

UKRAINIAN PRISM: FOREIGN POLICY 2017



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This analytical study represents a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the Ukrainian foreign policy in 2017. 50 Directions were analysed – from cooperation with key partners and international organizations to public diplomacy. Five evaluation criteria – indicators, based on the new model of research methodology, were applied. The experts have studied and assessed activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (Parliament) and other institutions, involved into the creation and implementation of the foreign policy of Ukraine. This study is the third annual study. Previous years analysis can be found at <http://prismua.org>

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 third issue of the annual analytical report “Ukrainian Prism: Foreign Policy 2017”.

Traditionally in this report, experts of the Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism” in partnership with the Regional Representation of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Ukraine analysed details of the Ukrainian foreign policy elaboration and implementation, as well as systematically evaluated its success according to the proposed scale.

Every year we improve our methodology of evaluation and take into account results of the discussions held both in Ukraine and abroad. While preparing this year foreign policy assessment, we decided to expand it with some important geographical and functional directions. In such a way, the total number of the analysed foreign policy vectors reached 50.

The overall score of the 2017 assessment of the foreign policy performance has improved. Among the positive results, one can clearly see the activation of the institutions that elaborate and implement the foreign policy in the priority directions. However, the strategic vision of the foreign policy development traditionally remains at low level. Therefore, it is not a surprise that the strategic vision issue is one of our recommendations key points.

For the third year in a row now, the report provides a sufficient comparative basis for diplomats and foreign policy experts aimed at the comprehensive understanding of the foreign policy, its political, institutional and strategic components. We believe that the “Ukrainian Prism: Foreign Policy 2017” report brought us one more step further in creation of a practical and objective tool for the Ukraine's foreign policy assessment.

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METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH



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

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

The present research covers the year 2017 in the sections on political interest, institutional cooperation, activities, and results of each direction. Evaluation of the strategic vision is based on a whole range of respected documents that were relevant on the day of evaluation. Moreover, there is a comparison of each direction with the results of 2016.

Foreign policy directions of Ukraine

For the evaluation of the foreign policy of Ukraine in 2017, 50 directions were selected and divided into the following thematic blocks:

- Relations with the G-7 states (the United Kingdom, Italy, Canada, Germany, the USA, France, Japan);
- European integration (cooperation with the EU in economic and political spheres, visa-free regime, the Eastern Partnership, the European Energy Community);
- Euroatlantic integration;
- Bilateral relations (Belarus, Georgia, Israel, Iran, China, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, the Russian Federation [policy, economy, energy], Romania, Slovakia, Turkey, Hungary);

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

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

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

- (1) Political interest or engagement of political actors in particular directions of the foreign policy.
- (2) Effectiveness of cooperation and coordination among Ukrainian institutions in the sphere of foreign policy.
- (3) Strategic vision of a particular direction implementation.
- (4) Specific activities regarding a particular direction during the evaluated year.
- (5) Results and achievements regarding a particular direction during the evaluated year.

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

1. Political Interest / Engagement

The basis for analysis: Programs of the political parties represented in the Verkhovna Rada, parliamentary parties' election programs if elections happen in the evaluated year, parliamentary fractions' statements, statements of political parties'

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

Points:

- 1 point – lack of references to a foreign policy direction in official or unofficial statements, policy documents, and manifestos of the main political actors;
- 2 points – existence of an informal declarative reference to a foreign policy direction that has not acquired the form of a political position, interviews, blogs, or articles in the media on the respective topics;
- 3 points – there are official statements regarding events or certain aspects of activity regarding the direction under research among some political parties, mentioning in the Presidential Annual Address;
- 4 points – there are official positions of various political entities represented in the higher authorities, but they are not mutually agreed upon, inclusion to the Agenda of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs or other respective committees according to the topic, organization of the parliamentary hearings and round tables;
- 5 points – existence of a political consensus on Ukraine's activity in a chosen foreign policy direction, joint official policy statements (e.g. statements of the majority, inter-fraction statements, statements of the parliamentary delegations to the parliamentary assemblies of international organizations, decisions and letters of the Verkhovna Rada), organization of parliamentary hearings.

2. Institutional Cooperation

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

Points:

- 1 point – there are documented facts on confrontation of some institutions with others in policy development or conflicts between Ukrainian institutions or different branches of power in the implementation of a particular direction of foreign policy, failure of coordinating bodies' activities;
- 2 points – a lack of cooperation and coordination among certain bodies involved in the implementation of a particular direction of the foreign policy, but without any competition or conflicts;
- 3 points – individual facts of non-systemic cooperation, which are not based on agreed positions, coordinating documents, and are not covered by coordinating structures;
- 4 points – there are declared agreed positions of the foreign policy actors regarding activities in a particular direction, establishing of the special coordinating bodies, adoption of respective documents aimed at coordination of activities;
- 5 points – full coordination of relevant institutions' activities, establishing of special coordinating bodies to implement foreign policy in a particular direction.

3. Strategic Vision

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

Points:

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

- 5 points – there are references in general strategic documents, along with the presence of up-to-date bilateral (multilateral) medium-term documents, which are agreed upon and meet the current interests.

4. Activities

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

Points:

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

5. Results

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

Points:

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

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

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

Rating score	Indicator value
A	5
A -	4,6-4,9
B +	4,1-4,5
B	4
B -	3,6-3,9
C +	3,1-3,5
C	3
C -	2,6-2,9
D +	2,1-2,5
D	2
D -	1,6-1,9
E+	1,1-1,5
E	1

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

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

FOREIGN POLICY OF UKRAINE IN 2017

B-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3+	4-
Institutional cooperation	3+	4-
Strategic vision	3	3+
Activities	4+	4+
Results	3+	4-
General score	C+	B-

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2017, compared with the previous years, political interest analysis demonstrated that the Ukrainian political actors were mainly focused on the foreign policy priority areas identified in 2015-2016.

The foreign policy position of the President of Ukraine was summed up in his speech at the traditional annual meeting with the foreign ambassadors accredited in Ukraine (in January), as well as in the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada "On the internal and the external position of Ukraine in 2017" (in September). These public statements allow identifying the priority areas of the foreign policy interest. In particular, the special emphasis was put on the protection of the territorial integrity of Ukraine, its European integration and belonging to the Euro-Atlantic civilization space.

A creation of the international coalition to support Ukraine in its fight against the Russian aggression was also repeatedly mentioned as a foreign policy priority. European support in the security issues was tangible in relations with Austria, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, and France. The preservation of sanctions against Russia was a common denominator of the agenda, with the Ukrainian politicians emphasizing it on all international platforms.

The European integration in the analysed year had its specific frames that needed a political support. In particular, they concerned the full enactment of the Association Agreement, and an introduction of the visa-free regime for the Ukrainian citizens travelling to the EU. Implementation of the Association Agreement in the future also requires other forms of the strategic long-term cooperation.

According to the President's vision, people at the referendum should approve the Ukraine's future membership in NATO. At the moment, the Euro-Atlantic direction, and the country's compliance with the NATO standards have a high priority among other issues in the foreign policy of Ukraine.

Most of the political actors in 2017, like in the previous years, defined the United States as a key partner and an ally of Ukraine in the political, security, economic and energy spheres.

Traditionally intensive dialogue with Japan and Canada, strategic relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan were be noted, in particular, in the presidential statements. The head of the state also declared his interest in improving of the bilateral relations with the Middle East and Latin America countries.

The medium-term Governmental Action Plan till 2020 is a political document describing the government activities aimed at the development of the Ukraine's foreign policy priority areas. It postulates the need for such issues as the national legislation

approximation to the EU norms, functioning of the deep and comprehensive free trade area between Ukraine and the EU, bringing the Armed Forces to the NATO standards, strengthening international trade and investment attractiveness of Ukraine as well.

At the parliamentary level, it was managed to adopt a number of concerted political documents dedicated to the foreign affairs and the bilateral relations. In particular, in 2017, the following decisions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine were adopted, all of them demonstrating the consolidated position of the various factions: "On the Appeal of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to the parliaments of the foreign states and the international organizations concerning condemnation of the escalation of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine", "On the Appeal of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine regarding the Final Report of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) on the monitoring of the elections to the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation in 2016", and "On the Appeal of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to the Congress of the United States on security guarantees". In addition, some attention was paid to the cooperation with the EU and NATO, the human rights and the territorial integrity issues.

In general, according to the results of the analysis, in 2017, the greatest political attention were divided between the following directions: relations with the USA, Canada, the EU member states and the organization at large, and Turkey, human rights protection, and the Ukraine's activities within the Council of Europe and the UN.

The overall score for the political interest/engagement – “4-“

Institutional Cooperation

The institutional cooperation in 2017 slightly improved for the overwhelming majority of the foreign policy directions.

In October, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine announced a creation of the new Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration. The new provision was approved in the framework of the public administration reform and adopted by the Governmental resolution. The office is responsible for the coordination of the executive authorities' activities aiming at the implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, as well as for directing political, political-military dialogue and practical cooperation with NATO and its member states. The political level of the integration processes coordination was carried out by the Office of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine, as well as by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

The economic diplomacy was strengthened by a number of coordinating institutions. As early as in January 2017, President Poroshenko announced the launch of the

National Investment Council under the President of Ukraine. In August, its Provision, and in October – members of the Council headed by the President were approved. The Prime Minister of Ukraine, the First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine – the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Energy and Coal Mining, the Minister of Infrastructure, the Minister of Justice, the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada, the Head and the Deputy Head of the Administration of the President of Ukraine, and other persons joined the Council.

The majority of the bilateral foreign policy directions remained under the responsibility of the MFA and the diplomatic missions abroad, though the dynamics of the Ukrainian officials' visits shows the active involvement, in particular, of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Infrastructure, the General Prosecutor's Office and others.

In order to implement the Strategic Trade Development Roadmap, the International Trade Council was created as a temporary consultative and advisory body of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. The Council should facilitate coordination of the central executive bodies to support the exports growth and the international trade procedures simplification. The Council is headed by the First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine – the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, with some deputy ministers, heads of the Parliamentary committees and others taking part in its work. At the same time, despite the plans for 2017, the launch of the Export Credit Agency failed.

The Export Promotion Council and the Export Promotion Office under the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, as well as the Exporters and Investors Council under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were rather active. The meetings of the Ukrainian part of the bilateral intergovernmental commissions on trade and economic cooperation, as well as working groups on the organization of the bilateral economic forums added a lot to the coordination efforts at the national level.

In June, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine established the Interagency Commission on the Popularization of Ukraine in the World, formed with the governmental and non-governmental structures representatives. From the moment of its creation, the commission managed to hold a number of thematic meetings about the creation of the brand of Ukraine.

The public councils under the ministries and agencies were re-elected, allowing to strengthen the cooperation of the relevant ministries with non-governmental organizations and to raise the expert consultations level. At the end of the year, the MFA of Ukraine developed a procedure for the Ukrainian independent experts' secondment abroad to participate in thematic public events, while strengthening the public and expert diplomacy. Supported by the Public Council under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a list of the well-known expert platforms was prepared, where it was advised to facilitate the Ukrainian representatives' participation.

However, it should be also noted that there was a certain coordination imbalance between the governmental structures and the parliament, causing several internal discussions (for example, on the draft law No. 7206 "Buy Ukrainian, Pay to Ukrainians") and misunderstandings with the neighbouring states (Article 7 of the Law of Ukraine "On Education").

The cooperation between the executive and legislative branches of power on the implementation of the Association Agreement remained extremely low, resulting in a considerable fall behind the schedule of the legislative support and the agreement implementation.

The lack of a coordinated approach, unfortunately, was a characteristic feature when considering the important law "On Diplomatic Service", which was supposed to reboot the work of Ukrainian diplomacy according to realities and needs of the time.

The working group, chaired by B. Tarasyuk, the Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, in a period of November 2016 – June 2017, substantially polished the original draft prepared by the MFA. However, further handoff of the document to the President of Ukraine slowed down the process for almost six months, and the law was adopted in the first reading only in December 2017. The exclusion of a norm regarding consultations with the profile parliamentary committee members on the candidates of the heads of the Ukrainian diplomatic missions abroad became a specific feature of the presidential version of the Law of Ukraine "On Diplomatic Service".

According to the authors of this study, the relations with the USA, the EU, NATO, the Council of Europe, as well as a sphere of human rights protection can be distinguished as the most coordinated foreign policy directions at the national level.

The overall score for the institutional cooperation – “4-“

Strategic vision

Until now, there is any generalized conceptual vision. The guidelines for the foreign policy and the international security of Ukraine are defined in a number of the strategic documents. These documents are the Coalition Agreement, the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, the Sustainable Development Strategy for Ukraine by 2020, the Association Agreement with the EU, the IMF Memorandum, the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between Ukraine and NATO, the National Human Rights Strategy of Ukraine, the National Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace, and Security” for the period until 2020, the Concept of Ukraine's popularization in the world and promotion of Ukraine's interests in the global information space.

In 2017, a number of documents and programs that could be classified as the framework-strategic or operational, developed to meet the existing strategic requirements, were adopted.

In February, the Doctrine of Information Security of Ukraine was adopted, and in July, the Energy Strategy of Ukraine until 2035 was adopted too. Both documents form and refine in parts some principles of the foreign policy and security elaboration and implementation.

Medium-term Governmental Action Plan till 2020 adopted April 3, 2017, consist of some tasks and events in the sphere of economic and energy diplomacy, European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

In December, the Government approved the Export Strategy of Ukraine – the Strategic Trade Development Roadmap for 2017-2021. The Action Plan for the Roadmap implementation defines 56 tasks, involving about 40 state and non-state institutions, some of them still to be created.

The Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU also became an important strategic document, introducing the DCFTA and the AA implementation plan. In October, the Government approved a plan of the AA implementation, with 2016 tasks and about 5000 activities, in line with the Governmental Action Plan, strategic documents on the sectoral reforms, including the EU-agreed roadmaps. In the context of the Euro-Atlantic integration, it is necessary to mention the adoption of the Concept on improving the public awareness of Ukraine's cooperation with NATO for the period 2017-2020 (in February).

At the operational documents level, in June, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the Plan for the implementation of the Concept of Ukraine's popularization in the world and promotion of Ukraine's interests in the global information space, adopted in the end of 2016.

The Public Diplomacy Division of the MFA of Ukraine is developing the Public Diplomacy Strategy.

At the regional and bilateral level, there are some initiatives that can contribute to the establishment of the strategic or privileged partnership. For example, the Joint Statement of the Prime Ministers of Ukraine, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania, adopted in April 2017 can be considered as a strategic reference point for the relations between Ukraine and the Baltic states.

A number of medium-term intergovernmental action plans for 2017-2019 and 2017-2020 (with Turkey and Belarus) indicates the formulation of a multi-year planning horizon. The strategic character is also observed in the thematic orientation of the

Ukraine – PRC Action Plan on the implementation of the "Economic Belt of the Great Silk Road" and the "Sea Silk Road of the XXI Century" joint development.

At the same time, in the majority of the analysed foreign policy areas, there are any mentions of the existing strategic documents of Ukraine, as well as the medium-term bilateral documents, that could fully represent the Ukrainian goals and interests in a separate vector of the international relations.

The overall score for the strategic vision – “3+”

Activities

Traditionally, this indicator of the foreign policy implementation gets the highest scores among others. However, in 2017, it will be fair to note grow in activity of almost all Ukrainian actors engaged in the foreign policy.

In the context of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the effective communication with the key partner countries of Ukraine, meaning the North America and the EU countries, as well as work in the framework of the United Nations, the OSCE, the CoE, and cooperation with NATO, gained its importance. The main tasks include the following: support of the territorial integrity of Ukraine, condemnation of the armed aggression against Ukraine, non-recognition of the illegal annexation of Crimea, prolongation and strengthening of the sanctions policy against Russia, pressure on its leadership to implement the Minsk agreements, protection of the rights of the Ukrainian citizens in the occupied territories, launch of the UN peacekeeping operation in the Donbas region. In this context, it is worth pointing out the high level of the foreign policy activity of the President of Ukraine, who tried to keep these issues on the agenda of his official and working visits abroad and to the international organizations, as well as while accepting his foreign colleagues in Ukraine. The successful contacts at the highest level (with the US, the EU, the UK, Canada, Turkey, and the Baltic states) matched with the enhanced contacts between the governments' heads, and the intergovernmental level meetings, including MFAs.

In the context of the international security and territorial integrity, the Minsk agreements remained to be the main mechanism for the Russia – Ukraine conflict settlement. In addition, the Ukraine's activity within the international institutions framework was aimed at focusing of the international community's attention (in particular, the UN, the International Court of Justice, the OSCE, the Council of Europe) to this issue.

In February 2017, under its presidency in the UN Security Council, Ukraine managed to draw attention to the conflicts in Europe. The Ukrainian high-rank officials took part in a great number of the UN Security Council meetings in New York. In particular, the President of Ukraine took his part in the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly opening and in the UN Security Council high-level meeting on the reforms of the UN

peacekeeping operations (in September). The international platform "Friends of De-occupation of Crimea", initiated by the President of Ukraine in 2017 during the UN General Assembly, became important in terms of coordinating efforts in the Crimean issue resolution.

2017, compared to the previous period, can be considered as a year of the enforced and productive relations between Ukraine and the EU, since the mutual attention of Kyiv and Brussels to each other was at a high level. The President of Ukraine paid a visit to the capital of the EU twice (in June with a bilateral visit, and in November to take part in the 5th Eastern Partnership summit). The Prime Minister of Ukraine also paid two visits to Brussels (in February and December). In addition, the Ukraine – EU summit, which took place on July 12-13, 2017 in Kyiv, attracted a lot of attention.

The Ukraine's cooperation with NATO was active at all levels. In July 2017, an appointment of V. Prystaiko as the Head of the Mission of Ukraine to NATO became an extremely important development, since it confirmed the seriousness of the Ukraine's intentions in regards to the further rapprochement strategy. The NATO – Ukraine Joint working group on the defence and technical cooperation took its regular meetings. Another important political step was the NATO – Ukraine Commission meeting in Kyiv, with the participation of the NATO Secretary General and the President of Ukraine (in July). The cooperation at the parliamentary level was equally active.

The economic diplomacy also gained its momentum. In the context of cooperation with the EU and in the framework of the Association Agreement implementation, a number of the bilateral meetings were held: the High-level Ukraine – EU dialogue in horizontal and specific industrial sectors (in March), the first meeting of the EU – Ukraine Subcommittee on trade and sustainable development (in May), the 4th meeting of the EU – Ukraine Association Council (in December).

During the year, negotiations with Turkey and Israel to reach the free trade agreements were held. There were a number of bilateral (with Albania, Hungary, Belarus, Lithuania, and South Korea) and international economic forums (with Canada and Georgia) with the participation of the Ukraine's leadership. The joint intergovernmental commissions (in particular, with Moldova, Belarus, Vietnam, and Saudi Arabia) were also rather active. With some partners, such work has been renewed after a long break (Poland, China), while others agreed to set up the joint commissions (Albania, Qatar, Colombia).

In June, the Cabinet of Ministers approved a decision on the establishment of a state body – "Ukrainian Institute". Its branches were planned to be opened in 2017 in four European capitals (Warsaw, Berlin, Paris, Rome), but due to the complicated process of the interinstitutional approval, the implementation of this task was slowed down. In 2017, initiated by the Public Diplomacy Division, about 200 various projects in the field of public and cultural diplomacy were implemented.

The parliamentary diplomacy strengthening should be emphasized separately. In May, the Verkhovna Rada approved the recommendations of the parliamentary hearings on "Current Issues of Ukraine's Foreign Policy" (held in December 2016). In October, the joint parliamentary committees hearings on the implementation of the Annual National Programme under the aegis of the NATO – Ukraine Commission and the Strategic Defence Bulletin of Ukraine. The Committee's on Foreign Affairs public events were dedicated to the elaboration of the Ukraine's foreign policy strategy, energy security, economic diplomacy, and foreign policy dimension of the Donbas reintegration strategy.

Under the aegis of the relevant committee on foreign affairs, 90 parliamentary groups developed the inter-parliamentary relations with the foreign countries' parliaments. In 2017, the parliamentarians initiated creation of the parliamentary friendship groups with Ethiopia, Iceland, Colombia, Liechtenstein, Macedonia, Malaysia, Malta, Nigeria, South Africa, and Tunisia.

Some legislative initiatives led to the bilateral relations deterioration with a number of neighbouring countries (for example, Hungary, Romania).

In general, the study indicates the most intense official and informal events and contacts in the following directions: the United Kingdom, Canada, and the USA, economic cooperation with the European Union, Eastern Partnership, Euro-Atlantic integration, Lithuania, Poland, Baltic States, the UN, Council of Europe, human rights protection, and public diplomacy.

The overall score for the activities – “4+”

Results

2017 became a year of further development of the international support provided to Ukraine in its counteraction to the Russian aggression, including the sanctions packages, with both personal and sectoral restrictive measures against Russia and its business and political elites expanded, strengthened and prolonged by the EU, the US, Canada, and other partners of Ukraine. To the Crimea annexation anniversary, the European Parliament adopted a resolution “On the Ukrainian prisoners in Russia and the situation in Crimea”.

The international courts brought Russia to justice, that was also positive for Ukraine. On April 19, the International Court of Justice delivered its order on the first provisional measure in the case of Ukraine v. Russian Federation. In July, the documents, adopted at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly session in Minsk, in particular the resolution "On the restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity", once again condemned the fact of the Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine, the temporary occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by Russia, and called on the Russian Federation to cease the hostilities in Ukraine.

On December 19, 2017, the UN General Assembly positively voted for the revised draft resolution "The situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)". Moreover, for the first time in history, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution on the critical infrastructure protection against terrorist attacks, initiated by Ukraine and co-sponsored by 41 states.

In May, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, in its decision on the situation in the ARC and Sevastopol (Ukraine), recognized the Russia's responsibility in accordance with the International humanitarian law and international human rights law, and called on the Russian Federation authorities to fulfil their obligations and to stop repressions. The Permanent delegation of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to the PACE had a success with extending the sanctions imposed by the Assembly on suspension of the Russian delegation to the PACE rights until the end of 2017.

During the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, the resolution "On the restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity", proposed by the parliamentary delegation of Ukraine and containing provisions on human rights protection in the occupied territories, was approved as well.

2017 was a fateful time in the history of the Ukraine – EU relations, since they achieved both AA final ratification and its coming into force, as well as a visa-free regime for the Ukrainian citizens. However, the progress was to a certain extent overshadowed by the final text of the Eastern Partnership summit declaration, as well as the EU refusal to grant Ukraine a third tranche of EUR 600 million because of its failure to comply with the four pre-agreed requirements.

In the context of relations with the United States, the adoption of the Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act, as well as the US active sanction policy became another important achievement of the year. Under the Trump administration, the US – Ukraine cooperation in the security and defence sphere found its new forms. K. Volker was appointed as the United States Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations, responsible for the coordination of the interaction with Ukraine in order to accelerate the progress under the Minsk agreement. In addition, within the US budget limits for 2018, they allocated \$350 million for the security assistance and providing defensive lethal weapon to Ukraine.

The co-operation with the Western partners (the USA, the United Kingdom, Canada, Lithuania, and Poland) in the defence and security spheres also had its steady development. The Orbital, a British training program for the military personnel, was prolonged until March 2018. Canada decided to continue its military training mission UNIFIER until 2019, and Ukraine joined the Automatic Firearms Country Control List, which grants sale or supply of firearms to its member states.

Despite the specific nature of the Turkey – Russia relations, the Turkey – Ukraine relations gained positive dynamics. In particular, in October, with the mediation of Turkey, Russia released imprisoned in the annexed Crimea the Deputy Chairmen of

the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people A. Chiogoz and I. Umerov. During the Prime Minister V. Groysman visit to Turkey, the Turkish side sent a note on the prohibition for the Turkish vessels to visit the occupied Crimea. Nonetheless, the violations did not stop.

The Ukraine-Baltic Forum of the Heads of the Governments in April became another significant event. The Joint Final Statement of the Prime Ministers of Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, dated April 6, 2017, declared the support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine, the condemnation of the Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the encouragement for the further assistance to Ukraine, from the EU and NATO, in particular, as well as the support of the Euro-Atlantic course of Ukraine, the AA ratification, and a visa-free regime launch.

The active economic diplomacy resulted in the Ukraine – Canada free trade area launch on August 1. Also, the European Council decision, dated June 28, 2017, on the extension of the three-year EU quota for the duty-free import of a number of products from the important sectors of the national economy, can be considered a success too.

In May, Ukraine was officially invited to join the Pan-Euro-Med Convention. The internal procedures continued till the end of 2017, however, since May, Ukraine participated in the working bodies of the Convention as an observer.

In January-November 2017, the volume of the Ukrainian goods export equalled \$39.5 billion, with an increase of \$6.8 billion, compared to the same period in 2016. In geography terms, there was a raise in goods export to Australia and Oceania – by 304.4%, America – by 59.8%, Europe – by 30.4%, the CIS – 15.6%, Asia – by 12.9%, and Africa – by 7.5%. At the same time, within 11 months of 2017, the main partners' shares in the Ukrainian goods' trade turnover were as following: the EU countries – 41.3%, China – 8.4%, Turkey – 4.0%, and the USA – 3.6%.

The 2017 most successful directions are: the USA, the United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Lithuania, the political dialogue with the EU, the Euro-Atlantic integration, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, the UN, the Council of Europe and human rights protection, and a visa-free regime.

The overall score for the results – “4-“

G-7 COUNTRIES

United Kingdom	B+
Italy	C+
Canada	B+
Germany	B-
USA	A-
France	C+
Japan	B

UNITED KINGDOM

B+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	5	4
Institutional cooperation	4	5
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	5	5
Results	4	5
General score	B+	B+

In 2017 relations with the United Kingdom remained very dynamic with numerous visits, continued support along all the key lines of cooperation, including support for Ukraine in conflict with Russia, security and defence cooperation and involvement in domestic reform processes. Attempts at determining the relations after Brexit were made but they were insufficient and were moved over as objective for 2018.

Political Interest / Engagement

Despite active cooperation and reference to strategic partnership, political interest toward the United Kingdom is characterized by the general interest in overcoming Russian aggression or support for reforms and is not set out in political priorities or party programmes.

Institutional Cooperation

In 2017, there were numerous contacts on various levels between different branches of power (president, government, including different ministries, individual MPs and parliamentary groups), which complement each other in terms of enhancing Ukrainian-British contacts. There were no inter-institutional conflicts in realization of the foreign policy in the British direction.

Strategic Vision

Strategic documents of Ukraine still bear no references to the United Kingdom and its future exit from the European Union did not result in update of documents establishing the foundation for bilateral cooperation. Kyiv currently lacks even clearly stated short-term priorities as compared to London, which determined three priorities in its relations with Ukraine in 2017: support of sovereignty, territorial integrity and economic development of Ukraine, reforms implementation and fighting corruption, provision of humanitarian assistance. In view of lack of strategic vision, Ukrainian priorities in bilateral relations are unclear and sporadic (necessity to reach 3.5 bln in trade turnover, plans to become one of the top 20 countries exporters of Great Britain, the need to conclude free trade agreement or visa regime liberalization).

Activities

2017 was marked by a number of visits on the highest level: official visit of President P. Poroshenko (April 19) for the first time in 20 years, working visit of the Prime Minister V. Groyzman and a number of government officials (July 5-6), Minister of Finances O. Danylyuk. For the second time in six months, British Minister of Foreign Affairs B. Johnson paid a visit to Kyiv (March 1, together with his Polish colleague), in September we had a visit of Minister of State for Europe and the Americas A. Duncan. Secretary of State for Defence M. Fallon paid official visit to Ukraine (January 20), followed by his successor M. Lancaster in six months (August 31). A meeting between Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council O. Turchynov and Permanent Secretary of the UK Ministry of Defence S. Lovegrove took place. There were also intense contacts on lower levels (communication advisors, consultants).

As part of inter-parliamentary cooperation it is worth mentioning visits of MPs to London (Head of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of Verkhovna Rada H. Hopko (September 11-12), co-heads of Friendship Group S. Zalizchuk and O. Ryabchyn (January 23) etc.). On November 30-December 03, 2017 Chair of the British-Ukraine All-Party Parliamentary Group J. Whittingdale with several colleagues visited Ukraine.

On July 6, an international conference dedicated to reforms in Ukraine took place in London. There were two debates regarding Ukraine in the British parliament (on November 07 – regarding Holodomor, on December 20 as a summary of the visit of British MPs) and on January 23 during the celebration of the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

There was dynamic cooperation in support for reforms (among the key areas – judiciary reform and reform of the police, fighting corruption, creation of financial investigation service, assistance in reformation of the Ministry of Defence according to NATO standards, support for medical, pension and judicial reforms, civil service reform, improvement of business environment, ensuring independence of mass media, support for the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories). The British Embassy extended microgrants for internally displaced persons, funded programmes against gender violence and for demining. An important area of cooperation was training and consulting assistance to the Ukrainian army in the sphere of cybernetics and propaganda counteracting. Financial liabilities of the UK for 2017-2018 make up 40 mln pounds.

The Ukrainian party raised questions of economic cooperation, strengthening of ties with business circles and investors. We have initiated informal diplomatic consultations regarding future trade relations after the exit of the UK from the EU, preferably in the form of a free trade agreement. Inter-parliamentary friendship group promoted the issue of visa regime liberalization between Ukraine and the UK (letter from Ukrainian MPs).

Unpleasant moments included denied entry to Ukraine for British athletes who participated in competitions in Crimea annexed by Russia, protest against visits to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea by UKIP party members and pro-Russian statements of some politicians (Lord Belf). Over the year, Ukrainian Ambassador to UK was responding to negative or manipulative materials in British press, which points to the need to enhance Ukrainian information policy in UK. The other priority of the Embassy was work towards recognition of Holodomor as genocide; organization of debates in the Parliament, related initiatives in Scotland and Wales.

Results

Based on the results of 2017, Great Britain has been consistently condemning Russian aggression, working on keeping sanctions, raising the issues of occupation of the ARC, violation of human rights in occupied Crimea (co-sponsor of the Resolution of the UN General Assembly) and releasing of Ukrainian prisoners. Great Britain remains the second largest contributor of OSCE SMM, has been actively financing humanitarian support of those who have suffered from the conflict and has been the most active contributor of the demining mission (2.6 mln pounds). We have been developing cooperation in the sphere of defence, namely: prolongation of Orbital military training mission until March 2018 and its extension to aviation and fleet and introduction of additional courses, agreement on joint British-Canadian training sessions for Ukrainian army. Funding of cultural and educational programmes of the British Council and fellowships for studying in the UK have been increased. We are witnessing certain growth in trade and investment as compared to the decline of 2013. UK remains one of the biggest investors into Ukraine (more than \$2 bln) and Ukraine is among the 50 key directions for British export, yet the potential remains to be used to the fullest. The UK demonstrated its principled approach at the end of the year with criticism regarding fight with corruption, namely the pressure exerted on NABU, which the UK helped establish (statement of the MFA spokesperson of December 06, 2017).

The agreement as to a liberalization of visa regime for the citizens of Ukraine has not been reached so far. The UK government has not recognized Holodomor as a genocide despite Ukrainian effort. The UK continues to see Minsk Agreements as the only mechanism of solving the conflict and the Budapest Memorandum has been pushed to the margin of the discussion. In spite of significant supplies of non-lethal materials (as of January 2017 for a price of almost 1 mln pounds), the UK is not ready to give lethal weapons to Ukraine.

On January 20, Statement of the Ministers of Defence on Cooperation in Defence was signed (in elaboration of the Memorandum of Cooperation signed the previous year). On October 9, an Inter-Governmental Protocol Amending the Convention on Avoiding Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion was signed.

ITALY

C+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	4
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	4	3
Activities	4	4
Results	4	3
General score	B-	C+

In 2017, the Government of Italy continued supporting the European integration strivings of Ukraine and promoted achievement of peace in the East of the country, preservation of its territorial integrity, intensified exchange of experience of countering RF's hybrid aggressions, not recognizing the annexation of Crimea. At the bilateral level, inter-parliamentary and economic cooperation has been intensified. Security, military and medical as well as cultural cooperation remains an important dimension.

Political Interest / Engagement

The statements on Italy were mostly voiced by the members of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, in particular, by the head of the friendship group Ukraine – Italy S. Alieksieyev and his colleagues. In the focus of bilateral negotiations was implementation of the 2016-2017 Cooperation Roadmap, economic interaction of the two countries and European integration strivings of Ukraine as well as preservation of the sanctions regime against the RF. Most interested were MPs from the factions of the Petro Poroshenko Bloc (BPP), People's Front (Narodnyi Front) and "Samopomich" ("Self-Help"), but this interest was not represented in the party documents and programs. In the analytical report to the Annual Address of the President of the VRU Italy is mentioned only in the context of the latest terrorist acts in Europe, but in the actual Address it is not mentioned at all, in spite of being a member of the OSCE Troika and chairing the G7 this year.

Institutional Cooperation

The level of institutional interaction in Ukraine in the implementation of foreign policy regarding Italy is not high due to the absence of a comprehensive strategic vision. Still in 2017, the activities in the "Italian" direction at the level of the legislative branch became more intensive when the inter-parliamentary friendship group Ukraine–Italy determined five key priorities for cooperation: political and legal, fiscal and customs/economic, energy, medical/social, tourism – youth – sports – culture.

Counteraction to hybrid threats and "fake" news was a no easy task for the MFA and the Embassy of Ukraine in Italy, who concentrated on refuting populist statements made by some Italian politicians from the parties "The League of the North", "The 5 Star Movement", and "The Brothers of Italy". The main areas of concern were possible easing of sanctions against Russia and overcoming the consequences of illegal visits of the representatives of Italian regional councils from the above parties to Crimea.

Strategic Vision

Strategic vision of the interaction between Ukraine and Italy was represented in the 2016-2017 Cooperation Roadmap for Ukraine and Italy, which was strengthened due to signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Parliaments of Ukraine and Italy in June. However, even after such an important step, it is still too early to say that both countries have managed to intensify their dialogue at the level of political parties. The activities in this direction will yield positive results for further European integration of Ukraine.

Activities

In June 2017 the parliamentary dimension of the Ukraine-Italy bilateral interaction was activated, namely for the first time over ten years, a meeting at the level of the heads of two parliaments took place and the Memorandum of Cooperation was signed. It is worth noting that such an institutionalization of interparliamentary contacts is not a common practice. But these kinds of documents, even if declarative, show the intention of the parties to intensify their cooperation.

Besides that, during the year visits to Italy were paid by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, of Defence, of Energy and Coal industry of Ukraine, as well as other bilateral activities held place.

In 2017 Italian leaders publicly supported the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine as well as declared compliance with international sanctions against the RF until complete fulfilment of the Minsk agreements, as it was indicated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy A. Alfano during the negotiations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin in the city of Rome (June) and the city of Palermo (October).

Another feature of the implementation of the Ukraine-Italy Cooperation Roadmap is cooperation with Italy in the framework of the international organizations, in particular, in the support of the activities of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine as well as interaction in the PACE, PA of the OSCE and PA of NATO. The result has been the support of Ukraine's standpoint on non-recognition of the Crimean annexation in most cases, condemnation of the Russian aggression in Donbas, mass violations of human rights in Crimea and in Donbas by the occupation authorities. At the same time, the statements of some pro-Russian Italian regional leaders still remain a problem.

Results

Analysis of the development of bilateral relations between Ukraine and Italy in 2017 shows that despite some problematic issues related to violation of the legislation, manifested by visits of Italian officials to the temporarily occupied territory of the AR of Crimea and the ATO zone, and traditionally pro-Russian orientation of some influential political forces of the country, Italy continued to support the European course of Ukraine on reinforcing sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as continued the EU sanction policy against Russia.

Agreement was achieved concerning the support of EU-Ukraine energy dialogue and reform in the domestic energy sector. An agreement between the MFA of Ukraine and Italy on cooperation in the field of oncology diseases was signed (May) (but not yet ratified), as well as dispatch of Italian medical staff to Ukraine for exchanging experience with Ukrainian colleagues was discussed.

A number of meetings took place between the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, the Ministry of Health of Ukraine and their Italian counterparts. The importance of resistance to hybrid threats was set as the priority. Cooperation in the field of military medicine continued and negotiations on the establishment of the centre for mountain and infantry training in the town of Mukachevo were launched.

Besides that, cooperation at the level of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine and the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Italy was efficient, Italian experience in the establishment of the Service of Financial Investigations was borrowed, and in February the Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation between the National Anti-Corruption Agency and the National Anti-Corruption Body of the Republic of Italy was signed.

Italy supports further intensification of Ukraine's relations with the European Union. Besides that, in 2017 Italy, along with Ukraine, was a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council and was included into the OSCE Troika, where it showed its support of Ukraine's positions in basic issues.

CANADA

B+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	5
Institutional cooperation	5	4
Strategic vision	3	4
Activities	5	5
Results	5	4
General score	B+	B+

In 2017, the Ukraine-Canada relations gained their further development and were marked by the intensification in the economic, security and defence spheres. The continuing support provided by Canada in counteraction to the Russian aggression, its assistance in improving Ukraine's defence capabilities remained of a great importance. Besides that, several high-level official visits provided a powerful impetus to the bilateral relations, which can be characterized as a special partnership.

Political Interest / Engagement

The political interest of Ukraine towards Canada is high, as it is listed among the first priority countries for the development of the bilateral relations. This was stressed several times, among others: in the relevant provisions of the 2017 Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada, in the President's statement made at the Annual Meeting with the foreign ambassadors, in the Governmental Action Plan for 2017 and Action Plan till 2020, and also in some Parliamentary documents. Also, in the Analytical Report, which is a part of the President's Address, Canada was named an "overseas strategic partner of Ukraine". Canada was mentioned both in the context of economic cooperation and international counteraction to the Russian aggression, the Ukraine – NATO relations. During the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada C. Freeland to Ukraine in December 2017, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko also underlined the Canada's contribution to the reforms in Ukraine, its international efforts to de-occupy Crimea and developments in the bilateral military-technical cooperation. These lines were also discernible in the statements of the Ukrainian high-level officials during their contacts with the Canadian colleagues.

Institutional Cooperation

Cooperation with Canada is evenly presented in the documents of all branches of power. With the MFA of Ukraine coordinating role in this process, the Embassy of Ukraine in Canada actively facilitated it, in particular, regarding content of the Ukrainian high-level officials' visits to Canada and informing the Ukrainian companies about the FTA possibilities, as well as actual needs of the Canadian market. The coordinated activity of the institutions can be seen on the examples of the economic cooperation development and support provided to Ukraine in counteracting to the Russian aggression. Signed in July 2016 the Canada – Ukraine Free Trade Agreement (CUFTA) was ratified by both sides. At the same time, in the 2017 Governmental Action Plan, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine and other central government bodies were assigned to expand domestic products presence on the Canadian market by informing Ukrainian producers about its opportunities and benefits.

Strategic Vision

The conceptual documents of Ukraine declared the relations with Canada as of the highest level. As a result of the President Poroshenko visit to Canada, the Administration of the President of Ukraine noted the "strategic character of a special partnership between two countries". The same thesis was used during some other visits of the Ukrainian delegations to Canada and the Canadian delegations to Ukraine. A special impetus was given by the FTA Agreement between two countries coming into force, the support provided by Canada to Ukraine at the bilateral and the international levels, its contribution to the integration of Ukraine into NATO and strengthening of Ukraine's defence capabilities – all were emphasized in speeches of the President, the Prime Minister, and other top officials of Ukraine and some governmental plans. The

consolidated strategic vision of the relations with Canada contributed to their practical implementation, with the results important for Ukraine, first of all, in the economic and defence spheres.

Activities

The year was fruitful for the bilateral contacts and mutual exchange of the official visits at all levels: the Ukrainian Members of Parliament welcomed their Canadian colleagues in January; the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko paid a visit to Canada in September, the Prime Minister V. Groysman and the Vice Prime Minister I. Klymushyn – in October, the Foreign Affairs Minister P. Klimkin – in November, the Minister of Defence S. Poltorak – in April and November, and the Minister of Culture Y. Nyshchuk – in February. It is also worth to mention the visits to Ukraine paid by the Canadian Minister of Defence H. Sajjan in September, the Foreign Affairs Minister C. Freeland in December, and the parliamentary delegation in January. The Ukrainian debut in the “Invictus Games” in Canada, with the Ukrainian President being present at their opening and the Vice Prime Minister at their closing, also can be named among the important events. In the course of other visits, business, interparliamentary, cultural and transport cooperation and relations with the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada also gained their further development. The same tone was inherent to the events organized by the Ukrainian Embassy in Canada, such as the meeting of the Canada – Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group (October 3 in Ottawa) or the commemoration of the CUFTA start (August 8 in Toronto).

Results

The ratified CUFTA came into force on August 1. A number of important documents were signed during the year, in particular: a joint statement by the President of Ukraine and the Prime Minister of Canada; an Agreement on the defence cooperation and training of the Ukrainian civil servants; the memoranda on cooperation in the aerospace sector and on support for the public administration and the economic development. During his visit to Canada, the President of Ukraine informed about the decision to open a Consulate General of Ukraine in Edmonton in the near future. Canada provided CAD 7.75 million of the humanitarian aid and agreed to provide another CAD 6.89 million for additional projects. In 2017, cooperation in the security and defence sphere appeared to be the most effective. In addition to the defence agreement, Canada decided to extend the UNIFIER military training mission (for about 200 Canadian military personnel) by 2019; also Ukraine entered the Automatic Firearms Country Control List.

GERMANY

B-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	4	3
Activities	5	4
Results	4	3
General score	B+	B-

In 2017, the dialogue intensity between Ukraine and Germany significantly lost its dynamics, among others within the framework of the Normandy Format negotiations on the settlement of the situation in the Eastern Ukraine. The parliamentary elections, which took place in Germany in September and complicated processes within the EU, were last but not the least reasons for that. The level of the efficiency also went down in terms of bilateral agreements and joint activities. Though, the German financial and humanitarian support to Ukraine remained substantial. For the first time in the post-war history of the both countries, the Bundestag held hearings on the Germany historical responsibility towards Ukraine.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2017, the Ukrainian leaders, the President of Ukraine in particular and the Cabinet of Ministers, as well as MPs, showed their political interest in cooperation and development of the relations with Germany as rather high but sporadic. According to the Foreign Minister P. Klimkin, Germany remains the main partner of Ukraine in the fight against the Russian aggression, reforms and the European integration process. The Ukrainian government looks forward to further support provided by Germany in the peace process, restoring sovereignty and return of the occupied territories, that was mentioned in the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada.

Institutional Cooperation

Given the great political importance of the cooperation with Germany, contacts at the highest level and joint projects are supported and supervised by the President of Ukraine, the Prime Minister and the MFA of Ukraine. The interagency cooperation is also quite active, for examples in infrastructural projects development and the State Fiscal Service reform as one of the best examples. In 2017, one could observe a consolidated position of the Ukrainian authorities in counteracting the development of the "Nord Stream 2" project. The coordinated position was also shown regarding statements of the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany to Ukraine E. Reichel about conditions for conducting elections in the Donbas area. In addition, representatives of the Security Services, the NSDC, the MoD, the MIP, the NBU, the Office of Cyberpolice, the Foreign Intelligence Service, the State Financial Monitoring Service and the State Service for Special Communication and Information Protection of Ukraine took part in the intergovernmental consultations in the field of cybersecurity, that was for the first time in the history of the bilateral Ukraine – Germany relations.

Strategic Vision

During the year, no mention of the importance of developing the bilateral relations with Germany were included in the strategic documents of Ukraine. No new bilateral agreements were signed. Despite having a strong bilateral legal framework, there is still absence of the comprehensive strategy for the Ukrainian-German relations. Additionally, if the previous Energy strategy of Ukraine till 2030 (no longer in force since August, 2017) contained numerous references to cooperation between Ukraine and Germany in the energy sector, so the new strategy covering developments till 2035 says nothing about Germany at all.

Activity

In general, the bilateral relations during the year were marked with a decrease in the intensity of the political dialogue, first of all from the perspective of efficiency and specific agreements existence. The Normandy Format negotiations lost in dynamics; in 2017, only one meeting at the level of the foreign ministers and several telephone talks at the level of the heads of the states took place. The number of the official visits by both parties decreased as well. At the same time, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko paid two working visits to Germany during the year, and had a series of meetings with the Federal Chancellor A. Merkel at the sidelines of other international events. Four visits to Germany at the level of ministers and Prosecutor General of Ukraine took place. In its turn, in 2017 the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs S. Gabriel and the Federal Minister of Transport and Digital Infrastructure A. Dobrindt also paid visits to Ukraine. During 2017, the Ambassador of Ukraine to Germany A. Melnyk had several meetings with the German high officials, both at the federal and states level.

During those visits to Ukraine and Germany, as well as during other international meetings, the President of Ukraine, the ministers and other high-level officials discussed main issues for resolving the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and the central role of Germany in it, keeping in line the positions on the peacekeeping operation in the Donbas region, cooperation in the internal affairs (integrated border management, in particular), energy (construction of the “Nord Stream 2” and counteracting expansion of the Russian energy supply through OPAL), infrastructure and transport (the Digital Infrastructure Office launch and cooperation on some other infrastructural projects), industry and agricultural sector (consulting on the agricultural trade due to the FTA with the EU, attracting innovative technologies in the agricultural production, ensuring the European standards of quality and food safety, bioenergy issues).

For years, Germany was one of the few countries Ukraine strived to develop the military-technical cooperation with. In 2017, such activities were not observed, despite the first within the 10 years period visit of the Minister of Defence of Ukraine to Germany, when the heads of the defence ministries discussed such issues as counselling, training in medical assistance and rehabilitation of the military personnel, information exchange and personnel training.

Results

In 2017, the efficiency in most areas of the mutual interests (such as political, security, economic and energy issues) compared to the previous years has decreased significantly. Most of the bilateral meetings had no results. Only a meeting of the Minister of Justice with his German colleagues resulted in a signed Joint Statement on the Legal Cooperation between the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine and the Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection of the Federal Republic of Germany, and a Program of Cooperation till 2018.

Meanwhile, the German government support initiatives to Ukraine have remained significant. They became a part of a comprehensive "Action Plan for Ukraine". In the first half of 2017, Germany was one of the largest donors providing international technical assistance to Ukraine. Germany also remains an important donor providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine, as of November 2017, the Federal government allocated \$27.4 million to Ukraine (equal to 2016). In this context, it is important to note appointment of E. Milbradt as a Special Envoy of the Government of Germany on reforms in Ukraine in the sphere governance and decentralization (August 2017).

May 19 became a historic day: the Green faction initiated the debate about the Germany's historic responsibility towards Ukraine in the Bundestag. It was called to raise the awareness of Ukraine's contribution to a peace restoration in Europe, and to address the German government with an appeal to increase support for Ukraine.

Germany traditionally remains one of the key foreign trade partners of Ukraine, ranked 3rd after China and Russia: it is on the 8th place in terms of exports, and on the 2nd place in terms of the imports of goods. During the year, a noticeable growth of exports (by 19.9%) and imports (by 33.7%) could be seen. The Ukrainian share of the foreign trade in services between the countries slowly grows too. However, the foreign trade balance of Ukraine with Germany traditionally indicates a significant negative balance. As of October 1, Germany ranked 5th in the world in terms of the direct foreign investments to Ukraine (\$1.8 billion or 4.6% of the total volumes). Due to the lack of the substantial progress in the economic sphere, a meeting of the Ukrainian-German high-level group on the economic cooperation did not take place in 2017. The year was successful in terms of cultural diplomacy of Ukraine and Germany. In September, the Ukrainian-German Year of Languages was launched, aimed to deepen existing cooperation between the countries educational and cultural institutions and establishing some new long-term partnerships and projects.

USA

A-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	5	5
Institutional cooperation	5	5
Strategic vision	5	5
Activities	4	5
Results	4	4
General score	A-	A-

The beginning of 2017 was marked by the expectation of newly elected US President Donald Trump's position regarding Ukraine in general and the Ukrainian-Russian conflict in particular. To prevent "the Ukrainian question" from being moved to the back burner of the new US administration, Ukraine has enhanced institutional cooperation and intensified activities in relations with the USA. As a result, 2017 became a year of an active dialogue between the countries. The Ukrainian diplomats' efforts were primarily directed at the extension of sanctions against the Russian Federation, maintaining security guarantees and providing defence weapons. Support of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine remained the central topic of high profile discussions.

Political Interest / Engagement

During 2017, political interest towards the USA remained high. Importantly, none of the panic-stricken forecasts made after 2016 presidential elections in the USA has been implemented, as the President of Ukraine stressed in his annual address to the Verkhovna Rada.

The Verkhovna Rada has appealed to the US Congress regarding security guarantees for Ukraine and possibility to grant Ukraine a status of a major ally beyond NATO. Among the key tasks of Ukrainian diplomacy in Ukraine-US relations in 2017 was maintaining US sanctions against the Russian Federation, providing defence weapons and security guarantees for Ukraine, including a full-fledged UN peacekeeping mission in Donbas and compliance with the Minsk Agreements.

Institutional Cooperation

To maintain cooperation with the USA during the new administration, Ukraine has developed a systematic enhanced institutional cooperation at all the levels. Understanding of the strategic importance of cooperation with the USA, namely the role the USA plays in counteracting Russian aggression on the international arena and the support it gives to reforms and modernization of Ukrainian internal policy, became impetus for consolidated position and mutual coordination of efforts between different institutions in Ukraine.

Strategic Vision

The 2008 United States-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership is the main document, which stipulates priority and strategic value of bilateral relations between Ukraine and the USA. Strategic documents adopted during the previous years correspond to current state of affairs. For instance, the Military doctrine mentions the USA as an immediate support that Ukraine could count on after its own forces with regard to regulation of the military conflict in the East and ensuring regional stability. Likewise, the National Security Strategy of Ukraine defines deepening of strategic partnership with the USA as a key foreign policy priority within ensuring national security in foreign affairs.

In 2017, the regulatory framework of Ukraine-US cooperation was supplemented by Memorandum on Bilateral Cooperation between US Congress and the Parliament of Ukraine signed in Washington in June 15 by Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy and Speaker of the US House of Representatives P. Ryan. The document confirms strategic partnership between the countries and outlines expansion of inter-parliament cooperation between the Congress and the Verkhovna Rada in political, economic, security, cultural and humanitarian fields. The Memorandum symbolically mentions the significant role Ukraine plays “in protection of Europe as the outpost of the Western civilization.”

Activities

2017 was characterized by various bilateral contacts on different levels. President P. Poroshenko had meetings with President D. Trump (in June and in August), Secretary of State R. Tillerson, Vice-President M. Pence, Speaker of the House of Representatives P. Ryan as well as ministers of defense, energy and trade.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin had meetings with President D. Trump, Secretary of State R. Tillerson, and Vice-President M. Pence. Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groyzman and Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Andriy Parubiy also had high level meetings with representatives of legislative and executive power of the USA.

During most meetings, the central topics for discussion were security, territorial integrity, sovereignty of Ukraine, sanctions against the Russian Federation as well as other issues of sectoral cooperation. The discussed issues also included the following: energy security (both countries confirmed their joint stance concerning the threat of the project “Nord Stream 2”), deepening of cooperation in development of alternative sources of energy, implementation of joint projects in atomic energy, intensification of investment activities of US companies in Ukraine, development of multilateral trade, namely in the context of growing export of Ukrainian products to the USA. The MFA of Ukraine held consultations in cyber security, which were the first consultations of such kind in the history of Ukraine-US bilateral relations. The Embassy of Ukraine in the US together with the Ukrainian Association of Manufacturers and Entrepreneurs joined the organization of Ukrainian Brands D.C. Summit where Ukrainian foodstuffs producers were presented. With the support of the Embassy, for the first time Ukraine was represented at the international weaponry exhibition AUSA 2017 in Washington.

Results

An important achievement of 2017 was passing of the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, which condemned the actions of Russian Federation in Ukraine and supported sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Ukrainian state. Moreover, despite numerous sceptical prognoses the issue of sanctions was constantly present on the agenda. The USA decided to keep the existing sanctions until Russia fully complies with the Minsk Agreements, stops aggression and returns the occupied Crimea. The list of sanctions has been expanded.

Another important and frequently discussed issue in the bilateral relations between Ukraine and the USA was cooperation in security and defence field. It is important that during Trump administration this direction of cooperation was preserved and received key attention. The US special representative for Ukraine K. Volker has been appointed who is responsible for enhancement of the Minsk Agreements progress. As part of 2018 US federal budget, 350 mln dollars are foreseen for security support to Ukraine. Furthermore, provision of lethal defence weapons has been sanctioned.

Moreover, the USA has started supplies of steam coal to Ukraine; cancellation of antidumping duty for Ukrainian pipes was prolonged; cooperation in space industry was extended that resulted in successful launch of expendable launch system Antares. A new 4-year USAID programme – Financial Sector Transformation – with a budget of 23 mln dollars was launched to ensure transparency of the financial sector in Ukraine. First Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Economic Development and Trade S.Kubiv and Regional USAID Director S. Fritz signed two amendments to Agreement on Development with Ukraine that gives Ukraine additional 54 mln dollars of support in different spheres, such as fighting corruption, agriculture, reform of state procurement systems and enhancing energy safety.

President Poroshenko signed the Law of Ukraine “On Ratification of Agreement (in the form of note exchange) between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the USA on Renewing the Agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the USA on Cooperation in Science and Technology”. The Agreement promotes development of bilateral contacts in the mentioned fields, creates legal framework for joint research and strengthens protection of intellectual property.

FRANCE

C+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	2	2
Activities	4	4
Results	3	3
General score	C+	C+

The year 2017 in Ukrainian-French relations was marked by electoral campaigns in France. Their results could have changed existing relations completely. This did not happen, and the current dynamics continued, yet structural problems remained. Lack of progress in conflict resolution mechanism, absence of strategic vision of bilateral relations and new priorities in French foreign policy pose additional challenges for Ukrainian diplomats.

Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest toward France remains high, especially in the context of its participation in Normandy format. Presidential campaign in France also sparked active interest of politicians and general public as three out of the four leading candidates had foreign policy programs, which ran contrary to priorities of Ukraine (comments by the MFA regarding views of Marine Le Pen on January 03 and January 17). A slightly negative background was created by media reports on France slowing down visa liberalization process for Ukraine or on the French reluctance to recognize European prospects of Ukraine in the final declaration of Ukraine-EU Summit.

Institutional Cooperation

Priority of the French direction called for a high level of engagement of different government agencies. Inconsistencies were only minor: we could name a petition of the Ukrainian community of France pledging for dismissal of honorary consul of Ukraine in Nice on the accusations of passiveness and pro-Russia activities, or the proposal of MP O. Vilkul regarding address to the Heads of Normandy format participants, which was dismissed during a session of Verkhovna Rada Committee on Foreign Affairs (March 14).

Strategic Vision

Ukraine does not have a documented strategic vision of its relations with France. Two-year road maps for relationship development have not been signed since 2012 and the short-term priorities of cooperation were outlined for the last time in the Declaration of Heads of State in 2015. In view of the fact that some of foreign policy positions of France are not completely in line with foreign policy objectives of Ukraine (namely eventual membership of Ukraine in the EU or in NATO, priorities of neighbourhood policy with the EU etc.) and taking into account the political weight of France, this lack of strategic vision could potentially have negative consequences.

Activities

In 2017, activities remained dynamic: working visit of President Poroshenko to France (June 26), in September, the two Presidents met during UN General Assembly. Visits to Paris were also paid by the Minister of Foreign Affairs P. Klimkin (March 8-9), Vice Prime Minister for European Integration I. Klymush-Tsintsadze (November 18 – meeting with the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs N. Loiseau), the Minister of Internal Affairs A. Avakov (November 22). Visits to Ukraine were made by State Secretary for Foreign Trade M. Fekl (February 1-2), Head of Friendship Group H. Maurey with a delegation of senators (September 13), Head of the Continental Europe Department of the MFA of France F. Mangin (January 1, within the framework of political consultations on the levels of Heads of Territorial Departments etc.).

A lion's share of the bilateral contacts with France was directed at effort within Normandy format and Minsk process – both during meetings of the Presidents and during their occasional phone calls (three four-sided and two three-sided calls (without participation of Russia)). There was one meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Normandy countries (February 18) and several meetings of their deputies (March 24, May 30). The issues of bilateral cooperation were discussed inconsistently not least because of the election year and change of power in France. Activation of relations and development of legal framework were also discussed along with new initiatives in education and trade. Ukrainian MFA suggested initiatives for expanding interpersonal contacts and having cross years of the French and Ukrainian languages respectively.

Agreements on revival of the Ukrainian-French Inter-Governmental Committee for Economy have not yet yielded results, yet a number of visits (deputy Minister of Economy M. Nefyodov on September 29), meetings with investors (President on June 26) and public events (BusinessFrance on December 14) have gained some progress in this respect. The most promising areas are renewable energy, waste treatment, agriculture and processing industry. In particular, attention has been paid to cooperation in the sphere of climate change (contacts of the Minister of Ecology O. Semerak). Security cooperation remains limited, but some cooperation with the French criminal police and in the sphere of cybercrimes was established. Regarding support for the reforms, France has been expressing interest in public service reform, judicial reform, and the problems of fighting corruption. Ukrainian Embassy in France intensified its work regarding memory and cultural policy. The 25th anniversary of establishing diplomatic ties was celebrated (conference in the Senate, exhibition of documents in MFA of France), yet the expansion of informational and cultural presence of Ukraine in France remains an urgent political objective.

Results

In the short-term perspective, the results and general dynamics of relations remain positive. France supports maintaining sanctions against Russia until Minsk agreements are fully executed and does not recognize the annexation of Crimea. In response to inauguration of the self-proclaimed "representative office of DPR" in Marseilles (September 1) the country launched respective legal procedures. France continues providing humanitarian aid and demining assistance (humanitarian aid and training of State Emergency Service staff). The scope of trade and investment is gradually growing; France remains one of the biggest employers among foreign investors of Ukraine. Strategically, the year 2017 presented a number of challenges. Achievements in the sphere of Ukrainian-Russian conflict are modest; despite the effort, including that of France, no meeting of Heads of Normandy happened and the road map for implementation of Minsk agreements was not adopted. Budapest Memorandum plays an insignificant role on the bilateral agenda. Despite an optimistic result of the election year, Ukraine failed to prevent France from focusing on mending relations with Russia. Neither President Macron nor the Prime Minister Philippe have accepted the invitation to visit Ukraine at a convenient time, which intensifies the asymmetry of high level visits (the last visit of the President of France to Ukraine took place in 1998).

JAPAN

B



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	4
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	5	5
Results	5	5
General score	B-	B

Political interest of Ukraine in Japan rose considerably in 2017, however, that did not improve institutional cooperation or strategic vision. Ukraine further considers Japan to be a priority partner, though, in the capacity of a donor with the possibility to increase own investment attractiveness in energy efficient projects, use of renewable energies, medical sphere development, etc.

Political Interest / Engagement

Declaration of the year 2017 to be a year of Japan in Ukraine has greatly facilitated growing political interest. In particular, the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine indicates that the countries are living through the stage of most active dialogue in the whole history of relations. Comprehensive development of relations is recognized as a priority in relations with Japan, and would include a close political dialogue, active trade and economic cooperation, with preference given to the attraction of investment and technologies to the Ukrainian economy within the key interstate Agreement on Promotion and Mutual Protection of Investments.

The Government Priority Action Plan for 2017 points out the need to increase the volume of the Ukrainian goods export to Japan, since under the Export Strategy for 2017 – 2020 it ranks fifth among the countries with which Ukraine insufficiently uses its foreign trade capacity.

Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation did not undergo significant changes, but a wider than in 2016 range of institutions were involved in it (the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Science, the State Border Guard Service, the State TV and Radio Committee of Ukraine). Nevertheless, absence of the strategy with due account of the ongoing changes does not allow to assess this direction at its highest.

Strategic Vision

Strategic documents do not consider bilateral relations of Ukraine with Japan by themselves. No comprehensive bilateral agreements were signed in 2017. The same as before, the key documents are the Joint Statement of Ukraine and Japan (March 23, 1995), the Joint Statement on New Partnership in the 21st century (July 21, 2005), the Joint Statement of the President of Ukraine V. Yanukovich and the Prime Minister of Japan N. Kan on the Ukrainian-Japanese Global Partnership (January 18, 2011).

Activities

The Ukrainian side has been particularly active in the current year, and this is confirmed by numerous meetings at the level of ministries and agencies. The most important ones include the working visit of the Speaker of the Parliament of Ukraine A. Parubiy to Japan (February 25 – March 03, 2017), during which meetings with the Heir of the Emperor's Throne, Prince Naruhito, the State Minister of Defence of Japan, the Speakers of the House of Councillors and the House of Representatives of the Parliament of Japan, the Head of the Parliamentary Committee of Foreign Affairs and Defence of the House of Councillors, Deputy President of "JICA" (Japanese

International Cooperation Agency), the Head of the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives took place. Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity were supported by Japan. In the course of the meeting of the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Ukraine I. Rusnak with the Deputy Minister of Defence of Japan on International Relations Ro Manabe in Kyiv the issue of continued relations in the defence sphere was discussed (August 2, 2017).

Positive dynamics of mutual trade between Ukraine and Japan was pointed out at the meeting of the First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine S. Kubiv with the Parliamentary Vice Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technologies of Japan T. Tanose (July 26, 2017). S. Kubiv also participated in the VII Joint meeting of the Committee of Economic Cooperation of the Japanese Business Federation "Keidanren" and the Coordination Council on Economic Cooperation with Japan under the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (May 30, 2017), as well as in the opening of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency "JICA" in Ukraine (November 20, 2017).

The Head of the Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko held a meeting with the Deputy Director of the European Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, special representative of Japan in the countries of Central Asia, special representative of the MFA of Japan on GUAM T. Aiki. The parties discussed the presentation of the newly opened Office of the "JICA" in the Parliament of Ukraine (November 28, 2017). Besides that, Acting Minister of Health U. Suprun, together with the Ambassador of Japan Sh. Sumi visited Kyiv Regional Clinical Hospital, for which new endoscopic equipment was bought with the facilitation of the Government of Japan (June 7, 2017).

Among other things, attention was paid to restoration of the alienation zone, which was visited by the delegation of Japanese specialists in the field of environmental monitoring (August 2, 2017), the problem of waste disposal, technical cooperation within the Capacity Development Project of the National Public TV Company of Ukraine, etc.

Results

Following the results of the current year, the Governments of Ukraine and Japan cooperate fruitfully both at the bilateral level, and within the framework of international organizations. In particular, Ukraine strictly condemns actions taken by Pyongyang, urging the world community to take additional action to bring the DPRK to account and expressing complete support of Japan in this case; while Japan consistently supports Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Japan has supported all the three resolutions of the UN GA that are of fundamental importance to our state ("Territorial Integrity of Ukraine" 2014, "Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" 2016 and 2017). Within the framework of international organizations, in particular, IAEA, Wassenaar Agreement, etc., Japan regularly voiced its fundamental standpoint as to support of independence, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of Ukraine.

It is expected that several new Ukrainian-Japanese large-scale projects will be implemented, in particular, project “Improvement of radiation control of the environment and legislative framework in Ukraine for the environmental rehabilitation of radioactively contaminated territories” (August 2017), and starting with January 2018 Japan and Ukraine will go for the 2,5 years’ project aimed at the improvement and development evolution of the National Public TV and Radio Company of Ukraine.

Trade turnover increase has been pointed out by 40% since 2016. However, the most important statement was that of the State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan K. Nakane on simplification of visa requirements for Ukrainian citizens for short-term visits to Japan since January 1, 2018.

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

B

European Union

Eastern Partnership

European Energy Community

B+

B-

C-



EUROPEAN UNION

B+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	5	5
Institutional cooperation	4+	4+
Strategic vision	5-	4+
Activities	5-	5-
Results	4	4
General score	B+	B+

	General score	Political interest/engagement	Institutional cooperation	Strategic vision	Activities	Results
Political dialogue	A-	5	4	4	5	5
Economic cooperation	A-	5	5	5	5	3
Visa-free dialogue	B+	5	4	4	4	4

POLITICAL DIALOGUE

In 2017, the Ukraine's relations with the EU got second wind due to the Association Agreement coming into force and introduction of a visa-free regime. By the end of the year, however, the relations were a bit undermined by the EU's refusal to grant a third, last tranche of EUR 600 million due to the Ukraine's default on its commitments. In spite of an assessment being positive in general, one can notice some fatigue and disappointment over the reforms stagnation in Ukraine, and consequently, the reluctance of the EU member states to pay a high price for breaking relations with Russia following previously imposed sanctions.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2017, the European integration course of Ukraine was a priority issue for all branches of power. In the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada, it is stated that the European integration is both a goal and a means of our state modernization. In other words, the Ukraine – EU Association Agreement, which finally came into force on September 1, 2017, is considered by Ukraine as a basis for the systemic internal reforms necessary both for the rapprochement with the EU and for the modernization of the state itself.

Thus, within the year a certain reorientation of the European integration course from the foreign policy priority to the domestic policy priority occurred, when the entire state apparatus equally involved in it. Ensuring resolution of the urgent socio-economic problems does not go against the European integration goals, but, on the contrary, it allows focusing on the EU norms and standards. At the end of the year, the Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman stated that Ukraine and the EU increased their bilateral trade by 29%, which is a proof of the successful previous steps towards approaching and the promising outlook of the further convergence with the EU practices and norms by the Ukrainian government.

Institutional Cooperation

The institutional cooperation during the year was not a subject to the significant changes. Due to the preservation of the status quo in the division of the responsibilities and power between the ruling elites, the positive dynamics was increased and maintained in the development of relations with the EU high-ranking officials at the level of the European Council, the Council of Ministers of the EU, the European Commission, and the European Parliament.

Thanks to an agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the European Commission on the implementation of the Public Administration Reform Strategy for the period of 2016-2020, signed at the end of 2017, at the beginning of 2018 the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Office recruited

staff at all levels. In autumn, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the provision on the Government Office of coordination for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, according to which it should provide organizational, expert-analytical and informational support for the Government's activities in the field of European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Strategic Vision

Shortly after the EU – Ukraine Association Agreement coming into force, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved an action plan for its implementation, with 2016 tasks and about five thousand activities included. The plan is based on the Association Agreement's planning procedure and effectiveness evaluation, and also is consistent with the Governmental Action Plan, the strategic documents on the sectoral reforms, and includes the road maps approved by the EU for Ukraine to approximate its legislation to the European one. In addition, the Government approved the Communication strategy in the sphere of European integration for 2018-2021.

At the same time, the President of Ukraine identified the new “guidelines” for the Ukrainian path to rapprochement with the EU. However, the proposals of the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko on an introduction of the customs and energy union, as well as the Schengen zone, were met with some criticism, unlike initiatives proposing to create a common digital market and a common aviation space, approved by all parties.

Activities

Year 2017, compared to 2016, can be considered as more potent and productive, with Kyiv and Brussels paying attention to each other on the highest level. The President of Ukraine visited the EU capital twice: in June, he came there with a bilateral visit, and in November, he came once again to attend the 5th Eastern Partnership Summit. The Prime Minister of Ukraine also paid two visits to Brussels: in February and December.

There were also numerous visits at the level of the Vice Prime Ministers, Ministers and their deputies for the European integration issues, as well as the heads of the relevant agencies and MPs. Besides that, on July 12-13, 2017 Kyiv hosted the EU – Ukraine Summit.

Results

2017 will come in the EU – Ukraine history of relations as a fateful year. It was a time when finally both final ratifications were achieved and the AA came into force, with the Ukrainian citizens travelling to the Schengen area visa-free since June 11, 2017.

By the end of the year, however, this significant progress was to a certain extent overshadowed by two things: the Eastern Partnership Summit Declaration final text,

which turned out to be less ambitious than the Ukrainian side hoped, and the EU refusal to grant Ukraine a third tranche of EUR 600 million because of its failure to comply with four pre-agreed requirements. Though the EU can take a second look at the possibility to provide the next credit package of EUR 1.8-2.1 billion for 2018-2020, its refusal to "close eyes on the existing problems" is indicative and shows the EU intention to practice the "more for more" principle, by "rewarding" Kyiv with its political and economic support only for the achieved success.

It seems that the EU considers the current legal terrain with Ukraine as sufficient one and will help to use it as far as Kyiv wants it and able to.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

In 2017, there were no fundamental changes in the economic cooperation with the EU. Neither the Ukraine-EU Summit, nor the Eastern Partnership summit achieved any breakthrough. At the same time, the EU – Ukraine Association Agreement finally came into force. The ongoing process of rapprochement with the EU regulatory also continues, being criticized for the slow speed and a level of transformations. The Ukrainian trade reorientation to Europe also experiences some intensification combined in absence of changes in the sphere of investments attraction.

Political Interest/Engagement

In 2017, there were no significant changes compared to the previous years, while a political consensus as well as a priority for cooperation between Ukraine and the EU remained the same. The main stakeholders' efforts were all about the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area Agreement (DCFTA) implementation. At the same time, the 5th Eastern Partnership summit in Brussels brought its agenda in the centre of attention. Economic relations with the EU included a wide range of issues (small and medium business, financial services, digital economy, transport, cross-border cooperation, social policy, etc.). The support provided both with economic sanctions against the Russian Federation, and economic and technical assistance to Ukraine became a consolidating factor for the foreign policy efforts.

Institutional Cooperation

This year, the Ukrainian authorities had almost unanimous approach towards economic cooperation with the EU, based on the early achieved agreements. Some specific issues, in particular, a moratorium on the export of unprocessed timber resulted in some confrontations. The inter-institutional cooperation depended on such formats as the Export Promotion Council and the Export Promotion Office, as well as a dialogue between the authorities of the EU – Ukraine CSP and the UNP EaP CSF. The problematic issues of the DCFTA implementation progress, which caused some discordance of the authorities'

positions, related to the internal agenda, which, however, had a significant impact on the general context of the external economic contacts with the EU. The Government Office for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade took their responsibility for some aspects of the internal coordination. At the bilateral level, the ongoing cooperation with the EC Support Group for Ukraine, and the formats foreseen by the AA and the EaP took place. The Ukrainian position on the so-called "Marshall plan" proposed by Lithuania in general was weaker compared to its initiators' activities, while at the parliamentary level the advance efforts were not supported by the other branches of power.

Strategic Vision

Strategic vision of the economic cooperation with the EU is still based on the provisions of the AA in regard of DCFTA, with the main operational document called the Action Plan on the implementation of the Association Agreement, adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on October 25. The Cabinet of Ministers Activities Plan for 2014-2017 and the 2017 Governmental Action Plan focused on tasks within the country, remain relevant. The initiatives, which were called new in the Annual Address of the President in regard to the Ukrainian vision of the strategic long-term cooperation with the EU (in particular, joining the EU Customs Union, the EU Energy Union, the European Common Aviation Area (ECAA) and the Digital Single Market) at the moment are not supported by the reason-why appeals and have rather vague outlines. The 5th Eastern Partnership summit results defined the mid-term priorities to be expanded with the summit final declaration "20 Deliverables for 2020", where points 4-8 devoted to the economic development and market opportunities. On March 28, the Export Strategy of Ukraine, developed by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, was presented (but not approved). Its first stage is a Strategic Trade Development Road map, designed for the next 5 years.

Activities

2017, like the previous years, was full of different events in the spheres of economic cooperation between Ukraine and the EU, starting from the top-level summits (Ukraine – EU and the EaP) up to the platform meetings, panels, workshops at the level of ministers and experts. On September 28-29, Ukraine and the EU held a second meeting of the EU – Ukraine Association Council on trade issues. The activities covered a wide range of the technical regulation issues, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, public procurement, competition and governmental assistance, intellectual property rights, transport, financial and telecommunication services. Another component of the cooperation with the EU in the economic sphere resulted in some activities aimed at the Ukrainian business export competences development, promotion of the Ukrainian goods and services abroad, assistance in establishing cooperation and partnership between Ukrainian and foreign business. The efforts towards Europe in the economic sphere were also aimed at prolonging sanctions against the Russian Federation, lobbying for the additional trade preferences from the EU, increase in the reforms support in Ukraine, and use of the European programs for the economic development facilitation.

Results

The economic cooperation with the EU in 2017 lost its priority in a bilateral agenda, focused on security, energy, visa liberalization, anti-corruption, and other issues. After September 1, with the AA fully coming into force, parts of the document related to the economic cooperation, social policy, and labour legislation also got rolling. Since October 1, the additional EU preferences for some agricultural and industrial goods from Ukraine went into operation too. In general, the volume of trade with the EU and a number of business entities engaged in the export and import operations keep increasing; Ukraine is now listed among the top 10 food exporters to the EU. As a result of the non-fulfilment of obligations made by Ukraine, the EU macrofinancial assistance of EUR 600 million was lost. The "Marshall plan" for Ukraine did not get its outlines, but instead the final declaration of the Eastern Partnership summit mentioned the External Investment Plan, providing new opportunities for financing, in particular, by creation of the European Sustainable Development Fund (EFSD) designed to mobilize significant volumes of investments. The European support in counteracting to the Russian aggression by the economic means, reflected in the continuation and expansion of the sanctions against the Russian Federation by the EU, and should be considered an important achievement of the Ukrainian diplomacy.

VISA-FREE DIALOGUE

The main political event for Ukrainians and simultaneously the key achievement of foreign policy in 2017 was the launch of visa-free regime with the countries of the Schengen area. Yet, despite the successful start, closer to the end of the year the balance of responsibility between citizens of Ukraine and the government regarding compliance with visa-free rules and the mechanism for its temporary suspension has been violated by government officials. While citizens of Ukraine were complying with visa-free travel requirements, the attempts of government to weaken independence of anticorruption institutions together with violation of anticorruption liabilities have caused a number of warnings and concerns on the part of the EU and certain member-states regarding regress of the reforms initiated as part of visa liberalization. The very situation has again brought up the issue of post-visa monitoring of the compliance with Visa Liberalization Action Plan.

Political Interest / Engagement

Engagement of domestic political subjects, responsible for complying with the criteria of Visa Liberalization Action Plan with the EU (VLAP), both before and after the introduction of visa-free travel depended on public and media interest as well as pressure from the EU institutions for visible progress in the four blocks of VLAP benchmarks, namely within the context of practical implementation of anticorruption reform. Certain deputies chairing industry-based committees and members of inter-

faction associations were being particularly active as well as the President, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Vice Prime Minister for European and Euroatlantic Integration (as proven by numerous statements made of the political platforms of the EU and Ukraine). A significant role in the support for irreversibility of Action Plan reforms was played by civil activists and representatives of NGOs, who were fighting for initiatives aimed against anything that could stop the visa liberalization reforms and were working to maintain the achievements of visa liberalization for Ukraine.

Institutional Cooperation

Various executive bodies were actively cooperating with the EU institutions relevant for the monitoring report. On the general political level, differences between the President, parliament and government as far as implementation of anticorruption liabilities under VLAP goes, were apparent. The key role in coordination of visa liberalization reforms was still played by the MFA and other relevant ministries. In general, in both 2016 and 2017 we could still witness a formal approach toward understanding of the content and implementation of VLAP, particularly in corruption counteraction. Testifying to this is the – European Commission Monitoring Report under the Visa Suspension Mechanism published at the end of 2017. Apart from the fight against corruption policy, there is a need to control implementation and stability of reforms in other blocks of VLAP specified in the EC report. We are talking about such spheres as border management, migration management and asylum policy as well as public order and security.

Strategic Vision

Strategic frameworks of visa-free process stipulate Visa Liberalization Action Plan between Ukraine and the EU, Order of the President of Ukraine on National Plan for Implementation of the EU Visa Liberalization Plan for Ukraine (expired on October 24, 2017), which specifies relevant ministries responsible for complying with the criteria and the Association Agenda between Ukraine and the EU.

VLAP became a test for the ability of Ukraine to implement Association Agreement (AA), yet it did not gain strategic importance in the AA and Association Agenda between Ukraine and the EU. In 2017, the government continued to implement components of AA adjacent to Action Plan (legal cooperation, cooperation in the sphere of border management, migration, asylum, readmission, environmental sphere, counteraction to organized crime and money laundering). Within this context, it would be feasible to single out VLAP and its further implementation as an indispensable component for implementation of the political part of AA as well as liabilities in the sphere of justice, freedom and security. Assessment of the results of work within these areas was presented in the report on implementation of AA by Ukraine, which was published in November 2017.

Activities

After visa liberalization higher officials were mostly focused on performance of tasks, which Ukraine undertook after the last EC report (end of 2015), for execution of the Action Plan. We are talking about set up and ensurance of appropriate work of anti-corruption institutions (guaranteeing independence of anticorruption bodies (NABU, SAP, and NAPC), and launch of the automatic verification of e-declarations as well as improvement of the process of issuing new identification documents. The first EC monitoring report regarding sustainability of reforms after visa liberalization points to the facts that these problems were never solved and remain relevant even today. Besides, new requirements appeared – creation of an anti-corruption court and cancellation of the requirement for anti-corruption organization activists to submit assets declarations. Information campaigns aiming at explanation of rights, duties and opportunities within visa liberalization were quite active (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), State Migration Service, State Tax Service, “Open Europe” information campaign and others). At the same time, not enough attention was paid to the issue of reforms circulation on local level.

Results

Introduction of visa liberalization in June 2017 became possible only due to coordination of external and domestic parties/subjects engaged in visa dialogue. Since visa-free travel was launched, more than 400,000 Ukrainians were able to benefit from it.

Even though the process of performing liabilities was happening amid a series of political and corruption scandals inside the country, with the help of EC control over quality of changes implemented after granting visa liberalization (the mechanism for visa liberalization suspension), liabilities under visa-free travel together with AA remain effective tools for implementation of necessary domestic transformations in the country and reinforcement of interpersonal and business contacts with the EU countries.

At the same time, assessments made regarding implementation and complying with VLAP requirements by both the EU and civil society show that visa-free travel with the EU is not a complete task. Visa liberalization dialogue between Ukraine and the EU has just started. In this context, there emerges a need to establish efficient monitoring of the compliance of Ukraine with VLAP requirements, extension of its implementation as well as assessment of any initiatives covered by visa liberalization dialogue concerning compliance with VLAP criteria.

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

B-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	2	3
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	2	3
Activities	4	5
Results	4	4
General score	C+	B-

The Eastern Partnership in 2017 caught greater attention than in the previous year, this being primarily related to the Summit in Brussels. The Summit had been preceded by a wide discussion of the '20 key deliverables for 2020', which were included into the final declaration and became a kind of a middle-term roadmap. Ukraine's ambitions concerning intensification of the Eastern Partnership remained unfulfilled. In spite of the European Parliament's call to the development of a deeper format "Eastern Partnership Plus" and initiation of the so called "Marshall Plan" for Ukraine, no substantial changes were made in the EaP, which makes everybody more sceptical about its viability and capacity to resist current challenges.

Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest in the EaP in 2017 was limited primarily to the Summit of November 24, preceded by the development of the joint working document “20 key deliverables for 2020” and Ukraine’s suggesting initiatives that would enable to provide a new impulse for bilateral relations (association with the Schengen Area, accession to the EU Customs Union, EU Energy Union, enactment of the Common Aviation Space and the Digital Single Market). Proper implementation of the AA provisions remains in the focus of attention, which fact is reflected both in the agenda, and in the bilateral relations with the EU. In the EaP’s multilateral dimension, bilateral relations with partner countries and the EU remain a priority in comparison to the development of the EaP itself. Reinforcement of political engagement in the EP resulted in the European Parliament’s approval of the report with a call to make the European integration of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova in the “EaP+” format deeper.

Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation related to the EP is up to par, the work of the branches of power is mainly characterized by conformity, though absence of the coordination centre on multilateral cooperation is palpable, and the legislative body is subject to regular criticism. The issues of internal coordination are within the mandate of the Government Office for European and Euroatlantic Integration, subordinated to the Vice Prime Minister on European and Euroatlantic Integration, deputy ministers on European integration as well as the MFA. The Government Office planned to organize a unit responsible for the EaP, however, in the structure made public as of the end of the year, it is not available. Within the development of the recommendations for “20 key deliverables for 2020” in the first half of the year the MFA conducted some consultations with other ministries, and on the basis of it a well-coordinated working document (non-paper) was prepared. In the international dimension such formats envisaged by the AA and the EaP are in operation: the Council of the Association, the Committee of the Association, the Parliamentary Committee of the Association, informal ministerial dialogues, meetings within thematic platforms and their panels, EURONEST, CORLEAP, there takes place cooperation with the Civil Society Forum (its Ukrainian National Platform) and the Ukraine – EU Civil Society Platform. The 6th session of the EURONEST PA in Ukraine was characterized by the coordinated work of the permanent delegation of the Verkhovna Rada to the PA with the MFA and the Governmental Office.

Strategic Vision

2017 added strategic nature to the Ukrainian position within the EaP. The Annual Address of the President contains the statement on the sectoral integration with the EU, which should result in the maximum approximation to the membership criteria. At the EU – Ukraine Summit, the Ukrainian party put forward the already mentioned initiatives on its own vision of strategic long-term cooperation.

The strategy for development of relations with the EaP partner countries, however, was not developed. The attempts to coordinate standpoints with other members of the EaP were sporadic, mainly related to the preparation for the 5th Summit and were related to Georgia and Moldova as the signatories of the AA. The AA remains the major guidance for Ukraine within the implementation of the EaP European integration policy, while its fulfilment in full scope remains its strategic task.

Activities

In 2017 the activities within the EaP were developed both at the level of political dialogue, and within the application of a wider range of tools. The year of the Summit stimulated forum and conference activities within the EaP. The Ukrainian side got involved in the following events: the Third Youth Forum, the Second Media Conference, a Conference on e-partnership, a conference of civil society together with the 9th annual assembly of the Civil Society Forum, a business forum. It was for the first time in Ukraine that the EURONEST PA session was held in Ukraine on the initiative of the Ukrainian side. The activities in the European direction were related to promotion of Ukrainian initiatives, in particular, their inclusion into the final declaration of the Summit, while numerous meetings at the level of officials of the MFA of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova allowed coordination of common positions. The activities towards partner countries, as before, were related to settlement of the issues on the bilateral agenda.

Results

The main result of 2017 was achievement of interim goals within the EaP – getting a visa-free regime and enactment of the AA. The 5th Summit did not bring about any breakthrough results represented by new initiatives the Ukrainian diplomacy had been working at. Neither the “EaP+” format, nor the so-called “Marshall Plan” for Ukraine found support of the EU management bodies and were reflected in the Summit’s final declaration. The declaration tells only about the possibility of outlining a separate ground for communication at the level of three countries that have signed the AA. The participants of the Summit supported the European strivings and the European choice of the EU partner countries, with no clear statements on membership prospects and, as the result of involvement of the RF’s allies in the format, quite expectedly restrained from condemning Russia’s policy against Ukraine. A number of proposals on reinforcement of the EaP multilateral format were not supported, in particular, the proposal on the establishment of the Centre of Cyberthreats Counteraction in the EaP region in Ukraine. As the result of non-fulfilment of its commitments by Ukraine, it lost a tranche of macro-financial EU assistance in the amount of 600 mln euros, but an agreement was made on the possibility of continuing macro-financial assistance provision for 2018-2019.

EUROPEAN ENERGY COMMUNITY

C-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	4
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	3	2
Activities	3	2
Results	2	2
General score	C-	C-

The year 2017 was marked with fierce fight between energy monopolists and proponents of energy sector reform. Due to pressure from the Energy Community Secretariat, the European Commission and international partners, the Law on electrical energy market, commercial accounting of heat energy and water supply, energy efficiency of buildings was adopted, as well as Energy Efficiency Fund; also the Energy Strategy of Ukraine 2035 was presented. At the same time, reformers had to make significant concessions, which in return decreased the quality of adopted legislation, namely regarding national regulator in energy sector.

In 2017, it became possible to slow down the implementation of Nord Stream 2 project, yet not the same with Turkish Stream, which remains a threat for the decrease of gas transportation after 2019 and a new wave of gas confrontation with Russia.

Political Interest / Engagement

Despite the official date for elections being not yet set, energy sector became one of the PR-topics for both the parties in power and the opposition as well. Political interest in energy sector is connected to the tried-out method of using this topic to gain support of the voters through promises of reducing prices and punishing monopolists. In this respect, representatives of Batkivshchyna and the Opposition Block have distinguished themselves along with the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, which contrary to commitments refused to extend liberalization of gas prices for households. An inter-faction association was established at the Verkhovna Rada at the end of the year to protect consumer rights and fight the influence of monopolists. Over the year, the President's impact on energy sector has increased, in particular through the National Commission for State Regulation of Energy and Public Utilities (NCREPU), which posed an additional hindrance to reforms according to the European norms and practices and enhanced the influence of monopolists and Rinat Akhmetov's DTEK in particular. Political and governmental steps aimed at engaging the Energy Community in resisting Russian roundabout gas pipelines were not particularly successful because of slow progress with energy sector reforms on the one hand, and weak mandate of the Secretariat in advocating interests of the member-states before the European Commission and the EU member-states on the other.

Institutional Cooperation

During the year central bodies of executive power of Ukraine and the Energy Community managed to prepare and submit compromise draft bills to the Verkhovna Rada in most of the key directions, yet upon their finalization in the parliament and Administration of the President, the quality of adopted legislation has rapidly decreased. Neither central bodies of executive power nor the Verkhovna Rada managed to develop tactics for preparation and agreement on draft bills before session hall vote, which eliminates the effort aimed at their harmonization with the European regulations on the level the Government Office of the European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Adopted legislation does not become the driving force for the development of legal framework for its implementation or the process of its preparation is postponed for no reason as it happened with the Energy Efficiency Fund for example.

In addition, the Parliament, the President and Naftogaz of Ukraine did not join forces to face a strategic challenge – maintaining the volumes of Russian natural gas transportation across the territory of Ukraine and transformation of gas flows to the EU.

Strategic Vision

Adopted in July 2017, Energy Strategy of Ukraine 2035 did not become the driving force for the development of plans and programmes for its industry-based implementation. In the course of the year, the influence of oligarch clans on all the spheres of energy has increased, which creates doubts regarding implementation of the objectives for the strategy itself and liabilities within the framework of the Association Agreement. During the past year, Ukraine has practically not increased its level of energy efficiency, having failed with formation of strategic oil and oil products stock, having not performed tasks to create coal stocks and renovation of coal electrical power stations, having suspended implementation of energy efficiency projects by individuals due to lack of funding for the Warm Loans programme, particularly for HOAs.

Activities

Over the past year, representatives of governmental agencies participated in the Energy Community meetings initiated by both Ukraine and the EU, and specialized events, which served as the platform for reporting on reform results, approval of plans and working on interaction between different directions and scenarios. Regional Office of the EU4Energy, which is subordinate to the Energy Community Secretariat, has started its work in Ukraine making interaction and work coordination a lot easier.

Results

Based on yearly results (adoption of the Law on Electrical Energy Market, Commercial Accounting of Heat Energy and Water Supply, Energy Efficiency of Buildings, Energy Efficiency Fund, Energy Strategy of Ukraine 2035), Ukraine has made a significant progress in realization of its duties under the Association Agreement with the EU, yet the revisions and amendments introduced by the Parliament have decreased the role of such a legislation significantly and a delay with the adoption process took its toll on the reform process.

Ukrainian government did little to increase energy efficiency levels, yet it continues to increase the scope of subsidies in the state budget, which makes people get used to overspending and increases energy consumption amid weak economic growth.

Political management of the country has not made a single step towards creation of the strategic oil and oil product stock, which maintained high dependence on import and kept the critical threat of total deficit in case of the Russian aggression intensification. Disadvantages mentioned devalue the role of Ukraine as an Energy Community member and become arguments against the effort to block Russian roundabout gas pipelines.

EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION (NATO)

A-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	5	5
Strategic vision	5	5
Activities	5	5
Results	5	5
General score	A-	A-

The issue of cooperation with NATO remained the key one in foreign and security policy of Ukraine in 2017. Codification by law of Ukraine's future membership in NATO and development of the Annual National Program by the new standards were important steps. Activities at all levels – presidential, ministerial and parliamentary ones, as well as constant contacts at the highest level and continuous support provided by the Alliance is a sustainable trend.

Political Interest / Engagement

The issue of Ukraine's cooperation with NATO is one of the core foreign policy issues on the state agenda. In his Annual Address to the Parliament and his numerous speeches, the President drew attention to future membership of Ukraine in the Alliance and reform of the Ukraine's security sector in accordance with NATO standards. The Government's Priority Action Plan for 2017 and Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President pay a great attention to those issues. At the same time, most of the references are made to domestic political transformations and assistance provided by NATO, and, to a smaller extent, to what Ukraine may offer its partners. During his meeting with the Secretary General of NATO J. Stoltenberg in Brussels (December) the Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council O. Turchynov declared that Euroatlantic integration is Ukraine's strategic goal. He expressed similar opinion in many of his speeches and interviews.

Members of the Parliament of Ukraine at their meetings with NATO member-states members of parliaments also constantly raised the issue of Ukraine's future membership in NATO, intensified cooperation in the security and military spheres, as well as technical assistance provided to Ukraine. The Speaker of the Rada A. Parubiy paid a great attention in his speeches to NATO and reforms according to the Alliance's standards.

Grade "4" is related to the absence of consensus about Euroatlantic integration among the parliamentary parties, in particular, due to statements made by the Opposition Bloc against the referendum on NATO membership and refusal to vote en masse for amending the Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy", which confirmed the course towards NATO membership (June).

Institutional Cooperation

Approval of the Regulation on the Government Office for European and Euroatlantic Integration (October) became an important step on the way to ongoing improvement of coordination in the field of Euroatlantic integration of Ukraine in 2017. Its mandate includes organizational, expert and analytical, information provision of activity in the fields of European and Euroatlantic integration. The Vice Prime Minister on European and Euroatlantic Integration further coordinated active work in this sphere.

Besides that, cooperation took place and joint activities were conducted at the level of the Parliamentary committees, in particular, Joint Committee Hearings of the Parliamentary Committees on Foreign Affairs, on European Integration and National Security and Defense on the topic: "Approximation of Ukraine to NATO Standards: Obstacles and Achievements. The Status of Implementation of the Annual National Cooperation Program under the Auspices of the Ukraine-NATO Commission and Strategic Defense Bulletin of Ukraine" were organized (October 18). The representatives of governmental authorities, in particular, Vice Prime Minister on European and Euroatlantic Integration of Ukraine I. Klymush-Tsintsadze also took part in the hearings.

Strategic Vision

NATO takes an important place in all the strategic documents in Ukraine adopted in the previous years. Special attention is dedicated to the issues of the reform of the armed forces of Ukraine and the security sector in general according to NATO standards, as well as to cooperation and possible membership. The issues of cooperation with NATO or correspondence with the standards run through most of the state documents of different levels, including the Government's Mid-Term Priority Action Plan till 2020 (approved on April 3, 2017) and the Government's Priority Action Plan for 2017. Special attention should be paid to the development of the Annual National Ukraine-NATO Cooperation Program according to new standards (April 8, 2017), however this document needs additional elaboration, since it does not allow to determine clear indicators of its assessment and includes a considerable number of uncharacteristic tasks, duplicating the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement implementation plans.

Among important steps were approval of the Concept of Improving Public Information on Ukraine-NATO Cooperation for 2017-2020 (February) and approval of the Law of Ukraine "On Amending Some Legislative Acts of Ukraine" (on the foreign policy course of Ukraine) by the Verkhovna Rada (June 8, 2017), in enhanced cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization for the sake of becoming a member of this organization was named among the main principles of the foreign policy.

Activities

Ukraine cooperated with NATO in 2017 at a very fast pace at all levels. The President of Ukraine held a number of meetings with the NATO Secretary General, in particular, in Munich (February), Kyiv (July) and Brussels (November) and the Head of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly P. Alli (April). Besides that, NATO Headquarters were visited by the delegation headed by the Minister of Information Policy V. Stets to discuss development of the strategic communications system (January); Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman (February); the delegation headed by the First Deputy Minister of Defence I. Rusnak to participate in the meeting of the Joint Ukraine – NATO Task Force on military reform (February); delegation of the General Staff and other ministries within the NATO Trust Fund on Command, Control, Communications and Computers (C4) (March). Vice Prime Minister I. Klymchuk-Tsintsadze visited NATO Support and Procurement Agency in Luxemburg (March). The Minister of Defense S. Poltorak participated in the events held at the level of ministers of defense of NATO member states (June). Also, the representatives of Ukraine and the Alliance discussed issues of implementation of the NATO-Ukraine platform on counteracting hybrid warfare (November).

Regular meetings of the Joint Ukraine-NATO Task Force on defense and technical cooperation took place. As an important political step should be considered Ukraine-NATO Commission meeting in Kyiv with the participation of the NATO Secretary

General and the President of Ukraine. Further, a meeting of the Interparliamentary Ukraine-NATO Council (November) too place, and Members of the Parliament participated in the meetings of the NATO PA, had meetings with NATO representatives both in Ukraine and during their visits to Brussels.

In the Verkhovna Rada, joint committees' hearings "Approximation of Ukraine to NATO Standards", as well as a number of hearings in the committees on some issues of reforming the security sector of Ukraine in compliance with NATO standards were organized.

The Ministry of Defense continued to actively work at the level of consultations, joint activities, work of foreign advisors in Ukraine, adjustment of the respective standards and procedures. At this stage, the Ukrainian national contingent and staff perform tasks within the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (10 persons) and multi-national force KFOR in Kosovo (40 persons). Also, continued support to the NATO Operation Sea Guardian (successor of the Operation Active Endeavour).

Results

The Cabinet of Ministers approved (October) Cooperation Agreement Between the Government of Ukraine and NATO Support and Procurement Organization on Common Item Materiel Management (COMMIT) Support Partnership (SP) Agreement, as a result of which Ukraine would become an Associate State in the COMMIT SP and Ukraine will get with access to NSPA Source File. All in all, it is worth noting on-going high pace of Ukraine – NATO cooperation, considerable financial, technical, advisory and political support of Ukraine by NATO and continued reform of the security sector in accordance with NATO standards. Decision was taken to hold the Spring Session of the NATO PA in 2020 in the city of Kyiv.

Finally, after a long absence, the head of the Mission of Ukraine to NATO was appointed (July). In addition, a number of important documents were approved, though being of internal nature, but promoting Euroatlantic integration, in particular, the Concept of Improving Public Information on Ukraine-NATO Cooperation for 2017-2020.

At the same time, there is a negative trend relating to the possibility for one of the NATO member states (Hungary) to block meetings of the Ukraine-NATO Commission due to the issues not related to the topics of the Ukrainian cooperation with the Alliance (the Law on Education).

BILATERAL RELATIONS

Belarus	B-
Georgia	B-
Israel	C+
Iran	D+
China	B-
Lithuania	B+
Moldova	C+
Poland	B-
Romania	B-
Slovakia	B-
Turkey	B+
Hungary	C-
Russia	C+

BELARUS

B-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	4	4
Activities	4	4
Results	3	3
General score	B-	B-

In 2017, Ukraine–Belarus relations demonstrated their ultimate hybridity. Along with the intensification of the high-level contacts and intergovernmental cooperation strengthening, the number of hostile acts from official Minsk also grew dramatically. It was only the personal non-public assurances made by A. Lukashenko during his meetings with P. Poroshenko in regard to the “Belarusian neutrality” that allowed to keep official Kyiv away from a rigid symmetrical reaction to some public incidents and provocations. Thus, “economization” of their relations became a traditional form of the two neighbouring countries relations.

Political Interest / Engagement

Compared to 2016, the number of appeals to Belarus made by the politicians significantly increased. However, the Ukrainian side had to be engaged in the reactive behaviour responding to certain events or official Minsk activities. Minsk dependence on Kremlin was repeatedly stressed by the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko, the Secretary of the NSDC of Ukraine O. Turchynov, the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine A. Parubiy, the Deputy Chairwoman of the VRU I. Gerashchenko, the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko, MPs from the Petro Poroshenko Bloc, Batkivshchyna ("Fatherland"), and the People's Front. Belarus is mentioned in topics related to the security threats for Ukraine cause of Zapad-2017 exercises, Belarus voting against the UN resolution prepared by Ukraine on Crimea, Ukrainian citizens' detention in Belarus, deployment of the Belarusian peacekeepers to the Donbas region, accusations of the Ukrainian side in the coup attempt in Belarus.

Institutional Cooperation

In early 2017, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Republic of Belarus I. Kizim arrived to Minsk. His activity contributed to the resumption of the high-level contacts, indicating an increased coordination between the MFA and the Administration of the President of Ukraine.

To prepare the next meeting of the intergovernmental Ukrainian-Belarusian mixed commission on trade and export cooperation, the Ukrainian side of the commission held its own meeting and a number of interagency consultations for the draft protocol elaboration. Also in July, aiming to intensify the demarcation process, the President's decree renewed the personal composition of the Ukrainian delegation to the Joint Ukraine – Belarus demarcation commission, allowing to intensify its activities (meetings held in August and December 2017).

Strategic Vision

Belarus's mentioning in the strategic documents of Ukraine is not systematic. The basis for the bilateral relations comprises the mid-term operational "road maps" defining the trade and economic cooperation directions. In pursuance of the 2017-2020 bilateral cooperation road map, adopted in late 2016, several sectoral medium-term documents were signed in 2017, granting the bilateral relations development with a certain planning approach. However, building of the foreseeable full-fledged good neighbourhood relations is hindered by the Belarus dependence on Russia in the political and security issues.

Activities

During the year, three highest-level meetings (in April, July, and November) and one meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs (in April) took place. In July, the 25th Mixed Commission meeting was held in Kyiv, where the Protocol on cooperation between Ukraine and Belarus was signed. During the year, there were active intergovernmental contacts, working groups meetings, elaboration of the interdepartmental cooperation road maps for 2017-2020 and 2018 (on energy efficiency, shipping development, industrial cooperation, cooperation of the veterinary services, etc.).

However, a number of unfriendly steps taken by the Belarusian authorities resulted in filing the notes of protests and calling of the Ambassador of Belarus to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

Ukraine was interested in Belarus not only because of the bilateral contacts, but also in regard to the multilateral agenda (meaning the participation in the CEI official events, as well as in the OSCE PA session in Belarus).

Results

The political dialogue between the countries traditionally strongly depended on the Belarus – Russia relations. Although behind-the-scenes A. Lukashenko assured his respect for the territorial integrity of Ukraine, in public, the Russian influence led to the periodic unfriendly actions conducted by Belarus against Ukraine (such as a detention and an arrest of Ukrainian citizens, their kidnapping by the Russian special services on the territory of Belarus, illegal trade with separatists on the occupied territories of the Donbas region, some provocative allegations concerning the Ukraine's participation in the preparation of the anti-state actions in Belarus, Belarus participating in the manipulative Zapad-2017 military exercises, voting against the Ukrainian resolution on Crimea in the UN General Assembly, and an initiation of the espionage scandal).

Caused by problematic political dialogue during the year, a tendency of the relations' "economization" could be witnessed. The economic issues were central during the heads of the states' meetings. During A. Lukashenko's official visit to Ukraine, Ukraine – Belarus business forum was organized. Compared to the previous period, in 2017, the exports grew by 26.6% to \$1.14 billion, while the imports grew to \$3.2 billion, with a 15% increase. A number of the interagency documents were signed in such areas as physical education and sports, culture, interethnic relations and scientific cooperation. The countries also agreed on the symmetrical terms for the Ukrainian citizens staying in the territory of Belarus for the same period and without registration as for the Belarusian citizens staying in the territory of Ukraine.

The appointment of the ambassador contributed to the organization of work with Ukrainians in the Republic of Belarus too. It was agreed that the Ukrainian language would be learnt in Brest and Gomel regions

GEORGIA

B-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	2	3
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	3	4
Results	3	4
General score	C-	B-

In 2017, both the Ukraine's foreign policy towards Georgia and the Ukrainian-Georgian bilateral relations received a new impetus. Due to the active cooperation on a wide range of issues, both countries confirmed interest in development of the bilateral relations towards the European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Political Interest / Engagement

For a number of reasons, both positive and negative, in 2017 the Ukraine – Georgia relations again did not run beyond a circle of the most vital issues of the foreign policy of Ukraine. Their strategic partnership, a common agenda within the EU and NATO relations, and the "Russian factor" were the key aspects of the bilateral relations, making the Ukrainian politicians to react. Thus, in the annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada "On the internal and external situation of Ukraine in 2017", Georgia was mentioned in the context of the Russian aggression as a state sharing with Ukraine common goals in strengthening its sovereignty and independence, and restoration of the territorial integrity.

The aftermaths of "Georgian reformers" and M. Saakashvili's activities were in the epicentre of the parties and political discourse around the Georgian issues. These topics were extremely politicized through the lenses of the political forces struggling, first of all, in the Parliament. At the same time, the President and the Prime Minister tried to avoid the topic.

Institutional Cooperation

The beginning of the year, unlike the previous years, was marked with a long-awaited appointment (actually since 2014) of the ambassador of Ukraine to Georgia. This can be considered as an important result of the interinstitutional cooperation, in particular, between the APU and the MFA. It also facilitated coordination of activities of the state authorities responsible for the foreign policy implementation, including the Administration of the President, the Cabinet of Ministers, and the Verkhovna Rada. This process included both the bilateral agenda implementation at the level of the relevant ministries and agencies, and the multilateral cooperation within such regional international organizations as the BSEC, GUAM, and under aegis of the EU and NATO.

Due to the efforts coordination within the country, the Ukrainian leadership managed to sustain momentum with the official visits to Georgia and to conduct bilateral meetings at the highest level. Besides this, they elaborated a joint position on solving the problem issues on the different levels, as well as within the framework of the joint tasks of the international organizations, Ukraine and Georgia are the members.

Strategic Vision

Although neither the 2010 Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy", nor the 2015 National Security Strategy of Ukraine, nor the Medium-term Governmental Action Plan until 2020, and the Military Doctrine of Ukraine mention Georgia, nevertheless, during his first state visit to Georgia on July 17-19, the President Poroshenko met the President of Georgia G. Margvelashvili and signed the Declaration on the establishment of the strategic partnership between two states.

Activities

Intensification of efforts towards Georgia was observed at all levels. At the end of November, the Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman paid his first visit to Georgia to take a part in the Silk Road Forum. In June, the Minister of Defence of Ukraine S. Poltorak met in Tbilisi with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence of Georgia to share their views on the course of the defence reforms.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin, during his working visit to Georgia in April, discussed the bilateral cooperation with the President of Georgia, the Prime Minister, and the Speaker of the Parliament. In November, a working visit to Georgia was also carried out by the Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine P. Rozenko, who used it to discuss the ways to solve social problems of the internally displaced people and refugees from the occupied territories. In May, the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy within his official visit to Tbilisi met the President of Georgia and offered several formats for the parliamentary cooperation intensification, namely creation of an inter-parliamentary Assembly Ukraine – Georgia – Moldova. It also should be said about the visit of the President of Ukraine to Georgia in July. Thus, all levels of the state governing bodies were able to engage in the bilateral relations strengthening dynamics.

Results

From the institutional point of view, the appointment of the ambassador of Ukraine to Tbilisi in 2017 became an important factor in the intensification of the Ukraine's foreign policy towards Georgian. The Declaration on the establishment of the strategic partnership between two countries should significantly strengthen the bilateral relations too. Due to the active efforts of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine I. Klymush-Tsintsadze, a great deal of work with the Georgian side resulted in elaborating of the common positions on the eve of the Eastern Partnership summit. The volume of trade between Ukraine and Georgia in 2017 grew significantly to almost \$400 million, with an 11% increase compared to the same period in 2016.

ISRAEL

C+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	1	2
Activities	4	4
Results	4	4
General score	C	C+

In 2017, the cooperation with Israel was aimed primarily at the development of the inter-sectoral cooperation potential aiming for the creation of an FTA (which remains a priority task), as well as it was active in the medical, educational, legal, and cultural spheres.

Despite the Ukrainian side's statements about the strategic character of the relations with Israel, this status is not documented. Though at the intergovernmental and inter-parliamentary levels the efforts were rather active, the overall degree of the political interest scaled back compared to the previous year. There is still a great potential for using the Israeli experience in the development of the economy, the military sector and the system of public administration in a context of continuing threats to the national security.

Political Interest / Engagement

The interest in cooperation with Israel can be seen in the statements of the politicians, although it is not systematic. A key interest in engaging with Israel is the establishment of a free trade area, as it was emphasized, *inter alia*, by the Minister of Foreign Affairs P. Klimkin and the Prime Minister V. Groysman. The trade, energy, security, education, culture, ecology, medicine and the agrarian spheres are among the most interesting for cooperation.

In general, the Ukrainian political elite representatives expressed their desire to bring the relations with Israel at a higher political level, which should be facilitated with the intensification of the intergovernmental and inter-parliamentary ties. The Prime Minister of Ukraine drew his attention to this issue during a visit to Israel in May 2017, while stressing the strategic importance of the relations between the countries. Given a complex security situation in Ukraine, the Ukrainian politicians (in particular, S. Alekseev from the Petro Poroshenko Bloc and the First Deputy Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada I. Gerashchenko) emphasized the importance of the experience gained by Israel (including the economy, healthcare, military, and tourism) in the face of a constant threat to the national security.

The Israeli issue is on the agenda of a number of the meetings of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, mostly in the narrow context of the visits organization or the bilateral agreements ratification. The 2017 Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada does not mention Israel at all, opposed to the 2016 Analytical Report, where some interest in the cooperation in certain spheres were demonstrated.

Institutional Cooperation

In the framework of the main objective of the bilateral cooperation implementation — meaning the FTA creation — there was an effective interaction in the "Verkhovna Rada Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine — President" triangle. The above task is enshrined in the 2017 Governmental Action Plan, and several steps in this direction were already taken by a number of ministries (in particular, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Healthcare, the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, the MFA). And at the Verkhovna Rada level, a meeting of the parliamentary group on the inter-parliamentary relations with Israel also took place.

Strategic Vision

As of today, there is no any strategic dimension of the Ukraine — Israeli relations. And there is no mention of Israel in the main strategic documents of the Ukraine's foreign policy. The Memorandum of mutual understanding and principles of cooperation, signed on January 12, 1993 remains the main document of these bilateral relations.

Activities

In 2017, the negative trends associated with the Ukraine's vote in late 2016 for a resolution condemning the Israeli settlement activity were overcome. This is evidenced with the interactions at the highest level. Thus, in May 2017 the Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman paid a visit to Israel, during which several meetings with the Prime Minister and the President of Israel, as well as with a number of ministers took place. V. Groysman spoke for the intensification of the efforts to hold the First meeting of a Joint Committee on the implementation of the Scientific and Technological Cooperation Programme, dated December 2015. On November 26-27, the Minister of Foreign Affairs P. Klimkin paid his visit to Israel.

The main vector of the activities is aimed at the cross-sectoral cooperation between the countries. As a part of the work on the FTA, there were four rounds of the negotiations on the relevant agreement. The 10th meeting of the Joint Ukrainian-Israeli commission on trade and economic cooperation was held in August, and the sides discussed the deepening of the cooperation in the agriculture, water resources, energy efficiency, communications, science and education. On March 6-7, the trade mission of Ukraine to Israel took place. In June, the Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine paid a visit to Israel to discuss a possibility of the Israeli experience engaging for the reforms in the Ukrainian education system. In March, during the visit of the Minister of Healthcare of Ukraine, the parties agreed on the ways of cooperation in exchanging of the experience in the rehabilitation medicine.

The dialogue at the inter-parliamentary level is active as well. Thus, in March, the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko met the Deputy Speaker of the Knesset, the head of the Ukraine — Israeli inter-parliamentary group T. Ploskov and the representatives of the Knesset's coalition and opposition parties. During the meeting, they discussed the cooperation in the priority areas and the security issues faced by the countries. In June, the members of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Foreign Affairs came to Israel. On October 30, a joint meeting of the Ukraine — Israel inter-parliamentary group took place in Jerusalem, where the counteraction to terrorism and the cultural cooperation issues were discussed.

Results

As a result of the Prime Minister of Ukraine visit to Israel a number of the inter-sectoral agreements were concluded: the Joint Declaration of intent on cooperation in the field of the prevention and liquidation of emergency situations between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of Israel, the Plan of Cooperation in the field of healthcare between the Healthcare Ministry of Ukraine and the Healthcare Ministry of the State of Israel for 2017-2021, the Administrative Order between the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine and the Customs Administration of the Tax Authority of Israel on mutual assistance in customs issues and exchange of statistics on bilateral

trade, implementing protocols (construction industry) to the Agreement on temporary employment of Ukrainian workers in certain sectors of the labour market the State of Israel.

As a result of the meetings of the joint committees on the establishment of an FTA, the draft text of the Agreement was agreed, in particular, the institutional, general and final provisions, customs procedures, rules of passing, and settlement of disputes were worked out. The parties reached an agreement on access to the agricultural and industrial goods markets. The Verkhovna Rada and the approval of the President of Ukraine ratified the Agreement on the joint production of films and cooperation in the field of cinematography between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the State of Israel.

In the trade and economic sphere, according to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, the 9 months of 2017 trading volume between Israel and Ukraine resulted in \$562.5 million, which is \$74.7 million less compared to the corresponding period in 2016. The trade balance in this direction is positive for Ukraine.

IRAN

D+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	1	1
Activities	4	2
Results	2	2
General score	C-	D+

Despite the low level of the officially declared interest in Iran, Ukraine pursued a rather active policy towards the development of bilateral relations with it, although with the modest results. Some achievements were gained in the transport sector, besides this, Ukraine got a promise for a supply of the Iranian oil. However, regardless of expectations, the breakthrough in the relations with Iran did not occur.

Political Interest / Engagement

Compared to the previous year, the Ukraine's interest in Iran, which had not been very high, showed no new rise. In 2017, Iran was not mentioned in the overwhelming majority of the important political documents and speeches of the leaders of Ukraine, which was partly because of the US position on Iran. Iran repeatedly appeared only in the official statements made by the ministries, that had the direct contacts with it in 2017 – the Ministry of Energy and Coal Mining, the Ministry of Infrastructure, and the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food.

Institutional Cooperation

The Ukraine – Iran relations are the matter of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Energy and Coal Mining, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the Ministry of Infrastructure, and the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine. Their activities are coordinated by the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Iranian Joint Commission for Economic and Trade Cooperation, which held its 6th meeting in Kyiv in March 2017.

Strategic Vision

Speaking about the plans for cooperation with Iran in 2017 at the opening of the plenary meeting of the Ukraine – Iran Working Group on Transport, held on December 22, 2016 at the Ministry of Infrastructure in Kyiv, the Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine V. Omelyan stated the role of Iran as a strategic partner of Ukraine. The Ambassador of Ukraine to Iran S. Burduliak, in an interview with the Iranian news agency SHANA in Tehran on May 22, 2017, also noted that Iran could become a strategic partner of Ukraine in the energy field. However, Iran is not yet mentioned in any strategic document of Ukraine.

Activities

In 2017, Ukraine and Iran exchanged fewer visits of ministers and their deputies than in the previous year. In March 2017, the Iranian Minister of Agriculture Jihad M. Hojjati paid his visit to Kyiv. In addition, the Deputy Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine paid his visit back to Iran.

The cooperation in the field of transport brought some positive moments. Thus, Ukraine and Iran together with Azerbaijan, Georgia and Poland take part in the project of the South–West international transport route development, including the cargo container transportation from India or Gulf countries through Iran, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine, and Poland to the EU countries and backwards. The meetings of the Coordination Committee for the development of this project took place on September 7, 2017 in Odessa and November 1 in Tehran.

On September 14, 2017, the First Deputy Minister of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine M. Martyniuk met in Kyiv with the Iranian delegation led by the President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture G. H. Shafei. Despite the declared readiness to cooperate in the various spheres of agriculture, the parties failed to sign any contracts, and even any memoranda of understanding, with their signing now being postponed until the next meetings.

The Embassy of Ukraine in Iran was quite proactive. For example, on October 17, 2017, the Ambassador of Ukraine to Iran S. Burdyliak met the Vice President of Iran S. Sattari to discuss the interaction in the aviation industry, intensification of the relations between the both countries research institutes, realization of the joint projects in the pharmaceutical sphere, and also a possible increase of the Iranian students at Ukrainian universities.

Results

In 2017, the Ukrainian officials spoke a lot about the ambitious cooperation projects with Iran, but in fact, we have only a Memorandum on cooperation signed in 2016 and based on the Ukrainian-Iranian Joint Commission activity, but any contracts. The high-level official visits, already scheduled in 2016, are postponed sine die. The issue of simplifying the visa regime between two countries is still unresolved, wherein a lot depends on Ukraine in this situation.

In 2017, the level of trade between Iran and Ukraine remained insignificant, though providing some hopes for the future positive achievements. During a meeting of the Ukrainian interagency working group on oil and petroleum products market and the development of the oil refining industry, held in Kyiv on August 31, 2017, the Minister of Energy and Coal Mining I. Nasalik officially said about the agreement achieved with Iran on the possibility of its oil supply to Ukraine. Certain positive results were also achieved in the information sphere. Thus, on August 1, 2017, one of the Iranian media outlets “Sayeh”, for the first time since 2014, published an article condemning the Russian politics in Ukraine, in particular concerning the Crimean Tatars. According to the official statement of the Ukrainian embassy in Iran, this publication became possible, first of all, due to its work with the political and religious elite of Iran. However, the dominance of the pro-Russian propaganda in the Iranian press is still can be described as omnipresent.

CHINA

B-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	3	4
Activities	3	4
Results	3	4
General score	C-	B-

In 2017, the Ukraine's cooperation with the People's Republic of China intensified. Discussions about possible Ukraine's participation in the One Belt One Road Initiative revived. Also, the Vice Prime Minister of the State Council of the PRC paid a visit to Ukraine, and the prospect for the economic cooperation was outlined. At the same time, a visa-free regime and the FTA between Ukraine and China remained open.

Political Interest / Engagement

In the 2017 Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada a special emphasis was made on the deepening of the strategic partnership between Ukraine and China, and the PRC signals for support of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine are mentioned. In addition, in his statements, the President of Ukraine emphasized the great potential of the Ukrainian-Chinese cooperation, though its current implementation is insufficient.

Also in her November statement, the First Deputy Head of the Verkhovna Rada and the member of the Group for Inter-Parliamentary Relations with the PRC I. Gerashchenko agreed with the President on the insufficient use of the bilateral cooperation potential, but also emphasized the Ukraine's interest in the intensification of trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian relations with China, as well as importance of the One Belt One Road Initiative implementation.

At the same time, the lack or even absence of any substantive cooperation at the inter-parliamentary level, and the parliamentary groups' level should be noted.

Institutional Cooperation

Taking into account the number of meetings of the both states high officials, due appreciation should be given to the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in cooperation with the Administration of the President of Ukraine and other involved ministries. The coordination efforts of the MFA ensured the visit of the Ukrainian delegation led by the First Deputy Prime Minister S. Kubiv to the PRC in May, 2017 to participate in the high-level Forum on International Cooperation within the One Belt One Way Initiative, and the preparation of the Third meeting of the Commission on cooperation between the governments of two countries in December.

Strategic Vision

In the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the People's Republic of China is mentioned as one of the key centres of influence with which Ukraine seeks to establish a strategic cooperation based on the partnership relations. In addition, on December 5, 2017, at the Third meeting of the Commission on cooperation between the government of Ukraine and the government of China, they signed the Action Plan for Ukraine – China for implementation of the initiative to jointly build the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road of the XXI Century. That demonstrated the Ukraine's attention to the strategic cooperation with China.

The PRC is also mentioned among the important partners in the National Exports Strategy of Ukraine, adopted in December 2017.

Activities

In January 2017, a meeting between the Ukrainian and Chinese leaders P. Poroshenko and Xi Jinping took place at sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos. On September 18, 2017, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of China Wang Yi during the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly in New York. The Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman had a noteworthy meeting with the Vice Prime Minister of the State Council of the PRC Ma Kai, which took place in early December 2017 as a part of the Third meeting of the Commission on cooperation between the governments of two states, where the parties discussed a wide range of issues in the trade and economic sphere.

During his visit to Ukraine Ma Kai also met the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko. The Ukrainian leader one more time urged China to adhere to the non-recognition policy in regard to the temporary occupation of the Ukrainian Crimea by Russia. He also expressed his hopes for the constructive position of the Chinese side on the Ukrainian issues within the UN. Taking the opportunity, P. Poroshenko handed the invitation for the head of the PRC Xi Jinping to visit Ukraine.

Results

In 2017, the business cooperation between the People's Republic of China and Ukraine intensified, in particular, in the field of renewable energy, port and road infrastructure, agro-industry. The trade and economic dimension remains the dominant one (with the interest to Ukraine expressed both by the private and state corporations), however in the political sphere we can observe some noticeable shifts too. For example, in 2017, three intergovernmental agreements (in the field of standardization, metrology, conformity assessment; education; health and medical science) and six protocols of meetings of the bilateral subcommittees or working groups and commissions were signed. At the same time, the proposals made by the Chinese side regarding the introduction of the Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and China and a visa-free regime remained open.

As another achievement of the year, we can take the Ukraine – China Action Plan on implementing the initiative to build jointly the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road of the XXI Century that is especially important given the role of the initiative in the foreign and foreign economic strategy of China. Among the visible results in this context, we can also mention the agreement on new train routes from Zhengzhou to Slovakia, Poland and Hungary via the territory of Ukraine. As the second positive signal, we can consider an announcement made by the Vice Prime Minister of the State Council of the People's Republic of China Ma Kai during his visit to Ukraine in December that China assigned \$7 billion for the cooperation with Ukraine, and this sum can be increased in the case of a successful projects implementation. At the same time, none of the documents signed in December 2017 mentions specific investments, and the Action Plan has just general phrases about the cooperation deepening in certain areas without any reference to the specific projects.

LITHUANIA

B+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	4	4
Activities	5	5
Results	4	5
General score	B	B+

In 2017, Ukraine and Lithuania intensified their bilateral cooperation. Lithuania supports Ukraine both in the bilateral relations and at the level of the European Union, being as unambiguous as possible in regard to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine and the sanctions against Russia. In response to the Ukrainian government's appeal, Lithuania provided its military (weapons that did not meet NATO standards), humanitarian and other assistance (Ukrainian soldiers' rehabilitation, equipment). Lithuania was called an "advocate of the European aspirations of Ukraine", a "friend" and a "strategic partner", with all these status confirmed with the real actions. But, as in a previous year, the anti-corruption reforms remained to be the problem making Lithuania to criticize Ukraine within the European integration aspirations support.

Political Interest / Engagement

Lithuania was not mentioned in the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada at all. In the Analytical Report to this Address, prepared by the National Institute for Strategic Studies, Lithuania was mentioned once. The government web-portal contains some information on the cultural cooperation and youth exchanges, and the 2017 Governmental Action Plan specifies several youth cooperation projects, and that is all. The Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman during his meeting with the Speaker of the Lithuanian Seimas V. Pranckietis mentioned good relations between the states and between their leaders personally. The Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy noted that "Lithuania proposes key initiatives on providing support to Ukraine", and the Head of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko called promotion of the "New European Plan for Ukraine" as "one of the important issues within the framework of the political dialogue between Ukraine and the Republic of Lithuania at the level of the state leaders, governments, MPs, and the MFAs".

Institutional Cooperation

Ukraine did not find a way to create an agreed approach in its foreign policy towards Lithuania, except for the existing bilateral working groups. The branches of power have a coordination mechanism concerning the "New European Plan for Ukraine" for 2017-2020, and they managed to establish a government-parliamentary working group to present the project in Brussels. The 3rd Ukrainian-Lithuanian Economic Forum became a traditional venue for communication between the both countries' presidents, governments' representatives, business associations, entrepreneurs and economists.

Strategic Vision

During the meetings at the presidents and ministers level, the strategic character of the Ukraine – Lithuania cooperation was emphasized many times. Despite the fact that Lithuania is not mentioned in the main strategic documents of Ukraine, their bilateral cooperation is carried out in accordance with these documents. For example, the energy agreements mentioned below are implemented within the framework of the New Energy Strategy of Ukraine until 2035.

Activities

Among this year activities we can mention the 10th meeting of the Council of the Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania, the 16th meeting of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Lithuanian commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation, and the 3rd Ukrainian-Lithuanian Economic Forum. Ukraine continued to adopt the Lithuanian experience in NATO for the Armed Forces reforms (coordination within the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade framework, and

participation in the NATO exercises). The State Concern "Ukroboronprom" and the Lithuanian Security and Defence Industry Association (LDSIA) signed a memorandum of cooperation. At the end of the year, the Lithuanian government decided to provide Ukraine with about 7.000 Kalashnikov rifles, mortars and anti-tank weapons, all worth EUR 2 million. On December 5, the MFA of Lithuania allocated EUR 50,000 humanitarian aid to Ukraine. In the transport sector, in 2017, the permits granted to the Ukrainian carriers for the international carriage of passengers and cargo to Lithuania doubled in number, compared with 2016. The Ukrainian side negotiated increase of investments in port, river, and aviation sectors, and the Baltic – Black Sea transport corridor. Given the aggravation of the situation with import and use of cars with the Lithuanian registration in the territory of Ukraine (by November 1, there were more than 59,000 such cars, with 44,600 registered for the temporary stay in Ukraine), the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine and the customs of Lithuania began their joint investigation. In 2017, the Ukraine – Lithuania cultural partnership initiative had its further development, the youth projects' contest worth of UAH 500,000 were organized, and the Ukraine – Lithuania bilateral cooperation program in the agro-industrial complex was determined for 2017-2019.

Results

At the level of the Lithuanian Seimas, \$50 billion so-called Marshall Plan for Ukraine ("New European Plan for Ukraine for 2017-2020") was agreed and presented during the 5th Eastern Partnership summit. The MFA and the President of Lithuania provided their support to Ukraine when Hungary, during the European Council meeting in October 2017, pressured to revise Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU. Several new energy agreements were signed (for the creation of the electricity market, nuclear power plants dismantling, renewable energy sources use). Due to the previous years' agreements, the assistance in the defence sector increased, and some cultural and educational initiatives were co-financed. The trade turnover grew, and the trade balance of Ukraine and Lithuania raised too, with 45% increase, according the President of Ukraine. Due to this, in 2017 the volumes of cargoes (building materials, automotive spare parts, clothes, paper, polymers, alcohol, etc.) carried by the Viking container train, running since 2003, increased by 97%, compared to 2016 results. Some changes appeared in the Agreement on social security in terms of pensions and social support. Ukraine will be supported by Lithuania in unrecognizing the annexation of Crimea and the Russian hybrid war. The Lithuania's only point concern is the completion of the anti-corruption reform in Ukraine.

MOLDOVA

C+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	2	2
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	3	4
Results	2	4
General score	C-	C+

In 2017, bilateral relations intensified, while economic cooperation, a political dialogue and the 5+2 talks on the Transnistrian settlement significantly advanced. However, the level of institutional cooperation remains insufficient, and a pro-Russian position of the President of Moldova interferes with the Ukraine – Moldova dialogue at the highest level.

Political Interest/Engagement

In the 2017 Analytical Report to the annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada, the Republic of Moldova is recognized as a Kyiv's partner in providing stability and security at the southwestern direction.

Given the Ukrainian politicians' interest in Moldova, it is worth mentioning a rather tough statement made in November 2017 by I. Friz, from the PPB, addressed to the President of Moldova I. Dodon concerning Transnistria, which, according to him, has two ways: "either to become a part of Ukraine, or a part of the Republic of Moldova". The Ukrainian MP in her public speeches supported the Moldovan government desire to resolve the Transnistrian issue, advocating for the territorial integrity of Moldova and Transnistria as an integral part of it.

Not less critical in her speeches was another MP, V. Voitsitska from Samopomich, addressing V. Plakhotniuk, a leader of the Democratic Party of Moldova, which is a member of the ruling coalition and considers itself as a pro-European one. She criticized Moldovan politics for corruption and for the harassment of the political opponents and human rights activists.

In November 2017, the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko called for a unification of Ukraine and Moldova's power systems.

Meanwhile, the Article 7 of the Law of Ukraine "On Education" concerning the language of education was negatively perceived by the neighbouring countries including the President of Moldova. According to A. Spivakovski, a member of the Petro Poroshenko Bloc, Ukraine and Moldova will create a working group for the comfortable implementation of the Law "On Education", taking into account Moldovan minority interests.

Institutional Cooperation

This year, cooperation between the ministries and other state agencies intensified during a preparation of the meeting of the 14th Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation. In addition, we would also score the interaction between the MFA and the State Border Guard Service in preparation and opening of the two common border crossing points on the Ukraine – Moldova border.

At the same time, it should be mentioned a low level of cooperation between the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine, the Ministry of Energy and Coal Mining, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on problems of the Dniester River basin and getting the Ukrainian position across to Moldova.

Strategic Vision

No changes of the strategic vision did happen: Ukraine sees certain risks in the Russian military contingent presence in the Transnistrian region. Also, the Energy Strategy of Ukraine until 2035 mentions the need "to prepare a legal framework and to implement appropriate measures for the integration of the Ukrainian and Moldovan electricity markets until 2018". *(Please, find the details in the previous year issue)*

Activities

Compared to 2016, 2017 demonstrated intensification of the interstate dialogue between Ukraine and Moldova, as well as the work of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in supporting such a dialogue.

In October, the Minister of Education, Culture and Research of Moldova M. Babuk met the Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine L. Hrynevych in Kyiv. During the meeting they agreed to establish a joint Moldovan-Ukrainian working group to prepare a detailed analysis of the situation and to develop an action plan to ensure protection of the national minorities rights within the Law of Ukraine "On Education" implementation. There were meetings of both states' Prime Ministers, as well as of the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova P. Filip (in July). In total, seven meetings took place – in a bilateral format and on the sidelines of the international events.

However, there were no meetings between the presidents, due to the pro-Russian positions of the President of the Republic of Moldova I. Dodon as a reason.

A number of meetings took place at the level of the Vice Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Chairpersons of the Foreign Affairs Committees (the topics of discussions included cooperation within the Eastern Partnership framework, the GUAM, One Belt One Road Initiative, some infrastructure projects, and the bilateral relations).

In July 2017, the Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine O. Turchynov met the Vice Prime Minister of Moldova G. Balan in Kyiv to discuss the reintegration issues.

Results

The current year yielded good results in the Ukraine – Moldova relations: after six idle years, the Mixed Ukrainian-Moldovan Intergovernmental Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation resumed its work; two common border-crossing points between Ukraine and Moldova were opened; and documents on the establishment of a FTA between the states were signed during the GUAM summit. The Prime Minister of Ukraine within his visit to Chisinau in October signed the road map for the Ukrainian-Moldovan cooperation in 2018. Moreover, the 2017 road map was fully executed, except for the opening of the Bronnitsy – Ungur Bridge. Among other achievements, we can name the ratification by Ukraine of the Treaty between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on Cooperation in the Field of Protection and Sustainable Development of the Dniester River Basin, as well as signing of the Readmission Agreement.

The 5+2 talks also had certain advancing, for the first time within nearly a year and a half. In addition, due to the bilateral efforts, the turnover between the countries increased in more than 30% (the January-October trades of goods reached \$651.5 million, while the January-September services — \$52 million).

POLAND

B-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	5	4
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	3	2
Activities	5	5
Results	4	3
General score	B+	B-

In 2017, the relations between Ukraine and Poland were determined by an essential dichotomy: increase of the speed and scope of cooperation on all levels (security cooperation, support at international forums, energy industry, support for reforms and humanitarian aid), immense number of contacts in different formats and at the same time continued aggregation of conflict concerning historical policy.

Political Interest / Engagement

Ukrainian-Polish relations and Poland itself as an important neighbouring country are in the focus of Ukrainian foreign policy and mass media. All major politicians and political powers have in this or that way expressed their ideas about current state of affairs and prospects of Ukrainian-Polish relations. At the same time, the content of statements was stipulated both by the intensity of positive cooperation and aggravation of conflicts around historical issues. In 2017, civil society joined the effort aimed at amending the relationship (Polish-Ukrainian Partnership Forum, Dialogue Group etc.)

Institutional Cooperation

In 2017, significant attention was paid to activation of inter-state institutional mechanisms. Administration of the President engaged Consultative Committee of Presidents (April 11, November 17), MFA helped establish the Ukrainian part of Ukrainian-Polish Partnership Forum (March 15, June 03), Ukrainian Institute of National Memory (UINM) was managing Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians (March 27-29, October 19-21); for the first time since 2012 the 4th Session of Polish-Ukrainian Inter-Governmental Economic Cooperation Committee took place (April 21-22). There was a certain difference between the approaches of the Administration of the President, MFA, UINM, Security Service of Ukraine (SSU) and others. Thus, the prohibition issued by SSU for entry of the Mayor of Przemyśl into Ukraine (January 17) was cancelled and a harder stance of UINM and MFA on historical issues was softened after Extraordinary Session of the Consulting Committee (November 11) and meeting of the Presidents (December 13).

Strategic Vision

2017 showed the danger of continued absence of strategic objectives and directions in Ukrainian-Polish relations in the current state of relations. In 2017, some ideas were expressed by the Polish minister (article by the MFA W. Waszczykowski) as well as Ukrainian MPs (article by H. Hopko and V. Romanyuk suggesting a military alliance) and the public (discussion paper on "Priority Partnership" by the Dialogue Group). Yet, there is still a long way to go before any strategic priorities are formalized.

Activities

Relations with Poland remained among the most dynamic foreign policy directions. Three meetings of the Presidents took place – two "on the margins" (February 18, September 19) and the visit of A. Duda to Kharkiv (December 13). There were numerous visits of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, including two visits of P. Klimkin to Warsaw (March 15, April 12) and two visits of W. Waszczykowski to Ukraine (March 01, November 4-5), his participation in the meeting of Ukraine + Group

of Friends Ukraine in EU initiated by W. Waszczykowski in Brussels (May 18) and others. Speaker of Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy paid visits to Poland (sessions of the trilateral Inter-Parliamentary Assembly Ukraine-Poland-Lithuania on March 27-28, visits on September 06-07, October 21-22) as well as members of MP group for inter-parliamentary ties (February 15-18). In general, over the year representatives of a large number of ministries and agencies paid visits to a respective country.

For Ukraine the key issue in relations was cooperation in defence, development of military and technical cooperation, enlisting the support of Poland at international forums, Poland's support for Ukrainian European and Euroatlantic integration, cooperation in the UN (support of Poland as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council starting from 2018), cooperation in the sphere of ensuring energy independence (counteraction to Nord Stream, construction of gas interconnector, expansion of Ukraine-EU Energy Bridge). Poland is promoting local government and decentralization reforms, reforms of education and judiciary, fight against corruption etc. Poland is implementing humanitarian aid and development assistance projects. There is a dynamic trans-border cooperation between the bodies of local self-government.

Escalation of rhetoric on historical grounds turned into an avalanche of notes, commentaries and summoning of ambassadors to respective MFAs. 2017 has witnessed provocations around diplomatic institutions and places of memory, scandal over images in Polish passports, creation of personae non grata "blacklists", conflict about defining Polish presence in inter-war period as occupation, and conflicts between institutes of national memory. The crisis reached its peak in November when Minister W. Waszczykowski recommended the President not to visit Ukraine, a so-called bill on prohibition of "banderism" was introduced into Sejm, and Polish-Ukrainian Assembly scheduled for December 11-12 did not take place. Conciliatory measures of joint commemoration of Ukrainian People Republic soldiers, victims of the Katyn tragedy, renaming of streets and opening of commemorative plaques, participation of soldiers in parades of the neighbouring country did not result in significant improvement of the situation.

Results

Poland was supportive of Ukraine on the international stage, yet there has been an increased number of statements claiming that in the future such support will require serious adjustments of Ukrainian historical policy. In the end, Ukraine agreed to move the historical dialogue to the level of Vice Prime Ministers and managed to get the blacklists shortened (instead of cancellation). The announced signing of the road map for reconciliation between the nations at the session of Consultative Committee did not happen. The Ukrainian party did not understand the scale and consequences of "Volyn problem" for the bilateral relations and did not adjust its approach. At the same time, intensification of historical revisionism in Poland challenged the possibility for constructive dialogue as such.

Among the results of security cooperation, one can name achievement of combat readiness by LITPOLUKRBRIG, agreement on participation of Armed Forces of Ukraine units in military training of V4 countries and development of military and technical cooperation. No appropriate steps for involvement of Ukraine in regional initiatives of the Three Seas have been made. Memorandum of Mutual Understanding on Further Cooperation within the Framework of Via Carpatia Infrastructure Project (October 22) was signed. The number of Ukrainians in Poland exceeded one million persons, which stipulated the expansion of the network of consulates, practice of retreat sessions, and appointment of Polish officials in local government to take care of Ukrainians etc. Also, in 2017 Ukrainians were issued a record number of work visas. Despite the protests of Ukrainian side, Polish government continues to use the rhetoric of "Ukrainian refugees" in disputes with the EU. The number of Ukrainian students in Poland according to various estimates has reached 30,000 persons.

In bilateral trade, the numbers of 2013 were exceeded. Poland was 11th among foreign investors and became the second most important partner of Ukraine among the EU countries. On October 23, it was agreed to open four additional border posts and after several years of delay projects were submitted and tenders for the use of Polish loan of 100 mln euros were announced.

ROMANIA

B-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	4
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	4	4
Results	3	4
General score	C+	B-

Bilateral relations kept their positive dynamics, first of all at the level of military and law enforcement agencies. Institutional cooperation was noticeably strengthened, allowing restoring of the intergovernmental commissions work. Given divisive issues of the language provisions of the Law of Ukraine "On Education" solved, one can expect further progress in the bilateral relations.

Political Interest / Engagement

Speaking about the political engagement, one can clearly define the interest expressed by the Verkhovna Rada Speaker A. Parubiy to Romania, in particular, his appeal to four local authorities members of the Carpathian Euroregion, where he called them to unite around a single concept of the region development in a close cooperation with the neighbouring states, including Romania, to implement their joint projects, as well as to attract the EU funds for the infrastructure, tourism, etc.

The co-chair of the Group on Inter-Parliamentary Relations with Romania, and the Head of the People's Front faction M. Burbak also mentioned Romania in his speeches. Inter alia, he regretted a cancellation of the parliamentary delegation's visit led by A. Parubiy to Romania (which was caused by the Bucharest's negative reaction to the Law of Ukraine "On Education"). In his statements, the Head of the Radical Party O. Lyashko also criticized some Romanian officials in regard of the Romanian autonomy possibility.

In the 2017 Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada, Romania was mentioned as a state with a potential ability and determination to become our strategic partner in the Black Sea region, and in the context of the aerospace industry development. In addition, the report also describes the military and political cooperation between Kyiv and Bucharest in the NATO context.

Institutional Cooperation

The coordination efforts between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the State Border Guard Service can be considered as an example of the proper institutional cooperation.

The well prepared second meeting of the Ukrainian-Romanian Joint Commission on Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, which took place in Bucharest in July, 2017 after a five-year break, as well as unblocking of the work of the Mixed Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Romanian Commission on national minorities in September are other evidences of the institutional cooperation at the Ukrainian ministries and agencies level. At the same time, the lack of the coordination between the Ministry of Education, the MFA and the Parliament led to the adoption of the Law of Ukraine "On Education", with its controversial for the Romanian side Article 7, that happened on the eve of the commission's meeting (after a 10 years pause), thus making its agenda obscured and the previous developments negated. Moreover, the parliament's amendments to the law added during the voting led to a cancellation of the Parliament Speaker's planned visit to Romania and a delay of the planned visit of the Romanian President to Ukraine.

Strategic Vision

There were no changes in the strategic vision. *(Please, find the details in the previous year issue).*

Activities

In September 2017, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin met his Romanian counterpart T. Meleşcanu during the UN General Assembly, and on October 13, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin paid a visit to Romania. The parties agreed to continue their constructive cooperation in the field of education. In November, within the framework of the 5th Eastern Partnership summit, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko met the Romanian President K. Iohannis, and the parties discussed a possibility of consultations on the educational legislation.

Against the backdrop of the negative effects of the Law "On Education" adoption, some positive developments took place in the bilateral cooperation, in particular, in November 2017, the Commander of the Navy of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Vice Admiral I. Voronchenko met the Chief of the Romanian Navy, Vice Admiral A. Mirsu. During the meeting, they discussed the Black Sea region security issues, and had a talk on the various formats of the future joint naval exercises. A meeting of the representatives of the National Police of Ukraine and Romania was held in Bucharest, supported by the EU Advisory Mission. In August 2017, the Chairperson of the National Agency for Prevention of Corruption (NAPC) N. Korchak paid a visit to Romania that resulted in signing of the Protocol on cooperation in the field of prevention of corruption between NAPC and the Anti-corruption directorate of the Ministry of Interior of Romania. At the end of October, several representatives of the General Prosecutor's Office of Ukraine, led by the Deputy PG Y. Enin paid a working visit to Bucharest. In addition, in September, the Head of the NABU A. Sytnyk met the Head of the Anti-corruption directorate L. Kovesi in Bucharest. It looks like the analysed year priority for joint activities was assigned to the law enforcement agencies.

Results

According to the results of the two countries cooperation in 2017, the joint patrolling of the section of the Ukraine – Romania border in Chernivtsi region should be mentioned, that is an outcome of the previous year's Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of Romania on the joint patrolling of the Ukraine – Romania state border implementation. In October, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Prosecutors' General Offices of the countries, and in April, the state aerospace agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

In addition, on June 23, 2017 O. Bankov was appointed the Ambassador of Ukraine to Romania (with his predecessor fired back on March 11, 2016).

At the same time, taking into account this year's activities, given the divisive issues solved, one can expect the revival of the cooperation in other areas of the bilateral relations.

SLOVAKIA

B-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	4	4
Results	4	4
General score	B-	B-

Relations with Slovakia are not burdened by any problematic issue, which distinguishes this country from other Ukrainian partners in the Visegrad Four. Ukrainian diplomacy has yet to capitalize on this fact and an increasing authority of Slovakia in European processes. Despite favourable initial conditions, the cooperation is still suffering from lack of "major issues" on the bilateral agenda (with the exception of gas reverse) under the circumstances of fragmentary interest of the countries in each other.

Political Interest/Engagement

In the Ukrainian political discourse, the Slovak Republic was most often mentioned in the following contexts: 1) as an example of a successful model of state reforms in a number of key areas (finances, industry, business, local self-government, social sphere etc.); 2) as a partner in ensuring energy security (transit of Russian gas and reverse, joint counteraction to the Nord Stream 2). Thus, in the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada "On Domestic and Foreign State of Ukraine in 2017", Slovakia is mentioned as a leader in successful implementation of reforms in the countries of Central Europe and Asia according to the EBRD, and Ivan Mikloš, a former Slovak minister and advisor to the Prime Minister of Ukraine, is referred to as a successful reformer. In the Analytical Report of National Institute of Strategic Studies to the Annual Address, Slovakia is mentioned as a partner, which supported Ukraine in such key issues as a visa-free regime for the Ukrainian citizens, completion of the ratification process of the AA and expansion of the free trade zone between Ukraine and the EU, implementation of natural gas reverse etc.

Institutional Cooperation

In general, inter-institutional coordination is not a strong suit of the foreign policy activities in Ukraine. Nevertheless, in the Slovak direction we have not detected displays of obstructionist position from a certain governmental body or duplication of their functions etc. The MFA is coordinating foreign policy activities with some issues being managed by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Regional Development within the framework of their competence (regarding meetings of the inter-governmental committees for national minorities, education, culture and trans-border cooperation, which took place in spring and summer respectively). The Ukrainian MPs joined some issues discussions (during the visit of the Group of Friendship from the Slovak Parliament to Kyiv). Slow implementation of certain directions of cooperation from the Ukrainian side may be explained by inertia, low political interest in Slovakia and often lack of finances (when the Cabinet of Ministers does not include financing of the inter-governmental committee meetings into its priorities).

Strategic Vision

On the level of strategic documents, the Slovak direction lacks conceptual development. Notable in the sphere of strategic documents is lack of "major topics" on the bilateral agenda (with the exception of gas reverse) under the conditions of fragmentary interest that the countries have in each other. This is manifested namely in the lack of the Ukrainian-Slovak inter-governmental action plans or "road maps" as well as mentions about Slovakia in the Ukrainian documents except for single references to the Slovak experience in current political declarations.

Activities

A number of meetings between the Ukrainian and Slovak officials took place in 2017: President Poroshenko met President Kiska in New York, the Head of the Government Fico in Brussels; the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and Slovakia met during the Munich Security Conference and GLOBSEC Conference in Bratislava; Minister Lajčák visited Kyiv. An important symbolic ceremony was a meeting of the Presidents of the two countries and opening of the door to Europe on the Slovak-Ukrainian border on the occasion of the visa-free regime introduction between Ukraine and the EU. Meetings of the two inter-governmental committees took place and the meeting of the bilateral Ukrainian-Slovak Committee for Economy, Industry, Research and Technical Cooperation were postponed to 2018. Cooperation continued along the lines of counteraction to Gazprom Nord Stream – 2 project. In September 2017, the Slovak gas reverse to Ukraine turned three years old, a volume of supplied gas reached 32.3 billion of cubic meters. There was no significant progress in implementation of the often-mentioned idea of joint border and customs control on the Ukrainian-Slovak border.

The year 2017 also became the year for restoration of some inter-agency mechanisms. For instance, in autumn the session of the Ukrainian-Slovak Joint Committee for Combined Freight took place.

Results

Slovakian policy regarding the support for Euroatlantic aspirations and territorial integrity of Ukraine remained unchanged despite sporadic unfriendly voices within the Slovak political elite. In his address to the European Parliament, President A. Kiska urged the EU to be loyal to the politics of expansion and to increase support of Ukraine on its way to reforms while strengthening pressure on Russia. The Minister of Foreign Affairs was making statements in favour of more active participation of the EU in the Normandy format.

At the same time, there is a feeling in Slovak establishment that Ukraine sees the country as a small neighbour that cannot offer a country in the mid of a war any substantial assistance (still during 2014-2017 Slovakia extended financial humanitarian aid to Ukraine for a sum of over 1 mln euros.)

A positive tendency in the increase of the scope of mutual trade of goods between Ukraine and Slovakia in 2017 has continued (over the three quarters of 2017 it increased by 19.4% in comparison to the same period of 2016 and on the basis of 2017 trade volumes were expected of \$1.15 billion). Slovakia also supported granting of additional autonomous trade preferences of the EU to Ukraine.

Energy sphere took lead in the inter-governmental agreements. Respective Memorandums were signed between Slovak SEPR and Ukrenergo, and between Nafrogaz of Ukraine and Ukrtransgaz and Slovak Eustream).

TURKEY

B+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	5	5
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	5	4
Activities	5	4
Results	4	4
General score	A-	B+

Analysis of the Turkish direction in Ukrainian foreign policy points to existing political interest in cooperation with Turkey and an adequate understanding of its role in contemporary international processes. Ukrainian-Turkish relations remain dynamic and cover a wide range of spheres – from economic to military and political. Yet, current activities lack strategic vision, the ties are often superficial and formal and the windows of opportunity are not used to the full potential.

Political Interest / Engagement

Turkey was mentioned by representatives of the Ukrainian political establishment in the following context: 1. support for territorial integrity of Ukraine, possible participation of Turkey in de-occupation of Crimea and protection of the rights of Crimean Tatars; 2. economic cooperation; 3. growing number of joint projects in defence industry; 4. "special" relations between Russia and Turkey, for instance, developing Gazprom-sponsored Turkish Stream project (in the context of the threat to Ukraine of losing transit status) etc. The Analytical Report to Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada contains a contradictory definition of Turkey as a strategic partner and mentions that "recent steps for normalization of relations between Turkey and Russia do not interfere with the development of Ukrainian-Turkish relations." In defence sphere, Ukraine declares a desire to combine Ukrainian technical capacities and Turkish investment. We may say that there is interest in development of strategic partnership with Turkey but consistency is still missing.

Institutional cooperation

Intensity of contacts in different industries requires involvement of a wide range of government bodies of Ukraine. The quality of inter-agency coordination may be assessed as decent. An important task is entrusted to Ministry of Economy, in particular regarding successful conclusion of talks on FTA with Turkey.

Strategic Vision

The importance of relations between the two countries is firstly underlined by annual sessions of the High Level Strategic Council between Ukraine and the Republic of Turkey, with participation of presidents of the countries. Secondly, an inter-governmental action plans (in 2017 Action Plan 2017-2019 was signed) are adopted. There is interest in cooperation with Turkey and understanding of its role in contemporary international processes. A reflection of the important place that Turkey holds in the structure of Ukrainian foreign economic activity is inclusion of Turkey into the list of promising markets in the new Export Strategy. Yet, in current activity, strategic vision is lacking and the ties are superficial and formal. Windows of opportunity, which appeared in the past years, are not used to their fullest.

Activities

Intense dynamics of contacts was maintained in different industries. We had meetings of the Presidents Poroshenko and Erdogan during the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly (October) and the session of High Level Strategic Council (November), meetings of the Prime Ministers Groysman and Yildirim (March), parliamentary Speakers Parubiy and Kahraman (July), visits of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of

Turkey Mr. Çavuşoğlu (February) and Minister of Defence of Turkey Mr. Canikli (August); visit of the Secretary of National Security and Defence Council Mr. Turchynov to Turkey (May) etc.

Several rounds of negotiations regarding Free Trade Agreement took place with several trade provisions left to be agreed upon. During the Strategic Council session, President Poroshenko invited Turkey to join international group of friends for de-occupation of Crimea, to increase its presence in OSCE Special Monitoring Mission and to support deployment of the UN peacekeeping mission in the East of Ukraine. Turkey was recognized as one of the priority countries for cooperation in defence. Contacts in the sphere of education have been significantly more dynamic (for instance, "Ukrainian Language" major was launched at the University of Istanbul, and ties between Ukrainian and Turkish universities were strengthened).

Results

In October, with mediation of Ankara, Russia released deputies of the Head of Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People sentenced in annexed Crimea – Mr. Chygoz and Mr. Umerov. During the visit of Prime Minister Groysman Turkey sent a note prohibiting Turkish vessels from visits to occupied Crimea (still the violations continue). Out of the three priority documents in economy, two have been signed: revised Agreement on Mutual Assistance and Protection of Investment and Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation. Signing of Free Trade Agreement remains an open question. A decision was made to introduce passport-free travels for citizens with ID-cards. Characteristically, the Geneva Plus initiative on de-occupation of Crimea with participation of Turkey, which Ukraine was actively promoting back in the previous year, has all but disappeared from the discourse.

In economic sphere, Turkey is among top 5 Ukrainian trade partners and among top 10 foreign investors. Turkey, unlike many other partners, has significantly increased the volume of direct investment into Ukrainian economy (from 2014 to the 1st quarter of 2017 by 37% or 0.08 billion USD). The scope of mutual trade of goods and services between Ukraine and Turkey is increasing (making up around 4 billion USD) but have not reached the 2013 levels. Examples of successful projects in defence industry, despite a declared interest, remain sporadic, projects in the sphere of international combined/container shipping are being slowed down.

The results of the activities are affected – in addition to the lack of long-term strategic vision – by other limitations to Ukrainian-Turkish relations. An example would be implementation of Turkish Stream project by Gazprom, which goes against energy interests of Ukraine, the intentions of Turkey to buy Russian C-400 air defence systems, construction of the first Turkish Nuclear Plant by Rosatom in Akkuyu.

HUNGARY

C-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	2	3
Strategic vision	2	2
Activities	5	3
Results	4	2
General score	C+	C-

2017 demonstrated how the lack of Ukraine's attention towards the cooperation with Hungary, could led to a serious crisis in their relations. Hungary continued its policy towards Ukraine, focusing on the Hungarian minority interests' uphold in the Transcarpathian region. In their turn, the Ukrainian officials failed to prevent and had to react to the crisis consequences. The main achievement of the Ukraine – Hungary relations was Hungary maintaining its official position regarding the preservation of sanctions against the Russian Federation, as well as facilitation of a visa-free regime launch between Ukraine and the EU.

Political Interest / Engagement

Ukraine considers Hungary to be a partner in the security and energy independence issues, as well as in the European and Euro-Atlantic integration aspirations. Thus, the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada "On the internal and external situation of Ukraine in 2017" points out the need to join efforts in combating hybrid threats, and to preserve sanctions against Russia. It is emphasized there that Hungary remains an important regional partner, in particular, in regard to the diversification of the energy supply sources. However, in most of the Ukrainian politicians' statements, we can clearly distinguish their negative attitude towards the ultimate position of Hungary on the new Ukrainian law "On Education", and efforts to counter the Ukraine's integration progress.

Institutional Cooperation

The institutional cooperation concerned Hungary is generally low. The crisis in the relations, after the adoption of the law "On Education", was in no small way provoked by the inability of the Ukrainian authorities to work in concert. Only on a peak of the confrontation, the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were able to conduct a number of concerted actions, although the local authorities, namely the head of the Transcarpathian Regional State Administration H. Moskal, continued to criticize the central government. At the regional level, mainly in the Transcarpathian region, the institutional cooperation had a more intensive character, due to the high interest of the local elites in the Hungarian financial assistance. The cooperation between the different agencies is also aimed at the implementation of the initiatives for the ATO participants' rehabilitation and assistance to the IDPs from the Donbas region.

Strategic Vision

Hungary is not named separately in the official strategic documents, though in the framework of the important for Ukraine areas to reach desired level of the economic and social developments, the very countries of the Central and Eastern Europe are mentioned. In addition, it is referred in terms of security and energy issues.

Activities

The foreign policy towards Hungary takes a form of the intensive bilateral relations, with meetings, bilateral consultations, and contacts, including the ones at the highest level. Thus, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko met the Prime Minister of Hungary V. Orban on March 30, and the Prime Ministers of Ukraine and Hungary had a telephone talk on March 7. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs, other ministers, as well as officials of the various government agencies also met repeatedly. The Minister of

Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin paid two working visits to Hungary: on August 31-September 1 and on October 12. The Embassy of Ukraine in Hungary is also active.

Several interviews with P. Klimkin, L. Nepop and other Ukrainian statespersons were published in the Hungarian media despite its active opposition caused by the political crisis after caused by the language norms of the new Ukrainian law "On Education". On April 21 the first Ukraine – Hungary agrarian business forum was held in Kisvárd, and on June 8, Ukraine – Hungary business forum in Budapest.

Results

In 2017, the foreign policy towards Hungary was quite active, but not effective. During the year, Hungary provided significant financial assistance to Ukraine in various spheres, in particular, about \$100 million was allocated to the development of the border infrastructure and the agricultural projects financing. Some funds were also spent on the development of medical and educational institutions. The wounded ATO soldiers and 700 Ukrainian children were rehabilitated in Hungary. The Ukraine – Hungary relations results also features a direct flight between Kyiv and Budapest, opened by the Ukraine International Airlines on June 15.

Besides this, Hungary contributed to the implementation of a visa-free regime for Ukraine and supported the EU sanctions against the Russian Federation, and at the same time, it demonstrated a more pro-Russian position. Hungary used an ultimatums language appealing to the international organizations and attempting to block Ukrainian cooperation with the EU and NATO. Ukraine was not able to prevent this and had to react to the consequences of such a policy, while a significant role in the Ukrainian interests' protection was assumed to the representatives of the public sector. It is also necessary to take into account that the vast majority of the Hungarian infrastructure and the humanitarian projects operate exclusively in Transcarpathia, in the interests of the ethnic Hungarians. Therefore, there is a real need for a policy of the ethnic Hungarians' integration into the Ukrainian educational and social space.

RUSSIA

C+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3+	3
Institutional cooperation	3+	3+
Strategic vision	3	4-
Activities	3-	3+
Results	1+	2
General score	C-	C+

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

POLITICAL RELATIONS

2017 did not bring about any fundamental changes in the Ukraine-Russia political relations, hybrid aggression of the RF against Ukraine transformed into one of the dimensions of the Russian policy. Having found no influential political force in the Ukrainian politics, which would be capable of performing the political partnership function, the Russian authorities tried to apply de-legitimation strategies to the Ukrainian state via support of ‘pro-Russian’ politicians in Western countries-partners of Ukraine. Bilateral interstate relations will remain at a critically low level, with no prospective changes at least over the medium term.

Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest of the ruling Ukrainian elite is so far regulated by the realization of the real nature of the Russian threat posed to the Ukrainian state. As the result, no parliamentary political force declares in its political programs any “pro-Russian” foreign policy strategy. Over 2017 the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine approved a number of resolutions condemning the ongoing armed aggression against Ukraine and appeals made to international partners to support opposition to this aggression. In the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine 2017 special attention was traditionally paid to the “Russian issue”. Russian foreign policy is determined in the report as “Kremlin’s policy as the main threat to national security”. The probability of a large-scale aggression on behalf of the RF is assessed as high in the political and expert milieu, and along with that, strategies of de-occupation and reintegration of the occupied Ukrainian territories are considered.

Institutional Cooperation

The threat of foreign military and political threat on behalf of the Russian Federation against the background of a rather unambiguous standpoint of Western partners as to condemnation of this aggression has led to a high level of coordination and cooperation developed and established among the institutes of the Ukrainian authorities in relation to the “Russian issue”. At the institutional level, the counteraction to the Russian aggression became the strategy of further existence of the Ukrainian state. Along with that, interstate political dialogue is mainly concentrated on the mediation formats – “Normandy” and “Minsk” ones, which have so far exhausted their institutional resources and needs reloading and, possibly, expansion.

Strategic Vision

The current level of Ukraine-Russia relations generally reflects the state of political relations between the countries that are in the state of a “hybrid war”. In strategic regulatory legal documents (the Law of Ukraine the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles

of Domestic and Foreign Policy”, National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, etc.) the Russian Federation is regarded as a considerable and long-term threat to Ukraine. In view of the Russian military aggression and occupation of some sovereign Ukrainian territories, on October 4, 2017 the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko submitted draft law No. 7163 “On the Peculiarities of the State Policy of Ensuring State Sovereignty of Ukraine over Temporarily Occupied Territories in Donetsk and Luhansk Regions” for approval to the Verkhovna Rada. On October 6, 2017, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine voted on that draft law in the first reading, and on January 18, 2018, it was approved in general.

Activities

The ongoing Russian aggression and, as the result, general power and political consensus in Ukraine as to the gradual course aimed to reduce the level of diplomatic relations with Russia have led to the situation when diplomatic representation in the embassies of both countries is arranged at the level of charge d'affaires. At the same time, in spite of permanent calls of radical policymakers to the Ukrainian authorities to break off diplomatic relations with the RF in response to the ongoing Russian aggression, diplomatic activities of Ukrainian consular institutions remain the key institutional component for urgent issues of bilateral relations (legal support of imprisoned Ukrainian hostages in the territory of the RF, representation of the interests of Ukrainian citizens in the territory of the RF, etc.). Political and diplomatic opposition between the two countries within the framework of international organizations, primarily the UN, OSCE, the Council of Europe, IAEA, etc. is ongoing.

Results

2017 proved the ongoing hybrid military and political aggression of the Russian state in relation to Ukraine. Political dialogue in bilateral relations was reduced to a critically poor level, of which the “zero-sum game” is a logical continuation: victory of one party will mean a complete defeat of the other one. In spite of the absence of efficient contacts in bilateral relations, the end of the year was marked with the release of Crimean political prisoners and a large-scale exchange of military prisoners between Ukraine and ORDLO (Separate districts of Donetsk and Lugansk regions) (via international mediators). A significant event of 2017 was voting in favour of the updated draft resolution “Situation of Human Rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol (Ukraine)” by the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly (the updated draft resolution acknowledges the situation in Crimea to be lasting occupation and an international armed conflict, confirms the territorial integrity of Ukraine and does not recognize the Russian annexation of the Crimea, it contains a call to the RF to stop violation of human rights in the Crimea) and adoption of this resolution at the meeting of the UN General Assembly on December 19, 2017.

ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Foreign policy related to economic cooperation with the RF in 2017 remains ambivalent. Ukraine's actions, same as before, mainly responsive to financial and economic levers of influence by the RF. Despite of intensified confrontation, discriminatory policy and its negative effects, the RF remains the largest trade partner and keeps on playing an important role for Ukraine's economy.

Political Interest / Engagement

Officially, there remains political consensus and understanding of the essence of hybrid war of the Russia against Ukraine, the context of which is also related to the field of economic cooperation. In 2017, the issue of economic cooperation of Ukraine with the RF was not among priority ones in the political discourse, where attention was mostly paid to security issues. The discussion, started in relation to the breach of diplomatic relations with the Russian Federation, almost does not consider the economic component. The Annual Address of the President of Ukraine contains a statement on elimination of dependence on the Russian market, by which the state was characterized during its first twenty-five years of independence. Reduction of the Russian influence on the Ukrainian economy is further considered via transformation of the model of social and economic development and diversification of international economic contacts of Ukraine, in particular, reinforcement of its EU integration.

Institutional Cooperation

Implementation of activities in the economic field in relation to the RF is characterized by coordinated standpoints of foreign policy implementation entities (the NSDC, the VRU, the President of Ukraine, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the NBU, and the SSU). Due level of institutional cooperation ensures preservation of international consensus for a continuation and expansion of the sanctions regime against the RF. Introduction of sanctions against the five banks with Russian capital in March for the period of one year, as far as a ban to take the capital out of Ukraine in favour of related persons, constitutes a sample of interinstitutional cooperation. At the same time, the duration of the Ukrainian sanctions imposed in response to the Russian ones expires on December 31, and an issue of their prolongation is not accompanied with any proper information and analytical support.

Strategic Vision

Strategic vision of Ukraine's economic policy in relation to the RF remains inexistent. Annual Address of the President of Ukraine does not contain any clear statements about this, and economic strategy in relation to the RF is not formalized in any official documents. Export strategy also does not provide any clear guidance in the issue. The statement voiced by the Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade saying

that Ukraine should not fully reject its trade relations with Russia and that it should not reduce import but rather increase export, cannot be considered as a strategic one, since it is rather controversial. As the result, the authorities keep on acting in a tactful way and forcedly respond to challenges in the economic sphere created by the RF. Response measures are, on the one hand, aimed at reducing the dependence on the Russian economic influence, but, on the other hand, lead to negative consequences for domestic economy due to the loss of the traditional market. The President's December statement on Ukraine's readiness to restore procurement of natural gas from Russia in case it is cheap and the respective agreements are concluded in a transparent way is exemplary. So far, no answer has been found to the key issue of how to build up economic relations with the aggressor country, relations with which have been and remain significant.

Activities

Antagonism between Ukraine and Russia in the field of economic relations remains the dominant of 2017. The Russia has expanded the list of products, which are not allowed to be imported from Ukraine as well as has prolonged its effect. The Ukrainian embargo should be valid till the end of the year. Also, during the year additional sanctions were introduced. The above restrictions are not of critical importance for the overall volume of trade and economic cooperation of the countries, which keep on growing. The RF has directed to the WTO's dispute settlement body and the Government of Ukraine a request for holding consultations due to restrictions, which have been continuously introduced, since 2014. Ukraine, on its part, has directed to the WTO a request for consultations with the RF due to numerous restrictions for the import of the Ukrainian commodities. The WTO is already considering four disputes between Ukraine and Russia: in two of them Ukraine acts as a claimant, and in other two – as a respondent. In January, Ukraine filed a lawsuit in the International Court of Justice against Russia for violating the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Also, a lawsuit of the RF against Ukraine on Eurobonds for 3 billion USD is still under consideration.

Results

Economic relations of Ukraine with the RF remain complicated, with unclear prospects. There is no official dialogue in the field of economic cooperation. 2017 was marked by the increase in the figures of foreign trade between the countries. Both export and import are on the rise, but import is rising at a very fast pace (due to energy resources, fertilizers and spare parts) and creates a significant negative balance for Ukraine. Over 11 months the trade volume increased by 27% reaching almost 10 billion USD, while the negative balance made up 2.7 billion USD. Highly active economic relations at the level of citizens are still there – according to approximate estimates, there are about 2 mln Ukrainians in the territory of the Russian Federation, who have left there to earn their money. The scope of money transferred by them to Ukraine over three quarters, though, reduced by 40%, still makes up almost 460 mln USD.

In general, over the year Ukrainians have crossed the state border with Russia over 4 mln times. The RF remains the largest Ukraine's partner by the volume of trade and economic cooperation and, therefore, dependence of the Ukrainian economy on the Russian market still remains high.

ENERGY RELATIONS

In 2017 Ukraine did not import Russian gas because of ongoing hearings at Stockholm Arbitration and the possibility of buying enough gas from spot facilities in the EU. Transport blockade minimized supply of coal from the Russian Federation. There were technological cross flows of electric energy, and nuclear fuel supply continues to decrease along with technological cooperation. At the same time, dependence on fuel products import is increasing due to inaction in strategic stock creation, the influence of monopolists from the Opposition Block is increasing with the former advocating for expansion of cooperation with the Russian Federation.

In cooperation with international partners, Ukraine managed to curb realization of Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline but the RF embarked upon implementation of Turkish Stream projects, which poses a threat of transportation mode change for Russian gas, at least to the Balkans and Turkey.

Political Interest / Engagement

2017 was marked by low public political interest in the topics of energy cooperation with Russia with simultaneous intensification of behind-the-scenes talks and increase of trade volumes, including energy resources. Transport blockade of coal supply from the occupied territories of Donbas and its extrapolation onto supplies from Russia caused a massive campaign for blockade discredit both by representatives of the pro-Russian opposition forces and the pro-Presidential political actors. Only with a decision of the NSDC on "Emergency Additional Measures on Counteraction Hybrid Threats to National Security of Ukraine" (March 15) the conflict between the government and radicalized part of the society was partially soften.

Neither the government nor the Parliament and the President have expressed the desire to solve the issue of the creation of oil and oil products strategic stock creation, which resulted in vulnerability of the national economy to possible creation of the artificial deficit by Russia's blocking of import in Ukraine. Instead of consolidating efforts with Naftogaz NJSC regarding counteraction to the Russian roundabout gas pipelines, political parties in the Parliament, the Cabinet of Ministers and the President of Ukraine were trying to regain control over the company. As a result, we failed to block actions of the Russian Federation aimed at promotion of Nord Stream pipeline project and commencement of the Turkish Stream construction in the direction of Istanbul.

Institutional Cooperation

In 2017, increased confrontation tendencies regarding redistribution of turfs over separate areas of energy sector was witnessed. Namely, executive power was trying to make Naftogaz of Ukraine subordinate to itself. Practices of non-public preferences for companies supplying energy resources, specifically coal and oil products, from the Russian Federation have intensified.

Instead of intensification of cooperation aiming to increase energy security, there were an increased number of conflicts with traces of the Russian oligarch group's interests behind them. Thus, the actions of executive power resulted in re-reform of the Naftogaz Supervisory Board; a refusal to continue liberalization of gas market secured a monopoly of the regional gas companies, most of which are controlled by a pro-Russian oligarch D. Firtash.

Dubious decisions of the National Commission for State Regulation of Energy and Public Utilities in favour of coal generation power instead of atomic power plants deepens dependence on coal import, most of which originates in Russia, and takes financial resources away from the industry, which supplies around 60% of electricity and demonstrated significant success in overcoming dependence on Russian fuel and technologies.

Strategic vision

Energy Strategy of Ukraine 2035 defines the Russian Federation as a source of threats for energy security of the country. In order to minimize Russian impact, a number of strategic objectives are set out and their achievement will promote direct and indirect stability of the state. The objectives include: security, energy efficiency and competitiveness. Through modernization, reduced consumption, reforms and cooperation with partners, Ukraine will create a competitive energy market and integrate it into the European legislative and regulatory space.

Amid the objectives set out in the Energy Strategy, stimulation of the non-transparent relations with Russia in energy sector upon the initiative of separate financial and industrial groups and help from the Ukrainian government appears very strange. This poses a threat of negating the achieved level of energy independence in several years, increasing vulnerability of the country and challenging the reforms results and prospects of sustainable balanced development of national economy.

Activities

In 2017, the Energy Strategy of Ukraine 2035 was adopted, which among other strategic objectives mentions reduction of dependence on energy resources import from the Russian Federation and relations in energy sector as such through their use as means of political impact and element of unproclaimed war against the country.

Ukrenergo company signed an agreement on joining ENTSO-E European Energy System, which laid the foundations for re-orientation of electrical energy market from the post-Soviet one controlled by Russia to the European one after 2015.

Ukrtransgaz company has continued its work on legal framework development with partners from the neighbouring Western countries aiming to implement the European model of natural gas transportation after termination of contractual relations between Naftogaz of Ukraine and Gazprom in 2019, which strengthens positions of the company ahead of negotiations on future cooperation conditions.

Construction of the Centralized Storage for Waste Nuclear Fuel was started, which will allow to refuse its transportation to Russia and save money and prospective raw material to be used in future modifications of reactors.

A number of meetings between representatives of Naftogaz of Ukraine and Gazprom with the purpose of discussing conditions for renewing relations turned to be fruitless. The parties were awaiting the decision of the Stockholm Arbitration on the transit contract, yet even after the decision is made confrontation is likely to continue, as it is beneficial for the Russian company when advocating for the construction of Nord Stream 2.

Results

Similarly to the previous year, Ukraine has secured itself with gas from non-Russian sources and procured more, having created additional stock in case of cold winter. Stockholm Arbitration made a decision on claims of Naftogaz of Ukraine and Gazprom under the contract of Russian gas supply to Ukraine, which in general was positive for Ukraine because of the change of a significant share of discriminating provisions (terms "take or pay", pricing principles, volumes of obligatory gas procurement etc.) into those more appropriate for the EU gas market.

Ukraine continued increasing nuclear fuel procurement from Westinghouse (6 out of 13 VVER-1000) having reached the share of almost 40% from the general scope of import. Yet, at the same time dependence on the import of fuel products from Russia and Belarus and LPG from Russia was increased, also it was witnessed a non-transparent redistribution of LPG market with the use of security and law enforcement bodies and participation of little known companies, which increased procurement of the resource from Rosneft and Gazprom and reached up to 70% in total import scope of the resource.

Despite public blockade, the Russian Federation remains one of the key suppliers of coal to Ukraine with the share of almost 80% from the total volume of import of predominantly anthracite coal. Based on the results of Stockholm Arbitration regarding Russian gas supply contract, Ukraine will likely have to return to procurement of almost 4 billion m3 in 2018 to execute court decision

REGIONAL COOPERATION

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



ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

C



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	2
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	2	2
Activities	2	4
Results	3	4
General score	C-	C

2017 was marked with rather active visits tendency of the MFAs leadership to countries of the region and signing bilateral agreements on justice, trade and agricultural cooperation, opportunities for cooperation in the military-industrial sphere. The greatest attention was paid to Australia, Thailand and Indonesia. At the same time, in general the political interest in the countries of the region is extremely low. The North Korean nuclear program, a subject of the Ukrainian statements on the international platforms, is an important standalone issue.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2017, the Asia-Pacific region countries' experience was mentioned in the political statements concerning the economic positions strengthening and providing the humanitarian support to Ukraine. Some attention was paid to the North Korea issue, repeatedly emphasized at the international forums, among others, in a Statement of the President at the United Nations.

Also, in the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada a lot of attention was devoted to the relations with Indonesia, South Korea, and Australia. More specifically, it was accentuated the inconsistency between the existing economic cooperation level and the South Korea's potential, as well as support provided by Australia in protecting the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Ukraine, as well as possibilities of arms trade with Indonesia. The ASEAN also got some attention, though this region is not mentioned directly in the Address.

Institutional Cooperation

The need to promote Ukrainian goods, in particular of the military and industrial complex, was not adequately supported by the relevant ministries. The institutional cooperation on partnership with the APAC remained low due to the lack of the significant political interest in the region. Speaking about the positive signs, we would mention that all the embassies of the region have their ambassadors (including a swift replacement of the Ambassador to South Korea in 2017), although most countries have ambassadors with concurrent accreditation.

Strategic Vision

The strategic documents do not advocate for the Asia-Pacific region. It is mentioned among other priorities just several times and in general terms. In 2017, any important bilateral documents were signed with the countries of the region. The Export Strategy of Ukraine, adopted in 2017, names Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Japan as the most promising markets for the Ukrainian products exports.

Activities

The main activities were focused on the government and parliamentary levels. In particular, in November and December, the members of parliamentary delegation of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia paid a visit to Ukraine to meet their colleagues from the Verkhovna Rada and discuss the Ukraine-Indonesia trade and economic cooperation deepening, as well as the country's support of the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Within the framework of the Australian Senate President's Stephen Parry visit to Ukraine on October 2, he met the Speaker of the

Verkhovna Rada, the Prime Minister and the President of Ukraine. Some attention was devoted to the strengthening of the inter-parliamentary cooperation between two states and the formation of the renewed Australia–Ukraine friendship group in the Australian parliament.

In January, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine paid an official visit to Singapore to meet the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Minister of Justice. He also came to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, a first official visit in the Ukraine – Myanmar relations, to discuss the possibilities of the legal framework expansion between the states. In June, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine paid a first official visit to Thailand, that was also for the first time to Ukraine and Thailand, and then the Deputy Prosecutor General came to this country too. In September, the Minister of Foreign Affairs paid an official visit to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to meet the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Vietnam. And in November, the Minister of Defence of Ukraine S. Poltorak paid an official visit to the Kingdom of Thailand to participate in the Defence & Security-2017 international exhibition and to hold the talks with the military and political leaders of Thailand.

On September 4-6, the Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine paid a visit to Seoul (South Korea) to meet the Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of the Republic of Korea and the Korean companies' representatives. In addition, in April, in Seoul, the 4th Ukrainian-Korean Economic Forum was organized by the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Korean International Trade Association. On April 12, the Deputy Minister of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine met Vice Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs of the Republic of Korea, and the Director General of Imported Food Safety Policy Bureau of the Ministry of Food and Drugs Safety. They discussed the prospects of the Ukrainian dairy products, poultry and seafood certification. As a result, they agreed to strengthen the bilateral coordination to accelerate the relevant technical procedures. In addition, in October, the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine delegation led by the Minister of Justice P. Petrenko took part in the conference of the International Bar Association in Sydney.

Ukraine continued to supply of Thailand with the Oplot-T main battle tanks (MBT) in the framework of the \$240 million contract, signed in 2011. In March, Ukraine took part in one of the largest exhibitions in the world – LIMA-2017 (Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition) in Malaysia.

On October 9-10, the 14th meeting of the Ukrainian-Vietnamese Intergovernmental Commission on trade-economic and scientific-technical cooperation, as well as the Ukrainian-Vietnamese business forum took place in Kyiv.

Results

During 2017, a number of sectoral agreements were signed between Ukraine and the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, in particular, the Memorandum of Understanding between the government of Australia, the government of the Kingdom of Belgium, the government of Malaysia, the government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the government of Ukraine on political support for prosecution of the perpetrators of the MH17 flight crash on July 17, 2014 (dated September 20, 2017), and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine and the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) for a comprehensive cooperation in the field of intellectual property (dated October 3, 2017).

Within the framework of the visits to Thailand in June, the parties signed the Agreement between Ukraine and the Kingdom of Thailand on mutual legal assistance in criminal cases, and the Agreement on mutual cooperation between the General Prosecutor's office of Ukraine and the Office of the attorney General of the Kingdom of Thailand.

In September, a visit to Vietnam resulted in the Agreement on cooperation between Ministry of Justice of Ukraine and Ministry of Justice of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. In December, in Yangon (Myanmar) the Agreement on cooperation between the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs and the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry was signed. It is a first bilateral document aimed at the economic cooperation developing between the countries.

In addition, the Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Ukraine on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy entered into force, meaning cooperation in all types of nuclear energy peaceful uses, including possibility of transfer of some nuclear, specially designated non-nuclear materials and technologies. The upper house of the Australian Parliament adopted a statement to mark the 85th anniversary of the 1932-1933 Holodomor in Ukraine. The opening of the Honorary Consulate of Ukraine in Sydney, the first one in the history of the Ukraine – Australia bilateral relations, furthermore became a significant event.

MIDDLE EAST

C



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	2
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	2	2
Activities	4	4
Results	3	4
General score	C	C

In 2017, the interaction of Ukraine with the Middle East region maintained the pace of the previous year, as evidenced by a number of visits to these countries, including official meetings on the highest levels and the agreements reached as their results. The best efforts were made in relations with Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, and Iraq. However, some decrease in political interest towards this region does not allow developing of the foreign policy strategy to reach a new level of relations. The political dimension of the interaction involves a wide range of the security issues and is mainly declarative.

Political Interest / Engagement

The Middle Eastern vector is not a priority for the Ukraine's foreign policy, that is evident taking into account the lack of the Ukrainian politicians' systematic interest in it. There are sporadic mentioning about it. In regional security issues, among others, Ukraine pays considerable attention to the conflict in Syria. During the annual General Debate of the 72nd United Nations General Assembly, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko in his speech expressed a concern about the situation in the country, pointing at following the Geneva Communiqué and the UN Security Council Resolution 2254 as a mandatory requirement for the conflict resolution. The country's leadership, in particular, the President P. Poroshenko and the Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council O. Turchynov, repeatedly mentioned the destabilizing influence of the Russian Federation on the Middle East landscape, and targeting of its activity in Syria for undermining the international security system.

The Ukrainian side is interested in the Middle East countries' support in resolving the problem of violation of the Crimean Tatar rights in the occupied Crimea. P. Poroshenko, the Deputy Speakers of the Verkhovna Rada I. Geraschenko and O. Syroid called on their Middle Eastern partners to join protection of their coreligionists' rights. Intention of Ukraine to gain an observer status in the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation is an evidence of its interest in the regional cooperation development, the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko stated.

In general, the region lacks a holistic perception as a sphere for the Ukraine's foreign policy interests. Statements expressing interest in the deepening cooperation address just several countries and industries. As an example we can mention the First Deputy Secretary of the NSDC O. Gladkovsky who raised an issue of intensification of the military and technical cooperation with the UAE and Kuwait (during a meeting with the ambassadors of these countries), and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs A. Zayats in his interview to the Jordanian media outlined the Ukrainian political leaders' and business' interests in the development of relations with Jordan in trade and tourism.

The 2017 Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada mentions the Middle East countries in the context of the international security system crisis. In contrast with the 2016 document, they are not listed among countries of a high importance or interest for the cooperation.

Institutional Cooperation

The level of interaction between the Ukrainian institutions in regard to the Middle Eastern policy implementation is not high due to the lack of a complex strategy. However, the Administration of the President of Ukraine and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinate their work in defining and implementation of the particular tasks. The Middle East foreign policy also involves the legislative branch of power, with a group on the inter-parliamentary relations with Tunisia formed in 2017.

The 2017 Governmental Action Plan set an objective of joining the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin aiming to expand export markets, in connection with what Lebanon, Egypt and Tunisia are referred as the potential markets.

Strategic Vision

The absence of the Middle East mentioning in the majority of the Ukraine's strategic documents indicates a lack of the strategic domain in relations with region's countries. Though the region can be found declaratively mentioned in the Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy", indicating an interest in the economic cooperation with the OPEC countries. In the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, the region was named in the broad context of the international security issues. The bilateral relations have no any strategic agreements to write about.

Activities

We can single out two areas of the 2017 Ukraine's activities towards the Middle East. The first one is aimed at the intensification of the political dialogue and deepening cooperation, at the highest level as well, in the key spheres of interests (such as trade, economic, investment, military and technical, agrarian, transport sectors) with some countries of the region. In November, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko paid a visit to Saudi Arabia and the UAE to meet those countries' political and business leaders. In the UAE, P. Poroshenko met the head of DP World, who confirmed his intention to invest in the port industry of Ukraine. In October, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin paid an official visit to Qatar, and later met his Tunisian peer during the 34th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council.

At the intergovernmental and inter-parliamentary levels, some interaction was also observed. In March, a Ukrainian military delegation led by the Chief of the Armed Forces General Staff V. Muzhenko came to Kuwait to discuss issues of the military-technical cooperation. In November, a delegation of the parliamentary group for the inter-parliamentary relations, led by MP I. Lapin paid a visit to Iraq.

While reaching a goal of the export markets expanding, the Ukrainian side took part in a number of the economic forums and international exhibitions held in the countries of the region, in particular, in the meeting of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Kuwaiti commission for economic, technical and trade cooperation, the Ukrainian-Lebanese Business Forum, and the Ukrainian-Arab Business Forum in Kuwait. The Ukrainian companies were also among the participants of the International aircraft exhibition Dubai Air Show (in the UAE), the 6th exhibition Defence, Security and Aviation (in Iraq), the Agricultural exhibition AGRITEQ-2017 (in Qatar), and the International defence exhibition IDEX (in the UAE).

The second area of the activities deals with the regional security issues in the framework of the non-permanent membership of Ukraine in the UN Security Council. The Ukrainian side took an active part in discussing the key Middle Eastern issues (such as situation in Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Libya, Lebanon, and Iraq) and confirmed its position by voting for a number of resolutions (regarding the situation in Libya, Iraq, Lebanon etc.). A lot of attention was devoted to the Syrian issue. In particular, while presiding in the UN Security Council, Ukraine initiated a discussion on the humanitarian situation in the country.

Results

The main achievement of Ukraine in the Middle East region was a number of bilateral agreements signed with Saudi Arabia and the UAE, as a result of the P. Poroshenko visits. Speaking about Saudi Arabia, we should mention a Memorandum on investment cooperation in the agriculture sector, a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation and exchange of news between the Saudi Press Agency and the Ukrainian National Information Agency “Ukrinform”, and a Program of Cooperation between the Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine under the MFA of Ukraine and the Institute for Diplomatic Studies under the MFA of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Besides that, the countries’ cooperation in the field of the aircraft construction (under the agreement signed with Antonov in 2016) was highly evaluated and providing an idea of the mass production possibilities. The countries also agreed on the visa fees reducing.

In the UAE the following documents were signed: a Memorandum of understanding between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the UAE on the mutual abolition of visa requirements, an Agreement on cooperation in the cultural sphere, a Memorandum of understanding between the State Space Agency of Ukraine and the Space Agency of the UAE on the space exploration.

In the trade and economic area, according to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, within the 9 months period of 2017 the volume of trade between Ukraine and the Middle East countries (except for Turkey, Iran, and Israel) comprised \$4.1 billion, that is \$300 million more compared to the corresponding period of the previous year. The export efforts resulted in \$3.8 billion, while the import—in \$301.7 million, meaning a significant positive balance. In terms of the exports volumes, Egypt, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE were the main trading partners of Ukraine. Compared to the 2016 results, the increase in the trade volumes was achieved with Algeria (by 105%), Tunisia (by 51%), the UAE (by 34%), and Qatar (by 220%).

WESTERN BALKANS

C-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	2	3
Institutional cooperation	3	2
Strategic vision	2	3
Activities	4	2
Results	4	3
General score	C	C-

In 2017, the Ukraine's attention to the Western Balkans region was not elevated and remained differentiated, depending on the countries membership in the EU and NATO and their attitude towards Russia. The counteraction to the Russian aggression at the international level and the economic prospects became the key directions for the Ukraine's cooperation with the countries of the region. A sufficiently large number of documents were signed and ratified, which create the basis for the further development of relationship.

Political Interest / Engagement

The Western Balkans, as a region at large, in 2017 did not enjoy any significant political interest from Ukraine. The countries of the region are mentioned in the 2017 Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada in the context of the multilateral cooperation of Ukraine (with NATO and the Three Seas Initiative); in the 2017 Governmental Action Plan regarding the economic cooperation (FTA and WTO) and joining the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin (PEM Convention); as well as in parliamentary documents and statements about the development of the inter-parliamentary relations and assistance in the bilateral, mostly economic, cooperation. The lack of a consolidated political approach can be explained by the membership of the certain countries of the region in the EU and NATO, and by the various levels of their cooperation with Russia and, accordingly, by the Ukrainian search for the international support in counteracting to the Russian aggression, as stressed in the statements by the President P. Poroshenko and the Prime Minister V. Groysman. A key indicator of the relationship here was the level of support for Ukraine provided by the countries of the region in counteracting to the Russian aggression and in its European integration aspirations. Considering this, Ukraine paid its main attention to Croatia and Slovenia (as the EU members). It also keeps friendly relations with Montenegro and FYR Macedonia, middling – with Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), and the worse one – with Serbia. Thus, on November 7, 2017, the MFA of Ukraine expressed in a comment its concerns about participation of the Serbian mercenaries in the hostilities as a part of the Russian-terrorist forces, and illegal contacts of the country representatives with occupied Crimea.

Institutional Cooperation

The Western Balkans remained not fully covered by the diplomatic missions of Ukraine: its interests in Albania are represented by a charge d'affaires and counsellor in Athens, in BiH – by a representative of the Embassy of Ukraine in Croatia, and in Montenegro – by a charge d'affaires. Hence, there are various levels of activity in the region, multiplied by the absence of ambassadors in some countries. Some strengthening of the bilateral cooperation, in particular the inter-parliamentary one, can be noted after the appointment of the Ambassador of Ukraine to Macedonia in October. In general, the institutional cooperation during the year was at a rather low level, although the inter-parliamentary cooperation with the region showed some increase, in particular, due to the start on March 30 of the group of friendship with Macedonia. However, with Bosnia and Herzegovina such a friendship group was never formed. The approaches of the Ukrainian state authorities to the development of the economic cooperation with the region and protection of the Ukraine's interests in the international organizations can be described as more or less coordinated.

Strategic Vision

The relations with the Western Balkans countries do not belong to the strategic priorities of Ukraine. Meanwhile, from the official documents and statements made by the Ukrainian officials one can find out such key priorities of the Ukrainian foreign policy towards the Western Balkans as: Ukraine's support at the international level; inter-parliamentary cooperation; economic cooperation; energy security; post-conflict recovery; children and the ATO participants' rehabilitation (in Slovenia and Croatia).

Activities

The Ukrainian foreign policy in relation to the Western Balkans was determined by a strategic vision. It reached its highest peak in the relations with Croatia due to the visit of the Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman paid to Zagreb on July 13-14, the launch of the Working Group on Cooperation between Ukraine and Croatia on May 26, the inter-parliamentary contacts and activity of the Embassy of Ukraine, and was aimed at the economic, energy, military-technical and humanitarian cooperation. The President of the Republic of Slovenia B. Pahor visit to Ukraine in February contributed to the active bilateral relations with Slovenia, which were specified at the Ukrainian-Slovenian political consultations in May, in particular, in the trade, economic, energy, security (demining) and humanitarian spheres. The inter-parliamentary contacts with FYR Macedonia intensified credit to the meeting of the inter-parliamentary relations groups of two countries. The cooperation with BiH, Montenegro and Albania were developing mainly at the embassies level. Ukraine and Montenegro actively interacted in the framework of the international organizations. The discussion on the opening of a full-fledged diplomatic mission was held with Albania. The unproductive developments of the relations with Serbia are connected with the pro-Russian position of the country's leaders, that even led to some diplomatic spat in November due to the Serbian side negative reaction to the Kyiv's public statements regarding the Serbian government passive position towards its mercenaries in the Donbas region.

An important task for Ukraine in the Western Balkans was to refute the fake information about the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, which was spread there by the Russian Federation.

Results

The greatest results for Ukraine in its relations with the Western Balkans countries region in 2017 was reached with Slovenia and Croatia. With Croatia, a Memorandum on cooperation in the youth projects was signed, and agreements on the economic cooperation and on the promotion and mutual protection of the investments were ratified. The Ukraine's participation in the project of a new Croatia – Hungary – Ukraine gas corridor, initiated by the heads of two governments, is under consideration, and a Plan of the interactions within the Croatia – Ukraine working group on cooperation, aiming at dealing with reintegration issues, is signed. Slovenia ratified the agreement on the paid employment of the family members of the diplomatic missions employees, drafted an agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia on cooperation in mine action, initiated the signing of a memorandum on energy and the inter-ministerial agreement on youth exchanges, and also restored regular direct flights between Kyiv and Ljubljana. Slovenia and Croatia also invited hundreds of children and ATO participants for the rehabilitation.

Besides that, the agreements on the international road transportation of the passengers and goods and on cooperation in education and science were ratified with Montenegro. Several business forums organized with Croatia and Slovenia contributed to the expansion of the economic ties between Ukraine and these countries. Moreover, FYR Macedonia initiated participation of Ukrainian companies in the gas pipelines construction. At the same time, Ukraine and Serbia failed to reach the FTA agreement. This country was also the only one from the region (with BiH abstained) that did not provide any international support for Ukraine in counteracting to the Russian aggression by voting against the UN General Assembly resolution “The situation with human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine” on December 19.

BALTIC STATES

B+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	4	5
Results	4	5
General score	B-	B+

In 2017, the Ukraine's attention to the Baltic states increased, as evidenced by a number of the high-level meetings and communications exchanged by the heads of the states on Ukrainian reforms and conflict resolution in the East of the country. First of all, countries cooperated in military, humanitarian, and economic spheres. A lot of attention was paid to the Ukraine's integration into the EU, including a visa-free regime and the AA ratification, as well as approval of the sanctions against the Russian Federation. Ukraine preferred focusing on the bilateral relations with each country rather than building comprehensive regional approach.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2017, Ukrainian politicians continued to emphasize the fact that both Ukraine and the Baltic states struggled against the Russia's aggression. Estonia is the only country of the region that was mentioned in this year's Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada. It was mentioned there as an example of the economic reforms success, in particular, in privatization and innovation (e-government and IT sector). The year marked the 25th anniversary of the diplomatic relations establishment with Estonia and the Republic of Latvia, that was accompanied by several joint political statements at the highest level.

In addition to the security component, the Ukrainian politicians' declarations showed more attention to the economic cooperation with the region. The President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko, the Prime Minister V. Groysman, and the Vice Prime Minister S. Kubiv emphasized the need to strengthen investment and transport cooperation with the Baltic States.

The concept of the Baltic-Black Sea Union provided a new direction for the development of the political interest in the Baltic region. It was often heard in the politicians' statements, in particular, in the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy speeches.

Institutional Cooperation

The preparation for the second Ukraine – Baltic Forum of Heads of the Governments in Kyiv was a special in terms of the interagency activities' coordination in 2017. The Prime Ministers of four countries in their joint statement covered ten points that provided evidences of the extensive preliminary consultations at the governmental level in Ukraine.

Another evidence of the institutional cooperation at the national level was preparation of a common Ukrainian position on the priorities of the Estonian Presidency in the European Council in the second half of 2017, as well as an approval of the position on Final declaration of the Eastern Partnership summit in Tallinn.

Taking into account a number of topics for discussion and the signed bilateral agreements, the interagency coordination efforts for the 10th meeting of the Council of the Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania can be considered effective too.

The Ukrainian parts of the joint commissions had their meetings as usual. Therefore, the preliminary work on the 16th meeting of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Lithuanian Commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation was carried out in full. The intensification of coordination facilitated the restoration of the Intergovernmental Ukraine – Latvia Commission for economic, industrial and scientific-technical cooperation in December 2016. This allowed proceeding with

the planned work of the Ukrainian institutions involved in the organization of the cooperation with Latvia in 2017.

In 2017, the Ukrainian side also initiated a discussion on the similar bilateral institution activities with the Estonian partners.

Strategic Vision

The Baltic region has a strategic significance for Ukraine in defending its positions in the EU and NATO, as well as in the prolongation of the sanctions against the Russian Federation. Although this approach is not fixed in the documents, the governmental representatives made such references in their public statements.

The joint statement of the Prime Ministers of Ukraine, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, and the Republic of Lithuania, approved in April 2017, can be considered as a kind of a strategic reference point for the relations between Ukraine and the Baltic states. However, the declaration does not provide exclusively the Ukrainian point of view and says nothing about the program documents development and implementation.

Activities

The President of Ukraine had several meetings with the Baltic States leaders during the year: he paid several official and working visits to the region (to Estonia in January 2017 and to Latvia in April 2017), and met the peers during the international events as well. The Council of the Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania meeting was held. While the Ukraine – Baltic Forum held in April, became a significant event due to the adoption of a common political agenda. This institutionalization of the political cooperation strengthens the effectiveness of the joint projects, as well as formation of a coherent international position. In addition, one way or another the security issue was a subject of the overwhelming majority of the Ukrainian, Baltic, and the third countries leaders' meetings. For example, the President of Ukraine met all three Baltic States' Ministers of Defence.

Given the Estonia's chairmanship in the European Council in the second half of 2017, the Ukraine – Estonia cooperation gained in dynamics, with an increased number of the reciprocal visits at the government level.

The Ukrainian officials more actively involved their Baltic States peers' support at the international level. The ministerial meetings and the signed bilateral agreements between Ukraine and the Baltic states in the field of culture, education, and youth policy should be especially noted. In particular, the Estonian-Ukrainian cultural cooperation programme for 2017-2021 was signed, an ongoing discussion on advantages of the digital economy, economic success, e-governance, data exchange security, and cybersecurity have been continued. The National Agency on Corruption

Prevention of Ukraine and the Latvian Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau signed a memorandum on the coordination of the financial assets return to Ukraine. The countries also signed an Agreement on bilateral cooperation in the sphere of environmental protection (between the relevant ministries).

The cooperation in the agroindustrial complex actively developed. The Baltic States experience (Lithuania and Latvia) became a basis for the Twinning project on the Ukrainian legislation approximation to the EU in the field of the plant protection agents for 2017-2018. The joint statement on the implementation of the agreed Ukraine – Latvia bilateral cooperation program in the agroindustrial complex for 2018-2019 was signed as well.

Results

A full support provided by the states of the region to the Ukraine's strategic aspirations is an important reference point for the development of their further relations. The final joint statement made by the Prime Ministers of Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on April 6 2017, declares support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine, the condemnation of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the call for the further assistance to Ukraine (especially from the EU and NATO), support of the Euro-Atlantic course of Ukraine, the AA ratification and a visa-free regime. In this context, such bilateral joint declarations also should be mentioned: the joint statement of the President of Ukraine and the President of the Republic of Estonia (January 2017), and the joint statement of the President of Ukraine and the President of the Republic of Latvia (April 2017).

The joint multilateral initiatives, first of all, deal with the Ukrainian military trainings conducted by the instructors from the Baltic states or NATO countries, and the European integration of Ukraine.

The best results are seen in the Ukraine – Lithuania cooperation: the number of agreements between two countries increased from 127 in 2016 to 160 in 2017. As for the Ukraine – Latvia cooperation, there were 123 agreements by the end of the year, with 9 of them signed in 2017.

Lithuania also keeps its leading role among the Baltic States in its trade relations with Ukraine, that is partly thanks to the periodic Ukrainian-Lithuanian Economic Forum, which was held in 2017 for the third time. Though, all representatives of the region increased the volumes of their bilateral trade and economic cooperation with Ukraine.

WISEGRAD FOUR

C+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	3
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	5	4
Activities	4	4
Results	4	3
General score	B	C+

In 2017, the Ukraine – Visegrad Group cooperation was mainly based on the bilateral relations with its member states. The institutional cooperation took its course in various spheres, with a number of problematic issues, in particular, in the relations with Poland and Hungary that influenced the level of the regional cooperation with V4, where Warsaw and Budapest in 2017 held the rotating presidency one after another. However, the overall political support provided to Ukraine, as a potentially new member, and a visa-free regime for the Ukrainian citizens remained unchanged, as well as the preservation of the EU sanctions against Russia.

Political Interest / Engagement

The Visegrad Group countries (V4) continue to be a successful example on the path of the European integration, and an indisputable objective for Ukraine. These ideas are noted in the Ukrainian politicians' speeches and interviews, describing a desired level of the economic and social developments in the country. Also, the V4 countries are mentioned in the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada "On the internal and external situation of Ukraine in 2017". However, during the year the politicians showed no great interest in the Visegrad Group. This can be partly explained by the deterioration of the relations with some of the V4 countries (Poland and Hungary), by coincidence under their rotating presidency in the initiative in 2017.

Institutional Cooperation

When it comes to the regional cooperation, the institutional cooperation with the V4 countries is rather limited. Compared to 2015-2016, the level of the Ukrainian coordination efforts in the development of the cooperation policy with the V4 significantly decreased. The cooperation can be observed in a bilateral dimension at the level of the Ukrainian parts of the intergovernmental commissions, interdepartmental commissions and working groups. However, each country shows its own dynamics. The problems experienced in the bilateral relations with several countries exposed a lack of the effective cooperation mechanism engaging the government bodies of Ukraine. There appeared several ad hoc groups or initiatives addressed to deal with the urgent issues of the bilateral agenda. In particular, we can point out the strengthening of the cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine at the end of 2017.

Strategic Vision

In the strategic documents, the Visegrad Group countries are traditionally mentioned in the areas of a great importance for Ukraine, in particular, social, defence, security and energy sectors. Thus, the National Security Strategy of Ukraine emphasizes that Ukraine will continue its cooperation with the V4 to ensure the national security in the foreign policy sphere at the subregional level. Energy is another strategically important area for the cooperation. The Strategy on Sustainable Development "Ukraine-2020" and the Energy Strategy of Ukraine until 2035 both say about the need to integrate the Ukraine's energy systems into the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas (ENTSO-G), the V4 countries are a part of. Considering this, it should be noted that despite the President of Ukraine statements made in 2014-2015 about the Ukraine's desire to join the V4, the country failed in forming a systematic regional strategy for cooperation with the Visegrad Group. No any public document claiming a short or medium-term roadmap was created.

Activities

At the regional level, the V4+Ukraine activities lost their dynamics in 2017. In April, the V4 foreign ministers (namely from Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic) paid a joint working visit to Ukraine. In June, the V4+Ukraine Chiefs of General Staff traditionally met, this time with the Ukrainian delegation led by the Chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces General Staff V. Muzhenko. The format was enlarged with the Baltic countries, that might have some positive effect on the regional defence cooperation strengthening.

However, it should be also mentioned that in 2017 the V4+Ukraine format was gradually replaced with the V4+EaP format, with the countries of the region favouring the cooperation with Ukraine in this format. The Minister of Foreign Affairs P. Klimkin attended two meetings (in April and August) of the specified format.

In early July, the Prime Ministers of Ukraine and Hungary, under the Budapest presidency in the initiative, had a telephone talk on deepening of the interaction between Ukraine and V4. In September-October, another interesting initiative of the V4 countries ambassadors in Ukraine was to pay several joint visits to meet the local leaders and elites in Kyiv, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ternopil and Zakarpattia regions.

However, the bilateral relations format prevailed, and the Ukrainian embassies in the V4 countries' capitals added a lot to secure it. In 2017, the Ukrainian high-level officials' had a significant number of meetings with the V4 countries officials. Also they had several telephone talks at the highest level, as well as the bilateral consultations and other contacts.

Results

The Ukraine's foreign policy towards the Visegrad Group countries in 2017 was rather ambiguous, without mentioning the use of the V4 regional association opportunities. Some misunderstandings in the bilateral relations with Poland and Hungary, under their presidency in V4 in 2017, weakened the Ukraine's position in cooperation with the group. It was symptomatic that during the preparation for its V4 presidency the Hungarian side rejected all initiatives of the Embassy of Ukraine in Hungary for the V4+Ukraine to implement.

At the same time, the countries of the group support the prolongation of the EU sanctions against Russia, as well as a non-recognition policy for the annexed territories. In April 2017, during the Eastern Partnership summit, the V4+EaP declaration reaffirmed the V4 countries' support for providing the EU membership. The V4 countries also provided their political support for the Ukrainian citizens visa-free travel with the EU.

Due to the cooperation with the countries of the group, the Ukrainian dependence on the Russian Federation gas supplies decreased, with some V4 members among the largest importers of the Ukrainian electricity (55.5% – Hungary, and 18% – Poland).

In 2017, the military cooperation was significantly strengthened, the V4 countries continued to provide Ukraine with their humanitarian assistance, and the wounded Ukrainian fighters as well as the ATO soldiers' children restored their health owing to the host V4 countries.

NORTHERN EUROPE

C+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	4
Institutional cooperation	2	3
Strategic vision	2	2
Activities	4	4
Results	4	4
General score	C	C+

In 2017, the awareness of the Northern Europe region importance for the security policy of Ukraine and the implementation of the European reforms started its gradually growth. The countries of this region readily provided their support to Kyiv in terms of the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the counteraction to the Russian military aggression, as well as in the international organizations. The political dialogue and the trade and economic cooperation with all countries of the region, except for Iceland, featured some revival, with the energy, energy efficiency, and anticorruption spheres taking the lead. At the same time, the strategic vision of this region and the systematic approach to the cooperation with it in a number of the important areas for Ukraine can be described as mostly absent or insufficient, with certain issues of the institutional cooperation being unsolved, including the appointment of the Ukrainian ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark and the dialogue enhancing with the Republic of Iceland.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2017, the political interest of Ukraine in the cooperation with the Nordic countries significantly increased. In the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada “On the internal and external situation of Ukraine in 2017”, the Ukraine’s partnership with the Northern Europe states was mentioned as of the fundamental importance for the country. Taking into account the security potential of Ukraine, the document emphasizes support efforts provided by these countries in the field of the European integration and further reforms in the country. Speaking about security partnership, the Nordic countries are treated at the same level as the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Central and Eastern Europe states. It should be also noted, that visits of the President of Ukraine to Finland and Denmark in 2017 resulted in a number of political statements, with the Ukrainian priority tasks set, including the territorial integrity of the country, the sanctions policy against Russia till the Minsk agreements full implementation, and the Nord Stream 2 project development barring.

The political interest in the region shown by the representatives of other branches of power in 2017 was far smaller. During his visit to Norway, the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine A. Parubiy noted two key issues of the inter-parliamentary interaction with the country: an opposition to the Nord Stream 2 project, and a recognition of the Holodomor as a genocide at the parliamentary level. At the end of the year, in one of his interviews, the Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman named Scandinavia as a reference for Ukraine in terms of the economic and social development.

In the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the interest in the region was mainly observed within the Committee on Foreign Affairs. In 2017, the parliamentary group of MPs on inter-parliamentary relations with the Republic of Iceland was created, making a full list of the similar groups for all five countries of the region.

Institutional Cooperation

At the institutional level, the cooperation with the Northern Europe region and its countries was traditionally coordinated by the MFA of Ukraine. The Ukrainian interests did not dictate the state authorities to create any separate coordination structures in this region.

At the bilateral level, the cooperation with Finland and Norway was expected to be coordinated within the framework of the intergovernmental commissions, which, however, had no meetings in 2017. Though, this also should not be taken for the absence of the inter-agency coordination in regard to the bilateral events and projects. This kind of coordination was required, in particular, to prepare and organize several activities within the framework of two visits the President of Ukraine paid to the

countries of the region (Finland and Denmark). A ratification of the agreement on technical and financial cooperation with Norway by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine can be considered as another example of the positive institutional interaction between the legislative and executive branches of power.

Ukraine has its own diplomatic missions in all countries of the region, except for Iceland. Though there are any grounds for a full-fledged embassy in this country, however, Ukraine would gain from taking full advantage of the opportunities already available in the relations with Reykjavik. The long absence (since 2014) of the ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark is a political issue requiring an immediate solution.

Strategic Vision

Such strategic state documents as the 2017 Governmental Action Plan and the Medium-Term Governmental Action Plan until 2017 lack any specific references of the Northern Europe region. The report on the government activities in the first half of the year mentions the launch of the EU Anti-Corruption Initiative, but it says nothing about Denmark, a country that ensured its implementation.

Despite the fact that the Nordic countries' membership in the EU or NATO raises their strategic importance for Ukraine, a coherent strategy of their relations development is still a question.

The legal basis of the relations between Ukraine and the states of the region includes more than 150 bilateral documents, and in general more or less corresponds to the actual level of interaction within the key areas (trade, double taxation avoidance, protection of investments, energy, etc.). The basic agreements on friendship and cooperation with these states were not signed because of these countries established practice. On the other hand, the geopolitical changes that took place after 2014 were reflected in one and only bilateral political document – the Joint Declaration of Partnership between Ukraine and the Kingdom of Norway, dated 2016. With a strong role of the Northern Europe in the security, military and political spheres, Ukraine should strive to expand the legal framework of military cooperation with the countries of this region.

Activities

During the year, the dialogue with the Northern Europe countries, especially at the highest level, gained its steam. The President of Ukraine paid two official visits – to Finland (in January) and Denmark (in April), and also met the Finland's President Sauli Niinistö, the Prime Minister of Finland Juha Sipilä, the Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven, and he Prime Minister of Denmark Lars Løkke Rasmussen at the international events.

At the governmental level, the systematic approach and activity of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine I. Klymush-Tsintsadze, who in 2017 paid visits to all countries of the region, except for Iceland, must be specially noted. The MFAs leaders added to a dialogue with Denmark, Sweden and Finland. It is also worth to mention such an out-of-the-box idea, as a visit of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and Denmark to the ATO zone that gave a chance to the Danish foreign policy head A. Samuelsen to witness the scale of the Russian aggression in Ukraine.

At the inter-parliamentary level, most of the activities were connected with the Committee on Foreign Affairs headed by H. Hopko, with the numerous events organized together with the MPs from Finland, Sweden and Norway. In May, the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy paid a visit to Norway.

For Ukraine and the Northern Europe countries, 2017 was also marked with the international cooperation intensification on the defence issues, with the Minister of Defence of Ukraine S. Poltorak and the Minister of Defence of Finland J. Niinistö meeting on November 16, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Sweden M. Bydén visit to Ukraine on October 1-3, and a number of other events. However, the level of cooperation in the defence sphere with the countries of the region trails behind the level achieved, for example, with the Baltic States or the leading NATO countries.

Results

At the political level, we can consider a strong support of the Ukraine's position on its territorial integrity, the condemnation of the Russian military aggression in the Donbas area, the prolongation of sanctions against Russia, etc. as the key outcomes of the year in the relations with the Northern Europe countries. A clear illustration of this was the fact of the four countries of the region (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland) co-authorship of the UN GA Resolution "The situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine". It is also worth to mention a statement of the MFA of Norway "Three years of illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia", dated March 16.

In the area of the promoting further reforms in Ukraine, the Copenhagen position was the most active. The activity of the Danish-Ukrainian Energy Centre, which started its second phase in the end of 2017, also tracks another successful project of cooperation in this area. Among the other projects, we would give considerable attention to the support provided by Finland to the renewable energy reforms and the introduction of the Finnish educational experience, as well as support provided by Sweden to the Reanimation Package of Reforms and in the e-governance sphere. At the same time, the implementation of the EU Anti-Corruption Initiative (EUACI), backed by the Danish side, became an important factor of the Ukrainian reforms. Norway successfully implements the project on reducing the risk of corruption in the personnel management system of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine.

The ratification of the Agreement on technical and financial cooperation with Norway, as well as the signing of the Memoranda of understanding on energy efficiency and renewable energy with Finland and Denmark had a great importance in the context of their relations legal framework expanding.

In the trade and economic sphere within the 9 months period of 2017, there was a significant increase in exports of goods from Ukraine to Denmark (by 34%) and Norway (by 38.5%), and in a lower pace to Finland (by 26.7%) and Sweden (by 13.7%). Though the sharp contrast to it was the drop in exports to Iceland (to 64.6%) compared to the same period of 2016. Though the direct investments from all countries of the region to Ukraine increased, their level still remains insufficient.

LATIN AMERICA

D+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	2	3
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	1	2
Activities	3	2
Results	3	2
General score	D+	D+

Despite the noticeable intensification of the bilateral cooperation with the countries of the region in 2017, the Ukrainian interests in this region, the identification of the key partners and promising areas and activities in the area are still being realized very slowly. As in the previous years, the Latin America potential was underestimated by the Ukrainian authorities. This was seen both in the extremely slow growth of the Ukrainian export and in the country image losses (for example, for the second time, we can see no international support of Ukraine concerning counteraction to the Russian aggression by the ruling elites, in particular, in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Peru. It is evidenced by the preliminary results of the UN GA committee voting for the resolution "The situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine", proposed this year by Ukraine).

Political Interest / Engagement

Since 2017 was a year of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations with almost all countries of the region, the 120th and 125th anniversary of the Ukrainian emigration beginning to Argentina and Brazil, and the 50th anniversary of the Ukrainian World Congress, there were quite a lot of official statements made by the President, the heads of the Verkhovna Rada and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who emphasized the need to intensify the bilateral relations with the Latin American countries in the political, economic and humanitarian spheres. At the moment we are witnessing another attempt (the third within the current President's term) to revise the key partners in Latin America, depending, as it is stated in the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada, on the attitude of some countries of the region to assessing the Russia's policy towards Ukraine. Based on this, Argentina was defined as our "special partner", and Mexico, Brazil and Peru as "promising partners". Also, it was mentioned a necessity to strengthen Ukraine's presence in the region by opening of a full-fledged diplomatic mission in Chile. The MPs, the MFA representatives, the First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine – Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine S. Kubiv during the presentation of the Export Strategy of Ukraine for 2017-2021 at the Verkhovna Rada mentioned for several times this region as a prospective one for the export potential of Ukraine.

Institutional Cooperation

The level of coordination between the various authorities highly depends on the lack of a clear strategy for the region. In particular, the effectiveness of the foreign diplomatic missions suffers from a weak staffing (with 1-3 employees at the Ukrainian embassies in Peru and Cuba, and the delay in appointing the ambassadors). There are also problems in implementing the Export Strategy announced by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. On July 4, 2017, the International Trade Council with advisory functions was created to coordinate work between the various agencies under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. However, there are already several similar bodies in Ukraine: the Council of Entrepreneurs within the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Export Promotion Office at the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine, the Exporters and Investors Council under the MFA of Ukraine. Nevertheless, in 2017, none of them had any thematic events on the promotion of the Ukrainian products to the markets of Latin America. Also, no results were achieved with the Law "On promotion of the of the large-scale expansion of the export of the Ukrainian producers through insurance, guarantees and making cheaper the export credit", dated January 20, 2016, which envisaged creation of the Export-Credit Agency (to be launched in the summer of 2017) aimed at the financial stimulation of the Ukrainian exports, including to the Latin American countries. In its place, the cooperation of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, the SSU and the MFA in an extradition of the former high-ranking official V. Kaskiv from Panama can be named as an example of successful cooperation using the foreign policy instruments.

Strategic Vision

In 2017, the Latin American direction at large was given insufficient attention, as it was in the previous years. Neither the region at large, nor single countries were mentioned in the Export Strategy of Ukraine for 2017-2021 developed by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, despite the general course on the restoration of the Ukraine's export potential, outlined in the Priority Governmental Action Plan of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine for 2017, the Action Plan on implementation of the Concept of promotion of Ukraine in the world and its interests in the global information space, dated June 7, 2017, and the search for new and expansion of the existing markets for the products sale (as it is noted in the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada).

Activities

In 2017, the intergovernmental contacts remained largely unsystematic, and the initiatives started a year ago did not receive their continuation. At the same time, the bilateral relations indicated some positive trends. In particular, the logical continuation of the intensification of the Ukraine – Argentina cooperation, which became seen in the fall of 2016, was a sidelines discussion held at the 72nd session of the UN GA by leaders of the MFAs on the possible timing of the President of Ukraine visit to Argentina. During the work of the Ukrainian government delegation at the 11th WTO conference (in Argentina), it was agreed to hold a videoconference "Ukraine – Brazil" in February 2018 and to resume the work of the Brazil-Ukraine Intergovernmental Commission on Cooperation.

The inter-parliamentary cooperation with Argentina and Brazil also became markedly intensive, with full credits coming to the leaders of the Ukrainian group on the inter-parliamentary relations, as well to the corresponding embassies. In 2017, the heads of the MFAs of Ukraine and Guatemala had some sidelines meetings during the international events. Also, the ambassadors of Ukraine to the states of the region met with the heads of the MFAs (Uruguay, Chile, Guatemala, Panama, Costa Rica), the Ministry of Defence of Chile, the Ministry of Economy of Guatemala, some local high officials and representatives of the business circles, and took part in the work of some international and regional forums. The cooperation between the local authorities of Ukraine (in particular, of the Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk regions, and Kyiv) and the related structures in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico also demonstrated the increase in interest. Ukraine also takes more active part in the international exhibitions held in the region (in particular, LAAD-2017 Defence & Security in Brazil, Petroleum Exhibition & Conference of Mexico "PECOM", and Mexico's International Aerospace Exhibition FAMEX). In the humanitarian sphere, one can say about more frequent study visits of the Ukrainian youth and schoolchildren to the countries of the region (Brazil and Argentina) under the charity programs. This year, the young Ukrainian diaspora representatives from Argentina and Brazil took part in the internship program at the Verkhovna Rada and the Ukrainian central media for the first time.

Due to the intensive work of the Ukrainian ambassadors in Argentina, Mexico and Brazil, the regional communities there learn more about Ukraine and the situation with the annexed Crimea and the occupied territories of the Donbas region through publications in the local media, participation in TV and radio shows, visits to the student and academic communities within the higher education institutions.

Among the negative trends, we would mention the low efficiency of the embassies of Ukraine in Peru and Cuba, which is due to the decrease in the number of employees and the lack of interest in holding meetings within the six existing joint Intergovernmental commissions on trade and the economic cooperation (Ukraine – Argentina, Ukraine – Brazil, Ukraine – Paraguay, Ukraine – Peru, Ukraine – Mexico, and Ukraine – Chile).

Results

The statement from the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada, saying about the "significant strengthening" of the Ukraine's positions in the region does not correspond to reality, also in the context of the continued lack of support from the key countries of the region in the issues related to the annexed Crimea. Among the notable results of cooperation with the countries of the region in 2017 one can name the following: the creation of a parliamentary group for the inter-parliamentary relations with Colombia and its head first visit to the country; the opening of the Honorary Consulate of Ukraine in Costa Rica and the branch of the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Argentina in the Republic of Chile, as well as the first in the history of Ukrainian independence high-profile extradition from Panama of a former high-ranking official, ex-head of the Ukraine Investment Promotion Office V. Kaskiv.

In January 2017, a business alliance "Ukraine – Mexico" was created with the participation of the representatives of the aviation, energy, and pharmaceutical business, which will promote intensification of trade, scientific and technical cooperation between two countries. In the trade and economic sphere there is a slight increase in the indices of the Ukrainian exports of goods and services to the countries of the region (the trade turnover for the period of January-September 2017 comprises almost \$240.2 million). The Ukrainian exports result significantly increased regarding the cooperation with Argentina, the Bahamas, Belize, Bermuda, Bolivia, Venezuela, Guyana, Haiti, Cayman Islands, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Peru, Puerto Rico, Suriname. There is also a slight increase in exports to Cuba, Costa Rica, Colombia, Panama, Paraguay, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Uruguay, Trinidad and Tobago. At the same time, there is a decrease of exports to the key partners of Ukraine in the region: Brazil, Mexico, Chile, as well as Guatemala, Antigua and Barbuda. Simultaneously, the exports results to the Virgin Islands, the Dominican Republic, and Ecuador took the plunge (with less than 20% of the previous year figures). Compared to 2017, the Ukrainian exports have been started to Grenada, Dominica, Barbados and Anguilla. The negative trade balances remained with the vast majority of the countries of the region, except for Cuba, Panama, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Haiti, Costa Rica, Belize, the Bahamas and the Virgin Islands.

SOUTH ASIA

C-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	2	2
Institutional cooperation	2	2
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	4	4
Results	3	3
General score	C-	C-

In 2017, Ukraine was more pragmatic about its cooperation with South Asian partners. In particular, we came to realize that we should not expect to engage these countries in active counteraction to Russian aggression. Instead, we should pay more attention to recreation of the image of Ukraine and economic cooperation. Cooperation with India and Bangladesh is focused on the development of mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation, contacts in the sphere of education, tourism, military and technical cooperation. There has been certain progress in legal framework development for cooperation; individual contacts have become more frequent. At the same time, in 2017 there was virtually no cooperation with other countries of the region – Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

Political Interest / Engagement

Traditionally, South Asia is not singled out as a separate direction of the foreign policy of Ukraine. Over the past year there were no harsh statements made as to lack of support for the Ukrainian position from countries of the region. It is an understanding that Ukraine is a promising partner, which is interested in development of cooperation.

Yet, in the Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada a separate reference was made to the relations with India, "which remain rather unmeaning". Members of the Parliament demonstrated lack of interest regarding cooperation with South Asia countries, with the exception of meeting between the Head of Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of India to Ukraine during which they discussed a possibility of having a presentation on prospects of the Ukrainian-Indian relations developments in the Ukrainian parliament.

Institutional Cooperation

It is worth mentioning that there is cooperation and mutual effort of the Ukrainian parliament and the MFA aimed at resuming Ukrainian-Indian dialogue. In view of the increasing potential of India, the importance of the country in various multilateral formats, traditions of the Ukrainian-Indian cooperation and the vast Indian market, Ukraine cannot afford to ignore such an important direction of its diplomatic activity, hence such joint effort must be assessed positively. Ukrainian Embassy to India is currently also serving as a mission to Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

Strategic Vision

In 2017 the region did not appear in the main state documents but at least a position of the Ukrainian government regarding relevant tasks of the Ukrainian diplomacy in South Asia was voiced. This refers primarily to the Ukrainian-Indian relations (during the official visit of P. Klimkin to Delhi). It is said about intensification of a political dialogue and activation of economic ties with the purpose of expanding cooperation in aircraft engineering, participation of the Ukrainian companies in modernization of industrial equipment of the Indian machine engineering and metallurgy industries. Other promising industries include energy, transport, agriculture and information technologies.

While in the relations with India, the emphasis is made on the economic side of cooperation, in case of Pakistan we are talking about traditional military and technical sphere and importance of cooperation in information policy.

India and Bangladesh were mentioned among the top-20 markets in the approved Export Strategy of Ukraine 2017, which can demonstrate quick results in case the right tools and instruments of work with them are chosen.

Activities

In January 2017 First Vice Prime Minister – Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine S. Kubiv participated in the 23rd Partnership Summit – Sustained Growth of the States Economies in the Global Economic Order – in New Delhi, during which he had meetings not only with the Indian ministers but also with the Minister of Commerce of Nepal R. G. Thakali. In September, for the first time in the history of bilateral relations, Ukrainian Trade mission was visiting India, headed by the Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade – Trade Representative of Ukraine N. Mykolska and Deputy Minister of Agrarian Policy and Food O. Trofimtseva.

In October 2017, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin paid a visit to the Republic of India. In the course of discussions, including with the Minister of External Affairs of India S. Swaraj, a whole spectrum of bilateral relations amid global and regional problems was discussed. The parties agreed on the necessity to intensify political dialogue and made essential plans to have high-level visits in 2018. On a separate note, they talked about visible intensification of bilateral economic cooperation and business contacts. On November 8-10, 2017, as part of their visit to India, the delegation from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, headed by the Deputy Minister R. Hreba, had meetings with the First Deputy Minister for Human Resource Development of India S. K. Sharma, Head of the Medical Council of India J. Mehta, and others. The parties mentioned the need to improve bilateral legal framework and to simplify consular procedures, considering a number of students, who want to study in Ukraine (primarily in medical and engineering schools). Moreover, the Ukrainian delegation participated in the International Aerospace Exhibition Aero India 2017 (Bangalore, India, in February), during which they had meetings with high officials from the Ministry of Defence of India and commanders of the different types of forces of India, as well as a deputy commander of Air forces of Bangladesh and business circles of India.

The specificity of the Ukrainian-Pakistani relations remains traditional. After the first visit to Pakistan of the Minister of Defence of Ukraine S. Poltorak in November 2016, the military and technical cooperation remains the impetus for bilateral relations between the countries. The Pakistani delegation was represented on the highest level during DEFEXPO in October 2017 in Kyiv. The delegation from the IRP was one of the few participants of the exhibition, which did not only show interest in the Ukrainian products but also represented their own (for instance, bulletproof vests). Cooperation in the sphere of culture was extended in context of celebration of the 25th anniversary of the bilateral relations and the 70th anniversary of independence of the countries. A number of events was organized – from Yoga Day to the celebration of the Non-Violence Day on October 02, 2017, in Kyiv.

Meetings with representatives of Bangladesh took place on the sidelines of international events. Namely, Vice Prime Minister S. Kubiv had a meeting with the Minister of Commerce of the People's Republic of Bangladesh T. Ahmedas as a part of

the 11th Conference of the WTO Ministers (Buenos-Aires, in December), where they discussed increase of product flow and prospects of bilateral cooperation in machine engineering, agriculture and infrastructure development.

Results

In view of the increased interest in earning degrees from Ukrainian universities and a real profit from such cooperation, Ukraine made certain steps forward (namely, introduced an additional consular position at the embassy). As a result, the number of students from India in Ukraine almost doubled last year and currently makes up to 12 thousand. Another positive achievement of 2017 lies in the fact that India was included into the list of countries the citizens of which can receive visas upon their arrival to Ukraine. This has increased the tourist flow from India and will work for the future. In addition, in July Ratification Instruments of the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters were exchanged, signed back on December 2012 (according to the provisions of the Treaty it becomes effective only upon exchange of the Ratification Instruments).

Attesting to the importance of cooperation with Pakistan was signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in the sphere of defence on February 20, 2017, during the Defence Exhibition IDEX-2017 in Abu Dhabi. It foresees cooperation in production, reconstruction and modification of armoured vehicles among others. A number of projects have been implemented in the sphere of education and culture (round tables, lectures from ambassadors, joint cultural events) both with the Indian and Pakistani partners.

Pakistan has kept a principled stance as to positive neutrality on the matter of the Russian aggression against Ukraine and occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (unlike Indian position). Namely, during a vote on the UN Resolution on Situation of Human Rights in Crimea both in 2016 and 2017 India voted against, while Pakistan abstained.

Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and Agreement on Prisoners Transfer between Ukraine and Sri Lanka became effective (the agreements were signed in December 2016).

At the same time, we may note the virtual absence of activity and interest in the development of relations with other countries of the region, namely Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. In general, this state of affairs does not correspond to the interests of Ukraine and requires significant additional effort on the part of Ukrainian diplomats.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

D+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	3	2
Strategic vision	2	2
Activities	3	2
Results	3	3
General score	C-	D+

Top leaders of Ukraine are interested in expanding opportunities of cooperation with countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. Yet, the scope of measures implemented to strengthen Ukrainian positions in the region remains insufficient. African direction is beyond the focus of state documents of a strategic character as there is no consistent policy regarding this region. The basis for the bilateral relations is primarily trade and economic cooperation. Even though the volume of trade between Ukraine and African countries is increasing, it is still insufficient for the relations to move to the next level.

Political interest/engagement

Programme documents of parliamentary political parties lack provisions regarding relations between Ukraine and the Sub-Saharan Africa countries. The region remains beyond the focus of Ukrainian political actors. At the same time, higher officials of the Verkhovna Rada represented by the Speaker A. Parubiy and First Vice Speaker I. Gerashchenko have stressed the necessity to expand inter-parliamentary cooperation with certain African countries during their parliamentary speeches. Head of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko continues to play an important role in articulation of a thesis on the necessity to expand bilateral relations between Ukraine and the countries of African continent.

In his speeches, President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko mentioned that African markets pose interest for Ukrainian business. Namely, in October 2017 he stressed that Ukraine was interested in implementing unique experience and logistic opportunities of Malta in order to promote Ukrainian products on African markets, which would help expand the geography of sales for Ukrainian agricultural and machine engineering products.

The Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President to the Verkhovna Rada “On Domestic and Foreign Situation of Ukraine in 2017” refers to the extensive potential for cooperation between Ukraine and African countries, more than 30 of which have the EU Association Agreements of various levels. The Report also mentioned that technological development of Africa correlates with capacities of Ukraine, and therefore Ukrainian companies could build on this continent agricultural processing facilities, agricultural products storage facilities, construct basic infrastructure, wood-processing plants, hydro and thermal heat plants.

Institutional Cooperation

In 2017, a decline in cooperation between governmental agencies regarding strengthening of ties with the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa could be seen. The Verkhovna Rada was most actively involved in intensification of dialogue with the countries of Africa. This served as stimuli for inter-parliamentary cooperation. Under the auspices of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, three Friendship Groups were established – with Ethiopia, Republic of South Africa and the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

In order to strengthen ties with African partners in economy and education, the MFA, the MEDT, the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine coordinated their activities. The abovementioned institutions were organizers of the Annual Africa Day in May 2017.

Strategic vision

The issues of legislative consolidation of long-term objectives for the development of relations between Ukraine and Sub-Saharan Africa countries remain overlooked. State documents of strategic character approved in 2017 do not mention Africa.

Ukrainian Export Strategy 2017-2021 approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in December 2017 refers to a single country of the African continent: Egypt is mentioned in the list of TOP-20 markets of potential quick results in case proper forms and instruments used. At the same time, Nigeria, which was part of the 10 promising countries list and for which a strategic action plan for 5 years should be developed, did not make it into the final version of the Export Strategy.

Activities

Political contacts in 2017 were mostly conducted at the level of the Verkhovna Rada leadership, ministers of foreign affairs, their deputies and ambassadors.

In 2017, a breakthrough happened in relations between Ukraine and Kenya. In May 2017, for the first time in history of the Ukrainian-Kenyan relations, a delegation from the Senate of Kenya headed by the speaker E. Ethuro visited Kyiv. Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy stated that accreditation of the Kenyan ambassador to one of the European countries in concurrently to Ukraine or opening of the reciprocal Kenyan Embassy in Kyiv would result in more efficient exercising of national interests. In September, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin conducted a working meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Kenya A. Mohamed. The issues of trade and economic cooperation were in the focus of attention. In November, State Secretary of the MFA of Ukraine A. Zayats participated in the official inauguration ceremony of the re-elected President of Kenya U. Kenyatta.

MFA also focused its attention on such countries as Ethiopia, RSA, Sudan, Somalia and Algeria. The Embassy of Ukraine to Nigeria intensified its work in order to neutralize the risk of possible closing of the Nigerian mission in Kyiv.

As part of the Ministry of Defence activities, 382 Ukrainian military personnel serve in Africa within the UN peacekeeping missions: The UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the UN Mission in Liberia, the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei and the UN Mission in Southern Sudan.

Results

In general, there has been no significant progress in relations between Ukraine and the countries of Sub-Sahara Africa. Against stabilization of military and political situation in countries of the region, achievements of the Ukrainian side could have been much more sufficient than they are. This refers both to political and economic sphere.

Diplomatic presence of Ukraine in the countries of Sub-Sahara Africa has expanded at the expense of two honorary consulates, which opened their doors in the Seychelles (June 2017) and in Mozambique (October 2017). At the same time, three Ukrainian embassies in the region have no ambassadors appointed (diplomatic missions in RSA, Angola and Ethiopia). Voting during the UN General Assembly on the Resolution on the Situation of Human Rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol in December 2017 exposed that Ukrainian diplomacy must put more efforts into work with countries of Sub-Sahara Africa. Only three countries of the region supported Ukraine on this crucial issue: Botswana, Liberia and the Seychelles. Further, because of the activity of the Russian diplomacy both at the UN level and in relations with countries directly, Kyiv is having problems with such countries as Burundi, Eritrea, RSA, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

There is a 30% increase of the Ukrainian export to the countries of Sub-Sahara Africa. The share of region in total Ukrainian export based on the results of 2017 is 2,22%. Herein, trade balance is positive for Ukraine and makes \$378 million. Simultaneously, total volume of the Ukrainian export to all countries of Africa, Maghreb included, reduced by 13%. Increase of Ukrainian export was recorded in Togo (16 times), Zambia (8.8 times), Liberia (7.4 times), Mauritania (5 times), Burkina Faso (4.3 times), Cameroon (2.5 times) and Ghana (2.4 times).

The largest consumers of the Ukrainian products among countries of the region are Ethiopia (11.4% from the total volume of the Ukrainian export to the countries of Sub-Sahara Africa), Nigeria (9.8%), Senegal (9.7%), Kenya (8.2%), RSA (8.1%), Cote d'Ivoire (7%), Mauritania (7%) and Ghana (6.4%). Reduction in trade turnover was observed with such countries as Congo (Brazzaville), Nigeria, Gabon, Guinea, Djibouti, Malawi, Central African Republic and Southern Sudan.

The main items in Ukrainian export are still agricultural and metal products. In its turn, Ukrainian import consists primarily of different types of raw material, agricultural products and energy resources. In 2017, Ukrainian energy company DTEK Energo contracted 675,000 tons of anthracite coal from RSA. As of late 2017, 600,000 tons of African coal was unloaded at the Ukrainian Yuzhnyi Port.

Students from the countries of Sub-Sahara Africa continue to make a significant share among foreigners who come to Ukraine to study. More than 12,000 citizens of African countries study at the Ukrainian universities, including those from Nigeria, DR of Congo, Guinea, Sierra-Leone, Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire. A significant achievement in social and humanitarian sphere were Ukrainian Days in Cape Town (RSA) held in February-April 2017.

CENTRAL ASIA

D-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	2	1
Institutional cooperation	2	2
Strategic vision	2	2
Activities	3	2
Results	2	2
General score	D+	D-

Absence of the direct geographic access of Ukraine to the region, internal political and geopolitical agenda of the Central Asia countries and aggressive foreign policy of the Russian Federation against Ukraine keep on restraining Ukraine's presence in Central Asia. So far, there is a trend to put on hold and further reduce cooperation in bilateral interstate relations of Ukraine with the countries of the region.

Political Interest / Engagement

Ukrainian political interest in the region of Central Asia comparing to previous years is at a critically low level. Thus, in current programs of the Ukrainian parliamentary political parties, a range of topics of the relations developing with entities and countries of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) is almost absent. There no countries of Central Asia as partners or a strategic region for Ukraine in official speeches of the Ukrainian politicians and internal political discourse. In fact, one may confidently state that Ukraine, due to a number of circumstances, loses opportunities for political dialogue and economic relations with the countries of the post-Soviet Central Asia. The former economic, political and humanitarian presence of Ukraine is replaced by the presence of players having quite a considerable geopolitical, geo-economic and geo-cultural influence on the countries of the Central Asian region, viz.: Russia, China, and Turkey.

Political dialogue with authoritarian regimes of the countries of the region is not considered by domestic political elites as a process of personal political investment due to the elites change in Ukraine and critical decrease of Ukrainian business circles' cooperation with the countries of the region. Limited interest of Ukraine in the countries of the region is largely determined by the geographical distance and the Russian transit blockade of traditional ways of Ukraine's connection with Central Asia. In the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 2017, Central Asia as a region with Ukrainian interests is present only in the context of the "connecting link" for transit and transportation connection with China expansion ("One Belt – One Road" initiative).

Institutional Cooperation

The level of activities coordination directed at cooperation with the Central Asian countries between the Ukrainian governmental institutes may be defined as a low one. Let us indicate that in the format of bilateral relations, the Ukrainian institutes do not demonstrate any noticeable coordination, but there are no open conflicts or opposition between them in the current issues of cooperation with the countries of Central Asia as well. Another problem worth noting is absence of ambassadors in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan so far, which, definitely, makes political dialogue and economic cooperation with those countries more complicated.

Strategic Vision

The region of Central Asia has largely lost its strategic attractiveness for the Ukrainian elites and has shifted to the periphery as far as maintenance of the foreign political and economic relations is concerned. The strategic package (the Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy", the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, the Sustainable Development Strategy

“Ukraine-2020”, the Strategic Defence Bulletin of Ukraine, the Export Strategy of Ukraine: Strategic Trade Development Roadmap 2017 – 2021) contains no mentions of the Central Asian countries. No context for strategic cooperation has been created so far and is not expected due to the passive position of the countries of Central Asia in relation to the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

Activities

The reserved position of the Central Asian countries as to the Russian annexation of Crimea and absence of condemnation of the RF's aggressive actions, first of all, does not leave any efficient prospects for Ukraine's presence in joint regional and political projects, and secondly, limits cooperation within the projects, in which Russia is involved. This makes the opportunities for further institutional cooperation between Ukraine and the countries of the region scarcer. The loss of interest by Ukraine in the Eurasian Economic Community, reduced presence of Ukraine in the CIS and reserved attitude towards the Shanghai Cooperation Organization focuses cooperation with the countries of Central Asia only on bilateral formats, which mostly filled with issues of economic and humanitarian cooperation.

Due to the overall level of relations between Ukraine and the countries of the Central Asian region, cooperation focuses at the level of diplomatic missions, some executive authorities and business entities. During 2017, there was no high-level dialogue between political leaders of the countries of Central Asia and Ukraine, and there were no sufficiently active relations between the executive and legislative authorities either. The most significant interstate event at the bilateral level was the 13th Joint Inter-Governmental Ukraine-Kazakhstan Economic Cooperation Commission meeting (June 14-16, 2017) in Astana.

Results

2017 was not a year of stagnation overcoming in foreign political and economic relations between Ukraine and the countries of Central Asia. Vice versa, but for some economically attractive projects, the volume of export and import of goods and services between Ukraine and the countries of Central Asia do not just remain insignificant, but also a stable trend towards further reduction in mutual business activity remains there. In fact, absence of the joint economic and political agenda leads to the situation of Ukraine's withdrawal from the region in the mid-term prospective.

An important indicator of the deficit of the prospective relations with the Central Asia countries is an already established foreign policy position of those countries in the issues of the Russian occupation of Crimea. The same as in previous cases, negative consolidated voting both at the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly (November 14, 2017), and at the UN General Assembly (November 19, 2017) for the resolution “The Situation of Human Rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and

the City of Sevastopol (Ukraine)” is exemplary here. Thus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan (Turkmenistan did not participate in the voting) voted against the updated resolution on human rights in the occupied Crimea. Traditionally, such a standpoint is explained by the authoritarian nature of power of the post-Soviet Central Asian regimes and their reserved attitude towards the issues of human rights in the international dimension. However, the results of voting of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in the UN were largely due to the absence of the Ukrainian ambassadors to these states. At the same time, the Russian influence on the regimes of the above-mentioned countries and absence of efficient Ukrainian presence in the region closes this space for further prospective cooperation with Ukraine.

BLACK SEA REGION

C



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	2	2
Activities	3	4
Results	3	3
General score	C-	C

In 2017, as well as a year before, the Black Sea region continued to be considered by all the foreign policy decision-making centers in Ukraine almost entirely in terms of the security. It is quite natural that in 2017 the realization of the Ukraine's foreign policy in the Black Sea region largely was connected with finding the solutions on the level above regional. First of all, this concerns the search for the non-regional mechanisms for confronting the Russian aggression.

In the context of the long-term occupation of the Crimea and armed tensions in the East of the country, Ukraine focused on the further steps towards rapprochement with NATO and its members from the Black Sea countries, as well as on an attempt to closely cooperate with the BSEC, headed by Ukraine from July 1 to December 31, 2017.

Political Interest / Engagement

The state institutions and policies of Ukraine, with varying degrees of perseverance, paid their attention to the military and energy security strengthening, development of the bilateral cooperation with some countries of the region, and establishing of the economic cooperation within the framework of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). Depending on the political orientation of the parliamentary forces, during the year, each parliamentary party tried to propose its algorithm for protecting the "Black Sea interests" in the specified areas (the Petro Poroshenko Bloc and the People's Front representatives were rather active in this). However, unlike the previous year, there were hardly any political differences in their views on the Black Sea vector of the Ukraine's foreign policy.

The Black Sea region, as a separate foreign policy unit, was not mentioned in the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada "On the Internal and the External Situation of Ukraine in 2017", as it was not mentioned in 2016 too, although some of the President's statements made prospects of the Crimea return, that could also be considered a part of the Black Sea policy.

However, the political circles do not lose their interest in the region, in spite of the ongoing construction of the Kerch Bridge by Russia, and the "Turkish Stream" by Russia in tandem with Turkey. For example, at the end of September the President of Ukraine instructed to sue Russia for the environmental damage caused by the Kerch Bridge construction. Also, the Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine V. Omelyan repeatedly emphasized that the international partners' pressure on Russia, combined with some additional sanctions, could help to stop the construction of the Kerch Bridge.

During the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey to Kyiv in February, the President of Ukraine expressed his concern about the Turkey's cooperation with Russia in the energy sector. M. Çavuşoğlu replied that the "Turkish Stream" had nothing against Ukraine. However, in October, the head of Naftogaz A.Kobolev made a point regarding the assessment of the loss caused by the launch of the "Turkish Stream" first string—\$0.5 billion per year.

Institutional Cooperation

In 2017, the cooperation between the various Ukrainian government institutions (in particular, the Administration of the President of Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Cabinet of Ministers, the Verkhovna Rada) revealed closer ties than in the previous years. On the one hand, this may be due to the absence of any serious differences in views on the regional issues with the unifying solutions. On the other hand, the issue largely remained in the hands of the executive branch.

The representation of Ukraine in the regional organizations was further enhanced by the practical cooperation of the Verkhovna Rada, its relevant committees and the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while the Cabinet of Ministers in cooperation with the Administration of the President of Ukraine had an opportunity to promptly defend the Ukraine's interests within the framework of the BSEC.

Strategic Vision

As in the previous years, the analysis of the Ukraine's foreign policy in the Black Sea region is complicated because of the absence of the “Black Sea doctrine” in the Ukrainian foreign policy. In 2017, there appeared no any new complex approaches in the search for the effective solutions for the pressing problems of the region, either bilaterally nor multilaterally.

Despite the fact that the 2015 National Security Strategy of Ukraine had some mentions of the Black Sea region in the context of the European integration of Ukraine, the de-occupation of the Crimea, plans for denuclearization and demilitarization of the region, and the GUAM and BSEC activities, the 2017 Governmental Action Plan has no any direct reference to the Black Sea region or the Black Sea at all, though the issue of the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea is rather wide.

Activities

The state authorities' activity within the framework of the BSEC, headed by Ukraine since July 1 for a half-year period, in 2017 was quite noticeable and logical. In July 2017, the Consul General of Ukraine in Istanbul O. Gaman was appointed as a new representative of Ukraine at the BSEC. In late November, the MPs of the Verkhovna Rada were quite in time with their amendment to the final version of the Declaration of the 50th General Assembly of the PABSEC, saying about the need to promote the restoration of the territorial integrity of the BSEC countries.

In September, the First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine S. Kubov discussed with the Secretary General of the Permanent International Secretariat of the BSEC M. Christidis an issue of a closer interaction for the implementation of the BSEC Joint Declaration signed in May in Istanbul, and the problems of creating a regional FTA in the Black Sea region. Already within the framework of the Ukraine – NATO cooperation, for the first time during the Rose-Roth regional seminar, its key theme was security and stability in the Black Sea region.

In October, with the direct participation of the Ukrainian delegation, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Bucharest adopted a “Resolution on stability and security strengthening in the Black Sea region” with an amendment provided by the Ukrainian delegation and envisaging the continuation of the strategic discussion with Ukraine and Georgia on the issue of the Black Sea region security within NATO.

The activities of the Cabinet of Ministers were dominated by the issue of ensuring military and economic security in the Black Sea region. Traditionally, a great attention was paid to the multinational naval exercises "Sea Breeze 2017".

Results

2017 became a milestone for the relations within the Black Sea region, taking into account the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the relations with a majority of the countries. It also demonstrated almost full support of the Ukrainian interests by the regional actors, at least at the political level. This was reflected by the Ukraine successful chairmanship in the BSEC.

However, only some tactical issues were brought into practice (for example, in March in Kyiv, the GUAM member states with the participation of the Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman signed the Protocol between the customs administrations of GUAM Member States on mutual recognition of certain results of customs procedures regarding goods and vehicles moved across the state borders).

At the same time, some fails occurred: for example, an attempt to draw the international partners' attention to an idea of putting some pressure on the Russian Federation to stop the Kerch Bridge construction, or to convince the countries of the Black Sea region to consider the implementation of the Turkish-Russian project "Turkish Stream" as an inappropriate one.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

OSCE

United Nations

Council of Europe

B-

B+

A-



OSCE

B-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	3
Institutional cooperation	4	3
Strategic vision	4	4
Activities	5	4
Results	4	4
General score	B+	B-

In 2017, cooperation between Ukraine and the OSCE was marked with a high level of contacts, visits and interactions with the key OSCE institutions. After appointment of the new Secretary General, the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), the Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the ODIHR Director, they paid their visits to Ukraine. Same as previous years before, there was a high level of the bilateral cooperation realized by means of the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) activities, and the Ukrainian representatives taking part in the Trilateral contact group on conflict resolution in the Donbas area. Due to the reasons beyond the Ukraine's control, the OSCE SMM could not complete its mandate in full, and monitor Ukraine – Russia borderline and the temporarily occupied Crimea. The OSCE was actively used as a political platform for the talks on the Russian aggression against Ukraine and consolidation around the issues of providing support to Ukraine.

Political Interest / Engagement

The Petro Poroshenko Bloc “Solidarity” and the “Samopomich” (Self-Reliance) party had the highest political interest in cooperation with the OSCE, same as in 2016, due to their leaders’ and representatives’ participation in the Trilateral contact group on conflict resolution in the Donbas area (the Deputy Speaker I. Gerashchenko) and being members of the parliamentary committees on Foreign Affairs and European Integration. Other factions demonstrated much lower interest in the foreign policy agenda and the OSCE role in it.

Institutional Cooperation

Again, as it was before, in 2017, the President of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, with a leading role of the MFA, acted in full institutional coherence. The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine worked in concert with the Ombudsman Office of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. In 2017, the implementation of the ODIHR’s “Strengthening Dialogue among Civil Society and with Key Governmental Stakeholders in Ukraine” project’s final phase contributed to the promotion of cooperation between the government and the parliamentary institutions, as well as discussions on the issues of the political system reforms.

Due to the unprepared communication by the Ministry of Education and the specialized committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on the Law of Ukraine “On Education”, in particular, on the Article 7 concerning the language issue, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs became a key anti-crisis communicator both with countries expressing their claims to Ukraine regarding national minorities’ rights, and with the HCNM too.

Strategic Vision

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Ukraine and the OSCE on the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission deployment, signed in Vienna on April 14, 2014, remains one of the main strategic documents regulating the parties’ interaction (also defining coordination with other OSCE institutions) in the context of the counteraction to the Russian aggression.

The project activities of the OSCE in Ukraine are based on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Ukraine and the OSCE on establishment of a new form of cooperation, signed in 1999.

Activities

After the appointment of the new leadership of the OSCE institution (such as the Secretary General, the ODIHR Director the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Representative on Freedom of the Media,), they paid their visits to Ukraine.

In addition, at the beginning of the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship in 2017, the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Kurz, visited the ATO zone during his staying in Ukraine.

In 2017, the OSCE SMM reports remained to be an important source of information on the impact and consequences of the Russian aggression in the occupied territories of the Donbas region, and being presented during the OSCE Permanent Council meetings, where they were a source of information for the member states.

In December, within a meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Vienna, a ministerial level event devoted to the human rights situation in the occupied Crimea, and the Kremlin's political prisoners was held, with A. Chygoz and I. Umerov recently released from the Russian captivity attending the meeting. This event gave a powerful political signal about the Ukraine's international support and the preservation of the Crimea issue in the international agenda.

Results

One of the key results of the Trilateral Contact Group work, in particular, in the humanitarian dimension, was the release of 73 Ukrainian citizens, who were hostages in the separate districts of Donetsk and Lugansk regions (December 27, 2017).

Due to the work of the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna, the Special Monitoring Mission's mandate was extended (as well as a mandate of the mission on the border with Russia at the checkpoint Gukovo). At the same time, due to the factors beyond control of the MFA of Ukraine, in 2017, the SMM's mandate was not completed in full, due to the lack of access to the Ukraine – Russia part of the border, as well as to the annexed Crimea.

In spite of the resolution adopted by the Verkhovna Rada, calling on the OSCE on the inadmissibility of ignoring the illegal elections in the occupied Crimea in 2016 (despite the fact that the ODIHR did not observe the Crimean elections, the published report contained neither their political, nor legal analysis), as well as the request for the development of the methodology to assess the compliance of the elections process with the elections standards in case when one of the Member States applies aggression to another one, the OSCE/ODIHR provided no public response. At the same time, in 2017, the representatives of this institution had several working visits to assess the implementation of the recommendations based on the results of the Presidential and Parliamentary elections in Ukraine in 2014.

At the summer session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Minsk, the resolution on "Restoration of Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of Ukraine" was adopted, initiated by the Ukrainian parliamentary delegation and condemning the fact of the Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine, the temporary occupation by Russia of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, and the Russia's aggression against Ukraine in the Donbas region. The Minsk Declaration calls the Russian Federation to cease the hostilities in Ukraine, condemns the persecution and intimidation of the OSCE SMM observers in the separate districts of Donetsk and Lugansk regions, and for the first time in the OSCE documents says about the "Russian hybrid troops".

UNITED NATIONS

B+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	5	4
Strategic vision	4	4
Activities	5	5
Results	5	5
General score	A-	B+

The second year of a non-permanent membership of Ukraine in the United Nations Security Council marked continuation of extensive work as to involvement of the UN in Ukrainian with internal problems (first of all, the deployment of peace-keeping mission), as well as regarding crisis situations resolution in other parts of the world. Ukraine managed to not only keep the Ukrainian question on the agenda of the UN institutions but also to achieve a positive result in approval of the important UNGA resolution on Crimea and UNSC resolution on protection of critical structure.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2017 significant attention was paid both to the activities of Ukraine within the UN and to cooperation between Ukraine and the UN in resolution of certain issues of counteraction to Russian aggression, primarily deployment of the UN peacekeeping mission in Ukraine. The President focused his attention on the last issue in his annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada. Participation of the President in the Opening of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly in September highlighted a strong interest in activities within the UN. The President, in particular, talked about the necessity to reform the UN, the situation around Ukraine and peacekeeping mission to Donbas.

At the same time, there is no reference to cooperation with the UN in the Analytical Report to the Address of the President and the Government Priority Action Plan 2017. In its turn, the Analytical Report paid attention to institutional capabilities of the UN for the conflict resolution in the East of Ukraine, to the Crimea's question and international legal mechanisms of the UN.

The attitudes toward the UN are not controversial among different political parties. The priorities of Ukraine as a non-permanent member of the UNSC and participation in other sessions of the organization were on the agenda of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs (October, November).

Institutional Cooperation

The UN agenda and activities of Ukraine within the UN system do not cause disagreements between different branches of government. At the same time, the UN sometimes disappears from the agenda of central government agencies. For example, the Government Action Plan 2017 mentions "continuation of participation in international peace keeping and security operations under the auspices of NATO" as one of the objectives, yet it does not say anything about participation in the UN missions. All in all, the UN is only mentioned in context of other organizations as a part of the task of "ensuring efficient use of all available mechanisms and instruments of international organizations aiming to consolidate international support for Ukraine in counteraction to Russian aggression" and also regarding compliance with several UN Conventions in environmental and health care spheres.

The Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the UN played a vital role in 2017. It is worth mentioning the decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine (February) regarding protection of critical infrastructure, which was a consequence result of the UNSC resolution on this matter, the discussion on which had been initiated by Ukraine.

Strategic Vision

In 2017, strategic vision of the Ukraine's work within the UN did not change. Most of the current strategic documents of Ukraine, with the exception of the Law "On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy", have references of the UN. In view of the Ukrainian membership in the UNSC in 2016-2017, the strategic vision was reinforced by announced priorities, while limiting them only to the priority actions within the Security Council. At the same time, Peacekeeping Strategy of Ukraine is outdated and does not correspond to the current situation.

Activities

Among the varied and multilevel activities in 2017, the following should be mentioned.

As part of the Ukraine presiding over UNSC in February 2017, it was managed to draw attention to the topic of conflicts in Europe. In particular, under the presidency of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin an open ministerial level debate was held in New York. In March 2017, under the Ukrainian initiative an Arria-Formula SC meeting was organized on the topic – Hybrid War as a Threat to International Peace and Safety, which was the first discussion of the problem at the UN level, and in April, on the topic – National Security Implications of Climate Change and Sea-Level Rise. Starting from closed consultations on aggravation of the situation in Donbas (January 31) to the UNSC meetings – the Ukrainian question was always among the priority issues.

Ukrainian high officials were present during many UNSC meetings in New York. Namely, the President of Ukraine participated in the Opening of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly and High Level Meeting of the UNSC regarding reform of the UN peace-keeping missions (September), Vice-Prime Minister I. Klymchuk-Tsintsadze took part in open debate – Women, Peace and Security (October), Minister of Foreign Affairs P. Klimkin participated in a ministerial meeting dedicated to the problems of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (September). Among the UNSC meetings' participants there were Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs: V. Prystayko – on DPRK and Somalia (March), S. Kyslytsia – on fighting human trafficking in conflicts (March), human rights and conflict prevention, the situation in the Middle East (April) and others.

The Ukrainian delegation was continued to pay significant attention to the settlement of conflicts in Africa. Namely, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the UN V. Yelchenko was active in his role as a Head of UN Security Council Sanctions Committee on Central African Republic and as a Head of UN Security Council Committee established pursuant to the resolution 1591 he visited the Republic of Sudan (May). Ukrainian diplomats participated in the first ever visit of the UNSC to the Lake Chad Basin countries (March). Under the initiative of Ukraine, a joint meeting of the three UN SC sanctions committees took place to discuss Sudan, South Sudan and Libya.

The activities of missions in Vienna and Geneva remain less public and coordinate work within specialized UN agencies.

In 2017, 448 military personnel from the Ukrainian Armed Forces and 47 police personnel were representing Ukraine in the UN peace in the DRC, Liberia, South Sudan, Kosovo, Cyprus, Abyei Area (Sudan), which is one of the lowest number over the past ten years.

Results

Most of tasks and priorities set for the Ukraine's activity within the UN in 2017 have been completed. Russia's blocking of some resolutions adoption did not have a significant impact on the efficiency of drawing attention to the problems of illegal occupation of Crimea and security in the East of Ukraine. Thus, at the UNGA Third Committee (November 14, 2017) and UNGA (December 19, 2017), Ukraine for the second year in a row got a positive vote on the Resolution on Situation of Human Rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine).

In addition, upon the initiative of Ukraine for the first time ever the UN Security Council passed a resolution on the protection of critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks, which had 41 states as co-authors.

Among the positive results, we should mention International Court of Justice approval of the provisional measures of the in the cases Ukraine v. Russian Federation.

A negative outcome of the possible deployment of the UN peace-keeping mission in Ukraine (due to the Russian actions) cannot affect the positive assessment of the work of Ukraine within the UN, since it had been expected, and the partner's support level that Ukraine attracted on this matter was unprecedented.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

A-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	5
Institutional cooperation	4	5
Strategic vision	3	4
Activities	5	4
Results	5	5
General score	B	A-

Compared to 2016, the Ukraine's activity in the Council of Europe was not proactive but rather responding to the problem issues (for example, to the consequences of the Law "On Education" adoption, used by some neighbouring countries as a bilateral relations trigger). At the same time, due to the consolidated position of the Ukrainian delegation, during the spring session of the PACE it became possible to intensify discussions about the PA leaders' abuse of powers and changes to the institution rules, that could be considered as a proactive approach. The Council of Europe 2015-2017 Action Plan for Ukraine was realised as planned.

Political Interest / Engagement

Same as previous year, the level of the Ukrainian delegation activities in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe remained high. The overwhelming majority of the parliamentary factions had a consolidated position on protecting interests at the Assembly sessions. In this context, the activities of the Petro Poroshenko Bloc “Solidarity” should be mentioned specially.

Institutional Cooperation

In 2017, the number of the institutions involved in the cooperation with the Council of Europe was the same as in 2016: the Ministry of Justice, the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations, the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine, and the local self-government authorities. Among those that joined in 2017, we would mark the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, in regard to the implementation of the Law of Ukraine "On Education". The MFA remains the leading institution supporting the relevant draft resolutions development by the Ukrainian delegation to the PACE.

Strategic Vision

As in the previous assessment year, the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy”, and the Strategy-2020 do not mention directly the strategic need for the cooperation with the Council of Europe. However, the goals set in these documents can be found implemented within the 2015-2017 Action Plan for Ukraine adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (meaning the constitutional reform, good governance, electoral reform, anti-corruption and money laundering preventing efforts, cybersecurity promotion, monitoring and support for the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy and its Action Plan, development of a comprehensive National Strategy for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons and its Action Plan, public television and broadcasting system reform). The Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories developed a Strategy of Integration of Internally Displaced Persons, as written in the Cooperation Action Plan between Ukraine and the Council of Europe.

Activities

The spring PACE session (in April) and the Ukrainian delegation activity raised the issue of the Assembly's rules compliance to the facts of life to a new level, in particular, concerning the Assembly President's resignation given his actions noncompliant with the ethical standards.

The autumn PACE session (in October) intensified the national minorities rights issue due to the signing of the Law of Ukraine "On Education". The urgently organized debate "The new Ukrainian law on education: A serious obstacle to teaching the national minorities' mother tongues" became a major challenge for the Ukrainian diplomacy. During the debate, the PACE members from Romania, France, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Moldova asked controversial and sometimes provocative questions about the effectiveness of the Minsk agreements' implementation, the anti-corruption court creation, and the establishment of a dialogue with the occupied territories.

During the year, in the framework of the CoE, a number of political and informational events on the reforms in Ukraine and on the human rights situation in the occupied Crimea were held.

Results

Despite the fact that the role of the Ukrainian delegation should not be considered a decisive in the resignation of the PACE President P. Agramunt, it was a proposition to the Assembly to assess ethics of the human rights respect due to the P. Agramunt's visit to Syria with the Russian delegation that served as a trigger for more serious reforms of the Assembly and its decisions making process, as well as the P. Agramunt resignation at the autumn PACE session.

The conclusion of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, as of December 8, 2017, concerning the Law of Ukraine "On Education", does not contain any unambiguously negative interpretation of the Article 7 provisions. At the same time, it recommends providing maximum flexibility, stated in Clause 4 of Article 7, while adopting the implementing legislation, to ensure a sufficient level of teaching of various EU languages for the minorities. In addition, another important recommendation was to start a dialogue on the language issue in education with all stakeholders, as well as to improve the quality of the state language teaching for the minorities' representatives. As it can be seen from these recommendations, they have a space for compromise but the Article 7 implementation remains a contentious factor for some neighbour countries. At the same time, Hungary finds the recommendations on the transitional period prolongation prior to the Article 7 provisions implementation as a victory and its position taken into account.

In May, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a decision on the situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine), recognizing the Russia's responsibility according to the international law and international human rights law, and calling for the Russian authorities to fulfil their obligations and to stop the repression.

In November, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted an important decision on Ukraine, where the Ukrainian reforms and support in fight against the Russian aggression were highly rated.

In October, the President of Ukraine opened a star embedded in the sidewalks near the Council of Europe building to honour the Heavenly Hundred Heroes as a symbol of the Ukraine's struggle for the European values.

In the personnel dimension, the Ukrainian delegation professional merits were recognised by the election of G. Logvinsky as a PACE Vice-President, the re-election of V. Arieu as a General Rapporteur on Media Freedom and the Safety of Journalists, and the election of O. Sotnyk as a Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights. In addition, S. Holovaty became a Vice-President of the Venice Commission.

MULTILATERAL INITIATIVES

Human Rights	A-
Climate Change	C
Nuclear Non-proliferation	C
International Security	C+



HUMAN RIGHTS

A-



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	5
Institutional cooperation	4	5
Strategic vision	4	4
Activities	4	5
Results	4	5
General score	B	A-

In 2017, the MFA of Ukraine, and the specialized institutions focused on ensuring compliance with the Ukraine's international obligations to protect human rights. The human rights issue in the occupied territories of Ukraine and in the annexed Crimea reached a new level, in particular, due to the increased activity of the MFA involving the International Court of Justice. The UN, the Council of Europe, and the OSCE were the main platforms used to promote human rights in Ukraine.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2017, almost all factions of the Verkhovna Rada were involved in the implementation of the Ukraine's international human rights obligations, as well as referring to the human rights issue as a foreign policy tool. The representatives of the Petro Poroshenko Bloc "Solidarity", Batkivshchyna ("Fatherland") and the People's Front parties demonstrated the biggest engagement in this sphere, that could be explained by their representatives' participation in the activities related to the Minsk process, as well as to the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities and International Relations.

Institutional Cooperation

In 2017, the institutions kept being focused on the implementation and monitoring of human rights observance. In particular, the role of the MFA, the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine has enhanced. These institutions put issues important for the post-conflict resolution, for example, transitional justice, in their agenda.

Within the studied period, the institutions that were not directly involved in the foreign policy, but contributed to the human rights sphere as a diplomacy tool, were rather active. The Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs (MinTOT) gained a positive feedback, as it was one of the developers of the Program for the IDPs Integration, and launched a study of the international peacekeeping experience, as well as contributed to attracting funds from the international donors to overcome the aftermaths of the conflict in the Eastern Ukraine caused by the Russian armed aggression. The Prosecutor's office of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, which in 2017 collected a significant base of the human rights violations and crimes committed by the Russian Federation in the annexed Crimea, deserves a high appreciation too.

Compared with the previous years, the Ministry of Social Policy and the Ministry of Justice intensified their activities due to the tasks performed within the relevant UN committees during the Ukraine's reporting.

Strategic Vision

Compliance with the Ukraine's international human rights obligations is a priority of the National Human Rights Strategy, adopted in 2015, which remains the only strategic document focusing on the human rights in Ukraine. Despite the annual reporting on the implementation of the corresponding Action Plan, the lack of the clear indicators makes it difficult to evaluate the progress. In other strategic documents defining the foreign policy of Ukraine, human rights remain one of the crosscutting issues, not mentioned directly.

Activities

On January 16, 2017, the MFA of Ukraine filed suit before the International Court of Justice, to make the Russian Federation responsible for acts of terrorism and discrimination as a result of the unlawful aggression against Ukraine. Ukraine also appealed to the International Court of Justice for the provisional measures aimed at preventing further violation of the human rights by the Russian Federation during the substantive examination of the case.

On October 17, 2017, the Deputy Prosecutor of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea O. Udovychenko took part in the 5th Round of Ukraine – EU Consultations on legal consequences of the temporary occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, held in Brussels, where he raised the questions of the peninsula inhabitants' rights, investigation of the criminal proceedings on the facts of the illegal entry into the temporarily occupied territory, construction of the Kerch Strait Bridge, interference with journalistic activities, and real political and economic steps necessary for the liberation of Crimea from the aggressor.

In 2017, the Government of Ukraine reported to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the implementation of the international obligations in compliance with the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. In November 2017, Ukraine presented its third National Report on the human rights in the framework of the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council, with the report focusing on human rights violations in the territories temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation.

As previous years, the civil society representatives (human rights organizations) were involved in the OSCE human dimension activities, covering human rights protection in the occupied territories of Crimea and the Donbas region, as well as the illegally imprisoned and detained Ukrainian citizens in the territory of the Russian Federation and the occupied Crimea.

Results

One of the Ukrainian diplomacy's achievements in 2017 is the UN International Court of Justice decision, restoring protection of the collective human rights in the annexed Crimea. On April 19, 2017, the decision to indicate the provisional measures. The International Court of Justice in the Hague decided that Russia must refrain from restraining the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatars and resume its activities. Among the other things, the court ordered to ensure the availability of education in the Ukrainian language in Crimea. At the same time, the ICJ rejected the Ukraine's request for the provisional measures against Russia under the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

In the context of the situation with the human rights protection in Crimea as a result of its illegal occupation by Russia, the adoption by the UN GA Third Committee and the UN General Assembly a resolution on "Situation of Human Rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)" became an important achievement for the second year in a row. The document, in accordance with the international humanitarian law, states the Russia's obligations as of an occupying power in the armed conflict, in particular, regarding the human treatment of the occupied territory population and the protection of their rights under applicable international law. The resolution also calls on the Russian Federation to create and maintain a safe and enabling environment for human rights defenders and defence lawyers to perform their work independently and without undue interference in Crimea.

In May, the Council of Europe adopted a decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine), which recognizes the Russia's responsibility under the international humanitarian law and the international human rights law, and calls on the Russian authorities to fulfil their obligations and stop the repressions.

During the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the OSCE PA resolution on "Restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity", prepared by the parliamentary delegation of Ukraine was adopted, with its provisions about the human rights protection in the occupied territories.

The release on December 27, 2017, of 73 Ukrainian citizens, who were hostages in the separate districts of Donetsk and Lugansk regions, can be considered as another achievement of the negotiation process within the framework of the humanitarian subgroup of the Minsk process. During the year, several Ukrainian citizens, illegally arrested in Crimea by the Russian Federation representatives, were also released. At the same time, a significant number of Ukrainian citizens still suffer from the unlawful detention both in the territory of the Russian Federation, in Crimea, and in the separate districts of Donetsk and Lugansk regions.

CLIMATE CHANGE

C



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	2	2
Institutional cooperation	2	4
Strategic vision	2	2
Activities	4	4
Results	2	3
General score	D+	C

In 2017, Ukraine intensified its environmental efforts and managed to fulfil part of its commitments under the Association Agreement and international conventions. The Law On Environmental Impact Assessment became effective in December. It is supposed to become an instrument for preventing environmental harm during implementation of new large-scale projects. The government approved Single Registry of Environmental Impact Assessment, the Concept and the Action Plan of Climate Change State Policy Implementation 2030. Ministry of Ecology is designing a Low Carbon Development Strategy to implement Paris Climate Agreement.

A number of laws that are to be passed in energy sector will have a direct impact on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the contribution of Ukraine into fight with climate change.

At the same time, in 2017, Ukraine did not use opportunities of finding and attracting environmental (green) investments from global financial market, and relevant interagency working groups in the Ministry of Ecology and State Agency on Energy Efficiency and Energy Saving of Ukraine were mostly working with domestic market with respect to Kyoto Protocol and environmental tax for industry.

Political Interest / Engagement

During 2017, political forces represented in the Ukrainian parliament neither demonstrated particular interest in environmental problems at large nor in climate change in particular. Only due to the public pressure and the pressure of international partners the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment was passed, which still has room for improvement, for instance, regarding the specific features of its implementation in gas extraction industry. Simultaneously, certain limitations as compared to the European legislation were initiated by representatives of the pro-presidential political parties.

Ukrainian government was not showing interest in re-evaluation and update of the national contribution to the global fight with climate change within the framework of the Paris Climate Agreement, which the European signatories are expecting together with the public.

At the same time, virtually for the first time ever Ministry of Ecology initiated development of climate policy, managed to ensure support for a number of documents on the level of the Cabinet of Ministers and guaranteed interagency coordination.

Once the financial resources under Kyoto Protocol had been used up, the political powers became disinterested in creation of new conditions, market conditions in particular, for attraction of green environmental finances into national economy.

Institutional Cooperation

Upon liquidation of Climate Investment Agency in 2014, some work on attraction of green climatic finances was done on the level of interagency groups. Yet, such a group within the Ministry of Ecology had only one meeting – in January 2017, and the working group of the State Agency on Energy Efficiency and Energy Saving of Ukraine was working on development of a fiscal mechanism for industry with the purpose of improving mechanisms for applying environmental tax to invest in modernization and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Ukraine was a rather active participant of the international level thematic events on climate change. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UN Environmental Programme, the German Gesellschaft für die internationale Zusammenarbeit, the European Commission and the USAID offer both technical and financial assistance for the development of strategic documents and implementation of pilot projects in Ukraine aimed at climate change counteraction.

The Ministry of Ecology was one of the central governmental agencies, which launched systemic development of climate policy and managed to organize cooperation with other governmental agencies aimed at adoption of relevant legislation and legislative framework on the level of the Cabinet of Ministers. The Ministry of Ecology and the

Ministry of Energy started establishing dialogue in order to adapt climate and energy policy. It is expected that as part of work on measures for implementation of Energy Strategy of Ukraine 2035 the relevant strategic objectives will be agreed to ensure sustainable development of energy and environmental protection.

It is also obvious that there is a need for qualified professionals and a whole bulk of legislation to regulate environmental impact assessment not only when preparing large-sale projects but also when designing plans of regional, local and municipal development.

Strategic Vision

By signing the Paris Climate Agreement, Ukraine assumed clear responsibilities of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and is likely to review its national contribution in the nearest future. However, at this stage, both legislative and executive governmental bodies lack strategic vision of this agreement's benefits and the ways to ensure financing of the Ukrainian economy modernization in line with the commitments made. The latter is particularly relevant in view of the adopted Energy Strategy of Ukraine 2035 and work on a draft of the Low Carbon Development Strategy, which are to be harmonized and enforced.

Ukrainian governmental agencies are just using the remaining resources under Kyoto Protocol and are planning to review fiscal mechanisms of domestic market. At the same time, they do not pay attention to the opportunities available on the global market of climate finances and will be improved in the process of the Paris Climate Agreement implementation. Ukraine has a limited timeline to create necessary conditions for attraction of international private green investment, with the lowest interest rate as compared to average market indices, into the national economy both on a level of the state and private companies; cause with every year there will be more of those wanting to receive such funding.

Activities

During the year 2017, the Ministry of Ecology became one of the first ministries, which shifted from performing separate tasks within its competence to active and systemic development of environmental and climate policy and necessary cooperation with international and national partners. Representatives of the Ministry of Ecology participated in most of the international events dedicated to climate issues, which ensured explication, coordination and fulfilment of some of the Ukrainian commitments under the Association Agreement and international conventions.

However, simultaneously with the development of mechanisms for complying with commitments, the Ukrainian government did not created preconditions for sufficient financing of respective measures. There are two interagency working groups. One of them is at the Ministry of Ecology is dealing with financial issues under Kyoto Protocol

and the second group from the State Agency on Energy Efficiency and Energy Saving of Ukraine is analysing opportunities for improving fiscal mechanisms (environmental tax) aimed at accumulating a special fund and financing energy efficiency projects for industry.

No one was working to ensure that private and state companies of global private climate (green) investment have access to the market, while the needs of national economy cannot be covered by internal resources.

Results

In 2017, a number of laws were adopted. Together they created a significant legislative framework for systematic reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Ukraine in both industry and private households.

The Ministry of Ecology launched systemic work on the development of state environmental policy according to the international commitments and its integration into industry-based programmes and plans of other executive governmental bodies. On the national level, a compromise was reached, resulted in adoption of the Law of Ukraine on Environmental Impact Assessment. Also, a number of draft laws in energy sector, which will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, were agreed. On the level of the Cabinet of Ministers we the Concept and the Action Plan for the State Climate Protection Policy Implementation was developed, approved and adopted; the work for the Low Carbon Development Strategy and creation of a national system of monitoring accounting and greenhouse gas emissions verification have been started.

The results achieved came after compromises between the few supporters of the full-fledged reforms and numerous political groups surrounding different financial and industrial groups. Everything mentioned above is one of the reasons for low interest and insignificant activity in creation of preconditions for necessary financial resources accumulation. At the time when national economy needs a lot more money and would benefit greatly from increase of its own competitiveness, when using market mechanisms and private funds from the global market of green investment, priority is given to fiscal instruments and grant money. A telling example might be EBRD IQ-Energy programme for energy efficient projects of households and green loans of some banks (for example, Ukrgazbank) for renewable energy projects.

NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

C



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	3	2
Activities	4	4
Results	3	3
General score	C+	C

In 2017, Ukraine's foreign policy in the sphere of nuclear non-proliferation did not undergo any changes. Ukraine kept on performing international commitments undertaken within the non-proliferation regime. Special attention was paid to the issues of export control and security guarantee mechanism's enhancement.

Political interest

During the period under analysis, the problem of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons within Ukraine's foreign policy still remained within the Budapest memorandum discourse. The use of such narrative in the context of non-compliance with international security guarantees by nuclear states was mainly aimed at getting an additional lever of influence and attracting diplomatic and strategic support of the world community to counter the Russian aggression against Ukraine. It is in this vein that the Parliament in its resolution "On Address of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to the Congress of the United States of America on Security Guarantees" as of March 22, 2017 urged the USA to consider the possibility of concluding a defence agreement with Ukraine and granting it a status of its main ally beyond NATO, stressing on the spirit and the letter of the Budapest memorandum.

Ukraine also responded to current challenges of the non-proliferation regime through the prism of the Budapest Memorandum. During the general debate of the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly the President of Ukraine clearly stressed Ukraine's dedication to the global regime of non-proliferation and disarmament, regardless of the aggression demonstrated by the country-signatory to the Budapest Memorandum, as well as condemned nuclear tests held by the North Korea as the ones destroying the system of security and stability of the non-proliferation regime, that are among the pillars of the current global security. During his visit to the US, in his speech at the West Point Military Academy P. Poroshenko, while commenting upon the situation of non-compliance with the security guarantees within the Budapest Memorandum, pointed out that "we have to prove that the nuclear weapons non-proliferation system would have to work; otherwise new North Koreas would keep appearing from year to year". The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin at the Ministerial Meeting of the UN SC on September 21, 2017, stressed that security guarantees must be binding. At the same time, non-proliferation problems were not covered by the President of Ukraine in his Address to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine "On Domestic and Foreign Situation of Ukraine in 2017".

Institutional cooperation

Interaction and coordination of the Ukrainian institutions in the sphere of non-proliferation took place in the working regime, in accordance with the set responsibilities. A dialogue between the state institutions was mostly taking place within the international activities in the format of bilateral or multilateral initiatives. The interdepartmental expert task force on non-proliferation, terrorism counteraction and critical infrastructure protection continued its work, though not that regularly and focusing on the issue of critical infrastructure.

Strategic vision

Over the reporting period, strategic vision of the implementation of the policy in the sphere of non-proliferation did not undergo any special changes – Ukraine continued with its strategic course towards fulfilment of international commitments undertaken within the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

Among strategic documents there should be mentioned the “Annual National Program under the Auspices of the Ukraine – NATO Commission for 2017” approved by the President, in which one more time adherence to the state policy in the sphere of state export control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and means of its supply aimed at ensuring national security is confirmed.

Implementation of the UN SC Resolution 1540 was among the priorities on the agenda of Ukraine’s foreign policy within its non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council.

Activities

In 2017 Ukraine continued its active cooperation within the non-proliferation initiatives launched earlier. On the one hand, this confirms consistency of the state policy in the given direction, but, on the other hand, proves absence of any efficient search of new forms of cooperation and development of non-proliferation initiatives.

Ukraine continued its cooperation with NATO in the issues of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, taking part in NATO’s annual conference on the above range of issues. The Ukrainian delegation used the platform for discussing the influence of Russia’s hybrid war against Ukraine on the non-proliferation regime, as well as presenting specific facts of the militarization of temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Ukraine’s foreign policy course towards efficient implementation of the UN SC Resolution 1540 was activated via holding of the respective international seminar in November, aimed at making a comprehensive evaluation of current challenges and threats in the sphere of non-proliferation and discussion of the mechanisms of efficient interaction of all stakeholders both nationally, and internationally. Under the current security conditions the policy in this direction has become a priority for Ukraine, which fact has been repeatedly confirmed by the Ukrainian side on the international arena.

On bilateral level, Ukraine continued its strategic cooperation and active dialogue on non-proliferation with the US. On October 24, 2017, regular meeting of the Ukrainian-American Task Force on Non-Proliferation and Export Control took place in Kyiv, which gives hope for new practical initiatives in the above direction to appear in future.

Over the reporting period, cooperation also continued in the multilateral format with members of the G7 initiative “Global Partnership against Proliferation of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction”.

Establishment of cooperation with the James Martin Centre for Non-proliferation Studies could be a promising step towards reinforced export control and non-proliferation regime. During the meeting on January 27, 2017 between the representatives of the Centre with Members of Parliament and representatives of the APU at the Parliamentary Committee on National Security and Defence plans for future were discussed, in particular, intensification of cooperation in the framework of the Export Control and Border Safety Program (EXBS). American colleagues intend to analyse the work of governmental bodies in the field of export control, which could greatly reinforce Ukraine’s positions in this sphere.

Results

The foreign policy vector of Ukraine in the sphere of non-proliferation over the reporting period was mainly directed at fulfilment of the commitments undertaken under the existed treaties, with no initiation of new activities. A stable interest of the international community in the issues of non-proliferation in Ukraine, especially, as far as the problems of export control are concerned, could be traced.

Within the active discussion of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons passed on July 7, 2017 in the UN headquarters in New York and opened for signing on September 20, 2017, Ukraine’s strategic position remained solidary with the key international players, including the USA, NATO, and others. In spite of the fact that the very document aims to ban development, testing, storage, acquisition, transportation and use of nuclear weapons, Ukraine has not signed it. Ukraine continues to consistently advocate the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons for the global non-proliferation regime and sees the threat to its stability posed by the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Participation in global initiatives relating to nuclear non-proliferation has enabled Ukraine to actively stress current risks in the field of non-proliferation and challenges in the context of international technical aid provision. Besides that, this has enabled to discuss new mechanisms of interaction in emergencies, in particular, the ones involving illegal trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

C+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	3	3
Institutional cooperation	3	3
Strategic vision	3	3
Activities	4	4
Results	3	3
General score	C+	C+

In 2017, Ukraine de facto kept on focusing its activity related to international security on its activities as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Promises to increase Ukrainian participation in the peace operations under the auspices of the UN and NATO, given previous year, were not fulfilled. The number of women participating in such operations decreased. Conflicts on the African continent, in Transnistria and North Korea stayed almost the only topics of political interest in the field of international security.

Political Interest / Engagement

During the year, issues of international security were mainly considered through the prism of the Russian aggression against Ukraine and attempt of the Crimean annexation. In his annual Address to the Parliament, the President of Ukraine focused on issues of international security mostly in the context of aggressive actions taken by the Russian Federation, recalling the situation in Georgia, joint strategic trainings of the Russian and Belarussian armies “Zapad – 2017”, challenges for Ukraine’s Western partners. The Analytical Report to the Address pays some attention only to general issues related to a crisis of the international security system, mainly due to the above-mentioned actions taken by Russia, as well as to development of the Permanent Structural Cooperation in the Field of Security and Defence of the EU (PESCO). The issues of international security and mentioning of the Ukraine’s possible participation in peace operations, mediation, and anti-terrorist activity are not covered by the Government’s Action Plan for 2017 at all.

During his speech at the opening of the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly, the President of Ukraine focused on a situation with the nuclear program of the DPRK, relation between Russian actions in Syria and the Crimea, as well as conflicts on the African continent above all the set of international security issues. In July, the President, during his meeting with the Prime Minister of Moldova P. Filip, declared his readiness to promote territorial integrity of Moldova. At the same time statements by some representatives of the Petro Poroshenko Block (for example, I. Friz) related to the situation in Transnistria and Transnistrian conflict settlement, do not favour, and even exacerbate the situation, having a negative impact on the image of Ukraine as an official mediator.

The representatives of Ukraine’s parliamentary political parties pay little attention to international security issues. The agenda of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, in fact, did not include issues of international security. However, it is worth mentioning a statement of the Committee members “On the Use and Development of Nuclear Weapons by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and Launching of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles” (December).

Gender issues in the field of international security has become a new focus. Thus, at open debate of the UN Security Council in October 2017, the Vice Prime Minister I. Klymush-Tsintsadze indicated that “Ukraine acknowledges importance of equal and full participation of women in all activities aimed at prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace-keeping and peace support”. Ukraine also actively informed the world about ensuring gender equality in the sphere of security in the framework of the OSCE fora.

The Head of the Mission of Ukraine to NATO V. Prystayko stated that Ukraine would reinforce its participation in the Alliance’s Resolute Support operation in Afghanistan (November).

Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation within the international security sphere in 2017 remained sporadic. While the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stresses Ukraine's active position in conflicts resolution around the world, other institutions, such as the Ministry of Defence, are not ready for this or consider it as a prerogative of special services only. That is not just the matter of restrictions due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict in the East of Ukraine, but, also, among others, the matter of unfulfilled commitments to increase Ukraine's participation in the UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System.

Strategic Vision

Strategic vision of the issues of international security and participation of Ukraine in their settlement did not change over 2017. The documents approved in the previous years consider those problems mostly in the format of subregional security or the state's Euroatlantic course, where a special attention to a question of general threats to international security in the Middle East and nuclear non-proliferation. The Ukraine's priorities in the UN Security Council may also refer to the development of the strategy in the above direction. "The Strategy of International Peace-Keeping Activity of Ukraine" (2009) defines priorities on a superficial basis, and does not correspond to the current situation, requires updating.

Activities

Ukraine's activities in the context of international security challenges during 2017 became more active in some directions (the UN, NATO) and was almost not noticeable in other ones (Transnistria, anti-terrorism, etc.). Within the UN such issues of international security as non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, issues of women and children in conflicts, reform of the UN SC, North Korea, Syria and conflicts in Africa were paid special attention by the Ukrainian representatives.

As of 2017, contingents of Ukraine peace-keepers were participated in nine international peace and security support operations (all in all 448 service men of the Armed Forces), viz.: in the UN missions in Congo, Liberia, Kosovo, South Sudan, within the UN Interim Security Force in Abyei and the UN Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus, within the multinational forces KFOR in Kosovo and NATO's Training and Advisory Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan as well as Joint Peace-Keeping Force in the security area of the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova. 48 Ukrainian law-enforcers participate in international peace operations: under the auspices of the OSCE (Kosovo), under the auspices of the UN (South Sudan, Cyprus, Congo, and Liberia) and at the UN Secretariat. In July, the Head of the Main Department of Military Cooperation and Peacekeeping Operations, General Staff of Armed Forces of Ukraine L. Holopatiuk had a meeting with an Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operation in New York to discuss participation of Ukraine in peace operations. The President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko participated in the High-Level

Open Debate on Peacekeeping Operations Regarding the Reform of UN Peacekeeping (September) as well as in a number of other international security conferences, in particular, Munich Security Conference (February). The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine P. Klimkin participated in the OSCE Mediterranean Conference dedicated to topic of large movements of migrants and refugees across the Mediterranean (October, the city of Palermo, Italy), the Halifax Security Forum (November, Canada), etc.

As far as the representatives of the Parliament are concerned, the Head of the Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko participated in a number of public events in Ukraine and abroad dedicated to the issues of regional security. The Parliamentary Delegation of Ukraine to the OSCE PA actively participated in its sessions, in the course of which topical issues of international security were discussed. Topical issues of international security were also among priorities during the visit of the co-chairperson of the group of friendship for inter-parliamentary connections with the United Kingdom S. Zalishchuk to London (January).

Results

Despite the fact that increase of the Ukrainian women participation in ensuring international peace and security has been declared as a priority one and regardless of the respective commitments of Ukraine, statistics of participation in 2017 demonstrate a reduced number of women among law-enforcers and military service members in peace operations.

Appointment of a new special representative of Ukraine on Transnistrian settlement – V. Kryzhanivskyi, who had already held this office once, – is positive (August). It is considered that as the result of his appointment, the role of Ukraine as a mediator may ratchet up.

In fact, Ukraine's results in the sphere of international security comprises almost only of its activity within international organizations, primarily, the UN and the OSCE (*see the respective chapters*). Focusing on its own security in the context of the Russia's ongoing aggression, Ukraine limited its involvement in resolution of other conflicts and cooperation in such spheres as anti-terrorism, illegal migration, participation in peacekeeping activities, in spite of the previous statements on its willingness to increase Ukraine's participation in such operations.

BUILD-UP OF INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT ON COUNTERING RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

B



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	5	3
Institutional cooperation	4	4
Strategic vision	5	5
Activities	4	4
Results	4	4
General score	B+	B

2017 showed that despite reduced trust in the Ukrainian political elites, international support of Ukraine is still there. Regardless of ungrounded fears, the territorial integrity of the Ukrainian state has not been subjected to compromises among the key world actors, a “great agreement” between the Western partners and Putin’s Russia “at the expenses of Ukraine” has not been arranged. Unlike the previous year, the threat of lifting or relief of sanctions against Russia was considerably neutralized. Instead, during 2017, the sanction package was expanded and reinforced, while in the international package of support for Ukraine there appeared new military and strategic components. Of utmost importance there still is the role of international organizations in the consolidation of international support to be provided to Ukraine.

Political Interest / Engagement

The issue of build-up and consolidation of international support in counteracting the Russian aggression remains one of the key elements of the foreign policy of the Ukrainian state. Of utmost importance in this context is effective participation of Ukraine in the international organizations, where political influence of the Russian Federation is institutionally limited – primarily, efficient use of institutional and political opportunities of the UN, OSCE, and NATO. At the same time, the strategy of international support development in the Ukrainian political process has not become a systemic consolidated practice. Parliamentary party-political groups mainly focus on the internal political fight, addressing the foreign policy direction only to get external support as an additional legitimization resource. In this context engagement of some institutions of the Ukrainian civil society and Ukrainian diaspora communities of the partner countries is important for the build-up of the international support in counteracting Russian aggression.

In some parts of the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 2017 such as “Priority of Peaceful Means for Counteracting Aggression” and “Deoccupation and Reintegration” there is generalization and outline of the “political and legal Instruments for counteracting Russian aggression”, “public diplomacy in conditions of hybrid warfare”, “foreign policy and international legal factors of deoccupation”, as well as “regulatory and legal provisions of deoccupation”. The Report stresses the “need to use all the opportunities for building-up international mechanisms of cooperation in counteracting the aggressor and deoccupying the Ukrainian territories”, via 1) reinforced cooperation with the USA as a strategic partner of Ukraine, as well as other states that act as guarantors of the territorial integrity of our state under the Budapest Memorandum, 2) established cooperation with NATO in the issues of the Black Sea region security, 3) most efficient use of upgraded opportunities in the NATO partnership format, 4) formalized relations, with due account to the new formats of defence cooperation, uniting countries with different nature of relations with NATO and the EU”.

Institutional Cooperation

The urgent need for the international support of Ukraine in counteracting Russian aggressive acts is one of the disciplining factors for the Ukrainian authorities. Along with that, the level of institutional cooperation between the Ukrainian authorities has not become systemic and remains insufficient. Public sector still has a considerable effect on guaranteeing international support of Ukraine in counteracting the Russian aggression as it used to. At the same time, a considerable mechanism for developing overall support for Ukraine in the world is expansion of the opportunities for using the prospective capacity of public diplomacy tools. In this context, it is important an approval of the resolution of the Government of Ukraine “On Establishment of the Inter-Agency Commission for Popularizing Ukraine in the World” as of June 7, 2017,

initiated by the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine to perform the “Concept of Ukraine’s Popularization in the World and Promoting the Interests of Ukraine in the Global Information Space”, which was approved in October 2016.

Strategic Vision

The ongoing external aggression of the RF against Ukraine is one of the factors of national and political consolidation of the Ukrainian society. At the same time, the difference in military and economic as well as resource capacities of both countries requires from Ukraine to elaborate foreign policy strategies and instruments for building-up and receiving international support as well as to create efficient national mechanisms for accepting international assistance and support. Secondly, development of political and legal instruments of counteracting the Russian aggression remains a strategic direction. In the strategic regulatory package (Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy”, the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, the Strategy Ukraine-2020, the Strategic Defence Bulletin of Ukraine) there have been developed target directions of Ukraine’s interaction and strategic integration with the key security and political systems of the modern world, that are now are the key international donors in further development of the Ukrainian state.

Activities

An important step in the development of international support of Ukraine in counteracting the Russian military aggression is more efficient cooperation with the key partner countries of Ukraine – the North America and the EU countries as well as close communication with the partner countries within the framework of the Ukraine’s participation in the UN, OSCE, the CoE and cooperation with NATO. Highly necessary was an appointment in July 2017 of the Head of Ukraine’s Mission to NATO V. Prystayko, that confirmed the seriousness of Ukraine’s intentions as to the strategy aimed at further approximation.

A promising step towards protection of Ukraine’s interests, development of Ukraine’s positive image in the world and international counteraction of the Russian aggression was a decision passed in 2017 on the establishment of the state institution “The Ukrainian Institute” within the MFA’s mandate. Of importance from the point of view of effort coordination in the settlement of the Crimean issue could be the international platform “Friends of De-occupation of Crimea”, initiated by the President of Ukraine in 2017 during the UN General Assembly.

Results

2017 became the year of further build-up of the international support of Ukraine in counteracting the Russian aggression – the sanction packages including both personal and sectoral restrictive measures against Russia and its business and political elites were expanded, reinforced and prolonged with no discussion. On March 16, on the occasion of the third anniversary of the Crimean annexation, the European Parliament approved the resolution “Ukrainian political prisoners in Russia and situation in Crimea”, where it expressed a demand to Russia to immediately release all citizens of Ukraine, kept illegally in the territory of the RF and the occupied Crimea, as well as to stop any further persecution of the Ukrainian citizens. On April 19, the International Court of Justice announced provisional measures in the case “Ukraine v. Russia”, in which, among other things, the Court obliged the RF to keep from restricting the chances for Crimean Tatars to represent their own interests, to restore the activity of Mejlis and to ensure restoring of education in Ukrainian.

Some documents approved in July by the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE in its session in Minsk, in particular, the resolution on “Restoration of the Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of Ukraine”, once again condemned the fact of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, temporary occupation of the AR of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by Russia, as well as urged the RF to stop taking military actions in Ukraine. On November 14, there took place voting on the updated resolution “The Situation of Human Rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol (Ukraine)” at the Third Committee of the UN GA. The updated resolution recognizes the Crimean situation as an ongoing occupation and an international armed conflict, confirms territorial integrity of Ukraine and non-recognition of the Russian annexation of Crimea, contains calls to the RF to stop human rights violations in Crimea. The resolution was adopted at the session of the UN GA on December 19, 2017. A ministerial meeting held in December within the OSCE’s Council of Ministers in Vienna, involving A. Ciygoz and I. Umerov released from the Russian captivity, launched the establishment of the International Platform “Friends of De-occupation of Crimea”.

ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

B+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	3	5
Activities	4	4
Results	4	4
General score	B-	B+

In 2017, certain positive achievements were made in economic diplomacy as compared to the previous year. Institutional development continued, and strategic vision was reinforced – the National Export Strategy of Ukraine was adopted. The Government carried out purposeful policy of introducing or restoring trade and economic as well as investment cooperation with China, India, Western Balkans and the Middle East countries, along with the European direction advance. Some economic diplomacy tools got political support from the President and the Prime Minister of Ukraine. In 2017, the overall volume of export increased slightly, what may prove that the country is about to leave the drastic decrease phase, which has lasted since 2013-2014. Still, so far the figures of export activity are still too low to be able to talk about reaching the level before the crisis.

Political Interest / Engagement

The issue of economic diplomacy, strengthening of investment attractiveness and export capacity building hold a prominent place in the statements made by politicians. In the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine, special emphasis is laid on the achievements and tasks of economic diplomacy, primarily within the framework of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement implementation. In his speeches on international issues the Prime Minister V. Groysman stressed the need to intensify economic relations with different actors, for instance, with the EU and Japan. Wider application of the practice of holding bilateral business fora, including the ones supported at the highest political level (under the patronage or simultaneously with visits of the Head of the State or Government) may also testify to active engagement. The Head of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs H. Hopko acted during the year as one of the advocates of the so-called “Marshall Plan”, and a number of public events dealing with the problems of international trade were held in the Parliament on the Committee’s initiative.

Institutional Cooperation

The institutional basis for ensuring international trade also kept improving during the year. Since 2015 the Export Promotion Council, and since 2016 – the Export Promotion Office have been functioning within the Ministry of Economic Development. Issues of the Ukrainian business interest protection are within the mandate of the Inter-agency Commission on International Trade. The Council of Exporters and Investors within the MFA has been rather active. Meetings of the Ukrainian part of the bilateral intergovernmental commissions on trade and economic cooperation have promoted coordinated effort at the national level (for instance, in 2017 were held with Belarus and Poland).

In 2017, the Council on International Trade was established for the sake of implementing the Strategic Trade Development Roadmap as a temporary consultative and advisory body of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. The Council aims to promote coordinated effort of the central executive authorities in the field of export support and simplification of the international trade procedures. The Council is headed by the First Vice Prime Minister – the Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine, and comprises of deputy profile ministers, heads of the Parliamentary committees, etc.

However, such positive dynamics of the inter-institutional coordination sometimes failed. Rather exemplary was adoption of the populist draft law No. 7206 “Buy Ukrainian – Pay Ukrainians” in the first reading, which evoked a wide resonance and resistance from the Ministry of Economic Development and a number of other government bodies dealing with the European issues.

The Government also failed to launch in 2017 the Export Credit Agency.

Strategic Vision

The issues of economic diplomacy are mentioned in the basic strategic documents, in particular, in the Sustainable Development Strategy “Ukraine–2020”. Still, in 2017, a great progress was achieved at the level of the strategic development of international trade. In April, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the Mid-term Priority Action Plan till 2020 and the Priority Action Plan for 2017. The action plan, among other items, mentions the direction of investment climate improvement and Ukrainian export development as one of the tasks for the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade.

In March, there took place a presentation of the Export Strategy of Ukraine – Strategic Trade Development Roadmap for 2017 – 2021, which had been developed by the MEDT in close coordination with profile ministries as the result of their work for several years. The Roadmap Implementation Action Plan includes 56 tasks and supposes involvement of some 40 state and non-state institutions, some of which still need to be established. The Strategy was approved by the Government in December 2017.

The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement still remains an important strategic document in the field of economic diplomacy, and includes introduction of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area as well as the AA Implementation Action Plan. In October, the Government approved the Agreement Implementation Action Plan, which includes 2,016 tasks and some 5,000 activities. It is also coordinated with the Governmental Priority Action Plan, strategic documents in the sphere of sectoral reforms, and includes roadmaps coordinated with the EU.

At the same time, the issue of trade cooperation with Russia and the occupied territory of Crimea still remains unregulated.

Activities

A number of meetings of bilateral bodies were conducted in the context of cooperation with the EU within the Association Agreement implementation: High-Level Ukraine-EU Dialogue in Horizontal and Specific Industrial Sectors (March), the first meeting of the Ukraine – EU Subcommittee on the issues of trade and sustainable development (May), the Fourth Meeting of the Council of the Association between Ukraine and the EU (December).

The negotiations on finalizing free trade agreements with Turkey (8 rounds) and Israel (7 rounds) happened during the year. At the same time, in spite of the statements made by the heads of Ukraine and Turkey on signing the free trade area agreement by the end of 2017, it was not concluded. Similar was the situation with negotiations with Israel on the FTA establishment.

Under the Strategic Trade Development Roadmap, the Government paid a great attention to the development of cooperation with China and India. In December, Ukraine-China Action Plan dealing with implementation of the initiative of joint construction of the “Great Silk Road Economic Belt” and the “21st Century Maritime

Silk Road” was signed. In 2017, a joint protocol on the agreements on cooperation in the nearest future was signed with India.

During the year a number of bilateral (Albania, Hungary, Belarus, Lithuania, South Korea, etc.) and international economic fora (Canada, Georgia) were conducted with the participation of the Ukrainian top leaders. Joint intergovernmental commissions (Moldova, Belarus, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, etc.) worked actively. The activity of those institutions with some partners was renewed after a long break (Poland, China), and with some – agreements on establishment of joint commissions were made (Albania, Qatar, Columbia).

Work in the WTO Dispute Settlement Body constituted an important component of the economic diplomacy during the whole 2017, primarily as far as proceedings initiated against the RF are concerned.

At the same time, during the year, political aspects influenced economic diplomacy. For example, Ukraine’s Trade Representative was forced to ignore in the last minute the annual export forum held under the auspices of the WTO, due to the place where it was held – Hungary.

Results

A Ukrainian economic diplomacy achievement is that the free trade area between Ukraine and Canada has been active since August 1, 2017. Also, a certain achievement in the economic component of diplomatic activity in 2017 was decision of the EU Council as of June 28, 2017 on expansion of quotas for the period of three years for duty-free import of products from many important sectors of the Ukraine’s economy to the EU countries.

In May, Ukraine was officially invited to join the Pan-Euro-Mediterranean Convention. By the end of 2017, internal state accession procedures were ongoing, however already starting with May, Ukraine has participated in the Convention working bodies as an observer. That enabled Kyiv to start negotiations with a number of trade partners on initiation of the so-called cumulation triangle (Ukraine – Convention Member State – EU), with application of respective preferences (Macedonia, EFTA).

The volume of export of Ukrainian commodities over January-November 2017 made up \$39.5 bln. and increased as compared to the same period of the previous year by \$6.8 bln. Geographically, export of goods increased to Australia and Oceania by 304.4%, to America – by 59.8%, Europe – by 30.4%, the CIS – by 15.6%, Asia – by 12.9%, Africa – by 7.5%. And over 11 months of 2017, the share of main partners in the foreign trade turnover of Ukraine was as follows: the EU countries (41.3%), China (8.4%), Turkey (4.0%), and the USA (3.6%).

Unfortunately, intermediate goods still dominate in Ukraine’s export structure, and trade in them highly depends on the situation in foreign markets. To increase the export of consumer goods and services needs additional effort to be taken by the Government and business.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

B+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	4	4
Institutional cooperation	3	4
Strategic vision	3	4
Activities	4	5
Results	3	4
General score	C+	B+

2017 was in fact a revolutionary year in terms of institutionalization of public diplomacy and approval of necessary regulations, including of the strategic character. Information Security Doctrine of Ukraine and Action Plan for Implementation of the Concept of Promoting Ukraine in the World and Promoting the Interests of Ukraine in World Media have been passed, the decision on establishing Ukrainian Institute has been made.

Department of Public Diplomacy of the MFA was particularly active and efficient in 2017. It initiated launch and further implemented almost 200 different projects in the sphere of public and cultural diplomacy. At the same time, lack of proper state funding for this sphere traditionally remained a problem.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2017, the level of involvement of public agencies in the development of public diplomacy increased significantly. Yet, the level of political interest remains low as based on analysis of statements by heads of factions or political parties' leaders represented in the Verkhovna Rada. A profound interest was shown only by the Head of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and some individual MPs. We may consider it a positive sign that in 2017 the MFA of Ukraine budget for this sphere was increased to 77 mln dollars. Nevertheless, in view of current political situation around Ukraine and the ultimate hybrid war of Russia against Ukraine this level of funding is unsatisfactory.

The sphere of public diplomacy traditionally received significant attention in the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President to Verkhovna Rada, yet is not mentioned in the very address. At the same time, attention is drawn to this sphere (primarily within the context of strategic communications) by the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine: public diplomacy received a recognition in the Information Security Doctrine approved in 2017.

Institutional Cooperation

Summarizing the results of 2017, we may say that cooperation between key governmental agencies in the sphere of public diplomacy is getting systematic. However, the Concept of Promoting Ukraine in the World and Promoting the Interests of Ukraine in World Media (developed by the Ministry of Information Policy) approved in 2016 bears no references to the mechanism of institutional coordination. More specific information is presented in the Action Plan for Implementation of the Concept (hereinafter – Action Plan) approved in June 2017, which does not set the Administration of the President as a coordinator (as established by 2020 Strategy), but the Cabinet of Ministers. The same is confirmed by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers on Creation of Inter-Agency Commission for Promoting Ukraine in the World (No. 467 of June 07, 2017), which is designed to increase the level of public diplomacy coordination between governmental agencies involved.

At the same time, at the end of the year it is possible to state that most of the governmental agencies implemented predominantly their own initiatives and projects in this sphere without inter-agency coordination. Perhaps the only successful example of cooperation between agencies was having a joint Ukrainian booth of the MFA and the Ministry of Culture at the International Book Fair in Frankfurt (October 2017).

Approval of the following two documents: Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers “On Approval of the Procedure for Using Funds from the State Budget Foreseen for the Financial Support of Promoting Positive International Image of Ukraine and Implementation of Efforts for Maintaining Links with Ukrainians Living Abroad”

(No. 165 of March 22, 2017) and Order of the MFA “On Approval of the Procedure for Organizing Trips of Foreign and Ukrainian Experts” (No. 380 of September 06, 2017), brought significant progress to formation of the regulatory framework for public diplomacy and targeted use of budget funds for this sphere

Strategic Vision

Legal basis of the strategic character regarding public diplomacy expanded significantly in 2017. In addition to the reference in the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, in 2017 another document was passed, which stresses upon the importance of public diplomacy and the need to develop this sphere – Information Security Doctrine of Ukraine (approved by the Decree of the President of Ukraine No. 47/2017 of February 25, 2017).

A significant step towards determining practical areas for implementation of public diplomacy tasks in Ukraine is an approval of the abovementioned Action Plan for Implementation of the Concept of Promoting Ukraine in the World and Promoting the Interests of Ukraine in World Media in 2017. Finally, a “roadmap” was developed on the state level with specific steps and mechanisms for implementation being determined.

Yet, the key content-related problem of the state strategic documents in the sphere of public diplomacy is lack of understanding that key foundations must be determined – formulation of strategic narratives, which must serve as a basis for all future work on promoting image and national interests of Ukraine.

Activities

For the second year in a row, the most dynamic and efficient activities in the sphere of public diplomacy were carried out by the Department of Public Diplomacy of the MFA. Activities of the said department promoted better coordination of efforts between cultural attaches working at the Ukrainian embassies abroad. In 2017, the Department initiated and started implementation of almost 200 different projects in the sphere of public and cultural diplomacy, including numerous public lectures at the US universities about current development of Ukraine, exhibitions of the Ukrainian artists in Washington and New York, “50 Inventions that Ukraine Gifted to the World” exhibitions, organization of a large-scale Un Week-end à l'Est festival in Paris – a multicultural project trying to familiarize Parisians and guests of the French capital with artistic, intellectual and literary life of Kyiv.

Since 2015, Diplomatic Cultural Club has been functioning by the MFA initiative, which unites diplomats of all levels, including those from abroad, representatives of international and foreign cultural institutions interested in cultural diplomacy. Regular annual meeting took place in March 2017.

The work of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine or the Ministry of Information Policy in 2017 was rather modest in comparison with activities of the Department of Public Diplomacy.

Within the year, some agencies demonstrated efficient cooperation with foreign diplomatic representations in Ukraine or civil society representatives in promoting public diplomacy. In January, National Institute for Strategic Research hosted a round table discussion – Global Ukraine Network and Governmental Agencies. In June 2017, Kennan Institute Kyiv office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and the Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine conducted Third Cultural Diplomacy Forum of Ukraine. A significant contribution to growth of public and cultural diplomacy in our country is made by the Ukrainian Crisis Media Centre, network organizations of the Ukrainians abroad, such as Razom for Ukraine, Promote Ukraine etc.

Results

Along with active work of the Department of Public Diplomacy and passing of a number of important strategic documents, the most significant achievement lies in adopting a decision on creation of a state institution called Ukrainian Institute (Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 430-p of June 21, 2017), which is to become a powerful instrument for promotion of international image of Ukraine. Representative offices of the Ukrainian Institute were supposed to be launched in 2017 in four European capitals – Warsaw, Berlin, Paris and Rome. Yet, due to a complicated process of the inter-agency approval, the implementation of the said task has slowed down.

UKRAINIANS ABROAD

C+



	2016	2017
Political interest/engagement	n/a	3
Institutional cooperation	n/a	4
Strategic vision	n/a	4
Activities	n/a	3
Results	n/a	3
General score	n/a	C+

Ukraine's attention to the Ukrainians abroad has somewhat increased in the context of the foreign aggression and declared intention to develop towards the European integration, which fact is proven by the meetings of the country's authorities with the representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora, as well as by the approval of the State Program of Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad for 2017-2020 by the Government. Development of stable effective communications with Ukrainian diaspora and the use of its potential for the sake of popularizing Ukraine and Ukrainians, promoting their interests in the world are a core of in this sphere. However, so far, there is no wide political interest in cooperation with Ukrainians worldwide, and this issue is mainly outlined generally within the list of many other tasks, that does not allow separating this direction as a priority one.

Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest of the state authorities in the issues of Ukrainians abroad is rising, what is caused by the striving to consolidate diaspora in resisting the Russian aggression and supporting the European aspirations and reforms in Ukraine.

The President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko started his visit to the USA in June 2017 with Ukrainian diaspora meeting. During the Economic Forum “Support of Ukraine’s Economic Development: Cooperation between the Government and Diaspora” at the end of August 2017, Ukraine’s Prime Minister V. Groysman stressed the capacity of Ukrainians abroad in the context of foreign investment attraction and development of the Ukrainian economy. The Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada A. Parubiy at his meeting with the President of the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC) E. Czolij in November 2017 discussed issues related to the educational reform and possible engagement of the UWC in the work of international organizations.

In spite of the state authorities’ effort aimed to mobilize the capacity of diaspora and to establish cooperation with them, no considerable interest of the leading political parties in the issue can be traced in their programs.

Institutional Cooperation

In Ukraine, there is a specially established National Commission for Matters Concerning Ukrainians Worldwide, which consist of the representatives of central executive authorities, Members of the Parliament, representatives of the Administration of the President of Ukraine and non-governmental organizations. The Commission’s functions narrowed to decisions on granting, refusal to grant or termination of the legal status of Ukrainians living abroad. As of December 2017, 5 meetings of the Commission were conducted, and based on their results, the Ukrainian abroad status was granted to over 200 persons.

Priority tasks and activities related to the institutional cooperation with organizations of Ukrainians abroad were outlined in the State Program of Ukrainians Abroad for 2017-2020, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in June 2017 and determining priority tasks and activities, in particular, those of awareness-raising and clarification nature, their implementation deadlines and ways of funding.

The MFA is a coordinator of the program, while the MFA, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Information Policy, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, regional state administrations and Kyiv city state administration are involved in its performers.

A priority for upcoming years is resistance to anti-Ukrainian propaganda and affirmation of the Ukraine’s positive image in the world.

The tasks set will be implemented via provision of financial support to the citizens in diaspora (from the state and local budgets of Ukraine) for issuing periodicals, preparing and broadcasting TV- and radio programs, supporting Internet resources, publishing articles about Ukrainian issues in foreign mass media, organizing and participating in international cultural festivals as well as in fora and conferences involving Ukrainians worldwide.

There is no public report on fulfilment of the State Program as of December 2017.

At the level of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 2017 together with the World Congress of the Ukrainian Youth Organizations the inter-faction union “Cooperation Ukraine – Diaspora” was established, which aim is cooperation of youth in different directions – starting with education up to establishment of trade relations.

In spite of the above mentioned, the prevailing part of the institutional work with Ukrainians abroad is done by the MFA and foreign diplomatic missions, where this work always constitutes a separate direction of their activity. A serious reserve in this area is the established Ukrainian Institute that may become an influential one only with the support of local diasporas.

Strategic Vision

The issue of Ukrainians abroad is mentioned in the official strategic documents. The Constitution of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy” focus on meeting national and cultural as well as linguistic needs of Ukrainians residing beyond the territory of the state.

The Sustainable Development Strategy “Ukraine – 2020” and the Concept of Popularization of Ukraine in the World and Promotion of Ukraine’s Interests in the World Information Space focus on sustainable communication with Ukrainian diaspora, the use of its capacity for popularization of Ukraine and Ukrainians, promotion of their interests in the world.

The main principles of cooperation with Ukrainian diaspora are enshrined in the Law of Ukraine “On Worldwide”, which, besides the above issues, speaks of the parity in ensuring the rights and meeting the needs of Ukrainians abroad and Ukraine’s national minorities by the foreign states and Ukraine.

In June 2017, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the State Program of Cooperation with Ukrainians Worldwide for 2017-2020.

However, official documents leave the issue of the Ukrainian labour migrants, whose interests’ protection requires special approaches, unattended.

Activities

Meetings with the representatives of diaspora, organized in Ukraine and abroad at the top level (President, Prime Minister, Speaker of the VRU, Minister of Foreign Affairs), promoting intensified cooperation in this direction were important in the field of cooperation with Ukrainians abroad.

No less important remains the activity of cultural and information units of foreign diplomatic missions, the level of success of which is difficult to assess objectively due to the absence of the MFA's public report as well as particularities of each country, opportunities and priorities of their work.

Special attention should be paid to the activity of the International Institute of Education, Culture and Relations with Diaspora of the National University "Lviv Polytechnic", the work of which focuses on four key directions – education, migration, culture and cooperation with diaspora, as well as two representative offices of the Ukrainian World Congress – in Brussels and Kyiv. The first one deals with lobbying of Ukrainian issues in the EU institutions, while the second one ensures presence of the issue of the Ukrainians worldwide in the legislative process and in the action plans of the governmental agencies. The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, first of all through WCU, and, lately, the Kyiv Patriarchate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church play a significant role in supporting projects of the Ukrainians abroad.

Results

The core results of the year are provision of support by the Ukrainians abroad in the issues of resisting hybrid Russian aggression as well as promotion of the state's positive image development. The tour of the President of the UWC of Ukraine's neighbouring countries is worth attention, since the issues of concern over the Law of Ukraine "On Education" and support of the European and Euroatlantic Integration of Ukraine were discussed there. Due to the joint efforts of the Ukrainian diplomacy and Ukrainian diaspora, the Parliament of Portugal and the Senate of the State of Washington passed their resolutions on the acknowledgement of Holodomor as a genocide of the Ukrainian nation.

The results achieved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine may include approval of the State Program of Cooperation with Ukrainians Worldwide for 2017-2020, as well as timely approval of the state budget for 2018, which separately envisages funding of the Ukrainian Institute and activities aimed at maintaining contacts with diaspora.

At the same time, the results in the field of cooperation with Ukrainians abroad in 2017 are, in fact, equal to the work of foreign diplomatic missions in this direction, which are frequently limited as far as budget and human resources are concerned.

SUMMARY TABLE OF THE FOREIGN POLICY EVALUATION IN 2017



GENERAL SCORE OF FOREIGN POLICY PERFORMANCE IN 2017

Foreign Policy Direction	General Score	Political interest	Institutional Cooperation	Strategic vision	Activity	Results
Foreign Policy in 2017	B-	4-	4-	3+	4+	4-

EVALUATION OF FOREIGN POLICY DIRECTIONS IN 2017

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

Foreign Policy Direction	General Score	Political interest	Institutional Cooperation	Strategic vision	Activity	Results
Euroatlantic integration	A-	4	5	5	5	5
Bilateral Relations						
Belarus	B-	3	4	4	4	3
Georgia	B-	3	4	3	4	4
Israel	C+	3	3	2	4	4
Iran	D+	3	4	1	2	2
China	B-	3	4	4	4	4
Lithuania	B+	4	4	4	5	5
Moldova	C+	4	2	3	4	4
Poland	B-	4	4	2	5	3
Romania	B-	4	4	3	4	4
Slovakia	B-	4	4	3	4	4
Turkey	B+	5	4	4	4	4
Hungary	C-	3	3	2	3	2
Russia	C+	3	3+	4-	3+	2
<i>Political relations</i>	C+	4	4	5	3	1
<i>Economic relations</i>	C-	3	4	2	3	2
<i>Energy relations</i>	C	2	2	4	4	3
Regional Cooperation						
Asia-Pacific Region	C	2	3	2	4	4
Middle East	C	2	3	2	4	4
Western Balkans	C-	3	2	3	2	3
Baltic States	B+	4	4	3	5	5

Foreign Policy Direction	General Score	Political interest	Institutional Cooperation	Strategic vision	Activity	Results
Visegrad Four	C+	3	3	4	4	3
Latin America	D+	3	3	2	2	2
Northern Europe	C+	4	3	2	4	4
South Asia	C-	2	2	3	4	3
Sub-Saharan Africa	D+	3	2	2	2	3
Central Asia	D-	1	2	2	2	2
Black Sea Region	C	3	3	2	4	3
International Organizations						
OSCE	B-	3	3	4	4	4
United Nations	B+	4	4	4	5	5
Council of Europe	A-	5	5	4	4	5
Multilateral Initiatives						
Human Rights	A-	5	5	4	5	5
Climate Change	C	2	4	2	4	3
Nuclear Non-proliferation	C	3	3	2	4	3
International Security	C+	3	3	3	4	3
Build-up of international support on countering Russian aggression	B	3	4	5	4	4
Economic Diplomacy	B+	4	4	5	4	4
Public Diplomacy	B+	4	4	4	5	4
Ukrainians Abroad	C+	3	4	4	3	3

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE UKRAINE'S FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA 2018



2018 – a year of the visa-free regimes. Harmonization of the visa regimes with certain countries, simplification of the visa regimes with Canada and the United Kingdom, reaching 100 countries for a visa-free travel for the Ukrainian citizens will promote human mobility and intensify business contacts.

Focus on the public diplomacy. The decision to open the Ukrainian Institute is only the first step towards creating a positive image of Ukraine and expanding the "Ukrainian" theme in the world.

Adoption of the Concept of Ukraine's Foreign Policy till 2025. There is a real need for a single strategic document, defining the main foreign policy directions in the medium-term perspective, as well as its purpose, tasks and resources, and consolidating certain provisions specified in other official documents, setting co-ordinating roles and mechanisms in the structure of the executive and legislative powers of Ukraine. The representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, experts and MPs should jointly develop such a document.

Development of the operational documents on the Ukraine's foreign policy regional priorities. These documents should answer questions about the Ukraine's goals, interests and opportunities in relations with the countries of the Middle East, the Black Sea region, the Asia-Pacific region, Latin America, Africa, etc. as well as what is a Ukrainian position on the main crisis phenomena in these regions.

Intensification of work in the areas outside the European and Euro-Atlantic integration process. Among such directions, a priority should be given to the United Kingdom (in the context of the Brexit), the Western Balkans, Israel, India, China, Morocco, Central Asia (first of all, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan), South Africa, and Peru.

Neighbourhood Policy Elaboration. Such a policy, expounded in the relevant strategic documents, should formulate the Ukraine's overall vision for the relations with the neighbouring countries and address the problems recently raised in the relations of Ukraine with close neighbours (primarily in the relations with Poland and Hungary). The Neighbourhood policy should not be limited to the declarations, but name the specific activities and funds for the projects aimed at the development of the relations with the neighbouring states.

Differentiated strategies for the economic cooperation encouraging.

This recommendation comprises the economic incentives for the international and foreign business communities to enter the Ukrainian market, creating conditions for the deeper European business involvement, including in the defence industry. In this context, an introduction of the Ambassadorial position for the cooperation with the tech companies (as in Denmark) or, in a broader sense, on cooperation with the large corporations, can be introduced as a new approach.

"Expert diplomacy" intensification, including such instruments as political and expert forums, which can facilitate attraction of the neighbouring countries' expert communities to deal with the problematic relationships issues and finding ways to solve them. With the Ukraine – Slovakia Forum or the Ukraine – Poland Partnership Forum as examples, it is worth to launch such platforms with Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

Abbreviations

AA	Association Agreement
APAC	Asia-Pacific region
APU	Presidential Administration of Ukraine
ARC	Autonomous Republic of Crimea
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATO	Anti-Terrorist Operation
BPP	Petro Poroshenko Bloc
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation
CSF EaP	Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum
CSP	Civil Society Platform
DCFTA	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area Agreement
DPR	Donetsk People's Republic
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECAA	European Common Aviation Area
EFSD	European Sustainable Development Fund
EXBS	Export Control and Border Safety Program
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
G-7	Group of Seven
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IDP	Internally displaced persons
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MinTOT	Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs
MPs	Members of Parliament
NABU	National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine
NAPC	National Agency for Prevention of Corruption
NATO PA	NATO Parliamentary Assembly
NBU	National Bank of Ukraine

NSDC	National Security and Defence Council
ODIHR	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
ORDLO	separate territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions
OSCE PA	Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSCE SMM	Special Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
PG	Prosecutor General
PRC	People's Republic of China
SAP	Special Anticorruption Prosecutor's Office
SSU	Security Service of Ukraine
UINM	Ukrainian Institute of National Memory
UN GA	General Assembly of the United Nations
UN SC	United Nations Security Council
V4	Visegrad Group
VRU	Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
WTO	World Trade Organization

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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, as well as associate experts in Ukraine and abroad.

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.

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.

The Foundation supports and enhances the ideals of social democracy, in particular by means of:

- political awareness-building with the aim of strengthening the civil society. Political awareness-building programs of the Foundation in Germany are focused on motivating citizens, developing their independence, informing and teaching them best practices of active participation in political life, activities of trade unions and civil society. We promote citizens' participation in discussions on social issues and in decision-making processes;
- political consultations. The foundation holds strategic research on main issues of economic, social and educational policies, as well as on the ways of further development of democracy. Due to engagement of academic circles and active politicians, the Foundation creates conditions for a broad discussion on the issues of building a fair and sustainable economic and social pattern in certain countries, Europe and the whole world;

- international collaboration. Due to international offices of the Foundation, which carry out their activities in more than 100 countries of the world, the Foundation supports the policy of peaceful collaboration and human rights protection, promotes creation and reinforcement of democratic, social and constitutional bodies. The Foundation is in favor of independent trade unions and strong civil society. Within the framework of European integration process the Foundation actively promotes socially-oriented, democratic and competitive Europe;
- support for talented youth by providing scholarships, in particular to students and post-graduates from underprivileged families or migrants;
- preservation of collective social democratic memory. Archives and libraries of the Foundation, as well as works on contemporary history allow to preserve the roots of social democracy and trade unions, at the same time they are information sources for conducting social-political and historical research.

At present, there are head-offices of the Foundation in Bonn and Berlin. Besides, in Federal Republic of Germany the Foundation has 6 educational centers as well as 12 county and regional offices. Apart from that, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation possesses its own library in Bonn, which comprises 650 000 volumes. “The Archives of Social Democracy” of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Bonn includes the biggest collection of materials from the history of the European labor movement.

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