic States advocate Ukraine's interests in the EU and NATO. Ukrainian military receive rehabilitation in the Baltic States. Favorable conditions for education of Ukrainian students in the Baltic States have been created. There were cultural exchanges, but mostly at the initiative of the Baltic States. In the first 9 months of 2016, foreign trade between Ukraine and the Baltic States increase compared to the same period of 2015. In particular, there was a jump of export to Estonia (67,012.1 thousand USD or by 145.2%) and Lithuania (181,453.5 thousand USD or by 104.6%), and import from Latvia (79,955.9 thousand USD or by 130.9%).

NORTHERN EUROPE

C

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	3
Institutional cooperation	n/a	2
Strategic vision	n/a	2
Activities	n/a	4
Results	n/a	4
General score	n/a	C

Ukraine's interest in the Northern European countries considerably intensified in 2016. It was facilitated due to clear and unanimous position of the governments of these countries regarding the Russian aggression and territorial integrity of our country, as well as assistance and support for Ukraine on the part of the aforementioned states. High-level visits, strengthening of cooperation in economic, energy and security areas are the results of intensification of Ukraine's interest in this region. At the same time, there is still no strategic vision and systematic and balanced approach to the Northern European countries on the part of Ukraine.



Political interest/engagement

Northern European countries were rarely mentioned in political statements during the current year. The annual Address of the President to Verkhovna Rada in 2016 contains no references to this region, however, the included Analytical Note entitled “On the Internal and External Situation of Ukraine in 2016” specified that the risk of possible military threat from Russia intensified for Northern European countries as well. The inter-parliamentary cooperation mainly concerns supporting Ukraine’s position in international organisations regarding the issue of sanctions against the Russian Federation and the Russian aggression.

Institutional cooperation

Ukraine has diplomatic missions not in all Northern European countries. In particular, the ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Finland is also ambassador with concurrent accreditation to Iceland. Deputy groups of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on inter-parliamentary relations with the Kingdom of Sweden, the Kingdom of Norway, the Kingdom of Denmark and the Republic of Finland operate at the parliamentary level. Such deputy group on relations with Iceland parliament is absent. Countries of this region are mentioned neither in A. Yatseniuk’s Government Programme nor in B. Hroisman’s Government Programme.

Strategic vision

Northern European countries are not currently included in strategic priorities of Ukraine. Such strategic documents as the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy” dated July 1, 2010, the Decree of the President of Ukraine “National Security Strategy of Ukraine” dated May 26, 2015, the Decree of the President of Ukraine “On Decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine ‘On the New Revision of the Military Doctrine of Ukraine’ dated September 2, 2015”, the Decree of the President of Ukraine “The Strategy of Sustainable Development of ‘Ukraine 2020’” dated January 12, 2015 or the Energy Strategy of Ukraine up to 2035 contain no references to this region. Ukraine’s cooperation with Northern European countries during the current year was rather tactical than strategic with various fragmented approaches to separate countries of the region.

Activities

Foreign policy activity of Ukraine concerning this region during the current year was more productive in comparison with previous years. For example, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko made official visits to the Kingdom of Norway and the Kingdom of Sweden. In Norway, the President held a meeting with leadership of STATNETT, the national energy transportation company, STATCRAFT, the largest European company operating in renewable energy area, as well as the leadership of the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate. This July, during his visit to Warsaw during the NATO Summit, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko held the meeting with S. Niinistö, the president of this country. While the first official visit of the Minister of Defence of Ukraine S. Poltorak to the Kingdom of Sweden was made as late as October 6.

Results

The most effective foreign policy activities of Ukraine in 2016 involved the Kingdom of Norway with the signing of declaration of partnership between the two countries. In addition, our state and the Kingdom of Norway also signed a number of bilateral documents on further cooperation, including the framework agreement on technical and financial cooperation between the two countries in the area of involvement and use of international technical assistance between the governments of both countries. Collaboration with the Kingdom of Denmark was meaningful and effective. In particular, the State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection and Danish Food Administration signed a veterinary certificate for export of beef from Denmark on April 19. Ukrainian-Danish Business Forum was organised in the current year with subsequent conclusion of four agreements with the Danish investment funds and companies.

LATIN AMERICA

D+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	2	2
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	1	1
Activities	2	3
Results	2	3
General score	D	D+

Despite intensified bilateral cooperation with the countries of the region in 2016, human and resource potential of the Latin America remained underestimated by the developers of Ukraine's foreign policy strategy in the Western Hemisphere. It led to the further decrease of Ukrainian export indicators and consecutive loss of international support for Ukraine on the issue of opposing aggression of the Russian Federation on the part of the power elites, including Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico and Peru, which was shown by results of the UN General Assembly Committee vote for resolution proposed by Ukraine concerning humanitarian situation in the Crimea.

Political interest/engagement

In 2016, the Latin American vector was not considered as a separate direction of Ukraine's foreign policy. Interest in this region was further determined primarily by economic priorities, the need to restore export potential of Ukraine, search for new markets and expansion of the existing ones, as well as the need to intensify dialogue with Ukrainian Diaspora in different parts of the world. It was formalised in the Cabinet Action Programme enacted by Verkhovna Rada on April 2016, the Priority Actions Plan for 2016 enacted by the Cabinet on May 27, 2016, the Concept of Popularisation of Ukraine in the World and Promoting Interests of Ukraine in the Global Information Space. The Analytical Report annexed to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine referred to neither Latin American region in general nor individual countries at all as prospective partners of Ukraine. However, attention was drawn to the establishment of the trade organisation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (participants included Chile, Peru, Mexico) as potentially attractive. However, during conversations with the newly appointed ambassadors of Argentina and Brazil to Ukraine at the ceremony of delivery of letters of credence and the President of Argentina "on the sidelines" of the 71st session of the UN General Assembly, the Head of State emphasised the importance of restoring the regular political dialogue and business contacts between our countries.

Institutional cooperation

The existing level of cooperation between the President of Ukraine, the Cabinet of Ministers and Verkhovna Rada still hinders adoption and implementation of the effective foreign policy in the Latin American region. The personnel issue concerning the appointment of the ambassador to a diplomatic mission in Cuba has never been settled. Due to the low credit rating of Ukraine, the National Bank of Ukraine (NBU) did not support the idea of establishing the Export-Credit Agency that led to the failure of the government programme on promoting Ukrainian products in foreign markets. Underestimation of the existing resource is reflected in the situation where Ukraine has an embassy in Peru, but the deputy corps is still unaware of necessity to create an inter-parliamentary relations group within the Verkhovna Rada.

Strategic vision

Official documents that define the short-term foreign policy strategy of Ukraine do not mention the Latin American region among the potential objects of regard. At the same time, implementation of individual programmes defined in the Concept for the Development of the Security and Defence Sector of Ukraine, the Strategy for Sustainable Development "Ukraine 2020" may occur specifically in view of the active use of its potential.

Activities

Intergovernmental and inter-parliamentary cooperation with individual countries of the region visibly intensified during 2016. Representatives of the Presidential Administration, the Cabinet of Ministers, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade and the Ministry of Justice visited Mexico, representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Agrarian Policy and Food visited Brazil, the Minister of Justice visited Argentina, members of Verkhovna Rada, government officials and businessmen visited Brazil. At the same time, in 2016, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade held no meetings of either of the 6 existing joint Intergovernmental Commissions on trade and economic cooperation (Ukrainian-Argentinean, Ukrainian-Brazilian, Ukrainian-Paraguayan, Ukrainian-Peruvian, Ukrainian-Mexican and Ukrainian-Chilean) without disclosing the reasons, while the Chamber of Commerce of Ukraine did not organise any collective stands of Ukrainian entrepreneurs at international exhibitions held in the Latin American region. In order to protect interests of domestic manufacturers, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade participated in three revisions of anti-dumping measures held in Mexico concerning Ukrainian import of rolled products.

In March 2016, a deputy group of 9 members concerning inter-parliamentary relations with Mexico was created in Verkhovna Rada, though reports on activities of the acting groups on relations with the Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico, and Chile) were never announced at the meetings of Verkhovna Rada Foreign Affairs Committee.

Results

The issues of bilateral cooperation were discussed during the visits of senior officials from Latin American countries to Ukraine, particularly during political consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and Argentina (November 14, 2016) and visit of the Ministry of Healthcare of Mexico and official delegation of the Municipal Government of the City of Mexico to the capital of Ukraine (August 21–23, 2016).

During 2016, leaders of diplomatic missions of Ukraine in Latin America held meetings with presidents of Uruguay, Guatemala, Costa Rica, local officials and representatives of business circles. They also took part in the work of international and regional forums using them as platforms to express position concerning important issues of global and regional security and prospects of bilateral cooperation in various areas. Work of diplomatic missions included much attention paid to carrying out activities in the cultural, humanitarian, and public diplomacy areas.

As to the notable results of cooperation with the countries of the region in 2016, it stands to mention acquisition of the observer status in the Pacific Alliance (that includes Mexico, Peru, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica); restoration of “friendship groups” with Ukraine in national parliaments of Argentina, Brazil and Mexico; ratification by Verkhovna Rada of the agreement with Argentina on mutual assistance regarding investigation of customs offences; signing the agreement on cooperation and exchange of information between national news agencies of Mexico and Ukraine, which will facilitate unbiased presentation and immediate communication of information about our country.

The trade and economic area is marked with a further general decrease of indicators of Ukrainian export of goods to the countries of the Central and South America and the Caribbean: by 8 % for 8 months of 2016 as compared to the relevant indicators in 2015 (by USD 14.564 million in money terms). While indicators of Ukrainian export to our traditional regional partners Argentina, Brazil, Cuba and Peru were rapidly decreasing, trade cooperation intensified with such countries as Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Venezuela, Haiti, Honduras, Guyana, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Cayman Islands, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, Uruguay and Chile.

SOUTH ASIA

C-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	2
Institutional cooperation	n/a	2
Strategic vision	n/a	3
Activities	n/a	4
Results	n/a	3
General score	n/a	C-

Ukraine's cooperation with the South Asian states is in general reduced to relationships with the two largest countries in the region, India, and Pakistan. Our relations with both countries are traditionally called friendly and partner. At the same time, they faced certain challenges in conditions of the Russian aggression. It should be considered that India and Pakistan have gained Shanghai Cooperation Organization membership over the past year, and will continue further active cooperation with the Russian Federation. That is why Ukraine should not expect involvement of these countries as partners to oppose Russian aggression. Instead, we should focus on active communications policy and reproducing the image of Ukraine as a reliable and predictable partner.



Political interest/engagement

Development of relations with countries in the Asia-Pacific region (APR) is one of the priority directions of the foreign policy of Ukraine. At least this point is contained in all basic documents governing foreign activities of our country. Issues of cooperation with the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan are not mentioned separately either in statements of the President and Head of the Government or in speeches of political party leaders. In addition, several representatives of the political elite and even experts took the stance of the “offended party” towards India due to Indian position that is arbitrarily interpreted as pro-Russian. There is a complete lack of understanding of India’s standards of conduct, which is not actually officially pro-Russian. As to Pakistan, there are more hopes in general, since some Ukrainian experts consider asymmetrical Pakistani-Indian relations as South Asian equivalent of asymmetric Ukrainian-Russian relations. Accordingly, we expect more understanding of security challenges and informational threats from the Pakistani side, though Pakistan never provided any official condemnation of the Russian Federation aggression.

Institutional cooperation

The level of coordination between Ukrainian government institutions in the South Asian direction can be evaluated as low since there is no strategy for this area of Ukrainian foreign policy at all. Separate branches of the state mechanism are working on solving specific short-term tasks such as arranging visits of Indian officials to Ukraine (MFA) or preparing the next Ukrainian-Indian business forum in India (Council of Entrepreneurs under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine). Preparation of visit of the Secretary Minister of State for External Affairs of India to Ukraine (the lowest level at the beginning of a political dialogue between countries) has been already announced. So far, the work in this direction is carried out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in close cooperation with the Embassy of the Republic of India to Ukraine. Lack of coordination between different branches of power was clearly demonstrated by the round table in Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on September 22, 2016, dedicated to the prospects of development of Ukrainian-Indian relations: neither members of the inter-parliamentary deputy group nor declared heads of the ministries were present, except for the Deputy Minister of Economic Development N. Mykolska.

Strategic vision

It should be noted that there is a lack of attention to the region on the part of the authorities of Ukraine, while the importance of the development of relations with these states lacks definition in documents and programme statements of our political leaders and officials. Instead, there are no references to South Asia as a separate important direction and no mentioning of India and Pakistan as strategic partners of

Ukraine in the main strategic documents that determine the foreign policy of Ukraine. However, the Address of the President to the Verkhovna Rada on September 2016 refers to South Asia, though for some reason in the context of P. Poroshenko's visit to Indonesia.

Activities

Contacts at the bilateral level remained highly sporadic and completely insufficient in 2016, though the last year gave hope for significant shifts. It is connected in the first place with the intensification of work of both Ukrainian diplomatic missions and ambassadors of India and Pakistan to Ukraine. On June 29, 2016, Ambassador I. Polikha held the meeting with the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs of the Republic of India Sh. Tharoor, a famous politician, diplomat, and writer. The meeting considered intensification of the inter-parliamentary direction of cooperation. The Ukrainian side raised a point of establishing the India-Ukraine Friendship Group within the supreme legislative body of the Republic of India.

2016 was quite a significant year for bilateral relations with the IRP, especially in terms of the intensification of political dialogue between the two countries. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin held the meeting with the Adviser for Foreign Affairs of the Prime Minister of Pakistan S. Aziz in the context of participation in the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building in Asia on April 27, 2016 in Beijing. The parties discussed both bilateral cooperation and its prospects, and cooperation of Ukraine and Pakistan in the context of international organizations. Bilateral political consultations took place on 6 June 2016 in Kyiv at the level of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine S. Kyslytsia and Pakistan R. Siddiqui, who discussed the roadmap of the development of bilateral relations. The meeting of A. Geete, the Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises of the Republic of India, with S. Kubiv, the First Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine in November 2016 was an important step towards the renewal of the dialogue.

The area of bilateral trade demonstrates a slow increase of goods turnover, though the indicators are very modest so far. Cooperation in the field of culture is supported mainly by the Indian side. Unfortunately, Ukrainian culture in India (as well as in Pakistan) is known much less.

Results

Among the positive developments of the past year we should note the establishment of special commissions within the intergovernmental working group on the issues of trade and economic cooperation, tourism, mining and metallurgical industry, supply of mineral fertilisers, pharmaceuticals, oil and gas production, aviation and space as well as Education Committee, i.e., in all promising areas of bilateral cooperation. 2016 brought new contracts in the field of the aviation industry and military and technical cooperation. On April 27, 2016, Indian Reliance Defence Engineering Ltd signed Memorandum on Strategic Partnership with Ukrainian manufacturer Antonov SC in Kiev; passenger and transport aircrafts An-148, An-158, and An-178 won a tender of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited in May 2016 and the contract was signed on intent concerning joint development and production of multifunctional transport aircraft. In addition to that, another batch of Malyshev Plant component parts for Al-Khalid Chinese-Pakistani tanks were sent this year within the four-year contract signed in 2013.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

C-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	2	3
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	1	2
Activities	2	3
Results	3	3
General score	D+	C-

Ukraine declared significant interest in the development and deepening of relations with the states of Sub-Saharan Africa. There is a consensus among the top Ukrainian political leadership on the growing importance of the region for the Ukraine's foreign policy, especially in terms of trade and economic tasks implementation. Meanwhile, there is a lack of a long-term program of action in the African direction at the strategic level and, consequently, an acute shortage of high political contacts. It should be noted that interest in Africa is growing among the Ukrainian business community; therefore, it is a positive signal for increased state attention to the practical implementation of measures for promotion comprehensive dialogue between official Kyiv and African partners in the future.

Political interest/engagement

The programs of the political parties represented in the Parliament have no innovations, regarding problems relating to Sub-Saharan Africa. Parties did not pay much attention to Ukraine's relations with the region. In this context, Petro Poroshenko's Bloc "Solidarnist" is an exception, in particular, MPs L. Kozachenko, J. Friz and R. Chubarov, who emphasized on the necessity to intensify partnership. The Chair of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko promotes the most systematic approach on Ukraine's interest in Africa.

During 2016, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko has repeatedly stated that Ukraine is planning to expand mutually beneficial cooperation with the African continent. Pointing to the existing positive experience of cooperation between Ukraine and South Africa, the President stressed the importance of promoting Ukrainian export to African markets. The Analytical Report to the annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada "On internal and external situation of Ukraine in 2016" states that the African countries is a market for Ukrainian military products. The main buyers of the Ukrainian defense industry products were Ethiopia and Nigeria.

Institutional cooperation

In 2016, all higher bodies of the state authorities, without exception, have shown increasing institutional cooperation with African countries.

A number of activities aimed at enhancing a dialogue with the African region was held at the level of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. The Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko noted the importance of appearance of the Ukrainian products in African stores. The coherent economic model is meant to be adopted, not only fragmented laws. The representatives of the MFA, the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine attended the special parliamentary hearings on the economization of the foreign policy conducted by Hopko-led Committee and the Committee on Industrial Policy and Entrepreneurship

In November 2016, there was a parliamentary "round table" on "The development of trade-economic cooperation between Ukraine and Africa" with the participation of heads of the parliamentary committees, Deputy Minister of the Cabinet of Ministers, representatives of the MFA and the State Research Institute of Informatization and Economic Modelling, Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce, African and Ukrainian businessmen. During the event, it was noted that the African region is one of the most promising for intensifying trade and economic cooperation. This requires, particularly, creation of the export credit agency, which can provide support to Ukrainian exporters.

Strategic vision

The region is not mentioned directly in the strategic documents. The negative point is an absence of the direct reference to the African countries in the Government Action Plan for 2016, which was developed by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine headed by V. Groysman. It coincided with the expiration of the Program of Ukraine's cooperation with African countries for 2013-2015. A new document has not been adopted yet, whereas the previous government of A.Yatsenyuk articulated the task to start negotiations on a free trade area between Ukraine and the West Africa.

Activities

The key problem of relations with the Sub-Saharan Africa remains an acute lack of the highest level contacts. The last such meeting took place during the presidency of V. Yushchenko. Foreign Minister of Ukraine P. Klimkin met with the Foreign Minister of Nigeria (March 2016) and Senegal (November 2016), in addition, MFA held political consultations with the Foreign Ministries of Nigeria (May 2016) and Kenya (December 2016 g.). Attention was also paid by the MFA to such states as South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, Equatorial Guinea and to international organization such as the Economic Community of West African States.

In September 2016, a delegation of "UkrOboronProm" during the exhibition "Africa Aerospace and Defense" in South Africa held talks with representatives of Kenya, Tanzania, Angola, Nigeria, Republic of Congo and Mozambique on Ukrainian weapons sales.

In November 2016, there was a parliamentary "round table" on "The development of trade-economic cooperation between Ukraine and Africa." In order to enhance trade and economic cooperation it is necessary to create an export-credit agency, which provides support to Ukrainian exporters.

Regarding Ukraine's peacekeeping activities in Sub-Saharan Africa, it should ne single out the participation of Ukrainian peacekeepers in four UN missions: United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan, United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei and United Nations Mission in Liberia. On January 20, 2016, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2260 (2016) concerning Côte d'Ivoire, and in February 2016 Ukrainian helicopter squadron was withdrawn from this state.

Results

Dynamic of the Ukraine's relations with Sub-Saharan Africa's countries in political, economic, cultural and humanitarian spheres was uneven. Acute problems of trade and economic relations between the parties are an absence of the effective system of support of Ukraine's economic interests in the region, as well as significant risks of doing business, despite the fact that local markets are rather capacious and extremely attractive due to the deficiency of access barriers. However, the problem of maritime piracy in the African states littoral waters has not bear such risks as in previous years. In 2016, just one case of capturing of Ukrainian sailors was registered near the coast of Benin.

The solidarity of African countries concerning conflicts on the territory of Ukraine is less than in 2014-2015. The voting in November 2016 on the Ukrainian draft resolution "Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)" showed problematic issues in relations between Ukraine and such countries as Sudan, Zimbabwe, Angola, Burundi, Comoros and South Africa. This situation is caused by an active Russian diplomacy in the region.

As for the practical work of the MFA in 2016, an important step of the Ukrainian diplomacy in Africa was obtaining of an observer status at the African Union.

According to the State Statistics data, for 9 months of 2016, export to the countries of the African continent, not including the Maghreb Union countries, amounted to 7.8% of the total Ukrainian export, i.e. 7% more than last year. The share of Sub-Saharan Africa countries in Ukrainian exports is 1.7% (440.5 million US dollars) while all African States forming 10.1% (over 2.5 billion US dollars). The main importers of Ukrainian products among Sub-Saharan Africa countries are Ethiopia (18%), Nigeria (17.4%), South Africa (7.7%), Kenya (6%), Sudan (4.8%), DRC (4%), Ghana (3.7%), Djibouti (3.2%), and Mauritania (2.8%). Significant recovery of the Ukrainian exports happened to such countries as Botswana, Zimbabwe, Somalia, Gabon, DRC, Angola, although it has mostly situational nature. In 2016, Ukrainian "Centrenergy" and "DTEK Energy" companies continued to purchase anthracite coal from South Africa.

Finally, facilitation of activities and structuring of Ukrainian migrant communities in African States such as Kenya and South Africa can be mentioned as a significant achievement of the Ukrainian diplomacy in the social and humanitarian sphere.

CENTRAL ASIA

D+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	n/a	2
Institutional cooperation	n/a	2
Strategic vision	n/a	2
Activities	n/a	3
Results	n/a	2
General score	n/a	D+

In 2016, there were no significant changes in Ukraine's relations with the Central Asia states. The geopolitical and geo-economic location of the region and specificity of the interstate regional cooperation make Ukraine's access to it critically dependent on the Russian position. During this year, the Russian foreign policy was aimed at complicating political and economic relations between Ukraine and the states of Central Asia, whereas the Central Asian states demonstrated servile foreign policy in terms of Russia.

Political interest/engagement

The programs of the Ukrainian parliamentary political parties practically do not contain any issues on developing relations with the Central Asia states and their authorities (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). Given the current processes, the Central Asia region, where Ukraine was traditionally present to a large extent, and shaping the foreign policy strategies, alternative to the Russian influence (GUUAM with Uzbekistan, exporting "color revolution" in Kyrgyzstan, large-scale business projects in Turkmenistan, etc.), is transforming into the region with strong Russian influence, especially military and economic-wise.

The Ukrainian political elites do not consider a political dialogue with the states of this region as a process of personal political investments: on the one hand, this can be explained by the transformation of the Ukrainian political elite from the former Soviet Union to a pro-European mode in recent years, on the other hand – by a critical decline in oil and gas cooperation of the Ukrainian business with the states of the region.

Ukraine's limited interest to the Central Asian states is significantly determined by the geographical remoteness of these countries and the Russian transit blockade of the Ukrainian traditional lines of communication with Central Asia, which was actually introduced in 2016. The Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of 2016 (in contrast to the European direction of foreign policy) mentions Central Asia as a region of Ukrainian interests only in terms of enlargement (return) of the markets for Ukrainian producers and as a region that plays an important role in transit transport links with China and other countries of the Southeast Asia and the Middle East regions. However, it is necessary to realize that relations with no political dialogue at the highest level would be in stagnation also in those areas that are not related to political relations.

Institutional cooperation

The fact that the Central Asian states have not condemned the Russian aggressive actions, brings up the need for Ukraine to exit from the joint regional-political projects, which greatly complicates the possibility of institutional cooperation between Ukraine and the aforementioned states. Loss of interest from the Ukraine's side to the EurAsian Economic Community (EurAsEC) and minimizing the presence of Ukraine in the CIS, transforms cooperation with the Central Asian countries in a bilateral format, mostly filled with issues of economic and humanitarian cooperation. The Ukrainian authorities do not demonstrate significant mutual coordination in terms of bilateral relations, but, at the same time, there are no open conflicts or confrontation between them on current cooperation with the Central Asia states.

Strategic vision

Due to the significant remoteness of Central Asia from Ukraine and limited direct communication lines in the current geopolitical and foreign policy reality, this region does not have a strategic status for the Ukrainian foreign policy. The package of strategic documents (the Law of Ukraine "On the basis of domestic and foreign policy", National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, the Strategy "Ukraine-2020", the Strategic Defense Bulletin of Ukraine) do not contain any references to the Central Asia countries. Last but not least the lack of national strategic vision of Ukraine's cooperation prospects with the Central Asian region is determined by the passive stand of the Central Asian states towards Russia's aggression and lack of partner political elites in the region (including no results after rather active contacts between the Presidents P. Poroshenko and N. Nazarbayev last year and of Nazarbayev's shift to the political support of the Russian political system; a separate issue that complicates the Ukrainian-Kazakh relations is the absence of the Ambassador of Ukraine in Kazakhstan).

Activities

Given the general level of relations between Ukraine and the Central Asia states, cooperation focuses on the level of diplomatic missions, some executive authorities and business structures. In the course of 2016, there was no "high-level dialogue" between the political leaders of the Central Asia states and Ukraine; also, relationships were underactive at the level of the executive and legislative branches of the government.

Another issue that is unlikely to facilitate future development of the bilateral relations, for instance with Uzbekistan, was the absence of the President or the Prime Minister of Ukraine at the funeral of the Uzbek President I. Karimov (especially dissonant with the visits of V. Putin and D. Medvedev to Uzbekistan at that time and their unofficial political patronage on the new President of Uzbekistan S. Mirziyoyev).

Key issues to be solved by Ukraine in the framework of bilateral cooperation are mainly concentrated in the economic and humanitarian dimensions (given an actual withdrawal of the state from the region). However, in the view of the geographical remoteness, economic cooperation with the countries of this region is carried out in the grip of the Russian embargo on communication lines with Central Asia.

Results

2016 was the year of continued stagnation of foreign policy and foreign economic relations between Ukraine and the Central Asian states. Rigidity of the post-Soviet elites and political and security contradictions of the abovementioned region make the foreign policies and security strategies of these states highly dependent on the Russian influence (especially Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan). Despite some economic and humanitarian achievements of bilateral cooperation (for example, the transit and logistics project "Silk Road"), volumes of exports and imports of goods and services between Ukraine and the Central Asian states are generally insignificant.

Even given the fact that Ukraine has a positive trade balance with all countries of the region, lack of implementation capacity in relations with the Central Asian countries is extremely high: in fact, Ukraine risks losing its economic presence in the region in the near future. A significant indicator of the absence of an effective dialogue with Central Asia is their negative vote (or withdrawal) both in terms of the draft resolution on human rights violations in the occupied Crimea at the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly, and at the meeting of the General Assembly (on December 19, 2016). In view of traditionally restrained attitude of the Central Asian regimes to human rights, lack of support for this resolution was predictable, but the negative vote of certain states is undoubtedly an achievement of the Russian diplomacy in shaping the agenda in the Central Asia region.

BLACK SEA REGION

C-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	3	2
Activities	3	3
Results	2	3
General score	C-	C-

In 2016 the Black Sea vector of the foreign policy of Ukraine, as in 2015, has not received essentially new (either conceptual or practical) content from the Ukrainian authorities. Like the year before, the Black Sea region continued to be considered almost exclusively in the field of security due to the prolonged occupation of the Crimea and the threat of hostilities renewal in the region of the Azov coast. All other activities of the state authorities faded into insignificance inclusive of regional intension. It is directly linked to the Russian aggression against Ukraine and an inability to solve the existing contradictions by local mechanisms of cooperation only, in terms of increased tension in relations between Russia and NATO, Russia and the US in the Black Sea Region.

Political interest/engagement

The lack of systemic vision of the Black Sea region as an integrated geopolitical complex further leads to poor engagement and selective political interest of the main decision makers. At the same time, it can not be said that in 2016 Ukrainian government ignored Black Sea regional space, because most pressing points of Ukraine for the last three years has been situated here. The state and political institutions of Ukraine paid attention to the strengthening of military and energy security. Depending on the political orientation of the parliamentary groups, each parliamentary party tried to offer appropriate protection algorithm of "Black sea" interests of Ukraine in these spheres. However, these algorithms go beyond the problems of the Black Sea region and touch parties' strategy on other global subjects, such as building future relations with Russia. For example, Opposition bloc's approach to this issue differs dramatically from the rest of the factions in the Verkhovna Rada. Representatives of the Cabinet of Ministers, in particular at the level of deputy prime ministers, relevant ministries paid great attention to regional issues taking part in various international events on regional issues.

The Black Sea region is presented in the Analytical Report to the annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada, but as a part of the "Baltic-Black Sea subsystem of international security". In addition, the existing major regional issues, including the Crimean problems were also mentioned. The Government Action Plan 2016 has no direct reference to the Black Sea region.

Institutional cooperation

The most effective level of bilateral development of regional relations was observed in tandem of the Presidential Administration and the MFA of Ukraine. This is not only due to cohering of common tasks and the same political orientation of the leaders of these institutions, but also a push to strengthen coordination efforts with the government after the appointment of a new Prime Minister in April 2016. The practical cooperation with the Secretary of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and relevant committees at the level of multilateral cooperation reinforced representation of Ukraine in regional organizations.

Strategic vision

Specificity of analysis and generally inefficient implementation of the foreign policy of Ukraine in the Black Sea region both during 2016 and earlier are due to the absence of a coherent object of research and a task-oriented doctrine of the 'Black Sea policy'. In 2016 a comprehensive approach to search for effective responses to current issues of regional nature on both bilateral and multilateral levels has not appeared. It leads to the unsystematic response to specific challenges, halfness and incompleteness of processes and procedures. «Ad hoc» mode is a reflection of such a regional policy of Ukraine.

Activities

The "Black Sea" activities of the President of Ukraine and his Administration fully aimed at enhancing bilateral cooperation with our neighbors in the region, particularly Turkey. Bilateral relations level was maintained by close cooperation between Ukraine and Romania, in particular under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence as a reflection of certain decisions of the NATO Warsaw Summit and Romania's initiative to create a NATO fleet in the Black Sea with the participation of the Ukrainian Navy. The parliamentary and presidential elections in Moldova, Bulgaria and Georgia caused a minor mode in relations with Ukraine at the end of the year. The issues of military and energy security of the region predominated in the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. In particular, much attention was paid to the multinational naval exercises "Sea Breeze 2016" and the preparation to "Sea Breeze 2017" at the end of the year. Ukraine continued to participate in the activities of regional institutions. However, the efficiency of participation of such organizations as the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) is quite low and limited by military tensions in the region. Significant in this respect was the diplomatic demarche of the Ukrainian delegation to the BSEC in January because the Russian's presidency start. A number of the BSEC Member States supported such position of Ukraine. The participation of delegations of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in regional organizations' sessions was also noticeable, especially during the 46th and 47th meeting of the Parliament Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Committee on economic, trade, technological and environmental issues.

Representatives of various ministries participated in international events on regional issues, in particular on the development of "the blue economy" of the Black Sea region, discussed the issues of military security in the Black Sea. The Head of the Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry proposed to take a tougher line towards solving energy issues, particularly to put out Russia's occupied Black Sea offshore wells to tender for conclusion contracts of association with foreign companies.

Results

Without the Black Sea strategy, Ukraine's foreign policy in the region in 2016 remained range of bilateral relations "of interest." Activities of Ukraine in regional organizations such as BSEC, GUAM, BLACKSEAFOR, are longstanding. It took place in parallel but separate from one another without regard to the common potential of bilateral and multilateral formats because of external and internal reasons. However, focusing on solving regional security issues in the area of the Black Sea is not possible any more in isolation from the problems of the national and European levels. It integrates the Black Sea foreign policy vector in a higher-order system of priorities and strategies. Multilateral cooperation format in the region for Ukraine reshapes in bilateral format of regional relations or inclines to multilateral format, but without the participation of Russia.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



OSCE

B+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	4	4
Activities	4	5
Results	5	4
General score	B+	B+

A high level of intensity of cooperation between Ukraine and the OSCE, of visits and interactions within the framework of various institutions was maintained in 2016. The most active one remains the interaction with the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM), participation of the Ukrainian representatives in the Trilateral Contact Group on peaceful settlement of the situation in Donbas. For reasons beyond Ukraine's control, there is a problematic issue concerning the full implementation of the mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission, monitoring on the entire territory of Ukraine including the Ukraine-Russia border territories and the temporarily occupied Crimea. At the same time, there is some progress in discussion on updating the mission mandate and establishing a police mission, which would contribute to efforts of conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction of Donbas. Using OSCE tools for the reintegration of Crimea remains relevant.



Political interest/engagement

Among political parties, the highest level of the OSCE cooperation was maintained by “Petro Poroshenko Block “Solidarnist”, especially in the context of the First Deputy Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine I. Gerashchenko participating in the negotiating process concerning the Minsk agreements implementation. The activity of Ukrainian MPs in the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE remains stable. The informal discussion place “Minsk platform” partially reflects the interest of other groups and factions in cooperation with the OSCE. Within frames of the “Minsk platform”, the situation in Donbas, implementation of the Minsk agreements were discussed and meetings with the representatives of the Minsk Group were held.

Institutional cooperation

During 2016, cooperation with various institutions of the OSCE remained a high level priority (President of Ukraine, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Parliament). Active cooperation of the Office of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Ministry of Justice with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) as well as with the Office of the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine remains. The main positions of these institutions are agreed upon, however, not all ministries demonstrate awareness concerning the international commitments of Ukraine (in particular, awareness of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Security Service of Ukraine is still relevant).

Strategic vision

Formal recognition of the strategic vision of the OSCE role in Ukraine's foreign policy needs to be polished. It is only the National Security Strategy that recognizes OSCE, in line with the Council of Europe, as an instrument of “creating an effective system of interaction in Central and Eastern Europe aiming for better security and stability”. While security and humanitarian dimensions of the OSCE cooperation are indirectly mentioned in the strategic documents, economic and environmental dimensions should be itemized.

Activities

2016 saw continued active cooperation between Ukraine and the OSCE institutions. The highest level of cooperation is noted with the ODIHR/OSCE (particularly, through implementing a number of projects in the field of democracy, fighting corruption and establishing the rule of law, implementation of gender equality, strengthening public participation) and with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (parliamentary hearings that took place in March 2016 with a participation of HCNM A. Thors should encourage development of an institutional framework for minorities in Ukraine). This level of interaction continues to address current issues

of democratization of Ukraine, the rule of law, human rights, judicial reform, and the rights of internally displaced persons. Solving the same security issues in Europe in formats accessible to the OSCE (including participation in resolving protracted conflicts, including the Transnistrian settlement) requires more pro-active position of Ukraine.

The cooperation with the OSCE Special Representative is realized within the Trilateral Contact Group and concerns joint steps aimed at the implementation of the Minsk agreements. Current year continued a series of meetings of the Trilateral Contact Group on the peaceful settlement of the situation in Donbas. One of the priorities for discussion proposed by the Ukrainian side remains the issue of security in Donbas, release of hostages held illegally in certain districts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, modalities of elections in the occupied regions of Donetsk and Lugansk regions.

Ukraine's interaction with the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission remains of the highest significance. The debate on a deployment of the OSCE armed mission in the occupied Donbas gained a new impulse.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe continues to be a platform for discussions on resolving the situation in Donbas. In addition, the report of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, published during the session on 1-5 July, highlights the issue of restoration of territorial integrity of Ukraine, emphasizes Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea.

Results

SMM OSCE reports are the basis for decision-making and forcing the Russian Federation to stop aggression in eastern Ukraine. Previous arrangements within the Minsk process with the Trilateral contact group and commitment to develop the so-called "road map", which governs the process of restoring security and expands surveillance of the SMM OSCE in Donbas are some indirect progress of Ukraine's cooperation with the OSCE. Fragmentary achievements (including monitoring visit of the OSCE Special Representative for humanitarian subgroup in CDDLR (ORDLO) and meeting with the hostages, who illegally kept in captivity) can be considered as some progress in negotiations. However, issues of heavy weapons withdrawal, demilitarization of Debaltseve, unlocking checkpoint "Zolote", release of hostages held in CDDLR (for the 1 of December, 2016 – 109 people), threats to the physical safety of SMM monitors, for reasons beyond Ukraine's and OSCE's control, remain the ground to exploit the potential of cooperation with the OSCE. A pressing issue is to develop modalities of CDDLR (ORDLO) elections after the restoration of security. In addition, the cooperation between Ukraine and the OSCE on human rights in annexed Crimea and reintegration of Crimea requires activation.

UNITED NATIONS

A-

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	3	4
Institutional cooperation	4	5
Strategic vision	4	4
Activities	4	5
Results	5	5
General score	B	A-

Ukraine's election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2016-2017 has intensified activities in this direction. Active work of the Permanent Mission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and participation of the members of the Parliament of Ukraine in various events under the auspices of the UN allowed both to draw attention to the Ukrainian issues, and to become a fully active participant in solving problems of the global agenda. In 2016, activities were observed both in a foreign policy direction and aiming to secure more active UN assistance to Ukraine.



Political interest/engagement

In 2016, much attention was paid both to the Ukraine's activity within the UN and cooperation between Ukraine and the United Nations to address specific issues countering Russian aggression and other areas of global development. However, there is no reference to cooperation with the UN in the Government Action Plan for 2016 as a separate direction, but only a brief mention as a tool for human rights protection and a participant of Technical assistance fund. In its turn, in the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada in 2016 attention was paid to Ukraine's presidency in the UN Security Council, peacekeeping and respond to security challenges within the UN. The speech of the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko at the General Debate of the 71th session of the UN General Assembly is worth noting.

The issues, related to the UN, predominantly remain in the sphere of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs responsibility or specialized institutions that are in charge of these areas of activities. The attitude to the UN as to a global organization is not controversial among political parties. They support an idea of reforming and limiting "the power of veto". Parliament, especially the Committee on Foreign Affairs, paid sufficient attention to the UN-sponsored events and appealed to this organization in terms of the Russian aggression, human rights and release of political prisoners, problems of Crimean Tatars etc.

Institutional cooperation

Issues of the UN agenda and Ukraine's activities within the framework of the UN system do not cause any disagreements in different branches of power and among political parties. In fact, for today, participation of specialized institutions, Ministries, as well as Ukrainian MPs, when necessary, in various meetings and conferences under the UN auspices is secured. At the same time, this sphere remains the prerogative of the MFA with active engagement of the Presidential Administration. The Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations played a significant role in 2016.

Strategic vision

In 2016, a strategic vision of Ukraine in the UN and cooperation with the organization and the system of affiliated institutions has not changed. Most current strategic documents of Ukraine, except the Law "On Fundamentals of Domestic and Foreign policy", referred to the UN. Because of Ukraine's membership in the UN Security Council in 2016-2017 strategic vision was strengthened by declared priorities. At the same time, they are limited by the priorities in the Security Council. Among them, it is worth noting the opposition to Russian aggression, strengthening capacity of the UN in conflict prevention and mediation, peacekeeping in Africa, promoting agenda on women, peace and security and respond to challenges on environmental change.

Activities

Ukraine's activities within the UN framework were rated highly owing to the Ukrainian mission's active participation in the sessions of the Security Council, involvement of the representatives of relevant ministers in other events under United Nations auspices, activity of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. This activity is not only in the foreign policy direction, but also in cooperation with representatives of various UN programs inside the country. Among the diverse and different levels of activity in 2016, the following are worth noting:

Upon an initiative of the delegation of Ukraine, an emergency UN Security Council open meeting (28 April 2016) on the subject of Russian aggression against our country and the UN Security Council "Arria-Formula" meeting to protect critical infrastructure from terrorist attacks (21 November 2016) were held. Ukrainian delegation pays great attention to conflicts in Africa, in particular, the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations V. Yelchenko is a Chairman of the UN Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), which is responsible for monitoring compliance regime of sanctions against the Central African Republic.

President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko headed the Ukrainian delegation at the summit of the UN Security Council on the situation in Syria (21 September 2016), First Deputy Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine I. Gerashchenko led the Ukrainian delegation at the UN Security Council open debate on "Women, peace and security" (25 October 2016). The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin took part in the ministerial meeting of the UN Security Council on aviation safety in the context of combating terrorist threats. Minister of Youth and Sports of Ukraine I. Zhdanov held a meeting with the envoy of the UN Secretary General for Youth A. Alhendawi (3 February 2016). Commissioner of the President of Ukraine for the Rights of Disabled Persons V. Sushkevych and Deputy Minister of Social Policy of Ukraine V. Ivankevych took part in the 9th session of the Conference of Member States of the Convention on rights of disabled persons (14 June 2016). Ukrainian delegation addressed the plenary meeting of the United Nations Forum on Indigenous Communities (12 May 2016) etc.

Today, more than 500 (the lowest per last 10 years) soldiers and police officers represent Ukraine in seven peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, South Sudan, Kosovo, Cyprus, the Abyei Area (Sudan).

Results

Most of the objectives and priorities of Ukraine regarding the UN in 2016 were executed. Russia's blocking of adoption of certain resolutions had no significant effect on the performance of drawing attention to problems related to the illegal occupation of the Crimea and security situation in the east of Ukraine. The adoption of resolution on "Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)" (15 November 2016) at the Third Committee of the UN GA, where the first official UN documents which recognized Russia as an occupying country, was an important achievement.

Ukraine was among the first states, signed and ratified the Paris climate agreement, confirming the priority of protecting the environment.

In 2016, Ukraine was not only focused on the issues of its own security, but was also actively involved in other issues of international security, was a co-author of the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions etc. In addition, Ukraine with other contributing countries to the UN peacekeeping operations (PKO) joined the so-called "Kigali Principles". This document aims to provide recognition of the central role of the protection of civilians during the UN operations.

It is also worth mentioning, signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between the Government, the UN and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development on Trust Fund involving many partners (28 October 2016) that accumulates funds from international and Ukrainian donors to support restoration projects of Donbas.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

B

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	5	3
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	4	3
Activities	4	5
Results	4	5
General score	B+	B

During 2016, activities of Ukraine in the Council of Europe (CoE) reached a certain progress compared to the previous year. In particular, it happened through revitalization of the Permanent Delegation of Ukraine to the CoE activities, due to the appointment of a new permanent representative. The illegal annexation of the Crimea and human rights violations as a consequence, the release of Ukrainian citizens – political prisoners and hostages remained an issue to discuss on most available platforms of the CoE that resulted in the adoption of several resolutions. The Action Plan of the Council of Europe for Ukraine for 2015-2017 years has acquired new impetus, particularly through increased funding of the reforms in Ukraine provided by the Plan.



Political interest/engagement

During 2016, representatives of all parliamentary factions showed political interest in bilateral cooperation between Ukraine and the Council of Europe. The unanimous position of the Ukrainian delegation to PACE at the September session of the Assembly on the possible refusal to participate in the Assembly in case of the Russian delegation return, to some extent indicates the presence of consolidating political interest regarding cooperation with the Council of Europe. However, the exclusion of some MPs from the delegations in international organizations, despite the lack of internal debate, provides no basis for improved scores on the given indicator.

Institutional cooperation

The engagement of the broader than in 2015, circle of institutions (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Human Rights, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations, General Prosecutor of Ukraine), in combination with the active work of the Permanent Delegation of Ukraine to the CoE gives the reason to assess this area highly enough. The MFA continues its cooperation with the Permanent Delegation of Ukraine to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. In particular, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to support the introduction of relevant draft resolutions by the Ukrainian side.

Strategic vision

As in the previous year, the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Law of Ukraine "On the basis of domestic and foreign policy of Ukraine", "Strategy-2020" do not indicate directly the strategic need for cooperation with the Council of Europe. However, the objectives set out in these documents, are displayed to a full extent through the implementation of the Action Plan for Ukraine, adopted by the CoE Committee of Ministers for 2015-2017 years (constitutional reform, good governance, electoral reform, combating corruption, money laundering, promoting cyber security, monitoring and support of implementation of the National strategy on human rights and action plan to it, development of comprehensive national strategies for protection of internally displaced persons and action plan to it, reforming the system of public television and radio broadcasting).

Activities

This year the activity of Ukraine, also through enhanced activities of the Permanent Delegation of Ukraine to the Council of Europe, has intensified. Available platforms of organizations were broadly used in the work, involving the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, representatives of relevant ministries. On October 3, the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the CoE organized a Day of Ukrainian

reforms in the CoE headquarters in cooperation with the Council Secretariat and the Estonian chairmanship in the Committee of Ministers. It should be noted that such event was held for the first time in the CoE. Presentations and discussions that took place in the working groups (strategy on human rights and the reform of the penitentiary system and police, the judicial reform, fight against corruption) contributed to raising awareness on the implementation of the Action Plan of the Council of Europe for Ukraine and overcoming the negative effects of Russia's information campaigns regarding crisis of reforms in Ukraine. Activity of the Ukrainian delegation remains constantly high during the sessions of the PACE.

Results

One of the achievements of the Permanent Delegation of Ukraine to PACE is the adoption of Resolution # 2133, which actually impose on Russia (that executes de facto authority in the annexed Crimea) a responsibility for human rights protection in the annexed Crimea and ORDLO. An additional factor that increases success of the implementation of the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine is an allocation of additional EUR 1.3 million by the Norwegian Embassy. Apart from that, one of the achievements of the implementation of the Plan in 2016 is the introduction of the judicial reform, establishment of the anticorruption bodies (National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine and National Agency on Corruption Prevention).

In the frames of the 36th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention for the Protection of Wild Flora and Fauna, and Natural Habitats in Europe (CETS 104, Bern Convention), a decision was adopted according to which the Ukrainian deep-water route in the mouth of the Bystre estuary poses no threat to the environment. In addition, the Head of the Protected Areas Department of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine I. Ivanenko was elected as a Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of the CoE Convention on the Protection of Wild Flora and Fauna, and Natural Habitats in Europe (T-PVS).

The signing of the act on Ukraine's accession to the European Code of Social Security on November 10 was an additional result of institutional efforts combination. The document requires ratification by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

MULTILATERAL INITIATIVES



HUMAN RIGHTS

B

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	5	4
Activities	4	4
Results	4	4
General score	B+	B

In 2016, protection of human rights, on the one hand, remained negotiations topic and a diplomacy tool, on the other – international cooperation and Ukraine's international commitments on human rights remained a tool of implementation of the National Strategy on Human Rights. A high level of activity of the official and public diplomacy continued to persist (especially regarding human rights violations in the occupied territories and the efforts for rights protection, which are mainly used in the Minsk negotiations). The OSCE, the UN General Assembly sessions, the UN Human Rights Council, Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe remained the main instruments to promote the issue of human rights protection in Ukraine.

Political interest/engagement

As in the previous year, compliance with Ukraine's international commitments on human rights and human rights protection as a tool of diplomacy was reflected in official speeches of the President of Ukraine, the Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Human Rights, National Minorities and on Foreign Affairs.

Activity of the members of the “Solidarnist” party (participation of the Vice Speaker I. Gerashchenko in the negotiation process within the Minsk format and representative functions within the respective visits to topical events to the UN headquarters, Council of Europe, the OSCE) and the party "Batkivshchyna" (its representative headed the office of the profile committee of the Verkhovna Rada) remained at the same level.

The programs of other parties and official statements of their representatives do not refer directly to the issue of human rights, but in 2016 it became the subject of parliamentary debate of the informal discussion group on "Minsk process" that allows to conclude that the attention relatively increased.

Institutional cooperation

The level of coordination among the various ministries in the process of implementation of Ukraine's international commitments on human rights needs to be strengthened. One example is the suspended visit of the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture in May this year, which was to some extent a consequence of the lack of information coordination between the Ministry of Justice and the Security Service of Ukraine. Although the situation was clarified (including involving the Office of the Ombudsman) and the suspended visit of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture was held in September 2016, the task of raising awareness of employees of the ministries and departments on international human rights obligations remains relevant. At the same time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to work actively. The Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories established in 2016 is actively working in this field. Involvement of the EU advisory mission in Ukraine in the implementation of the Action Plan on the National Strategy on human rights in a number of directions, support of the UNDP in Ukraine, projects of the Council of Europe clearly indicate institutional interaction.

Strategic vision

The main documents, reflecting the strategic vision of respect and protection of human rights, remain the National strategy on human rights, strategic cooperation plan of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights with international organizations for 2013-2017, Strategy "Ukraine-2020".

Activities

Protection of human rights in the occupied territories remains a priority for both formal and informal diplomacy within the framework of humanitarian, security and political subgroups in the Minsk process. In particular, representatives of Ukraine continue their efforts to release hostages held in ORDLO and Russia, prevent environmental disaster in Donbass, and ensure water supply and access of international humanitarian organizations.

Permanent missions of Ukraine to international organizations continue to bring the issue of human rights violations in the occupied territories to attention of the international community, using committees of the UN, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Council of Europe as tools.

Office of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights and the ministries continue to accede to the ratification of international conventions on strengthening the rule of law in Ukraine (in particular to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence). Implementation of the National Strategy on Human Rights and Action Plan for its implementation reflects a proactive foreign policy of Ukraine. At the same time, issues related to a derogation of Ukraine from some of its international commitments on human rights need to be addressed. To a considerable extent, it is due to the annexation of the Crimea and Russian military aggression in Donbass (social rights protection of displaced persons, citizens of Ukraine who live in the occupied territories, active and demobilized participants of ATO).

Results

Approval of the resolution "Situation on human rights in the Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)" by UN General Assembly on December 19, 2016 is the obvious achievement of the MFA of Ukraine and the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the UN. The document identifies Russian Federation as an occupant country, and the Crimea and the city of Sevastopol as a temporarily occupied territory.

Partial achievements of the Ukrainian foreign policy are the special visits of Council of Europe Commissioner N. Muižnieks (including ORDLO) and Ambassador J. Shtutman to the occupied Crimea in March and April 2016 respectively. However, the report of the special mission of the Council of Europe, published on April 14, 2016 raised heated discussion both by Ukrainian human rights activists, and by the Office of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. Particularly there is a controversial thesis of the report on "cases of repression, more focused on individual opponents" in the Crimea, ignoring violations of collective rights, including the rights of the Crimean Tatars. Despite the efforts in the Minsk process, activity of international humanitarian

organizations in the occupied regions of Donetsk and Lugansk regions remains blocked. ICRC has not received access to the occupied territories to search for missing persons and prisons with hostages.

Indirect achievement of the Ukrainian public diplomacy are references in the report of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court "about the actions of the preliminary investigation of the situation in Ukraine, "where events in the Crimea, Donetsk and Lugansk regions are recognized as providing the ability to use the law on international armed conflict.

CLIMATE CHANGE

D+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	3.5	2
Institutional cooperation	4	2
Strategic vision	3	2
Activities	4	4
Results	3	2
General score	C+	D+

2016 should had become the key year from the perspective of implementation of financial mechanisms to combat climate change, though due to lack of the real practical steps everything was limited to signing and ratification of the Paris Agreement on climate change, i.e. assuming new commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emission.



Political interest/engagement

Unfortunately, political parties pay inadequate attention to the climate change issue in their programme documents, since the interest in it disappeared together with the loss of ability to receive significant amount of “green investments” under the Kyoto Protocol.

Lack of proper attention to this problem on the part of the business and the society resulted in reducing the list of possible ways of fulfilling climate protection obligations under international agreements to perspectives of implementation and use of fiscal instruments. Even despite understanding of the scale of the necessary climate financing and limited possibilities of fiscal tools though, we observe disregard for market instruments and mechanisms stipulated by the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement that would provide opportunity to attract international financial market resources to reduce consumption of traditional energy resources, greenhouse gas emissions and increase energy efficiency of the economy.

Unfortunately, lack of interest in this issue on the part of political forces resulted in delaying implementation and adoption of the necessary regulatory and legal acts. In this regard, access to private financial resources remains actually closed, while opportunities for development of the real economy and the financial sector of Ukraine remain only in the long term.

Institutional cooperation

Ukraine actively cooperates with international organisations and financial institutions responsible for combating climate change. Specifically, those are various divisions of the UN (Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, United Nations Environment Programme, etc.), the corresponding GIZ programmes (Gesellschaft für die internationale Zusammenarbeit), the European Commission, USAID that provide both technical and financial assistance for development both strategic documents and specific mechanisms aimed at combating climate change.

At the same time, it may be noted that the level of interaction between the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine with other ministries and agencies in the process of developing a strategy for the low-carbon development of the country is low. Particularly acute deficiency of such interaction is observed in formation of institutional conditions for the use of market-based financial instruments and mechanisms that allow accumulating resources needed to achieve specified climate and energy goals.

Strategic vision

Signing the Paris Agreement on Climate Change means that Ukraine made clear commitments to keep the volume of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 within 60 % of 1990 level. Unfortunately, these indicators have not yet been reflected in strategic development documents and have no proper tools to ensure their implementation.

Almost the only document that contains exact steps to establish the necessary institutional conditions for effective combating climate change is the EU Association Agreement and the relevant Ordinance of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 847-P dated September 17, 2014 that contains the plan of implementation of the EU Agreement provisions. However, implementation of the regulatory and legal acts related to the climate change issue is delayed, and timelines defined for that are violated in some cases.

Activities

In 2016, the President of Ukraine, representatives of legislative and executive bodies actively contributed to the process of signing and ratifying the Paris Agreement on Climate Change that should replace the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. At the same time, the work on the relevant strategy for low-carbon development is only starting, and in absence of interaction between all related ministries and agencies it may become incapable, which would jeopardize the prospect of keeping the volume of greenhouse gas emissions at the defined level.

Lack of the necessary infrastructure and conditions for reporting non-financial risks (including environmental) may be regarded as the largest threat for Ukrainian companies and the economy, which may create obstacles for development of trade relations with the EU in connection with the obligation to report both own risks and risks of contractors to be introduced in the EU in 2017.

Due to lack of information about existing capabilities of climate finances, cooperation between the authorities and NGOs provides no opportunity to develop and implement effective financial instruments to fulfil climate change obligations defined in international treaties.

Results

The signing and ratification of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change remains the only visible and meaningful achievement of Ukraine in 2016. At that, issues of implementing provisions of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, financial support of measures necessary to fulfil obligations taken by Ukraine under various international agreements remain open. Another adverse fact is the predominance of fiscal instruments and the grant assistance among possible sources for accumulating climate finances. At that, the existing market-based instruments and opportunities for attracting private financial resources as well as the need to create institutional conditions for their use in Ukraine are neglected.

Instead of creating conditions for attracting international “green investments” to develop the real economy and financial sector in Ukraine, we have to acknowledge the lack of genuine political will and delay of implementation of the necessary regulatory and legal acts that may result in failure to fulfil obligations to reduce greenhouse gases emissions, restrict access to international capital markets and goods, neutralise national contribution to limitation of the temperature growth rates on the planet.

NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

C+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	3
Institutional cooperation	4	3
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	4	4
Results	4	3
General score	B-	C+

During the reporting year, Ukraine has demonstrated its commitment to the existing non-proliferation regimes, export control, nuclear security and fully fulfill its international obligations, although significant activity to strengthen its position in the international arena as well as improving efficiency of the political/strategic approaches were not observed.



Political interest/engagement

Reporting year was marked by the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the non-nuclear status of Ukraine by the Verkhovna Rada. It provoked another round of discussions on political expediency of the Ukrainian decision to refuse its nuclear arsenal. The most active advocates of restoring Ukraine's nuclear shield in the political arena are representatives of the O. Liashko's Radical party and "Svoboda", while the position of MPs from the Coalition parties, including "Petro Poroshenko Block" is completely opposite.

The discussions on the Budapest Memorandum received special attention as the main instrument in this area. In particular, the President of Ukraine during his speech at the UN General Assembly in September 2016 noted that "we failed to pass an exam with the Budapest memorandum" and it remained "just a piece of paper". The Washington Summit on nuclear security (April 2016) made an appeal to establish new mechanisms of effective guarantees by the nuclear states to non-nuclear ones as a result of the deployment of the Russia's missiles and aircrafts capable of carrying nuclear warheads. Unlike last year, the Analytical report to the President's Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 2016 has not mentioned the Budapest Memorandum or a non-nuclear status.

Institutional cooperation

Institutional cooperation was held without major changes. Annual National Program of the NATO-Ukraine cooperation for 2016 defined priorities of Ukraine in the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, including implementation of a state policy on national export control. The necessary measures for this was carried out through inter-agency cooperation of the relevant state bodies – Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, State Border Guard Service of Ukraine and others.

The issue of proliferation of nuclear and radioactive materials from the temporarily uncontrolled territories and occupied Crimean Peninsula remained a priority for the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine (SNRIU) and law enforcement agencies, which discussed strengthening of the inter-institutional cooperation within the XIII Ukrainian Conference on Physical Protection, Control and Accounting of Nuclear Materials (3-7 October 2016).

Strategic vision

There are no visible changes in the strategic vision of the policy of non-proliferation in Ukraine in 2016. Particularly, adopted in 2016 "Concept for the Development of the Security and Defense Sector" referred to the Military Doctrine 2015, which stands to a non-nuclear weapons status.

Activities

In 2016, Ukraine enhanced cooperation with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin met the Executive Secretary of the CTBTO L. Zerbo on June 13, 2016.

January 27, 2016 Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States V. Chaly participated in a political meeting of experts of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) member-states, which took place in Washington. Ukraine supported the joint position on recognition of weapons of mass destruction and means of their delivery as a real threat to international peace and security, especially on the background of the North Korea recent nuclear weapons test, and became a co-author of the relevant UN Security Council resolution.

Secretary of the NSDC of Ukraine O. Turchynov discussed issues of cooperation in the framework of collective security with the Assistant Secretary of State of the USA for Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance F. Rose on January 19, 2016.

The implementation of the US Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program continued in 2016, with the support of Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation (ISN) the US Department of State. In November, there was a meeting between the representatives of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine and ISN to discuss the current status of the project and opportunities of future cooperation.

Significant importance had Ukraine's participation in several international events, including the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington and the UN General Assembly, the NATO conferences on relevant topics, where the Ukrainian side has clearly demonstrated its position. A clear indicator of the Ukraine's deterioration of confidence in NPT ideology was Kyiv's refusal to vote on the Draft Resolution of Disarmament and International Security Committee (27 October 2016), which authorized the start of negotiations for establishing a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. It appears that key partners of Ukraine in NATO vote against the resolution and this fact largely predetermined position of Kyiv to abstain from voting.

Results

Presentation of Ukraine's national positions on non-proliferation during the reporting period were declarative and had programmatic nature. It determined the absence of any significant progress in this direction. However, there were certain sectoral results.

In June, the CTBTO made a decision to provide Ukraine with technical and financial assistance to ensure the effective operation of the International Monitoring System, namely high-tech primary seismic station (PS) 45 in Malin. Ukraine will contribute to further development of the International Monitoring System, which is an important means of verification under the Agreement.

Ukraine has consistently defended the NPT in the UN, particularly the idea of the necessity of the Treaty reform by providing additional safeguards for non-nuclear states. However, abstaining from voting on the resolution on opening of negotiations for the treaty to ban nuclear weapons, confirmed some Kyiv's disappointment in non-nuclear ideology. It appears that the reason was a demonstration of Ukraine's devotion to the spirit of collective security. Activities within the UN Security Council and adoption of the resolution on North Korea are also positive results.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

C+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	4	3
Strategic vision	2	3
Activities	3	4
Results	3	3
General score	C	C+

In 2016, Ukraine increased its activity in international security, in particular through non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council, strengthening bilateral security dialogue with many countries and intensification of cooperation with NATO and other international organizations. However, activity of Ukraine is ambiguous, since while activating in African conflicts or North Korea issues, Ukraine actually lost its position in the Transnistrian peace settlement and did not pay attention to the Syrian crisis and conflicts in the Caucasus.



Political interest/engagement

The representatives of political parties present in the Parliament paid little attention to international security topics, but only related to the Ukrainian issues and combating hybrid threats. On the one hand, we can talk about increasing political interest in international security issues due to participation of the Ukrainian delegation in the UN Security Council and enhance cooperation with NATO. On the other hand, this interest remains limited. Government Action Plan for 2016 do not pay attention to international security. The Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Parliament gave heed to nuclear safety, Ukraine's membership in the UN Security Council, the Syrian crisis and international support in handling of the crisis in Donbas and population protection. During his meetings, the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada repeatedly brought up a point of challenges to international security, and possible options for cooperation, for example, he suggested to the Speaker of Lithuanian Parliament and Chairmen of committees a wider form of cooperation between the states that border Russia – the Baltic-Black Sea alliance format, involving Romania, Ukraine, Baltic States and Poland.

Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada in 2016 pays more attention to international security, but much less to Ukraine's role in this process. Some attention was given to international terrorism, nuclear non-proliferation, hybrid threats to European security. A separate section devoted to Ukraine as a contributor to international security, framing its activities only within the UN and NATO cooperation, and transfer of the best practices in fighting hybrid threats. The President of Ukraine and Foreign Minister made the key statements during international forums.

Institutional cooperation

Institutional cooperation on international security issues in 2016 remained unchanged. In fact, this sector remained in the coordination of the MFA and the President of Ukraine. The Verkhovna Rada is attracted mostly for making political statements on international support in resolution of the situation in Donbas or ratification of necessary agreements.

Strategic vision

Strategic vision of international security issues and Ukraine's participation in their settlement for 2016 is not changed. The documents adopted in previous years, considering these problems mainly in the form of sub-regional security or Euro-Atlantic course of the country, where the issues of common threats to international security in the Middle East and nuclear nonproliferation issues received special attention. In 2016, Ukraine's priorities in the frame of the UN Security Council can also be considered as shaping of the strategy in that direction. In particular, it stands out for: strengthening peacekeeping capacity, strengthening the capacity of the UN

conflict prevention and mediation, peacekeeping on the African continent, fighting against terrorism, supporting disarmament and non-proliferation, promoting agenda on women, peace and security as well as children in armed conflicts.

Activities

Ukraine has stepped up its engagement in solving the problems of international security. However, this activation actually took place only through participation in the UN Security Council (see the relevant section). In addition, Ukraine is represented in seven peacekeeping operations within the UN, two within NATO and one multinational – in Transnistria. At a meeting of the UN Security Council (November 7, 2016) the Minister of Foreign Affairs P. Klimkin said that Ukraine intends to expand the geography of its "blue helmets" participation in the missions of the international organizations.

For the second year in a row, Ukraine decreases its participation in the Transnistrian settlement, despite the appointment of a new Special Representative in March 2016. During the escalation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in April 2016, Ukraine supported Azerbaijan side, insisting on resolving the conflict on the assumption of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Ukrainian delegations took part in various events and initiatives on nuclear non-proliferation (see the relevant section) and in the 21th session of the Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (November 28, 2016, in the Netherlands).

In addition, there were consultations on international security issues with partners in NATO and the EU and bilateral consultations with strategic partners and neighbors (see. the relevant sections). Ukraine joined the EU statements regarding Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

Results

Ukraine's actual results in international security equal to its activities in the UN and cooperation with NATO. Focus on own crisis issues limited Ukraine's engagement to resolve other conflicts or cooperation on problems of terrorism, cyber security, maritime security, migration, etc., to political statements. Ukraine's attention to issues of nuclear non-proliferation reflected in co-authorship of the UN resolution to tighten sanctions against North Korea (November 2016).

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

C+

	2015	2016
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	4	3
Strategic vision	5	3
Activities	5	4
Results	4	3
General score	B+	C+

In 2016, the development and implementation of public diplomacy slightly lost dynamics. From the majority of strategic documents announced in 2015, just one was approved. Progress was observed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs activities, which, in cooperation with other partners held a series of effective events of public and cultural diplomacy. However, inadequate state funding of the sector and the lack of full coordination of efforts of all institutions involved in the construction of public diplomacy remains the key issue.



Political interest/engagement

In 2016, the interest in public diplomacy remained, but the actual level of political involvement significantly decreased. Analysing statements of the heads of factions or leaders of political parties represented in Parliament, we should acknowledge the lack of proper understanding of the importance of this sector, especially in the situation of a hybrid war against Ukraine. Permanent engagement was observed only by the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, which has repeatedly raised this topic on their meetings and public events. The Analytical Report to the annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada paid special attention to public diplomacy. However, the Address of the President and his statements itself did not contain any reference to public diplomacy.

Institutional cooperation

A palpable imbalance was observed in activities: each institution has been implementing predominantly their own initiatives and projects. The high level of coordination can be noted only between the Presidential Administration and certain responsible ministries (MFA, Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine, Ministry of Culture, etc.). In addition, from 2015 public diplomacy, being part of strategic communications has been in the focus of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine as a coordinating body. Despite a creation of the interdepartmental working group (2015) on the Concept of Ukraine's popularization in the world and promotion of Ukraine's interests in the global information space, which consist of representatives of many ministries, the concept was approved only on October 11, 2016, and only MIP was named as a developer.

As positive examples of interinstitutional cooperation, including civil society involvement, public actions of diplomatic missions, government officials and MPs in support of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU during a referendum in the Netherlands, as well as action in support of N. Savchenko could be noted. The cooperation of the MFA and the Ministry of Culture in representing Ukraine at the Frankfurt Book Fair can also be marked.

The Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs during the year repeatedly carried out activities involving institutions and public experts in the area of foreign policy and national security on issues of public, cultural and expert diplomacy.

Strategic vision

After approval of the Sustainable Development Strategy “Ukraine-2020” (2015), ambitious Program of Ukraine's popularization in the world and promotion of Ukraine's interests in the global information space, only one document was added to the strategic context of public diplomacy. On October 11, 2016, the Concept of

Ukraine's popularization in the world and promotion of Ukraine's interests in the global information space was adopted. However, the provisions of the Concept downplayed the current situation of hybrid war against Ukraine and did not even mention public diplomacy as one of the key tools to promote a state image. The Military Doctrine of Ukraine is the only government document that contains a concept of public diplomacy as a part of strategic communications. Until October 2016, the National Reforms Council website had contained links to the developed in the late 2015 acquis and implementation plan regarding the program of popularization of Ukraine in the world. However, in early December, these links disappeared.

Activities

MFA has demonstrated the most active and effective activities in public and cultural diplomacy during 2016. At the end of 2015, after establishing the Office of Public Diplomacy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs came down to the point of staff seriously, relevant departments have been created. The Ministry continued an active campaign to attract world attention to Ukraine through social networks, especially Twitter, as well as international online campaign #myukraineis (My Ukraine is) to promote the country abroad (in cooperation with the MIP and StratCom.UA organization).

During the year, the Foreign Ministry cooperated effectively on projects of cultural diplomacy with other Ukrainian and foreign partners. On April 27, 2016 the MFA and Kyiv office of Kennan Institute with the financial support from the US Embassy in Ukraine and the International Renaissance Foundation organized the Second Cultural Diplomacy Forum of Ukraine. Conduction of periodic meetings of diplomats and representatives of the cultural sphere in "Cultural diplomacy club" format, participation of independent experts in the meeting of heads of foreign diplomatic representations provided an opportunity to discuss potential joint projects. Annual open-air performance format in front of the MFA devoted to important issues has already become traditional.

Despite a negative for Ukraine result of the referendum in the Netherlands, an information campaign before it can be considered as an unprecedented example of public diplomacy embodiment of our country.

Results

Despite some practical steps in the institutionalization of public diplomacy in the 2015-2016, the performance in this area is still quite moderate. Professionally staffed the MFA Office of Public Diplomacy has already demonstrated significant achievements. However, the system of cultural and information centers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs remains not ready for new challenges of public and cultural diplomacy development and needs serious reforming.

The lack of a clear strategy for implementation of public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy as one of its most important components, keeps out of moving at more coordinated system level. No less ambitious plans for the Law of Ukraine "On Ukrainian Institute" remained not adopted in 2016. In April, a draft law was presented to the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs. Government Action Plan on 16 March 2016 still contained the acquis that planned for implementation during the year, but in the next Government Action Plan on May 27, 2016, any mention of this direction has already been missing.

The key issue remains absence of the adequate state funding. Another problem is a discrepancy to the current situation of internal regulations of the MFA on regulating financial activities of foreign diplomatic institutions, including for improving the image of our country abroad.

SUMMARY TABLE OF THE FOREIGN POLICY EVALUATION IN 2016



GENERAL SCORE OF FOREIGN POLICY PERFORMANCE IN 2016

Foreign Policy Direction	General Score	Political interest	Institutional Cooperation	Strategic vision	Activity	Results
Foreign Policy in 2016	C+	3+	3+	3	4+	3+

EVALUATION OF FOREIGN POLICY DIRECTIONS IN 2016

Foreign Policy Direction	General Score	Political interest	Institutional Cooperation	Strategic vision	Activity	Results
G -7 countries cooperation						
United Kingdom	B+	5	4	3	5	4
Italy	B-	3	3	4	4	4
Canada	B+	4	5	3	5	5
Germany	B+	4	4	4	5	4
USA	A-	5	5	5	4	4
France	C+	4	4	2	4	3
Japan	B-	3	3	3	5	5
European Integration						
European Union	B+	5	4+	5-	5-	4
<i>Political dialogue</i>	A-	5	4	5	5	4
<i>Economic cooperation</i>	A-	5	5	5	5	4
<i>Visa-free dialogue</i>	B+	5	4	4	4	4
Eastern Partnership	C+	2	4	2	4	4
Visegrad Group (V4)	B	4	3	5	4	4
European Energy Community	C-	3	3	3	3	2

Foreign Policy Direction	General Score	Political interest	Institutional Cooperation	Strategic vision	Activity	Results
Euroatlantic integration	A-	4	5	5	5	5
Build-up international support in countering Russian aggression	B+	5	4	5	4	4
Economic Diplomacy	B-	4	3	3	4	4
Bilateral relations						
Belarus	B-	3	4	4	4	3
Georgia	C-	2	3	3	3	3
Israel	C	3	3	1	4	4
Iran	C-	3	3	1	4	2
China	C-	3	3	2	3	2
Lithuania	B	4	3	4	5	4
Moldova	C-	4	2	3	3	2
Poland	B+	5	4	3	5	4
Romania	C+	3	3	3	4	3
Slovakia	B-	4	3	3	4	4
Turkey	A-	5	4	5	5	4
Hungary	C+	3	2	2	5	4
Russian Federation	C-	3+	3+	3	3-	1+
<i>Political relations</i>	B-	4	4	5	3	1
<i>Economic relations</i>	C-	4	4	2	3	1
<i>Energy relations</i>	D+	3	2	2	2	2

Foreign Policy Direction	General Score	Political interest	Institutional Cooperation	Strategic vision	Activity	Results
Regional Cooperation						
Asia-Pacific Region	C-	3	3	2	2	3
Middle East	C	3	3	2	4	3
Western Balkans	C	2	3	2	4	4
Baltic States	B-	4	3	3	4	4
Northern Europe	C	3	2	2	4	4
Latin America	D+	2	3	1	3	3
South Asia	C-	2	2	3	4	3
Sub-Saharan Africa	C-	3	3	2	3	3
Central Asia	D+	2	2	2	3	2
Black Sea Region	C-	3	3	2	3	3
International Organizations						
OSCE	B+	4	4	4	5	4
United Nations	A-	4	5	4	5	5
Council of Europe	B	3	4	3	5	5
Multilateral Initiatives						
Human Rights	B	4	4	4	4	4
Climate Change	D+	2	2	2	4	2
Nuclear Non-proliferation	C+	3	3	3	4	3
International Security	C+	3	3	3	4	3
Public Diplomacy	C+	4	3	3	4	3

RECOMMENDATIONS TO 2017 FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA OF UKRAINE



Most of the following recommendations were elaborated by experts in the course of the last year's study on the foreign policy of Ukraine based upon the results of 2015. Most of them remain of high priority, but at the same time, there is a low level of their implementation. To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Ukraine's foreign policy in 2017, we encourage paying attention to the following proposals:

1. Ukraine is still lacking a united strategic document that would define the main medium-term directions of the foreign policy, its goals, objectives, and resources related to the implementation of Ukraine's interests in the international stage. In this context, it would be expedient to develop a specific document in the inter-institutional and intersectoral format – Ukraine's foreign policy priorities for the period until 2020 (Foreign Policy Concept). This document has to take account of the tasks provided for in the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, the Strategy for Sustainable Development "Ukraine-2020", the provisions of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, the Association Agenda). The mentioned strategic document assumes high-priority significance given the rapid geopolitical and economic transformations in the world, which impact positions of international actors in global and regional dimensions (persistence of the conflict with Russia, the election results in the US, Brexit, growth of populist and nationalist movements in European countries, China's economic expansion, crisis of international law and international institutions in the field of security, etc.).
2. Approved foreign policy priorities have to provide the basis for the development of specific strategies or action plans concerning states, regions and international organizations. The relevant approach has to be used in the functional dimension of diplomatic work.
3. In the course of developing priorities, it is expedient to make use of the experience of applying mechanisms to review strategic documents and policies used by the European Union. It is worth paying attention to the EU consultation mechanism when reviewing the European Neighborhood Policy or developing the Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy.
4. There has to be an annual public reporting by the MFA on the implementation of the Priorities and other short-term government plans, specific tasks according to the presidential decrees, the NSDC decisions. Such reporting can be in the form of the MFA report publication at the Ministry's official website, Foreign Minister's briefing, or a speech in the Verkhovna Rada.

5. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine should prepare and make public the concept of reforming the diplomatic service, which would explain the Ministry's logic steps on optimizing a structure and defining priorities, which have been taking place since 2014. The mentioned concept document, according to the foreign policy priorities, has to systematically link the MFA transformation, starting from the selection and education systems and finishing with reinforcement of classical diplomacy with new effective tools.
6. Interinstitutional cooperation requires a significant enhance in terms of implementing the Ukraine's foreign policy, where special attention should be paid to the establishment of institutional framework for efforts coordination, aimed at creating the Ukraine's positive image abroad, and using instruments of economic, public, cultural and expert diplomacy.
7. Ukraine has to strengthen its participation in international security sphere, to take an active role in advocating the agenda in terms of reforming international organizations, finding new regional security architectures, peacekeeping and mediation missions. An important focus should be given to pushing an issue of approving the concepts of "aggression" and "intervention" in the framework of regional organizations.
8. Through intensifying cooperation with NATO, Ukraine has prospects to become not only a recipient of aid or to be engaged in joint military initiatives. It is worth initiating the issue of developing the NATO Black Sea Security Strategy, involving both the Alliance members, on the one hand, and Georgia and Ukraine, on the other hand.
9. With a view effective implementation of the European integration priority of the foreign policy of Ukraine, it is necessary to divide functions of the respective Embassy of Ukraine to the separately Embassy of Ukraine to the EU and the Embassy of Ukraine to Belgium and Luxembourg.
10. Keeping European and Euro-Atlantic integration among the main priorities of the Ukraine's foreign policy, it is however important for Ukraine to intensify its activities and presence in other regions, including the Middle East, Africa, South Asia, which are promising in terms of selling Ukrainian products, attracting investments, launching joint projects, as well as in the context of creating an active pro-Ukrainian position during the UN voting.
11. There is a need to finalize the started institutionalization of public diplomacy, creation and maintenance of the expert team. Considering the complexity of the set tasks, it would be expedient to create an internal institutional vertical, headed by a deputy minister, to whom the public diplomacy division is subject, and to develop Ukrainian institutions' systems in the key countries or regions. Vertically integrated tool of the public diplomacy should have qualities of openness, commitment and accountability. Mid-term planning horizon (up to 3 years) and annual reporting should become a common practice.

12. The draft law on the establishment of the Institute of Shevchenko has to be finalised, and formal coordination of establishment and follow-up activities of the mentioned institutions should be handed over to the MFA.
13. The MFA internal regulations should be aligned with the new realities of the foreign policy, which regulate financial activities of the Ukraine's foreign diplomatic missions, including the issue of improving the image of our country.
14. In some countries, it is necessary to strengthen the embassies' activities in the fight against Russian propaganda, including through intensification of the ambassadors' public speaking, participation in public events, in addition to increasing activities of cultural attachés, possible promotion of plans to create Ukrainian chairs at universities, and support for regular contacts with media.
15. Particular attention should be paid to the Visegrad Four countries, which are, on the one hand, are in a difficult domestic political situation that affects defining their position in terms of Ukrainian, and, on the other hand, they have already realized the level of hybrid threats to their national security, thus familiarization with the Ukrainian experience and launch of joint projects become particularly important.
16. Further systematization of activities towards the development of economic diplomacy should be based upon the long-announced steps that were not implemented in 2016: to adopt the National export strategy, to establish the export-credit agency, to launch trade missions, as well as to intensify the signing of the free trade agreement with Turkey and Israel, and to ratify the respective agreement between Ukraine and Canada.
17. The long-term objective of the foreign policy in terms of certain key countries should become the implementation of differentiated strategies to attract international and foreign business communities with the help of economic incentives to enter the Ukrainian market, to create conditions for engaging European business, including the defense industry. In this context, it is advisable to study experience of other states on coordinating cooperation with TNC, for example, to introduce a special envoy position to cooperate with technology companies (following the example of Denmark) or more extensively – to cooperate with large corporations.
18. Renewal of comprehensive work of the expert council at the MFA as opposed to the currently ineffective public council is worth special attention. Expert approach has to become dominant compared to the broad public representation of non-specialized public institutions. The MFA's current regulatory field allows creating expert councils at the Ministry, but at the moment there is not enough political will in this field.
19. Together with the Ukrainian non-governmental organizations, the MFA should develop a mechanism of expert exchanges, study visits for foreign experts, who are interested in the situation in Ukraine.

20. It is an urgent need to settle the issue of appointing the First Deputy of the Minister of the Foreign Affairs, position which has been vacant since August 2015.

21. The issue of absence of Ukraine's ambassadors in the key countries, including Romania, Kazakhstan, Belarus, NATO and others, should be immediately addressed, as non-presence of an ambassador for more than one year in each of these countries and international organizations is perceived very negatively, and leads to reducing the level of communication and deteriorating bilateral relations.

22. Pragmatism of the Ukraine's foreign policy should not only involve identifying the countries, which might provide Ukraine with political or financial support, but also identifying the list of areas and common interests, where Ukraine may be of interest to our partners. Through understanding the different approaches of particular countries to the issues of human rights, territorial integrity and right of nations to self-determination, ratio of human values to national interest, and at the same time maintaining own principles, Ukraine has to balance its own interests and those of our partners.

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- Nataliia Shevchenko, PhD in History, Associate professor, Kyiv National Shevchenko University (**Latin America**).
- Hanna Shelest, PhD in International Relations, Head of the International security studies programme at Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”, Editor-in-chief of UA: Ukraine Analytica journal, (**NATO, the UN, International Security**).
- Maryna Yaroshevych, Member of the Board of the Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”, representative of the Ukrainian World Congress at the European Union (**European Union. Political dialogue**).

On Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”

The Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism” is a network-based non-governmental analytical center, 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 non-governmental 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.

On Friedrich Ebert Foundation

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.

Aims:

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 endeavors 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.

Activity:

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:** 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 separate countries of 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. We are in favor of independent trade unions and strong civil society. Within the framework of European and 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 library 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 offices of the Foundation in Bonn and Berlin. Besides, in Federal Republic of Germany the Foundation has 6 educational centers as well as 12 county and regional offices. Apart from that, 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 labor movement.

ANALYTICAL STUDY

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