

Jean Monnet
Centre of
Excellence



Understanding Ukraine: War, Internal Politics and External Relations

Dr. Maryna Rabinovych, Post-Doctoral Researcher at the Department
for Political Science and Management, University of Agder

Plan

1. Background of the country: from the collapse of the Soviet Union to Russia's war against Ukraine. Three Revolutions prism
2. Origins and peculiarities of the war
3. Internal politics during the war, challenges and prospects
4. International response to the war
5. Ukraine in/and Europe and the world

1. Background of the country: from the collapse of the Soviet Union to Russia's war against Ukraine. Three revolutions prism

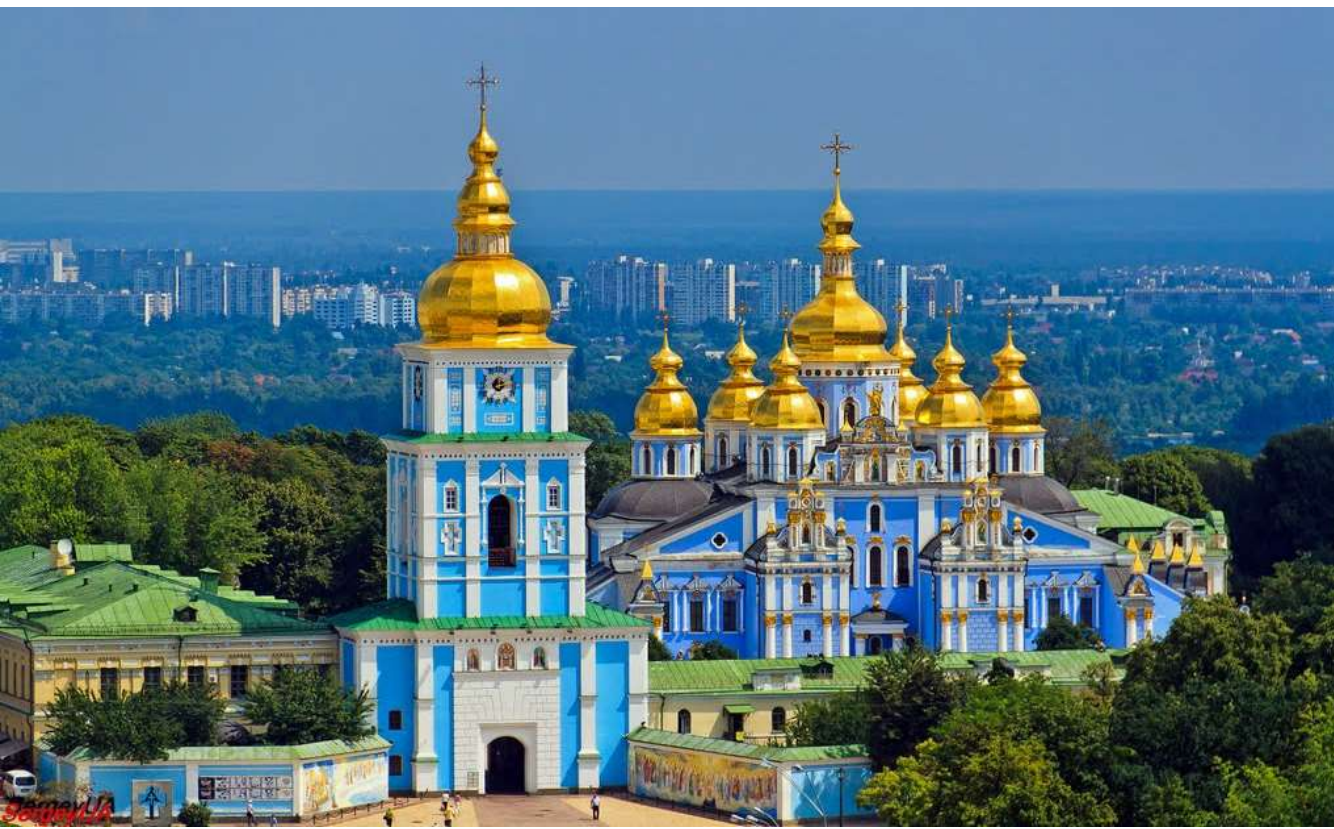
Pre-XX century history (1)

- Long history of being divided between different state entities
- **Kyivan Rus'** (late 9th – mid-13th century), founded by the Varangian (Viking) Prince Rurik
 - Active external relations, e.g. with Byzantine Empire, Turkic people, Mongols
- **Kingdom of Galicia-Volhynia** (13-14th century), where contemporary West of Ukraine belonged
- **Grand Duchy of Lithuania** (13-16 century, 1569), bringing together most of contemporary Ukraine's territories
- **Rzeczpospolita** (1569-1795): territories of Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland



Andriiv Church in Kyiv,
Colourbox

Old churches in Kyiv and Chernigiv



Pre-XX century history (2)

- Divisions of **Rzeczpospolita** in XVIII century between the Prussian Kingdom, the Russian Empire and the Habsburgs (Austrian-Hungarian Empire)
- Southeast and central parts of Ukraine - in the **Russian Empire**
- Western parts of the country – **the Austrian-Hungarian Empire**
- Following the First World War: **Soviet Union** (central and southeast Ukraine)
- **Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland** : West of Ukraine
- Following the Second World War: all territories of Ukraine under the **Soviet Union**



RUSSIA



5 BELARUS



9 ARMENIA



13 TURKMENISTAN

Ukraine in the USSR

ESTONIA



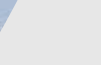
6 UKRAINE



10 AZERBAIJAN



14 KYRGYZSTAN



Latvia



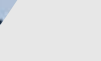
7 MOLDOVA



11 KAZAKHSTAN



15 TAJIKISTAN



Georgia



8 GEORGIA



12 UZBEKISTAN

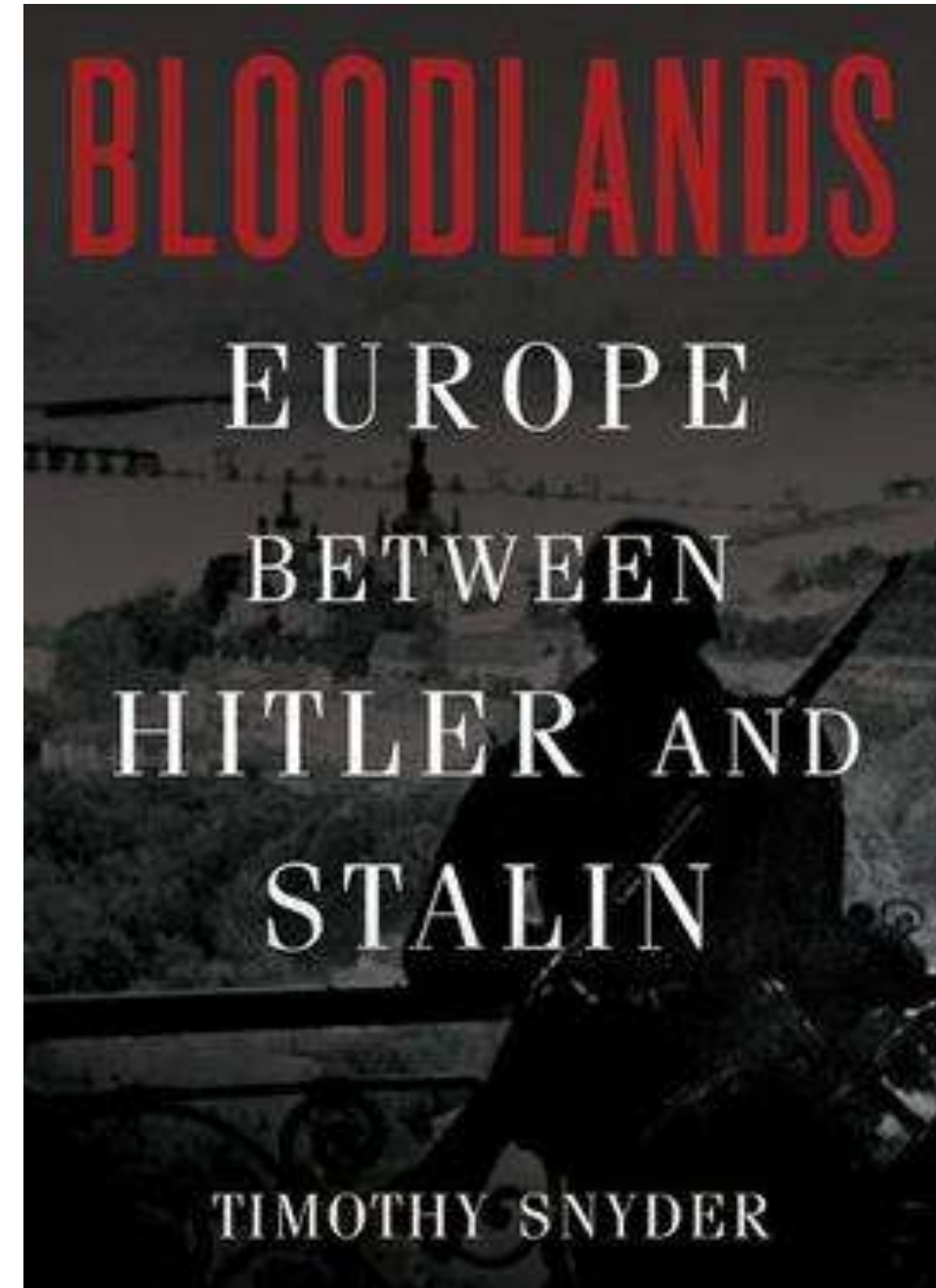


Ukraine in the USSR (1)

- (Failed) attempts to create independent Ukraine in 1917-1918 (Ukraine's People's Republic)
- 30 December 1922 – **creation of the USSR**
- Crucial role in the USSR's economy (2nd most important republic in the USSR in industrial terms; ¼ of all USSR agricultural products grown in Ukraine)
- Policies of industrialization, collectivization, de-Ukrainization
- **Ukrainian “Executed Renaissance”** (1920s-1930s)
- 1932-1933 – genocide of Ukrainians through famine (Holodomor): 4.8 million victims + 2.7 mln unborn



- Reflecting on mass murders, committed by Hitler's and Stalin's regimes in Central and Eastern Europe between 1933-1945
- **"Bloodlands"** - the region comprising Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, the Baltic States, northeast Romania and western parts of Russia
- Drawing similarities between the two totalitarian regimes, which killed around 14 million noncombatants between 1933 and 1945, largely outside German concentration camps
- Huge Stalin's political repressions



Ukraine in the USSR (2)



Nikita Khrushchev at the UN, Colourbox

- Focus on rebuilding the economy following the war
- Following Stalin's death in 1953: **"snowbreak" period** (Nikita Khrushchev), rehabilitation of victims BUT! continued repressions against "dissidents"
- Crimea joins Ukraine in 1954
- 1964-1982 – **period of stagnation**, which followed the post-war growth (Leonid Brezhnev era)
- 1973-1974 – oil crisis, start of USSR's oil export
- 1982-1991 – **turmoil period**: standstill economy + war in Afghanistan + reform attempts

1990 Revolution on the Granite



Source: Radio Free Europe



1990 Revolution on the Granite

- 2-17 October 1990 – protest (hunger strike), announced by the Ukrainian Student Union, as a response to communists' victory and a low number of democrats' mandates in the Verkhovna Rada
- Demands:
 - Re-election of the Rada
 - Nationalization of the Communist party's ownership
 - Non-signature of any further union agreement with Soviet states
 - Resignation of the head of the Council of Ministers Vitaliy Masol
- Success: manifestation by the Rada, guaranteeing the fulfillment of protesters' demands



Source: Wiki, "I agree to sacrifice my life for free Ukraine"

Ukraine's Independence Day: 24 August 1991



2004/2005 Orange Revolution



Sources: Jet D'Encre,

2004/2005 Orange Revolution

- Series of protests following the 2004 presidential elections, marked by massive corruption, voter intimidation and large-scale fraud
- Revote ordered by the Supreme Court for 26 December 2004
- Changes made to the Constitution of Ukraine to shift to increase the powers of the Parliament
- Victory of Victor Yushchenko, which gave start to Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic Integration
- Emphasis on history and culture & revealing communist crimes

Euromaidan / Revolution of Dignity



Source: POLITICO

Euromaidan and a start of the war in 2014

- Response to President's Yanukovych refusal to sign the Association Agreement with the EU because of Putin's pressure
- Violent standoff in November 2013-February 2014
- Yanukovych's fleeing to Russia in February 2014
- New elections in May 2014
- Russia's annexation of Crimea and the start of 'separatist' conflict in Eastern Ukraine
- Signing of the EU-Ukraine AA in 2014

Occupied Crimea





LUGANSK



LUGANSK PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC

DONETSK

Lugansk

Donetsk

RUSSIA

Rostov



DONETSK PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC

Developments between 2014 and 2022

- Positive economic and political developments amid association with the EU in the government-controlled areas
- Decentralization and public administration reform + creation of anticorruption agencies
- Multiple Western donor-led projects in government-controlled areas
- “Occupation by proxies” in Luhansk and Donetsk regions, multiple human rights abuses there and extensive deployment of Russian propaganda and hybrid warfare.
- 2014 Minsk I and 2015 Minsk II Agreements
- Election of Volodymyr Zelenskyy in 2019
- Zelenskyy’s initial strive for peace, followed by his support for investigations of Russian “fifth column” in Ukraine



President Volodymyr Zelenskyy



2. Origins and peculiarities of the war

Key points about the Russia-Ukraine War (1)

1. It did not come 'out of the blue', with the U.S. intelligence alarming the West and Ukraine about Russia's invasion plans since November.
2. The invasion was preceded by Russia's large-scale military build-up around Ukraine's borders in the North and Southeast.
3. Russia's used the build-up (and Ukraine as a hostage) to demand "security guarantees" from the West including:
 1. Closed doors to NATO for Ukraine and Georgia
 2. NATO's pullback to 1997 borders
 3. De facto prohibition of any NATO military activities in former Soviet Union

The Russian hybrid war against Ukraine

This recent series of Russian redeployments, along with energy pressure and destabilization at the border, is part of Russia's hybrid war against Ukraine. Conditions are being created to increase pressure on Ukraine and Belarus. The situation is constantly closely monitored by Ukraine, the United States and NATO.

The situation unfolding today on the border between Belarus and Poland, on the border between Belarus and Ukraine, and before that on the border between Belarus and Lithuania, is just a manifestation of the Kremlin's hybrid war.

The group of Russian forces includes troops of the 8th and 20th armies of the SMD and WMD, as well as forces and means of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation, separate units and parts of the 4th and 6th Armies of the Air force of the Armed Forces of Russia.

1st and 2nd Army Corps, are fully part of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. At least 2,000 Russian personnel officers are directly present in the temporarily occupied territories.

39 Battalion Tactical Group (BTGr)
114 000 military personel total

Political component:
The rhetoric of complete seizure of the territory of Ukraine is intensifying. Messages from Russia: 'Both Ukraine and Poland serve as US-led NATO strongholds in Russia's geopolitical encirclement strategy'.

Economic component:
Russia intensification of the energy crisis through blackmail with energy resources.

Four battalion tactical groups and combat support elements from the 41stA CMD, (the equivalent of a division), deployed to Voronezh from their permanent base in Novosibirsk, in the Russian interior, in April 2021.

The Russian Ministry of Defense claimed at the time that this deployment would support Russia's Zapad-2021 military exercise (though the 41stA CMD did not participate in the main Zapad-2021 exercises from September 10-16).



Key points about the Russia-Ukraine War (2)



Source: Washington post

4. Following several rounds of discussing “security guarantees”, Russia announced itself dissatisfied with the results and refused from further discussions.
5. Russia used a **patchwork of messy arguments** to justify its “special military operation”, including
 - alleged ‘genocide’ Ukraine commits towards Russia’s puppet Luhansk and Donetsk People’s Republics (‘LPR’ and ‘DPR’)
 - Ukraine’s militarization and plans to attack Russia / use force to get back Crimea annexed by the Russian Federation
 - Protecting civilians from Kyiv ‘Nazi’ regime.

Map of the actual attack



Source: Inews

Some “funny” justifications

РИА НОВОСТИ

08:00 09.03.2022 (обновлено: 08:08 09.03.2022) ID: 63348

Угроза у ворот. США создали на Украине десятки биолaborаторий



© AFP 2022 / Macro Tama/Getty Images

Читать ria.ru в [Яндекс Новости](#) [Яндекс Дзен](#)

МОСКВА, 9 мар — РИА Новости, Елена Попова. Минобороны России обнаружило на Украине биолaborатории, работавшие на США. В ведомстве уверены: их деятельность быстро свернули в надежде помешать экспертам подтвердить, что Киев и Вашингтон нарушили Конвенцию о запрещении биологического и токсинного оружия. Москва и Пекин не раз призывали американцев присоединиться к международному документу для контроля над бактериологическими угрозами. Но в Белом доме так и не согласились.

В США признали свое участие в работе биолaborаторий Украины

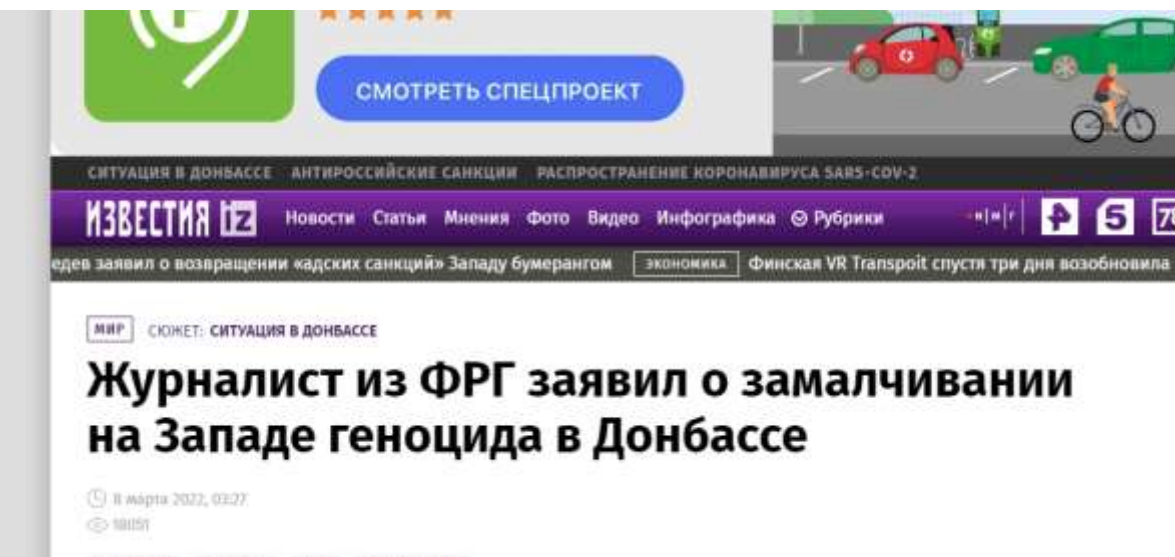


Елена Горшкова

11 марта 2022 в 07:59



Размер текста - 18 +



МИД России направит в Германию материалы о массовых захоронениях в Донбассе



МИД направит Германии шокирующие материалы о геноциде на Донбассе

В связи с заявлениями канцлера Шольца о «смехотворности утверждений о геноциде в Донбассе» в ближайшее время мы направим вам материалы о массовых захоронениях в этом регионе для ознакомления с ними руководства Германии.

Rusvesna.su 19 февраля в 22:30



Россия направит ФРГ материалы о массовых захоронениях в Донбассе

Захарова написала в своем Telegram-канале, что в ближайшее время по дипломатическим каналам для ознакомления руководства ФРГ российский МИД направит материалы о массовых захоронениях в Донбассе.

Аргументы и Факты 19 февраля в 21:01



МИД РФ направит Германии материалы о массовых захоронениях в Донбассе после слов Шольца

Официальный представитель МИД Мария Захарова написала в своем Telegram-канале, что в ближайшее время Москва направит в Берлин материалы о массовых захоронениях в Донбассе. Центральная Служба Новостей 19 февраля в 20:54



Россия направит Шольцу данные о массовых захоронениях в Донбассе

МИД России в ближайшее время направит Германии данные о массовых захоронениях в Донбассе. Московский Комсомолец 19 февраля в 20:47

Москалькова назвала геноцидом ситуацию в Донбассе

Российский омбудсмен Татьяна Москалькова назвала геноцидом события в Донбассе

Уполномоченный по правам человека в России Татьяна Москалькова заявила, что ситуация в Донбассе «отвечает всем признакам геноцида». Об этом сообщает РИА Новости.



Фото: Globallookpress.com

«Мы наблюдаем с 2014 года целую цепь событий, среди которых запрещение выплат пенсий, запрещение выплат пособий. А как человек может существовать, если он не получает тот минимальный прожиточный минимум, который обеспечит ему нормальную жизненную ситуацию», — заявила российский омбудсмен в интервью телеканалу «Россия 24».

Москалькова также сказала, что люди, которые выезжали с территории Луганска и Донецка, «отлавливались и наказывались абсолютно умышленно и целенаправленно нормативным актом и документом Украины самого высокого уровня». Она добавила, что происходящий сегодня «массовый исход» женщин и детей из ДНР и ЛНР говорит о том, что люди боятся за свою жизнь.

Key points about the Russia-Ukraine War (3)

6. The aim of the invasion was, however, simple: **blitzkrieg and occupation of the whole Ukraine or at least the whole Southeast of the country and Kyiv.**

7. Western allies were almost sure Kyiv would fall in 24-96 hours and thought of the future with a 'puppet regime' in Kyiv.

8. Nevertheless, the USA, the UK and Canada were the first countries to send defensive weapons to Ukraine prior to the invasion (as part of the deterrence).

9. The month of war demonstrated Russia's miscalculations as to the strength of its army and, most importantly, Ukraine's resistance.

10. As of the end of March, Russia officially 'refocused' its attention towards '**liberating**' **Donetsk and Luhansk regions.**

Peace prospects and talks

As of end of March 2022, both Ukraine and Russia feel they would not get 'an ideal victory'.

Peace talks started already on the 4th day of war with **new Russia's ultimatums**, such as:

- Ukraine's neutrality (no NATO) and demilitarization
- Its 'denazification'
- Recognition of Crimea as Russia's territory
- Recognition of DPR/LPR independence
- Russian as an official language in Ukraine

As of 30 March 2022, 'demilitarization' and 'denazification' are off the agenda.

17:30 28.03.2022 (обновлено: 18:00 28.03.2022) 18344

России не оставили выбора по Украине, заявила Матвиенко

Спикер СФ Матвиенко заявила о желании России закончить развязанную Киевом войну на Украине



© Пресс-служба Совета Федерации РФ / Перейти в фотобанк

Председатель Совета Федерации РФ Валентина Матвиенко на заседании Совета Федерации РФ

Ukraine's position as of 30 March 2022

- Neutrality + security guarantees, contained in a multilateral agreement with Russia as one of guarantors
- Clearly determined substance of security guarantees (including “closing the sky”)
- Treaty to be approved by the all-Ukrainian referendum before ratification
- Signing of the multilateral treaty is only possible after ceasefire and the withdrawal of Russian troops to the positions as of 23 February (**invalidity of treaties concluded under coercion**)
- 15-year negotiations period as to the status of Crimea
- The status of DPR and LPR to be discussed additionally by Putin and Zelenskyy
- Russia does not object to Ukraine's joining the EU
- European guarantors support Ukraine in the membership process

Further developments and actual situation

- Peace talks stopped following the uncovering of Russia's war crimes in deoccupied towns of Kyiv region (April 2022)
- Deoccupation of Kharkiv region in the North of Ukraine in early autumn 2022
- Fighting in the South (Kherson region)
- Russia's use of multiple blackmail tools: grain deal, occupation of Zaporizhia nuclear power plant, use of nuclear weapons
- Putin's official annexation of occupied (parts of) Kherson, Zaporizhia, Luhansk and Donetsk regions in September 2022, coupled with the announcement of mobilization and attempts to ruin Ukrainian energy infrastructure
- **Ukraine's position: no negotiations with Putin + deoccupation of the whole territory of Ukraine including Crimea.**

A map of Eastern Europe showing Ukraine and Russia. Ukraine is colored white, and Russia is colored red. Two purple arrows point to specific areas: one to a purple-shaded region in northern Ukraine and another to a purple-shaded region in western Ukraine. A small area in the south is marked with red and white diagonal stripes. The text 'UKRAINE' is in the top left, 'RUSSIA' is in the bottom right, and a central text block states Ukraine's position.

UKRAINE

Ukraine's position: no negotiations with Putin +
deoccupation of the whole territory of Ukraine
including Crimea

RUSSIA

3. Internal politics during the war, challenges and prospects

Key trends in internal politics

- Consolidation of power by the Zelenskyy's "Servant of the People" party and the Administration of the President under the martial law
 - But (!) decisions still made in the Parliament by usual procedures
- Opposition: "European Solidarity", led by the former President Petro Poroshenko
- Shrinking of pro-Russian political space, prohibition of pro-Russian parties BUT (!) possibilities of such party members to preserve mandates
- High popularity of the military and the leaders of volunteer movements among Ukrainians
- High level of social mobilization
- Use of technologies: "Diya", distant education, "Invisible University"



Source: Atlantic Council



THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE AFTER DESTROYING A RUSSIAN TANK



Source: Liga.net

New faces of Ukrainian politics? Azovstal defenders



4. International response to the war

Three categories of countries according to their response

- **Ukraine's allies** (the Democracy coalition) including countries-guarantors under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum: USA, the EU, NATO, individual European countries, Japan, South Korea
- **Russia's allies:** Belarus, Iran, North Korea (Nicaragua and Eritrea)
- **“In-between camp”**
 - Special role of Turkey as a mediator
 - Israel's and Indonesia's attempts to suggest mediation
 - African countries' challenging role because of grain exports

Types of support to Ukraine

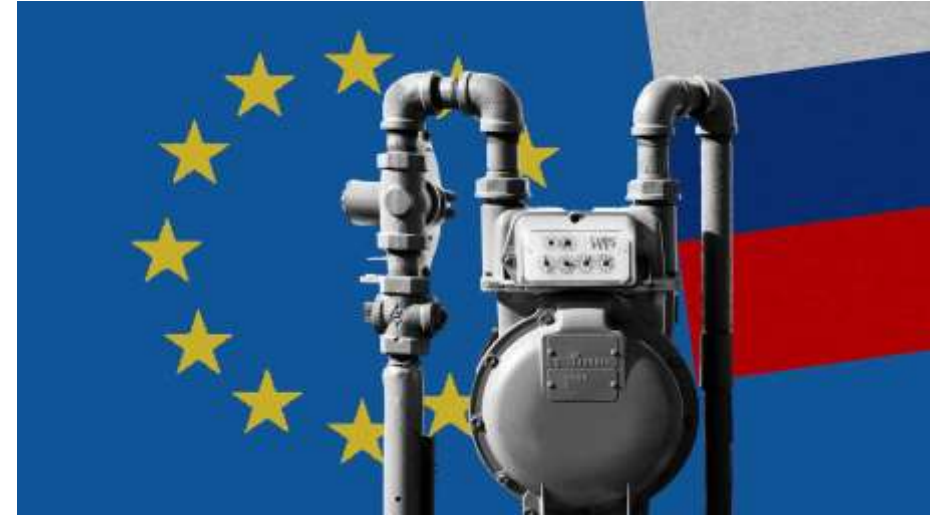
- Condemnation of Russia's aggression at various international forums (e.g. the recent General Assembly Resolution, expressing non-recognition and condemnation of the annexation of four Ukrainian regions)
 - Various acts of symbolic support
- Sanctions against Russia
- Supplies of lethal and non-lethal aid to Ukraine
- Financial and humanitarian support
- Intake of Ukrainian refugees



Jonas Gahr Støre in Ukraine

Internal policy change

- Worldview change: war is possible, need to be prepared, stronger geopolitical thinking
- Cutting Europe's dependency on Russian energy sources
- Strengthening European security and defense architecture
 - Admission of Finland and Sweden to NATO
 - Strengthening capabilities in terms of both the EU and NATO
- Investigating Russian security services' presence in Europe



Source: Financial Times

An air traffic control tower at Bergen Airport in Norway on Wednesday. (Marit Hommedal/NTB Scanpix/AP)



Listen 3 min



Comment 832



Gift Article



Share

BRUSSELS — Norwegian officials warned Thursday that there could be more arrests after at least seven Russians — including the son of a close associate of President Vladimir Putin — were detained in recent weeks for flying drones or taking pictures near sensitive areas, prompting an investigation by the domestic intelligence service.

A Strategic Compass for a stronger EU security and defence in the next decade (1)

- Four axes: Act; Secure; Invest and Partner
- **Act:**
 - EU Rapid Deployment Capacity of 5.000 troops
 - 200 fully equipped CSDP missions experts
 - Regular live exercises on sea and land
 - Full use of EU Peace Facility to support partners
 - Easier decision-making processes for CSDP missions
- **Secure:**
 - Stronger intelligence capabilities
 - Hybrid Toolbox and Response Teams to address hybrid threats
 - Cyber Diplomatic Toolbox and Cyber-Defence Policy
 - Foreign Information and Manipulation Toolbox
 - Strengthening of the EU as a maritime security actor
 - EU Space Strategy for Security and Defense

A Strategic Compass for a stronger EU security and defense in the next decade (2)

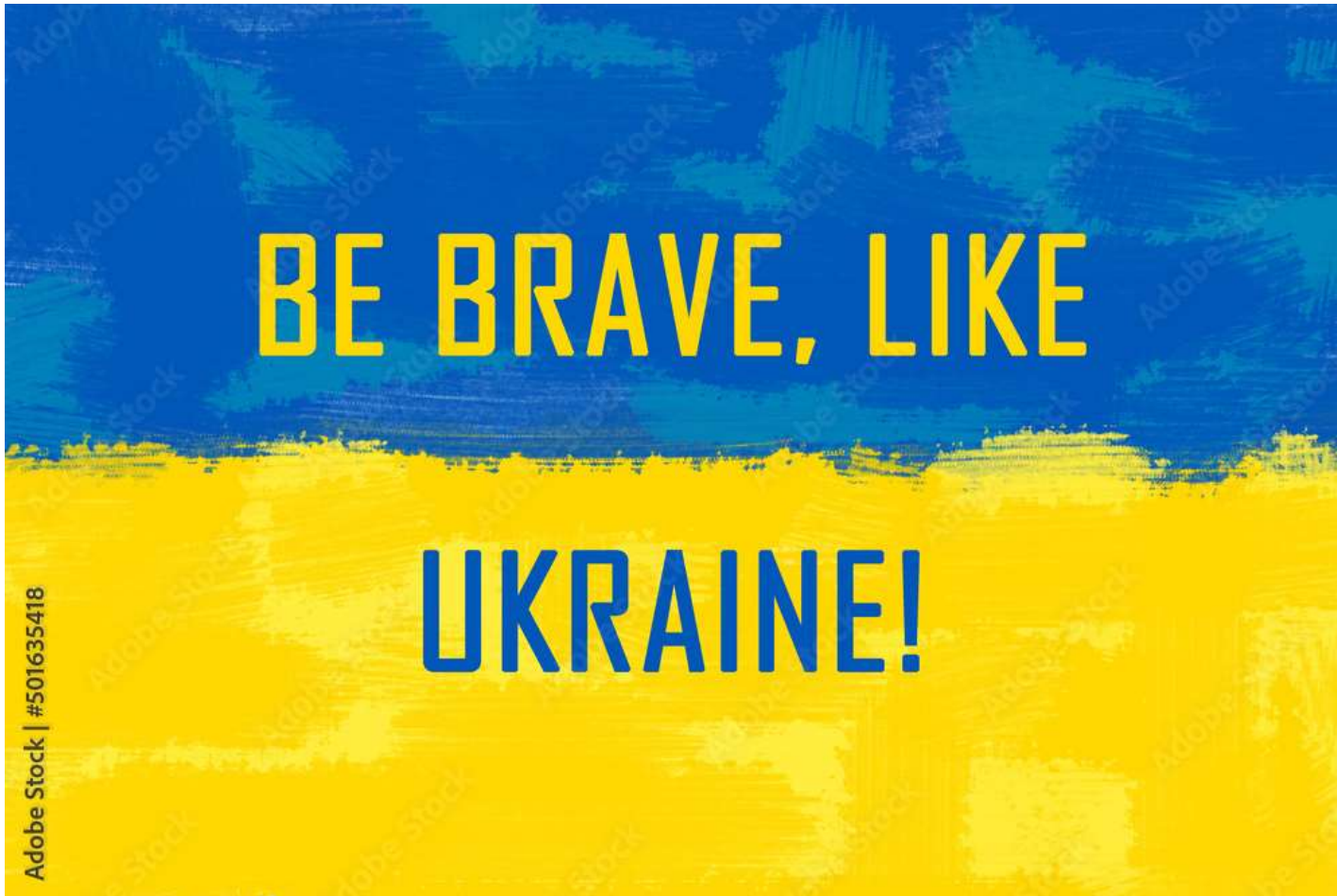
- Invest

- Substantial increase in defense expenditures
- Exchange on national defense spending objectives
- Boost defense technologic innovation

- Partner

- NATO, G7, UN and regional partners (OSCE, ASEAN)
- Bilateral partnerships (USA, Canada, Norway)
- Tailored partnerships with neighbourhood countries, Africa, Latin America, their participation in CSDP missions

5. Ukraine in/and Europe and the world



EU-Ukraine Association Agreement as a framework for Ukraine's European integration

- Concluded in 2014 following the Euromaidan
- Designed as a framework for “integration without membership”
- Lack of the membership perspective
 - Geopolitical reasons
 - Enlargement fatigue
- Political and economic aspects, **multiple opportunities for integration, cooperation and pathways for the AA's update** and adding new spheres (e.g., Digital Single Market integration)
- Elaborate multilevel institutional structure to manage cooperation



[@EUDelegationUA](https://twitter.com/EUDelegationUA)

Single Market integration (Title IV AA)

Trade in goods

Trade in services

Sanitary and
phytosanitary standards

Standards for industrial
products (prospective
ACAAA – Agreement on
Conformity Assessment and
Acceptance of Industrial
Products)

Public procurement

Digital Single Market (e.g.,
telecommunications,
electronic trust services)

War, the Use of Existing Arrangements and a Leap Forward (1)

- **DI in the security domain**

- Cyber Rapid Response Teams and Mutual Assistance in Cyber Security under PESCO
- The use of space technologies for assisting with the delivery of medical goods (the EU Agency for Space Programme)

- **Rule of law / investigating Russia's war crimes**

- Eurojust's support to Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland to create joint investigation teams (JITs) (operational, legal, financial and technical assistance)
- Communication and intelligence gathering with Europol (engaging with Ukrainian Europol Liaison in Brussels)
- In-depth cooperation under the Operational Task Force of OSINT (open source intelligence experts)



Source: European
Union

War, the Use of Existing Arrangements and a Leap Forward (2)

- **DI in the economic / connectivity domain**

- The DCFTA as a foundation for waving all exports duties for Ukrainian goods
- “Solidarity lanes” for grains exports, incl. speeded-up transport and customs procedures
- “Transport visa-free” regime under the special transport liberalization agreement
 - Eliminating the need for Ukrainian carriers to obtain appropriate permits for bilateral and transit traffic to EU countries
 - Measures to facilitate the recognition of drivers’ licences
- Extending four European Transport corridors to the territories of Moldova and Ukraine
- Joining BEREC (telecommunications, roaming)

- **DI in the environmental domain**

- Ukraine as a first non-EU country to join the EU LIFE programme
 - Needs assessment
 - Capacity-building

Foundation for future speeded-up trade between the EU and Ukraine

EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes



Supporting Ukraine's agricultural exports:

- **Additional freight rolling stock, vessels & lorries**
- **Increased capacity** of transport networks & transshipment terminals
- **Accelerated customs operations** & other inspections
- **Storage of goods** on EU territory
- Longer term: **increasing infrastructure capacity** & establishing **new connections**



Ukraine's relations with other actors



Source: Kyiv Independent

- Strong alliances with the USA and the UK, despite political turmoil
- Strengthening of the relations with NATO as an organization
 - Application for NATO membership in response to Putin's annexation of territories
 - Support by 10 NATO members: Canada, Poland, the Baltics
- Attempts to build new ties to Latin American and African actors

Outlook



- Strong culture of resistance and societal mobilization in Ukraine
- War as a 4th revolution ?
- Russia's war against Ukraine as a "wake-up call" for the democratic world
- Unclear strategy vis-à-vis future Russia
- Dealing with China and Taiwan
- Will the rules-based order sustain?