

War in Ukraine-Glory to Ukraine!

Which steps should be taken to prevent a domino effect, one in which the pieces become irreparable with each fall

How can Europeans position themselves in the future in view of the shaken security order?

Ukraine is, after Russia, the largest state on the European continent in terms of area, with a population of 44 million. Since its declaration of independence in December 1991, the presidential republic has faced the greatest challenges. Developments in Ukraine aroused international concern in recent years and have reached a low point in Russian-Western relations. In spring 2022, the war over Ukraine that had begun in 2013/2014 escalated further. Since then, several million people have fled to Western Europe, opinions have diverged in extremes, and Russia does not appear to be stopping its aggression against Ukraine. A global domino effect is observable, but one in which the stones become irreparable with each fall. In the following policy brief we will talk about considering the current situation and its degradation, demonstrating that European Union must take decisive actions immediately.

After observing the political context and listening to German politicians, our group elaborated three ways for EU to break in.



The first way is through negotiations. The EU as a global institution should take part in negotiations as a neutral third-party mediator. This would help certain countries avoid intervention of their internal interests.

A second opportunity is, since European law does not allow soldiers to take part in other countries' wars themselves, countries must at least send weapons to Ukraine. All the contra-arguments may be dissolved by realizing that Ukraine is fighting for the freedom and security of the whole Europe. Another option is to help Ukraine with resources and conclude an agreement on rebuilding the country after the war.

Russia is suffering from sanctions right now. Therefore, the EU could promise to revoke all sanctions the moment Russia ends the war. Some other economic benefits could also be added to that promise.

Intra-European opinions and issues regarding the Ukrainian-Russian war

The annexation of Crimea and the war in Eastern Ukraine took all those who considered themselves Russia's partners by complete surprise. Russia's political leadership has destroyed trust, the most important asset in foreign policy. The Putin regime has chosen the path of self-isolation, turning away from Europe, and opposition to the West. Economically and domestically, Russia is in agony.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, considerations of European security have been based on the idea of a partnership encompassing all of Europe, including Russia and the post-Soviet successor states, without dividing zones of influence. In the West, there was widespread hope that

Russia would democratize and, after a phase of successful

reforms, integrate into the framework of democratic states. On the Russian side, the goal was even formulated as Russia's integration into the "civilized world of states" (Boris Yeltsin). In the joint strategy adopted in 1999, the EU's relationship with Russia was defined as a "strategic partnership."

However, recent years have been marked by a growing estrangement between Germany and Russia. After the occupation of Crimea, moreover, Germany helped ensure that Russia's membership in the circle of G8 states was suspended. Recognizing the strategic importance of an independent Ukraine for the EU's security, the EU must do everything possible to promote the development of its eastern neighbor, the largest after Russia, into a governable, economically-stable constitutional

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state with functioning institutions and internal peace between eastern and western Ukraine. The EU has sought to accelerate the process of rapprochement through transformation in Eastern Europe since 2008 with the concept of the so-called Eastern Partnership for Inter-Europe. Within this framework, the EU concluded Association Agreements with Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova. The EU had tried

to involve Russia since the beginning but met

with - understandable - rejection in Moscow. Therefore, the EU must review its previous neighborhood policy. The destabilization on the EU's periphery emanating from Russia represents a challenge for the EU to which it must respond conceptually.

"Russia does not see itself as part of an EU concept with neighboring countries that it counts as part of its sphere of influence, but fears competition for integration."



Political Relationships between...

Ukraine and Russia

Currently, after several fruitless tries, both sides have stopped any attempts for peace negotiations, while blaming each other for this dire turn of events. According to Ukrainian diplomats, the Russian government is heavily delusional about Ukraine's public opinion and military power, which makes it difficult to find any common ground. The Ukrainian government

"Zelensky believes that any diplomatic progress can be achieved only after Russia will fail in its invasion and retreat from the occupied Ukrainian territories."

stays connected with Russian opposition representatives though, such as Maria Ovsianikova

and Alexander Nevzorov, in hopes of changing Russia's public opinion about the war. Russia, for its part, expects Ukraine to surrender or at least give up its claims on Crimea and Donbass. The only diplomatic successes between these countries right now are the regular exchanges of war prisoners.

EU and Ukraine

For a long time, Ukraine has strived to become a member of the EU. Politically, it began in 2004, and in 2014 it even led to a rebellion against the pro-Russian president Victor Yanukovich. Despite that, the relations between Ukraine and the EU remained quite reserved until the war. While formally expressing support for Ukraine after the Russian takeover of Crimea, the EU still preserved most economical and political ties with Russia. The relations between the EU and Ukraine reached a climax just before the war in connection with the Nord Stream 2, which would massively hurt the economy of Ukraine. Currently, the EU and Ukraine have much closer relations, with Ukraine eventually getting candidate status for EU membership and

enjoyed considerable military and humanitarian aid. Yet this progress should not be exaggerated: major European politicians, such as Macron and Scholz, are still expressing doubts about how soon Ukraine will be able to become an EU member, stressing that it might take time, while Ukraine is not satisfied with the number of weapons it receives. Despite the solidarity against Russian aggression, these relations are prone to diplomatic outbursts about any inconsistency from European part.

EU and Russia

EU and Russia relations reached their lowest point since the fall of the Soviet Union, with a

menu of economic sanctions being imposed and diplomatic

"Russia, from their side, is also quite willing to preserve diplomatic relations with EU, trying to convince it that the invasion was justified."

quarrels taking place. But dialogue between the sides continues. While Eastern European countries, such as Poland, Latvia, and Lithuania, are demanding the unconditional support for Ukraine and the disruption of Putin's regime and ideology, older EU member states are more willing to solve the conflict through negotiations, trying to convince Putin to stop the invasion. For now, both sides did not have much success about it, waiting who is going to fall first from mutual economic blackmail and possible public opinion shift.

Recommendations

Diplomatic

Later, while talking about the history of Ukraine-Russia diplomatic and non-diplomatic relations, we have mentioned certain problems. Among them, there is an absence of political will among the Russian authorities to pursue peaceful negotiations. Therefore, it is quite logical that with the beginning of war in 2014 and its escalation in 2022, that solution became completely impossible. However, the EU as an institution and its members as independent countries have frequently declared that peaceful diplomatic negotiation is an essential value for them.

At this very moment, neither side have expressed an interest in diplomatic negotiation. However, neither has the EU, despite their intentions. So, here is the bare minimum of what EU must do to meet their its own ideals:

- Clearly define its intention to promote peaceful negotiation to both sides.
- Help with the so-called technical and organizational side of negotiations.

If the EU specifically as an institution wants to take more steps and become involved in the negotiations, we think that according to EU values and views, it should stay apart and play the role of a neutral third party. That means that EU law would be applied as well as sending experts from to assist as advisers and mediators.

That solution is quite weak. First, at this very moment it is difficult to imagine peaceful negotiations with Russia, since the aggressor keeps violating agreements and law, both *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. Second, we should be extremely careful so as not to involve each EU countries' economical and political interests. The convincing component of this solution is that it is peaceful, and peace is something desirable now and ever.

Structural

The EU has accepted that Ukraine is the victim of Russian aggression could send help to the victim. That means real material help with resources.

The main resource is a human one. Nevertheless, it is against the law of the EU if the country sends soldiers to another. That is arguable whether that rule is necessary or appropriate, and we will not touch it. We will just take it as it is. However, we must bear in mind that the EU still can send medical, social, building, lifesaving, and many other humanitarian workers to Ukraine. Also, while talking about human resources, EU can provide workers (including soldiers) from Ukraine with education, training, and qualification courses.

Another resource is weapons. It has certain counterarguments from so-called politicians that sending weapons to Ukraine means supporting the armed conflict. We must realise, looking at the history of the relationship between the EU and Russia, that at this very moment Ukraine is fighting for the whole Europe. Therefore, the EU must support Ukraine for the sake of its own security.

Structural resources also mean help with technologies: for infrastructure, for healthcare, for education, for other purposes related to the renewal of the peaceful life of peaceful people.

Economic

This solution goes both ways: to Ukraine and to Russia.

Economic help to Ukraine means, on the one hand, lending them money and giving loans on conditions. It also means a legal promise to support the country financially after the end of the war.

The economic influence of Russia is to stipulate the following condition: if Russia admits its defeat in the war, the EU will remove all the economic sanctions on the peaceful population and organisations that are not related to the regime and do not support Russian aggression. It could be also reinforced with the promise to help Russia's financial system to rehabilitate.

Any of these suggestions can work either on their own or in concert with one another. But the most important thing for the EU is to choose any of them and finally intervene in the situation.

Glory to Ukraine!