

UKRAINIAN PRISM: FOREIGN POLICY



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This analytical study represents a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the Ukrainian foreign policy in 2020. Fifty one directions were analysed – from cooperation with key partners and international organizations to public diplomacy and COVID-19 pandemic consequences. Five evaluation criteria – indicators, based on the new model of research methodology, were applied. The experts have studied and assessed activities of the President, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, and other governmental institutions and parliamentary committees involved in the development and implementation of the foreign policy of Ukraine. This book is the sixth annual study. Previous years' analysis can be found at prismua.org

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Dear friends,

For the sixth year in a row, the Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism” and the Regional Representation of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Ukraine are pleased to present findings of the experts’ team who have analysed and scored the success of Ukraine’s foreign policy in different geographic and thematic directions.

Although each analysed year is peculiar in its own way, 2020 can be described as truly unique in terms of limited opportunities and specific conditions in which Ukraine has been working towards its foreign policy goals. On a global scale, the COVID-19 pandemic and corresponding quarantine restrictions introduced all over the world have significantly affected the forms of cooperation between Ukraine and its foreign partners in various fields. In addition to causing a slump in trade and economy, it has influenced the choice of new priorities for international cooperation and channels to develop political dialogue. In 2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine turned into a crisis management centre, providing emergency assistance to Ukrainian citizens, who got stranded by the lockdown, and seeking opportunities to raise humanitarian aid to mitigate pandemic consequences. In most areas under review, the fight against COVID-19 has become an additional element of bilateral and multilateral dialogue of our state.

In terms of domestic policy, 2020 also had its distinctive features, which affected how foreign policy goals were set and achieved. On the one hand, this was the first full year when President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy was in charge of the foreign policy while his team was responsible for its implementation. On the other hand, O. Honcharuk’s government was replaced by that of D. Shmyhal at the beginning of the year, which also impacted the pace of setting and implementing foreign policy tasks.

Nevertheless, the overall assessment of the foreign policy implementation in 2020 turned out to be slightly higher than in the previous year, although, in some areas, there was a significant decline in political interest and results.

The feature of this year’s edition is a new section highlighting Ukraine’s international efforts to mitigate the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is to be hoped that once the pandemic is over, Ukraine will be able to improve its overall progress in achieving strategic priorities in the international arena, and we will no longer need to assess this specific area of diplomatic efforts.

Hennadiy Maksak,

Executive Director of the Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”

Methodology of Research



A

The diagram consists of three main elements: a light blue circle containing the letter 'A' on the left; a yellow square containing the text 'B-' in the center, which overlaps the bottom of the circle 'A'; and a large light blue square on the right containing the text 'C+' in a large font. The background is a solid blue color.

B-

C+

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. 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 the 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 2020 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 relevant on the day of evaluation. This time the review of the foreign policy dimension of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences are also presented.

Foreign policy directions of Ukraine

For the evaluation of the foreign policy of Ukraine in 2020, 51 directions were selected and divided into the following thematic blocks:

- Relations with the G-7 states (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the USA,);
- European integration (cooperation with the EU in economic and political spheres, the Eastern Partnership, the European Energy Community);
- Euro-Atlantic integration;
- Bilateral relations (Belarus, China, Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Israel, Iran, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, the Russian Federation [policy, economy, energy], Romania, Slovakia, Turkey);
- Regional cooperation (Asia-Pacific Region, the 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 United Nations, 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.
- COVID-19 pandemic.

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 the 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, establishment 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 side-lines”; 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, and 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; the 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 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.

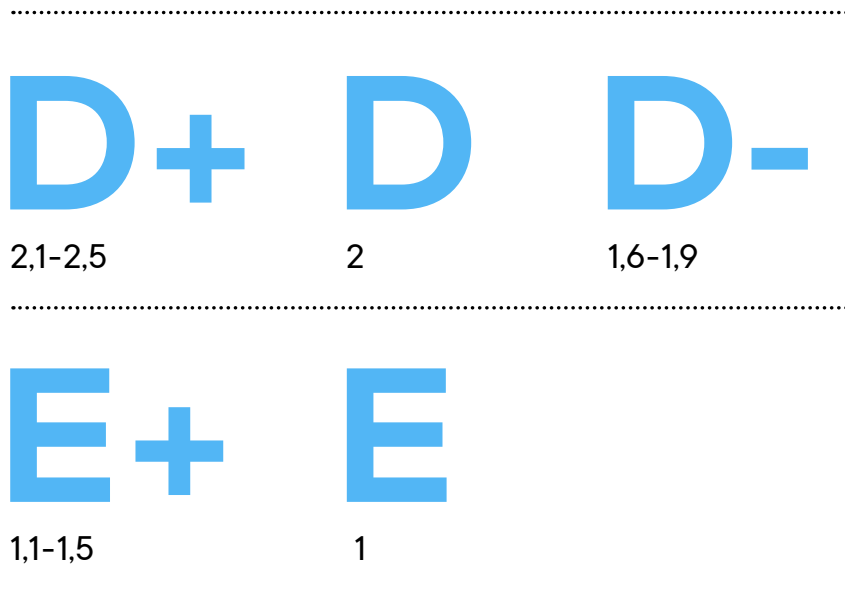
RATING SCORE:

	A	A-
Indicator value:	5	4,6-4,9

B+	B	B-
4,1-4,5	4	3,6-3,9

C+	C	C-
3,1-3,5	3	2,6-2,9

Direction's rating



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 the 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 2020

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3+	4-
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3+	4-
STRATEGIC VISION	3+	3+
ACTIVITIES	4-	4-
RESULTS	3+	3+
TOTAL SCORES	C+	B-

Despite the pandemic restrictions and the turbulence of 2020, Ukraine managed to keep a positive pace in implementing its foreign policy goals, adjusting to the new foreign policy environment and even improving the total score for its implementation. The analysis of 51 directions, both geographic and functional, by five indicators, including political interest, institutional cooperation, strategic vision, activities, and results, left the total score of Ukraine's foreign policy in 2020 improved to B-. Ukraine's efforts on the UK, Poland, Turkey, and Euro-Atlantic integration got the best scores in 2020.

The lowest scores were for the work with the European Energy Community, Israel, the Russian Federation, Hungary, Western Balkans, Latin America, and Central Asia, as well as on climate change, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and international security.

Political Interest / Engagement

Foreign policy was not the top priority for most Ukrainian politicians in 2020. The President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration were customarily those referring to this sphere the most. Compared to 2019, MPs had far less interest in the international agenda and the tools of parliamentary diplomacy in 2020. Countering Russia's aggression, including within PACE, was the only exception.

The President highlighted the European Union, USA, UK, Canada, Turkey, consolidation of international support in the fight against Russia's aggression, and relations with NATO in his key speeches, including the Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada in October and the meeting with ambassadors in December.

In addition to the themes mentioned above, MFA top officials referred to relations with Moldova and Turkey, Ukraine's engagement in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization and the Danube Commission, and the drafting of Asia and Africa strategies. The Lublin Triangle and the Crimean Platform, two new formats initiated in the international arena, were in the spotlight at all levels in 2020. Information security, the fight against COVID-19, and the expansion of markets for Ukrainian exports, including in Asia and Africa, were among the top issues on the agenda, too. Economic diplomacy and the promotion of Ukrainian goods in foreign markets became key in the context of bilateral relations with almost all countries. Similarly, central in bilateral formats and international organizations was the theme of consolidating international support in the fight against Russia's aggression.

Other ministers did not show any significant interest in foreign affairs. The exceptions included the Minister of the Interior, who dealt with relations with Italy and France within his portfolio, and the Minister of Defence, who had a strong focus on the Euro-Atlantic, US, and British tracks in the second half of 2020, after his controversial statements shortly after taking office.

The programs of O. Honcharuk's and D. Shmyhal's Governments did not feature much involvement in foreign policy issues. The March program of O. Honcharuk essentially limited foreign policy goals to getting visa-free access

to a number of countries. The June program of D. Shmyhal mentioned work with Ukrainians abroad, countering Russia's aggression, promotion of exports and Ukraine's image abroad, in addition to the traditional themes of the EU, NATO, G7, G20, and relations with neighbour-states.

Belarus, Italy, Germany, Poland, Turkey, the UK, Sub-Saharan Africa, economic diplomacy, protection of human rights, and the fight against COVID-19 got the highest scores on political interest in 2020.

The least political interest was for Moldova, economic relations with Russia, Western Balkans, and Central Asia.

The overall score for Political Interest

4.1

Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation is one of the most challenging indicators as it calls for both the analysis of established formats of coordination among institutions and the discovery of uncoordinated stances or open conflicts among various Ukrainian actors. There were no notably serious conflicts on foreign policy among different institutions in 2020. Still, some actions were not coordinated enough, leading to the respective consequences. One example was coordination among Ukrainian institutions when restrictions were introduced and borders closed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were some inconsistency and controversy on the US and Hungarian directions.

While Ukraine managed to hold some online meetings in bilateral commissions, a number of visits and events (see Activities) that called for institutional cooperation had to be postponed to 2021 because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Gaps remain in the appointment of Ukrainian ambassadors abroad. These positions remain vacant in Angola, Argentina, Cuba, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Ireland, Peru, Romania, South Korea, Senegal, Vietnam, the Holy See, and NATO. Ambassadors to South Africa, Turkmenistan, and Finland were appointed after a long delay.

Ukrainian institutions demonstrated the best level of coordination of foreign-policy actions in relations with the UK (preparing the visit of the President and signing a strategic agreement); Italy (on the case of Vitaliy Markiv); OSCE (Ukraine's chairmanship at the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation and organization of the local election observation mission to Ukraine); Council of Europe (countering Russia's actions at PACE and several CoE projects in Ukraine); NATO (obtaining the status of an Enhanced Opportunities Partner and in security cooperation); and the EU (the launch of talks to revise the Association Agreement/DCFTA).

Government and expert community strengthened cooperation through the MFA, the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy etc. Throughout 2020, experts and civil society representatives engaged proactively in drafting the Foreign Policy Strategy, the Concept of Public Diplomacy, the Concept for improving public awareness on Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine, and the MFA's Asia Strategy. Businesses were consulted with to determine priority markets for the exports of Ukrainian products.

Institutional cooperation got the highest scores for economic cooperation with the EU, cooperation with Lithuania, and work within the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

The lowest scores were for institutional cooperation on Latin America, Northern Europe, energy relations with Russia, and Hungary.

The overall score for Institutional Cooperation

3+

Strategic Vision

The new National Security Strategy can be viewed as a fresh development in strategic vision in 2020. Since the Strategy of Ukraine's Foreign Policy Activities drafted until the end of the year but not approved officially, the National Security Strategy dated September 14, 2020, is the key document, in addition to the Constitution, that defines the hierarchy of countries by Ukraine's national interests.

The EU and Euro-Atlantic integration, including the pursuit of Ukraine's full membership in the EU and NATO, as well as consolidation of international support and sanctions against the Russian aggression, remain top priorities.

At the same time, the Strategy brought up some questions about the division of countries into those where cooperation is of "priority strategic nature" (the US, the UK, Canada, Germany, and France), and the countries with which Ukraine is "developing strategic partnership" (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lithuania, Poland, and Turkey). Apart from that, the definition of priority vectors for developing partner relations — such as "with other Baltic states and countries of Northern Europe, as well as close good-neighbourly relations with the countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe" — is excessively generalized.

The analysis of other documents shows that the vision of Ukraine's relations with the EU and NATO remains strategically determined. Strategic support for relations with G7 countries scored traditionally well. The signing of the Agreement on Political Cooperation, Free Trade, and Strategic Partnership between Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in October was an important development.

At the same time, analysts point to the lack of a strategic vision for Ukraine's relations with neighbour-states and the Black Sea region despite fairly proactive policies in all these areas. Apart from that, while the President and representatives of the President's Office repeatedly highlight countries in the Middle East and North Africa, the issue of a strategic vision for relations with them remains open.

Ukraine's foreign policy vision in relations with Canada, Georgia, Germany, Lithuania, Turkey, the UK, the USA, and NATO, as well as for building international support to counter Russia's aggression, got the highest score.

The lowest score was for the strategic vision on Western Balkans, Latin America, Iran, Israel, Hungary, economic relations with Russia, and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The overall score for Strategic Vision

3+

Activities

Ukraine's foreign policy activities were greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The success of those activities, however, relied on the capacity to quickly adjust to the new restrictions, establish new channels of communication, shift dialogue at all levels to the online format, and find common points in the fight against the pandemic. As a result, Ukraine's embassies bore the brunt of maintaining bilateral dialogue throughout the year.

From March onwards, evacuation of Ukrainian citizens, consular assistance, and obtaining medical supplies and humanitarian assistance were the key challenges for most embassies. The way these issues were solved demonstrated the MFA's readiness to work in crisis situations, as well as geographic gaps in Ukraine's diplomatic presence in the world. The most proactive embassies and consulates at the stage of bringing Ukrainian citizens back home were in Ankara, Berlin, Budapest, Chisinau, Istanbul, Frankfurt, Prague, São Paulo, Warsaw, Vienna, and Zagreb.

European integration was traditionally one of the most intense segments of Ukraine's foreign policy. However, this proactive approach only applied to the political and economic dimensions, while there was far less progress in the Eastern Partnership and Energy Community. Despite the COVID-19 restrictions, Ukraine was one of the few countries that kept an intense offline dialogue at the highest and top levels, in addition to the online component, thanks to the meetings of President V. Zelenskyy, Vice Prime Minister O. Stefanishyna and Foreign Minister D. Kuleba with the EU leaders and top officials. In practice, however, the implementation of the EU norms and standards slowed down noticeably compared to the pace pledged earlier.

Despite the pandemic, the **Ukraine-NATO** dialogue was active at all levels in 2020. Numerous meetings and visits to Brussels of the President, vice prime ministers, ministers of defence and foreign affairs and Chief of the General Staff were complemented with joint exercises and engagement in NATO missions, participation in NATO reflection process and flights under SALIS, a program for strategic deliveries, whereby airplanes delivered supplies to the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, France, Poland, Spain, Slovakia, and the USA.

Consolidation of international support in countering Russia's aggression was traditionally a top priority in Ukraine's foreign policy

activities and a key theme both in bilateral dialogue with partners and in work within international organizations. Ukrainian diplomats operated proactively to support Ukraine in international courts, including Ukraine vs Russia case at the European Court of Human Rights. Work continued to keep and expand sanctions and expand the cooperation formats, including via the newly-announced Crimean Platform.

In cooperation **with the G7 countries**, the most proactive dialogue was with the UK, Canada, and the US. In October, President Zelenskyy visited London. Various online meetings with representatives of the UK Parliament, as well as joint exercises, took place throughout the year. Telephone conversations and online meetings/visits became the generally accepted new norm in 2020. These contacts were the most proactive with Canada and Germany. A number of high-level visits to Italy focused on the security dialogue, Ukraine's European aspirations, and the release of Vitaliy Markiv from an Italian prison.

In **bilateral relations**, dialogue with Lithuania, Poland, and Turkey traditionally had the best dynamics. Numerous government and parliament meetings continued. President V. Zelenskyy met twice with Polish President A. Duda and Turkish President R. T. Erdogan. The first Ukrainian-Turkish meeting in the new 2+2 format (two foreign ministers + two defence ministers) took place in December.

While direct bilateral contacts shrank in many areas, the high level of interaction between the Ukrainian and Romanian MFAs and MoDs was notable. President Zelenskyy's visit to Slovakia in September had a positive impact as the first official visit of the Ukrainian head of state to Bratislava since 2011.

Bilateral relations with Georgia were once again of a pendulum nature, swinging from dialogue between presidents and prime ministers to the diplomatic crisis due to harsh statements by former Georgian President M. Saakashvili. Relations with Hungary followed the same dynamics, going from tensions during the year due to possible interference of Hungarian politicians in Ukrainian elections to a resumption of the intergovernmental economic commission's work after a break of seven years.

Dialogue with Iran intensified as a result of the tragic event — the investigation of the downing of a Ukrainian plane near Teheran.

Despite President Zelenskyy's working visit to Israel in January, some pace was lost in relations with the country compared to 2019.

The China policy was essentially guided by the economic agenda and receipt of medical supplies to fight the pandemic. Trade is growing without any intensification in the political dialogue.

In the context of **regional cooperation**, Ukraine's activities mainly focused on improving the security dialogue, promoting Ukraine's exports and supporting Ukraine within international organizations. Growing political interest in various regions across the world did not always translate into practical activities in these areas.

The pandemic had a serious negative impact on Ukraine's activities in many regions across the world as visits, forums, and public events had to be cancelled. Some regions, such as Asia-Pacific and the Middle East, were in the President and the Foreign Affairs Minister's spotlight at the beginning of 2020. In spring, the MFA held the first Asia Week.

The President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs maintained communication with various countries, including Algeria, Albania, Croatia, Chile, Egypt, Indonesia, Qatar, Libya, Lithuania, Morocco, North Macedonia, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, and the UAE, via telephone conversations.

Ukraine's foreign policy activity on Western Balkans was not very proactive and usually focused on neutralizing the consequences of Russia's aggression and support to Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Work with Northern Europe was not intense either as most contacts there were limited to Sweden as the OSCE chair and Norway. Foreign policy on the Baltic states was traditionally active. Despite the pandemic and the cancellation of some events, dialogue with all three countries was maintained at all levels.

Cooperation with the Visegrad Four mostly took place through intense bilateral relations. The traditional meeting of Armed Forces commanders in September was the only manifestation of cooperation in the V4+Ukraine format.

Online platforms were used proactively throughout the year for business fora, meetings and presentations with partners from Asia and Latin America. Ukraine's MFA initiated a series of online political consultations with Latin American and the Caribbean States, including Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Panama. Ukraine's few embassies in the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa undertook the function of ensuring proactive dialogue with South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Senegal. The Embassy in Nigeria worked hard to free Ukrainian sailors that had been taken hostage by the pirates along the coastline of Benin, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea.

Compared to the generally low scale of Ukraine's relations with Central Asian countries in recent years, 2020 saw some increase of activity, even if not at the high level — via diplomatic missions, some executive authorities, business entities, etc. The most important events of 2020 in this area were the Ukrainian-Kazakh investment forum in October and the visit of Ukraine's Infrastructure Minister to Kazakhstan in November.

Ukraine still views the Black Sea region from the perspective of bilateral dialogue and security, given the threats triggered by the Russian occupation of Crimea. Ukraine nominated a candidate for Secretary-General of the BSEC in 2020, which helped present and promote Ukraine's agenda for the region.

Like in previous years, Ukraine was very active in international organizations, focusing primarily on protecting territorial integrity and sovereignty, dealing with the impact of Russian aggression, and protection of human rights. Ukraine successfully chaired the OSCE Forum of Security Cooperation in the second trimester of 2020, drawing attention to Russia's aggression in the context of various aspects of European security. At the Council of Europe, Ukraine's efforts mostly focused on PACE. Activities at the UN almost entirely shifted to Ukraine's representative missions in New York, Geneva, and Vienna and to online events with the President, Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, among others, participating. In February, Foreign Minister V. Prystaiko had a working visit to the UN Headquarters in New York.

In terms of **multilateral initiatives**, only protection of human rights scored well. International political contacts with President Zelenskyy where Ukraine confirmed its climate commitments and engagement in the global fight against climate change took place at the end of the year. The work on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was essentially limited to participation in the UN General Assembly and the International Atomic Energy Agency. The issues of the international security agenda were left in the secondary portfolio in 2020. Ukraine continued its engagement in UN and NATO peacekeeping missions, consultations on information security, ways to counter hybrid threats, and security challenges triggered by the pandemic. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, representatives of the Ukrainian Armed Forces joined important international exercises. Still, Ukraine lacked a clear stance on most conflict situations, including the Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria conflicts.

Economic and public diplomacy were ultimately integrated into Ukraine's political ambitions. A strong focus throughout 2020 was on promoting Ukraine's image in the world, its culture, goods and services across all regions. In economic diplomacy, European and Asian vectors stood out as priority ones.

Ukraine's activities on Canada, Italy, Poland, Turkey, the USA, the UK, Baltic States, Euro-Atlantic integration, the OSCE, public diplomacy, and the fight against COVID-19 had the best scores.

The worst scored activities were on Sub-Saharan Africa and political and energy relations with Russia.

The overall score for Activities

4. —

Results

The status of the Enhanced Opportunities Partner with NATO received in June, and the Agreement on Political Cooperation, Free Trade, and Strategic Partnership between Ukraine and the UK signed in October qualify as the two most significant accomplishments of 2020. The 22nd offline Ukraine-EU Summit with President Zelenskyy that took place despite all pandemic restrictions and the Joint Statement on the EU's unchanging support for Ukraine in de-occupation of its territory, reforms, and economic cooperation following the Summit, were important results, too.

The establishment of the Lublin Triangle as a new format of interstate cooperation can be listed as a strategic result of 2020. Its priorities include security, countering hostile disinformation, and the development of trade and infrastructure projects. The announcement of the Crimean Platform also delivered its first results as Canada, Moldova, Slovakia, Turkey, the UK, and the US agreed to join the platform.

A number of signed memoranda on military and military-technical cooperation, defence industry development, security assistance, etc., with Brazil, Iraq, Jordan, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the UK were important accomplishments in the security domain. The Memorandum signed with the UK

Export Finance was the most important development in this context. It provides for the possible allocation of £2.5bn-worth of British government export guarantee for joint Ukrainian-British projects in security and defence, agriculture, infrastructure, energy, and healthcare.

A number of other memoranda and agreements on cooperation in various sectors, signed with different countries throughout 2020, are worth mentioning as they highlight the wide range of priorities and opportunities that Ukraine is developing in bilateral relations. Examples include the 2021–2025 Intergovernmental Program of Cultural Cooperation between Ukraine and Italy; the Agreement to utilize the French loan for a water purification plant in Mariupol; a five-year USD 70 mln Program of Cooperation in the Space Industry between Ukraine and China; the Memorandum between Ukraine's Ministry of Infrastructure and Slovakia's Ministry of Transport and Construction on Cooperation in the sphere of combined transportation in routes between the EU and Asia through the territory of the two countries; the Memorandum on Cooperation between the Exporters and Investors Council and the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, etc.

In December, Ukraine gained support on two Crimea resolutions at the UN General Assembly and expanded their content, even though there is still no trend of more countries voting in support. The Ukrainian delegation to the UN also managed to counter Russia's attempts to revise sanctions against it and exploit the COVID-19 pandemic for political purposes. Sanctions against Russia were generally preserved and expanded in 2020.

Noteworthy are the accomplishments on humanitarian, financial, and medical assistance provided to Ukraine throughout 2020 by countries of Europe, Asia, and the US. The Government of Germany provided EUR 70 mln to improve energy efficiency, sustainable economic development, democracy, civil society, governance and decentralization. In April, the Czech Republic initiated V4EastSolidarity, a program to allocate EUR 250,000 to Eastern Partnership countries, including EUR 125,000 to Ukraine, to help them fight against COVID-19.

Representatives of Ukraine were elected to various high positions at the UN and the PACE. In December, L. Nepop, Ukraine's Ambassador to Hungary, was elected chair of the Danube Commission for 2021–2023. Ukraine nominated its candidate for Secretary-General of BSEC, but the results will be available in 2021.

Unfortunately, two events that are important for Ukraine did not take place as a result of the pandemic. One was the spring session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Kyiv. The other one was an annual conference Ukraine Reform, scheduled to take place in Vilnius in 2020. Both were postponed to 2021.

In economic and trade cooperation, Ukraine managed to maintain its position in a number of countries across the world. Total exports of goods only shrank 1.8%, while imports fell 11%. Contrary to the declared intentions, Ukraine failed to sign an FTA agreement with Turkey.

Ukraine's top 10 trade partners in 2020 included China (USD 15.4bn), Germany (USD 7.4bn), Poland (USD 7.36bn), Russia (USD 7.24bn), Turkey (USD 4.85bn), Belarus (USD 4.2bn), Italy (USD 4bn), the USA (USD 3.9bn), India (USD 2.7bn) and the Netherlands (USD 2.55bn).

The biggest growth of Ukraine's exports compared to 2019 was to Honduras (18,557%), the Dominican Republic (3,200%), Zimbabwe (1,924%) and Saint Kitts and Nevis (1,174%). Exports to Pakistan and Cabo Verde increased fivefold. Among Ukraine's top trade partners, exports to China almost doubled.

The biggest decline in exports, compared to 2019, among Ukraine's important trade partners, was to Thailand (51% compared to the 2019 rate), Serbia (53%), Slovakia (63%), Greece (65%), Singapore (65%), and Egypt (71.8%).

The top 10 destinations for Ukrainian exporters in 2020 were China, Poland, Russia, Turkey, Germany, India, Italy, the Netherlands, Egypt, and Belarus.

The pandemic restrictions affected trade in services far more as total trade in services plummeted almost 30% in 2020. Ukraine exported USD 11.2bn-worth of services and imported USD 5.2bn-worth of services.

Total trade in services was the biggest with Russia (USD 2.8bn), the USA (USD 1.8bn), the UK (USD 1.04bn), Germany (USD 1bn), and Switzerland (USD 942 mln) in 2020. Ukraine enjoyed a trade surplus with all these destinations.

The top 10 destinations for the services exported from Ukraine in 2020 included Russia, the USA, Switzerland, Germany, the UK, Poland, Cyprus, the UAE, the Netherlands, and Israel.

The biggest growth of export of Ukrainian services was to the US Virgin Islands (2,223% compared to 2019), Uruguay (808%), Zambia (472%), North Korea (428%), and Bangladesh (328%). Export of services also grew almost threefold to the Philippines, Brazil, Peru, and Ethiopia.

Export of services plummeted the most to the Dominican Republic (1.3% of the 2019 rate), Uganda (1.4%), Oman (10%), Sri Lanka (17.6%), and Libya (18.9%). Out of Ukraine's big trade partners, the greatest fall of export in services was to Russia (42% of the 2019 rate), Greece (48%), Spain (54%), and Italy (63%).

The results of foreign policy activities on Canada, Poland, Slovakia, the USA, the UK, Euro-Atlantic integration and the UN got the best scores.

The lowest scores on this indicator go to the work with Israel, Hungary, Russia, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Energy Community, climate change, international security, and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The overall score for Results

3+



G7 COUNTRIES

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

United Kingdom

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	5	4
STRATEGIC VISION	5	5
ACTIVITIES	4	5
RESULTS	4	5
TOTAL SCORES	B+	A-

2020 was a successful year for Ukrainian-British relations. The signing of the Political, Free Trade and Strategic Partnership Agreement between Ukraine and the United Kingdom became a key aspect of bilateral relations over the past five years. Active work to establish a functioning free trade zone, as well as a new political dialogue, and to intensify military cooperation has started.

Political Interest / Engagement

Over the course of the year, Ukraine's political interest in developing bilateral relations remained consistently high. However, certain omissions are worth noting. Despite the strategic nature of Ukrainian-British relations, as well as the general spirit of a more constructive dialogue, it was rather unsystematic and did not find expression in the major documents of key actors. For example, O. Honcharuk's government program of activities (March) covered the British direction only by mentioning simplification of the travel regime with the United Kingdom as a goal. D. Shmyhal government's program (June) covered the UK in the context of preparations for strategic agreement the signing.

The President's Address to the Verkhovna Rada repeatedly emphasizes the strategic importance of relations between Ukraine and the United Kingdom. Cross-cutting themes include naval cooperation, economic cooperation, and the importance of the signed Strategic Partnership Agreement. Besides, there was a thesis about joint work on creating and intensifying the "Crimean Platform" format.

During the Ambassadorial, the President mentioned relations with Great Britain as a priority of Ukraine's foreign policy. The speech included topics of overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic and the start of vaccine delivery to Ukraine.

Representatives of the Presidential Office mainly emphasized the economic component of relations. According to the Deputy Head of the OPU I. Zhovkva, the economic component, in particular increasing trade and improving access of Ukrainian goods to the British market, was the focus of the presidential administration in 2020.

The members of the Parliamentary Group of Friendship also showed active political interest.

Institutional Cooperation

Most of the direct cooperation remained with the MFA, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, and the MoD. The main efforts aimed at signing the Strategic Partnership Agreement and organizing and holding relevant events — a visit of the President, a joint business forum, and joint military exercises.

The level of institutional synergy in replacing the Ambassador of Ukraine to the United Kingdom in July is worth noting. Ukraine decided on the candidacy of V. Prystaiko quite fast.

Strategic Vision

The Political, Free Trade and Strategic Partnership Agreement between Ukraine and the United Kingdom, signed on October 8, became a new basis for bilateral relations. Thus, the short-term goals for the free trade zone set in 2017 were attained. The FTA becomes effective at the end of the Brexit transitional period (1.01.2021). The new agreement's political part includes cooperation on a peaceful settlement of conflicts, joint security and international initiatives, environmental protection, and the expansion of human contacts between the two countries.

The 2020 National Security Strategy identifies the development of relations with the United Kingdom as one of the priorities “to ensure international security and counter common challenges and threats, minimize their impact on Ukraine, and to strengthen the independence and sovereignty guarantees as well as to promote democratic progress and development of Ukraine.”

Activities

Most of the activities in the British direction in 2020 aimed at working out and finalizing the strategic agreement. The President of Ukraine's visit to the United Kingdom (7–8.10) was coordinated with the agreement signing. The visit included meetings with the Prime Minister, an audience of the presidential couple with Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, meetings with the House of Commons' Speaker L. Hoyle, and Lord Mayor of the City of London W. Russell.

There is some activity in the field of interparliamentary diplomacy. Although the quarantine restrictions generally affected the Group of Friendship activities, many online and offline events and meetings with British diplomats and parliamentarians took place at the initiative of its co-chairs L. Vasylenko and D. Natalukha. In particular, members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords of the British Parliament attended an online discussion "Ukrainian-British Interparliamentary Dialogue: Foreign Policy Dimension" (19.05). Also, D. Natalukha and V. Halaychuk were part of the official delegation of Ukraine during the President's visit to London in October, where they met with the Speaker of the House of Commons of the British Parliament Sir L. Hoyle, and the head of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Ukraine M. Pritchard. Numerous meetings with representatives of the British Embassy focused on reforms in Ukraine, the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, expansion of educational and cultural cooperation, green course, free trade area, development of start-ups, etc.

Significant achievements should be noted in the field of military cooperation. A delegation of the British MoD led by Secretary of State for Defence B. Wallace visited Ukraine (August 18). The visit concerned new formats of defence cooperation between the countries, establishing a closer dialogue between the defence agencies, and preparing for the documentation of relations. Also, Deputy Ministers of Defence of Ukraine I. Khalimon and A. Petrenko paid official visits to the United Kingdom.

Strategic Command and Staff Military Exercise "Joint Efforts 2020" took place in September, and Ukrainian-British exercise "Warrior Watcher 2020" — in October. The development of cooperation in the naval sphere over the year was at the operational level: e.g., during working meetings of Deputy Ministers of Defence of Ukraine I. Khalimon and O. Myronyuk with the British Embassy representatives.

Results

The main result in bilateral cooperation between the United Kingdom and Ukraine in 2020 was the signing of the Political, Free Trade, and Strategic Partnership Agreement (8.10), which provides for the establishment of the FTA, as well as the expansion of political and strategic cooperation. The agreement brings relations between the two countries to a qualitatively new level in many aspects.

An important addition to the agreement was the Memorandum on enhancing cooperation in the military and military-technical spheres between the two countries' MoDs (8.10). The key provision of this document is an agreement on the joint creation of infrastructure for servicing and further expansion of the Ukrainian Navy in Ukraine.

A memorandum with the British export agency UK Export Finance is also worth noting. It operates through the Export Credits Guarantee Department and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine represented by the Minister of Finance of Ukraine. The document was signed during Zelenskyy's official visit to the UK and provided for the possibility of British government export guarantees of 2.5 billion pounds (more than USD 3 billion) for joint Ukrainian-British projects in the fields of security and defence, agriculture, infrastructure, energy, and health.

In 2020, trade between Ukraine and the United Kingdom slightly increased (both export and import by 6%). The total turnover amounted to USD 1.48 billion, with a negative balance for Ukraine. The volume of trade in services amounted to USD 1.05 billion with a positive balance for Ukraine (at the same time, both export and import of services fell by 4% and 14%, respectively).

Italy

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	4
STRATEGIC VISION	3	4
ACTIVITIES	4	5
RESULTS	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	C+	B+

In 2020, Italy continued to support Ukraine's European integration aspirations and its territorial integrity. Ukraine and Italy have reached a new dimension of cooperation, in particular in the economic, financial, medical, cultural, and humanitarian sectors.



Political Interest / Engagement

In 2020, Ukraine's political interest was determined by cooperation with Italy in dealing with the pandemic and the politically important trial of the Ukrainian National Guard serviceman V. Markiv. Prominent Ukrainian politicians who showed interest in Italy included representatives of the Verkhovna Rada: D. Monastyrskyy, O. Merezhko, D. Volodin, Y. Cherniev (Servant of the People), most of whom joined the new inter-faction association "Free Markiv" and "Invest in Ukraine."

On 17 January, the Verkhovna Rada adopted a resolution in which it urged the Italian Parliament to ensure the impartiality and transparency of the appeal hearing of the National Guard of Ukraine senior sergeant V. Markiv's case.

The President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs did not directly mention Italy in their keynote speeches and interviews (except for the Markiv case or general mentions in the context of the G7 countries). The same is true for D. Shmyhal's Government Programme.

Institutional Cooperation

The MFA and the Ministry of Internal Affairs cooperated closely, especially in the Markiv case, decisive in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has strengthened the humanitarian direction of cooperation between the two agencies. In addition, it was announced that a representative of the MIA would be sent to Ukraine's Embassy in Rome. Representatives of the Ukraine-Italy friendship group were also involved in the Markiv case.

The Ukrainian-Italian Council for Economic, Industrial, and Financial Cooperation convened a meeting (16.12), co-chaired by Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine T. Kovalchuk and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy M. Di Stefano.

The MFA and the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine cooperated with their Italian counterparts closer than before.

Ukraine's new ambassador to Italy was appointed in September (after the previous one had been dismissed in July).

Strategic Vision

The National Security Strategy adopted in September 2020 only mentions Italy in the context of cooperation with the EU. The strategic vision for Ukraine-Italy interaction was presented as part of the bilateral cooperation roadmap for 2016–2017, which has not been updated.

Activities

Political relations revived in 2020. There were several high-level visits to Italy. The President of Ukraine paid a visit to Rome in February. The Minister of Internal Affairs made a number of visits (May, August, and November). In particular, in August, he met Italian Interior Minister L. Lamorgese to discuss cyber threats, the fight against transnational crime, illegal migration, and the situation in Donbas. During the same visit, he met the Commander of the Marine Coast Guard Headquarters to discuss the experience of using large patrol boats for maritime border protection.

Besides, a Ukrainian delegation consisting of Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration O. Stefanishyna and the Head of the Presidential Office A. Yermak paid an important visit to Rome (October) to discuss the situation in Donbas, economic and trade cooperation with the Italian Foreign Minister. These visits were also essential for bilateral political cooperation in the case of National Guard serviceman V. Markiv.

The 9th meeting of the Ukrainian-Italian Council for Economic, Industrial, and Financial Cooperation (December), which had not met for five years, marked a significant shift in political and economic cooperation. The co-chairs of the Council — Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine A. Avakov and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy L. Di Maio — held negotiations as part of the Council meeting.

The Ukraine-Italy interparliamentary friendship group has also made active attempts to intensify cooperation in the Markiv case at the parliamentary level.

Preparations were underway to sign a number of other bilateral documents in the areas of space exploration, trade facilitation, investment protection, and law-enforcement cooperation.

Ukraine supported Italy in the first months of the COVID-19 epidemic and provided humanitarian assistance to Italian citizens. In April, 20 Ukrainian doctors helped hospitals in the Marche region for three weeks, gaining valuable experience and having the opportunity to get acquainted with Italian treatment protocols, which had a positive image effect.

A particular boost was given to the cultural component in 2020: a Ukrainian-language audio guide is now available at the Colosseum in Rome, the Kyiv City State Administration building was illuminated in the colours of the Italian flag in support of the country during the pandemic, etc. The film about Vitaliy Markiv, “The Wrong Place,” produced together by Ukrainian and Italian journalists, was shown in the Italian Parliament and the regions.

Results

In 2020, Italian leaders continued to declare support for Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as adherence to international sanctions against Russia. Italy supports the further deepening of Ukraine’s relations with the EU. However, it notes the focus on the pragmatic economic component and that it will strengthen economic cooperation on the condition that Ukrainian partners have a strategic vision for this.

Although countering hybrid threats has continued to be a challenge for Ukrainian government agencies, Italian politicians made fewer populist statements about the possibility of lifting sanctions against Russia compared to the previous period.

One of the new noteworthy agreements signed between Ukraine and Italy is on the Intergovernmental Programme for Cultural Cooperation for 2021–2025.

Restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to a significant reduction in economic cooperation between Ukraine and Italy. In 2020, the trade turnover between the countries amounted to USD 4.06bn (– USD 430 mln compared to 2019). At the same time, exports amounted to USD 1.92bn (20.1% down), imports to USD 2.13bn (2.5% up). The decline in trade was mainly due to a decrease in Ukrainian exports of commodity items to Italian industries significantly affected by COVID-19 restrictions.

Italy was one of the first to help Ukraine overcome the consequences of the devastating floods in the Carpathians.

Canada

B+

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	5
ACTIVITIES	5	5
RESULTS	5	5
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B+

Bilateral cooperation has finally gained the status of a strategic priority in national legislation. There was only a slight reduction in trade despite the quarantine restrictions. Traditionally, the sides continued to cooperate in implementing domestic reforms in Ukraine, in particular in security and defence. They ratified a promising Audio-Visual Co-Production Agreement. The terms of the Free Trade Agreement have not been updated.

Political Interest / Engagement

Canada has traditionally been one of the priority countries for Ukraine's foreign policy. However, the authorities' activities aimed at developing relations with Canada were quite limited in 2020 due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. They mainly consisted of planned steps in economic, trade, and security cooperation, counteraction to Russian aggression and support for the sanctions policy, as reflected in the Government Action Plan for 2020, and the crisis challenges of 2020: curbing of the coronavirus spread and the investigation into the Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 crash in Iran.

The President of Ukraine repeatedly mentioned security and Euro-Atlantic cooperation, the establishment of the Crimean Platform and international support for Ukraine, describing Canada as Ukraine's "international blood brother." V. Zelenskyy also repeatedly talked about the priority nature of bilateral cooperation in his phone conversations with Prime Minister of Canada J. Trudeau (9.01, 10.01, 14.01, 19.03, 15.06, 22.09, and 16.10). In a Skype interview with Canada's *The Globe and Mail* (21.06), the President particularly highlighted the need to deepen economic and security cooperation and to liberalise visa regulations. The Zelenskyy's offered remarkable tokens of appreciation to the Trudeau-Grégoire couple by presenting them with embroidered blouses on Ukrainian Vyshyvanka Day and sending a special letter of support when the Canadian First Lady contracted the coronavirus.

Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba talked about priority partnership with Canada at the Ambassadorial (17–22.12). In an interview with the *Den* newspaper, he expressed profound gratitude to Canadian military instructors for their contribution to the training of the Ukrainian army (Operation UNIFIER). The Deputy Head of the Presidential Office of Ukraine, I. Zhovkva, talked about the importance of economic cooperation with Canada in an interview with the *Interfax-Ukraine* news agency (18.06).

Canada was mentioned in the Government Programmes of both O. Honcharuk (March) and D. Shmyhal (June). Prime Minister of Ukraine D. Shmyhal and Deputy Prime Minister of Canada C. Freeland discussed prospects for intergovernmental cooperation in finance and trade over the phone (8.06).

The previously planned ratification of the Audio-Visual Co-Production Agreement was the only subject for discussing the areas in cooperation with Canada at the Committee on Foreign Policy and Interparliamentary Cooperation meetings (5.02 and 1.07).

Institutional Cooperation

The agenda of institutional cooperation in 2020 included military cooperation within Operation UNIFIER (the Ukrainian Armed Forces), creation of investment opportunities for Canadian companies (the MFA, Presidential Office), coordination of efforts in investigating the downing of the Ukrainian aircraft PS752 over Iran on 8 January (the MFA, the MoD, the Office of the Prosecutor-General), and organisation of special flights to bring Ukrainian and Canadian citizens home after the introduction of quarantine restrictions (the MFA, the Ministry of Infrastructure).

While the expansion of the Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and Canada, which has been discussed since 2018, is considered a priority, a meeting of the bilateral commission has not yet taken place. President V. Zelenskyy once again mentioned this priority during a phone conversation with Prime Minister J. Trudeau (22.09). Technical consultations finished, but the President has not approved the composition of the Ukrainian delegation to negotiations, which the Cabinet of Ministers proposed in summer.

Strategic Vision

The new wording of the National Security Strategy of Ukraine approved on 14 September identifies comprehensive cooperation with Canada as a strategic priority. Finally, this status has been clearly defined in the top-level documents.

Although the Ukrainian authorities have repeatedly mentioned their interest in increasing Canadian investment and advancing trade potential, the planned expansion of the Free Trade Agreement to include services and investment has not been implemented. At the same time, the sides ratified an important Audio-Visual Co-Production Agreement, which automatically gives Ukrainian producers an opportunity to receive financial assistance from Telefilm Canada and apply for tax credits and discounts from the Canadian side.

Activities

The coronavirus pandemic has limited the possibility of contacts at different levels of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. The President of Ukraine and the Prime Minister of Canada held important conversations over the phone to agree on the Iran air crash investigation positions (10, 11 and 15 January), cooperation between Ukraine and Canada in combating the spread of the coronavirus and mitigation of its consequences (19.03 and 22.09), deeper economic cooperation and visa liberalisation (15.06 and 22.09). The First Ladies held a phone conversation for the first time.

During the first visit of Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs F.— Ph. Champagne to Ukraine and his meeting with V. Zelenskyy (4.03), the two discussed defence and police reform to which Canada has allocated two mln Canadian dollars (USD 1.5 mln).

The two countries' Ministers of Foreign Affairs held several phone conversations to discuss economic cooperation, Canada's support for Ukraine's cooperation with the IMF, implementation of reforms aimed at Ukraine's economic development and integration into the EU and NATO, and efforts to ensure Ukraine's security and defence (30.03, 14.04, and 1.10).

On the other hand, the pandemic has prompted the emergence of new forms of institutional cooperation. For example, Ukraine and Canada were engaged in an interparliamentary online discussion on the interaction between MPs and citizens during quarantine with the involvement of both countries' embassies (5.06). There was an international online conference "The Key Challenges and Lessons for Parliaments in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic," which brought together MPs from various countries and representatives of international organisations (11.06).

The appointment of I. Zhovkva, the Deputy Head of the President's Office, as an official "investment nanny" for the Canadian mining company Black Iron, which plans to implement an iron ore project in Kryvyi Rih, confirms the priority importance of developing economic cooperation and attracting Canadian investment.

As far as military cooperation is concerned, the MoDs of Ukraine and Canada, during a working visit to the NATO HQ in Brussels (13.02), agreed to increase the number of Canadian troops in advisory missions during the 10th-anniversary rotation of the Canadian military contingent in Operation UNIFIER (October).

The government paid special attention to the activities of the International Coordination and Response Group for the victims of Ukrainian International Airlines Flight PS752 in Iran, which includes Canada and other affected countries.

Special mention should be made of Ukraine's accession to the Canadian intergovernmental initiative, the Safer Skies Forum, which was established to increase civil aviation safety. The Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine V. Kryklii took part in the first meeting of the Forum (8.12). Ukraine also joined the efforts to create new standards and recommendations for airspace management in conflict zones developed by the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

Results

Canadian-Ukrainian cooperation has achieved the most significant results in economy, trade and security. As a result of the MFA's work with the Canadian side, the sanctions against more than 400 Russian individuals and companies were maintained and tightened under Canada's Special Economic Measures (Russia) Regulations and Special Economic Measures (Ukraine) Regulations.

Last year, Ottawa decided to extend the Operation UNIFIER military training mission on a permanent basis until 2022. Two rotations of the Canadian military took place in June and October, even despite quarantine. Also, the Canadian government decided to allocate an additional 4.3 mln Canadian dollars (USD 3.3 mln) to Ukraine's security and defence development (October).

The Honorary Consulate of Ukraine opened in Quebec. It is headed by the former president of the Ukrainian World Congress, well-known lawyer E. Czolij.

In 2020, trade in goods between the countries amounted to almost USD 282.5 mln: exports of goods decreased by 5% while imports increased by 3.3% compared to the previous year. Trade in services in 2020 amounted to more than USD 123 mln: exports of services decreased by only 0.7% while imports decreased by 67.4% compared to 2019. Thus, it can be stated that the pandemic has had no significant impact on trade in goods. As far as trade in services is concerned, in addition to a substantial drop in imports, there have been significant changes in the structure of exports — the share of computer, information, and telecommunications services has increased by more than 50%, which was facilitated by the remote work of the IT sector during the pandemic.

The ratified Audio-Visual Co-Production Agreement offers a platform for creating joint Ukrainian-Canadian films and opens access to the global distribution market for them.

Canada continued to support Ukraine on international platforms, including in credit talks with the IMF, unblocking of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, and so on. This is facilitated by the established consensus between the Canadian government and opposition on support for Ukraine (let us recall that over 100 Canadian MPs formed the largest group of friendship with Ukraine), which is actively being lobbied by Ukrainian authorities and the Canadian diaspora.

Germany

B+

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	5	4
STRATEGIC VISION	3	5
ACTIVITIES	5	4
RESULTS	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B+

In 2020, the National Security Strategy of Ukraine identified Germany as a strategic partner. The Ukrainian-German dialogue is described by the high dynamics of interaction, contacts and a trusting relationship between top officials. In 2020, the Chairman of the Ukrainian Parliament paid the first visit to Germany in five years. Ukraine and Germany also agreed to launch an energy partnership. Ukraine has continued to resist Nord Stream 2 but attempts to change the German government's official position on completing the pipeline as an economic project have failed.

Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest in Germany is invariably high, as confirmed by the active political dialogue and public speeches by representatives of all government offices in Ukraine. The main topics included the key role of Germany as a mediator in resolving the Donbas conflict, as well as Berlin's influence on maintaining the EU unity on sanctions against Russia, keeping the issue of ending Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine on the G7 agenda and holding large-scale business events. The Ukrainian authorities are interested in economic cooperation, assistance in implementing structural reforms in Ukraine, and overcoming the coronavirus pandemic, Prime Minister of Ukraine D. Shmyhal said in an interview with Handelsblatt. All political forces in Ukraine consider Germany a strategically important political partner. President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy particularly appreciates Germany's mediation in the Normandy format and A. Merkel's personal commitment to Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty. President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy, Prime Minister of Ukraine D. Shmyhal and Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada D. Razumkov agree on cooperation with Germany to secure access to COVID-19 vaccines.

Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation between public agencies on collaboration with Germany is quite coordinated, given the strategic importance of this state. All branches of power in Ukraine support a political dialogue on the coordination of efforts in the Normandy format and counteraction to Russian aggression, which is

spearheaded by the Office of the President of Ukraine. The Government of Ukraine plays a central role in establishing and developing trade and economic cooperation. The Ministry of Energy and the German-Ukrainian Chamber of Industry and Commerce held the 1st German-Ukrainian Energy Day. MPs are in contact with the MFA of Ukraine and coordinate their position in the interparliamentary dialogue. Diplomats attended the meetings of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee and informed MPs about the results of visits and about Ukraine's stand on historical and energy issues (the Holocaust, Bundestag's recognition of the Holodomor as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people, Germany's reparation to Ukraine for World War II crimes, Nord Stream 2).

Strategic Vision

The National Security Strategy of Ukraine, which was updated in 2020, states that Ukraine will secure its national priorities by developing relations with countries such as Germany, the United States, the UK, Canada, and France to ensure international security, address common challenges and threats, and minimise their impact on Ukraine. The document also states that these relations have a strategic priority and aim to strengthen the guarantees of independence and sovereignty, promoting the democratic progress and development of Ukraine. Ukraine and Germany signed the Joint Statement on the Start of Energy Partnership (26.08), placing the main focus on sustainable energy infrastructure and Ukraine's coal regions in transition.

Activities

The year 2020 was marked by a large number of meetings at the level of the President of Ukraine, the Prime Minister, the Verkhovna Rada and some ministries and departments. V. Zelenskyy had regular telephone conversations with German Chancellor A. Merkel. Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba held his first online meeting with H. Maas (24.03) and had a record number of telephone conversations with him.

Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba's visit to Berlin in early June was among his first foreign trips and confirmed Ukraine's priority to develop a partnership with Germany. The German Foreign Minister's visit to Kyiv on Independence Day (24.08) was a remarkable event.

Prime Minister of Ukraine D. Shmyhal and German Chancellor A. Merkel held an online meeting (12.05) to discuss economic cooperation and mitigation of COVID-19 consequences. A Ukrainian delegation led by Vice Prime Minister O. Reznikov paid an important visit to Germany in June. Also, four rounds of talks were held at the level of advisers to the Normandy Four heads of state in Berlin. It was attended by Head of the Presidential Office A. Yermak and Vice Prime Minister — Minister for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories O. Reznikov (January, June, July, and September).

The Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture, the Ministry of Health and the MoD of Ukraine worked closely with the Embassy of Ukraine in Germany. The Ukrainian-German High-Level Group on Economic Cooperation held its 11th meeting (14.12).

D. Razumkov paid the first visit by the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada to Germany in five years (29.10). The members of the interparliamentary friendship group of Verkhovna Rada and Bundestag held video conferences in the course of the year.

Results

The year 2020 was quite fruitful for Ukrainian-German relations. Germany has remained Ukraine's partner in implementing peace efforts in the country's east, countering Russian aggression, maintaining EU anti-Russian sanctions and restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity. Thanks to cooperation with Germany, Ukraine was able to evacuate its citizens from countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh, and Peru in 2020. During the 5th government-level dialogue on development policy, the sides agreed that Germany would allocate EUR 70 mln to energy efficiency, sustainable economic development, democracy, civil society, public administration, and decentralisation.

In April, the CMU approved a cooperation agreement with Germany's Government (the project "Housing for Internally Displaced Persons"). They also signed a framework agreement on financial cooperation, which defines the list of projects Germany agreed to finance in 2011–2019.

In 2020, trade in goods between Ukraine and Germany amounted to USD 7.4bn, which is 17% less than in 2019. The balance remained badly negative for Ukraine. Trade in services amounted to USD 1bn amid a positive balance for Ukraine and a slight increase in exports.

In 2020, Ukraine failed to resolve two important issues in relations with Germany: to ensure the Holodomor's recognition as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people and to prevent the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline.

USA

	B+	
	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	5	5
ACTIVITIES	4	5
RESULTS	4	5
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B+

Relations with the US remained vital for Ukraine's foreign policy in bilateral and multilateral formats. The global COVID-19 pandemic, presidential and congressional elections, and targeted information provocations against stability in bilateral relations hampered the active development of cooperation. Still, Ukraine managed to offset the impact of political scandals on bilateral relations and distance itself from the domestic political battle in the US, focusing exclusively on government and expert level of communications.



Political Interest / Engagement

In their practical work, ministries and Parliament showed interest in developing the American vector of Ukraine's foreign policy. Politicians repeatedly mentioned relations with the US in their speeches, mainly in the context of two key topics: support for reforms in Ukraine and countering Russia's aggression. For example, the President's Address to the Verkhovna Rada noted unwavering support for Ukraine from the US and bipartisan support in Congress. The analytical report that came with the Address referred to the aspiration of Ukraine to become a major non-NATO ally to the US.

The President highlighted the US in his speech at the Ambassadorial. So did Deputy Head of the Presidential Office I. Zhovkva and Foreign Minister D. Kuleba in their interviews.

The American vector was not represented in O. Honcharuk's Government Action Plan (March). D. Shmyhal's Government Action Plan (June) outlines a number of points in developing bilateral relations, including the implementation of legal norms to enforce FATCA by approving the algorithm of actions for the State Tax Service to hand over reports to the US tax authority; support for US sanctions against the Russian Federation; continued US security and financial assistance for reforms in Ukraine; and preservation of bipartisan support for Ukraine.

The media space featured some controversial narratives. These include MPs V. Medvedchuk and R. Kuzmin's statements about the alleged existence of "American biological laboratories" in Ukraine that were subsequently debunked by experts and the US Embassy in Ukraine.

Institutional Cooperation

The response to the investigation of H. Biden's involvement in Burisma by the President's Office, General Prosecutor's Office, and individual MPs was problematic in 2020. There was some inconsistency in reactions and overall communication of the narrative by various engaged authorities and individual representatives of the political establishment.

News of the possible appointment of O. Markarova, former Finance Minister, as a new Ambassador to the US in November, while the previous ambassador V. Yelchenko had served only a year in that capacity, left experts bewildered about the motivation of that decision. Nevertheless, it correlates with the President's statement at the Ambassadorial that the economic dimension of international relations should be one of the key accents in the work of current and future ambassadors.

Strategic Vision

The 2020 National Security Strategy defines cooperation with the US as a priority and strategic in the context of guaranteeing Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, democratic progress, and development.

The 2015 Military Doctrine also points to the importance of strategic cooperation with the US. It highlights the importance of US support in resolving the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine.

Activities

Support for the security aspect of cooperation, deterrence of Russia's aggressive actions by the sanctions' extension, and prevention of Nord Stream 2 launch remained the key themes of the dialogue between Ukraine and the US in 2020. These topics were discussed at the meeting of Foreign Minister Prystaiko and Secretary of State Pompeo in Kyiv (31.01), the US Senate delegation as part of their visit to Ukraine (17.02), and at numerous meetings of members of Ukrainian executive authorities with K. Kvien, the US Chargé d'Affaires ad interim in Ukraine.

The visit of Secretary of State Pompeo to Kyiv (31.01) was symbolic as the highest-level visit to Ukraine during the presidency of D. Trump. Secretary Pompeo met with the President of Ukraine, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Defence and the Patriarch of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

The fight against COVID-19 and the impact of the global pandemic was the key issue of 2020. In this, Ukraine proved to be a responsible and valuable partner, including via practical help in delivering individual protection gear to the US with Ukrainian planes, as noted by Secretary Pompeo in the telephone conversation with Foreign Minister Kuleba (06.05).

A certain level of cooperation between Ukrainian and American institutions in dealing with information provocations that took place in bilateral relations is worth noting. It included the publication of “Derkach tape” in July and the investigation of H. Biden’s activities in Ukraine by the Prosecutor General’s Office.

Ukraine’s Embassy in the US worked proactively throughout 2020. A number of high-level meetings took place, including with the bipartisan group of US Congressmen with the support of M. Kaptur, Co-Chair of the Congressional Ukraine Caucus (17.02); L. Amargo, Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (15.10); and L. Cooper, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia (30.10).

Results

Despite the problematic election year, the lasting echo of political scandals, and many lockdown restrictions, Ukraine managed to accomplish stability in relations with the US, which is a generally positive result for Ukraine’s foreign policy in the American direction.

Ukraine managed to preserve bipartisan support. This was primarily on sanctions against Russia, continued financial and expert assistance to the defence sector, democratic reforms in Ukraine, the fight against corruption and unwavering political support for Ukraine in multilateral formats.

Efforts were taken to extend the diplomatic reach of Ukrainian institutions abroad: an agreement was signed to set up Ukraine’s Honorary Consulate in Philadelphia (11.01). Worth noting is that Ukraine was provided USD 48 mln-worth of humanitarian and medical assistance to fight against COVID-19.

The issue of security remained crucial. Ukraine accomplished new dimensions and scale of cooperation with the US in 2020 via progress in political dialogue and support for Ukraine in international platforms, as well as in direct military cooperation. This includes the USD 250 mln-worth of security assistance for Ukraine and the transfer of Mark VI patrol boats to Ukraine (18.07).

According to the State Statistics Committee, trade in goods between the US and Ukraine did not change significantly in 2020. Ukrainian exports to the US grew 0.5% over that year while imports shrank 10% compared to 2019. Overall, Ukraine remains with a trade deficit with the US, while total trade with the US is USD 3.93bn.

France

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	2	3
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	C+	B-

2020 saw a slowdown of political contacts and signs of stagnation in resolving the Russia-Ukraine conflict in the Normandy Four. This was caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and domestic political processes in Ukraine and France. By contrast, bilateral cooperation and joint projects became more dynamic. The economic focus of Ukraine's diplomacy in France became clearer.

Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest for France remains high in Ukraine; cooperation in the Normandy Four continues to drive it. President Zelenskyy repeatedly highlights the importance of cooperation with France while his foreign policy advisor named it among the top five strategic partners for Ukraine. At the same time, the President did not speak about France in his Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada or in his speeches at the annual Ambassadorial.

Institutional Cooperation

The Office of the President of Ukraine, including its Head, A. Yermak, curated political relations in institutional cooperation. In the Government, Interior Minister A. Avakov took on the initiative of economic arrangements. Established in 2019 with some tensions, the new Parliamentary group for contacts with France did not demonstrate any performance. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian delegation to the Joint Interstate Ukrainian-French Commission on Armament and Military Equipment was restaffed. In September, V. Omelchenko began his tenure as Ukraine's new Ambassador to France (political appointee).

Strategic Vision

2020 did not present a strategic vision of Ukraine-French relations. The most recent definition of short-term priorities for bilateral cooperation dates back to the Joint Statement of Heads of States on April 21, 2015. Still, the 2020 National Security Strategy mentions France in the list of priority countries for cooperation that will contribute to international security and strengthening of Ukraine's sovereignty and democratic development.

Activities

Head of the OPU, A. Yermak, discussed the resolution of the situation in Donbas during his visit to Paris (12.06) and at the meeting of the Normandy Four foreign policy advisors in Berlin (4.07). Foreign Ministers and Presidents discussed them by telephone on November 2 and 5, respectively.

The countries managed to resume bilateral initiatives. The Joint Interstate Ukrainian-French Commission on Armament and Military Equipment met in February after the previous meeting back in 2015. The Joint Ukrainian-French Commission for Economic Cooperation had its meeting in November after the previous one in 2018.

A delegation of Ukraine's Defence Ministry visited France (24–26.02). A large delegation including the Chief of Staff and the ministers for the reintegration of the temporarily occupied territory, defence, culture and information policy went to France on June 12. The agenda of the ministers for TOT and defence included military-technical cooperation, Ukraine's defence reform priorities and the development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in compliance with NATO standards, the situation in the area of the Joint Forces Operation, Russia's armed presence in Eastern Ukraine, and militarization of annexed Crimea. The Minister of Culture discussed cooperation with French museums, including the launch of audioguides in Ukrainian.

The Embassy of Ukraine in France continued building the network of honorary consulates, reacting to the visits of French MPs to occupied Crimea (July) and of representatives of the "Yalta mayor's office" to the carnival in Nice (27.02), as well as to incorrect advertisements or maps. In 2020, the Embassy intensified its economic work, including the promotion of Ukraine in economic fora and industry webinars for agriculture, winemaking and IT. In late 2020, the new Ambassador initiated a series of meetings with cultural departments of the Paris Mayor's Office.

Results

Counter to expectations, President E. Macron did not visit Ukraine in 2020. France's strategic orientation at improving relations with Russia remains a serious risk factor in bilateral relations with Ukraine. France announced the Declaration on the Sixth Anniversary of Illegal Annexation of Crimea in March.

Ukraine joined the Biarritz Partnership for Gender Equality, initiated by France (12.09), which was a positive factor in their bilateral relations.

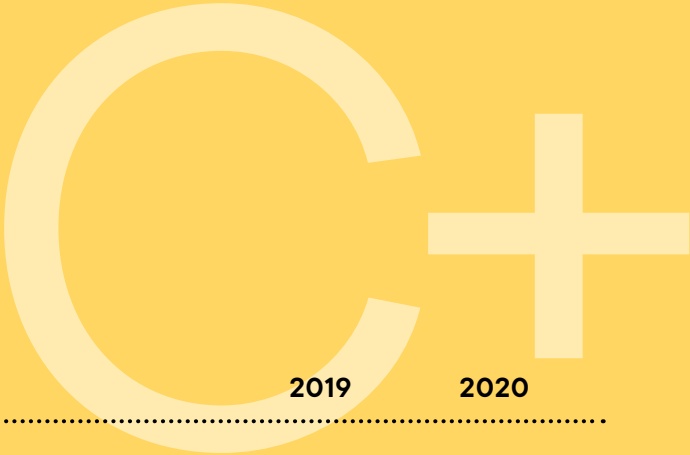
A number of important documents were signed in 2020 based on bilateral agreements reached that year: On March 4, the Verkhovna Rada ratified the Framework Agreement on Official Support for Strengthening Maritime Security and Defence of Ukraine (signed on November 19, 2019, in Paris to produce 20 patrol boats for the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine). In March, Ukraine signed the Agreement on using the French loan to build the water purification plant in Mariupol. A memorandum of cooperation was signed with the Palace of Versailles' administration to create an audioguide in Ukrainian.

Agreements were reached on the production of locomotives for Ukrainian Railways (UkrZaliznytsia) and the construction of energy storage facilities for UkrEnergo; plans were announced for another water purification plant in Popasna in Luhansk Oblast. The implementation of the contract to supply 55 Airbus helicopters to Ukraine continues, as do the supply of medical equipment to Ukraine and 50 Alstom electric locomotives to UkrZaliznytsia.

By contrast to growth in 2019, French exports to Ukraine fell 11.0% in 2020, and Ukraine's exports to France fell just 1% over the same period. Total trade turnover in 2020 was USD 2.1 billion. The asymmetry in trade is increasing in favour of France.

The recognition of Ukrainian driving licenses in France remains an unresolved problem. Despite numerous inquiries to law enforcement authorities, the "DNR representative centre" established in 2017 still operates in Southern France.

Japan



	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	4
STRATEGIC VISION	3	3
ACTIVITIES	5	3
RESULTS	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	B-	C+

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic decreased the number of high-level contacts and shifted accents in institutional cooperation, but it did not change the strategic vision. Ukraine sees the Asian vector as a priority in developing its foreign relations, and Japan as a component of it. The key objective is to ensure the development of cooperation in political, security, energy domains and fight against COVID-19.

Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest in Japan is reflected in D. Shmyhal's Government Action Plan (June), aiming to ensure the development of a comprehensive dialogue on humanitarian and technical assistance, and in statements by individual representatives of the top authorities. Among others, Defence Minister highlighted the importance of further developing the military-political dialogue between Ukraine and Japan and deepening defence cooperation and exchange under the 2018 Memorandum between the two countries' Defence Ministries at the meeting with Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan in June. Ukraine's Minister of Foreign Affairs noted mutual interest in cooperation on cybersecurity and countering hybrid threats and the fight against COVID-19.

At the same time, Japan did not come up in the President's Address to the Verkhovna Rada, his or the Foreign Minister's addresses to the Annual Ambassadorial in December, or framework interviews by the key foreign policy actors. MPs did not show interest in Japan.

Institutional Cooperation

Institutional interaction, as before, is inconsistent and mostly takes place beyond the coordination framework. The Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Infrastructure, Environment and Natural Resources of Ukraine were highly proactive in 2020. S. Korsunsky, Director of the Diplomatic Academy under the MFA and an active contributor to Ukraine's Asia strategy, was appointed Ukraine's Ambassador to Japan in April. He began to serve in that capacity in late October because of the pandemic.

Strategic Vision

Strategic documents do not outline Ukraine-Japan bilateral relations as a standalone issue. As a result, we cannot describe this vector as a priority. Japan is primarily mentioned in the context of G7. Ukraine's 2020 National Security Strategy does not mention Japan. No comprehensive bilateral agreements were signed in 2020.

Activities

The level of cooperation between the Governments of Ukraine and Japan declined in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Most contacts took place along the MoD lines. Defence Ministers of Ukraine and Japan met at the Munich Security Conference in February to discuss the intensification of bilateral cooperation and the importance of expanding further cooperation between their agencies. The Ambassador of Ukraine to Japan met with Japan's Defence Minister in November. This resulted in the decision to organize the first-ever visit of Ukraine's Defence Ministry to Japan.

Japan Self-Defence Forces planned to participate in the Sea Breeze 2020 military exercise as discussed at the meeting of Ukraine's Defence Minister and his deputies with Major General Jiro Hiroye, Director General of the C4 Department of Japan's Self-Defence Forces Command, in February. Also, they discussed ways to counter hybrid threats.

Ukraine's Defence Minister met with Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Ukraine in June. The Ambassador once again assured the Ukrainian side of undeniable support for Ukraine's strategic course of European and Euro-Atlantic integration and confirmed Japan's principled position on condemning Russia's aggression in Eastern Ukraine, and non-recognition of the illegal annexation of Crimea.

Ukraine's Minister of Culture and Information Policy discussed continued cooperation on media, culture, creative economy, and tourism at the meeting with Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Ukraine in October.

Online meetings were a special feature of 2020. These included the press conference at the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in June on the provision of USD 4.2 mln to Ukraine by the Government of Japan to meet humanitarian needs, support the vulnerable population, restore Ukraine's eastern regions and provide urgent support to Ukraine's healthcare for the military.

Results

2020 will be remembered for a certain slowdown of activities due to the pandemic and new conditions in global development. Still, it delivered some positive results: the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved a Draft Agreement between Ukraine and Japan's Governments (in the form of diplomatic correspondence) to provide experimental anti-COVID-19 Favipiravir (Avigan) treatment to Ukraine as humanitarian assistance.

UkrPoshta, Ukraine's postal service, received a USD 80,000 grant from the Government of Japan in June to buy POS terminals to make financial services more accessible in remote villages and towns.

Bilateral trade amounted to USD 1.25bn in 2020. Exports plummeted to just 72% of the 2019 results, while imports grew 11%.



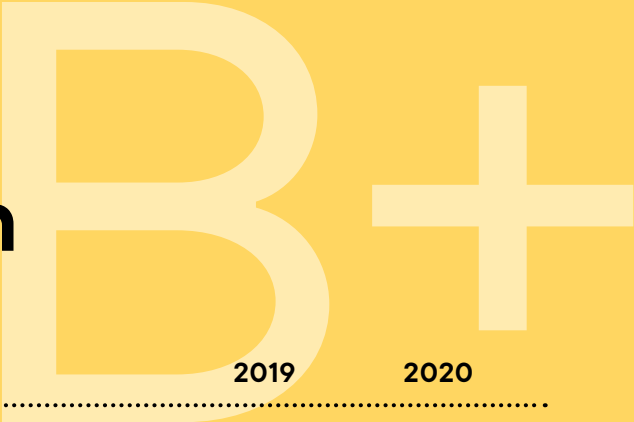
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

European Union	B+
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Eastern Partnership	C
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European Energy Community	C-
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European Union



	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4+	4+
STRATEGIC VISION	5	5
ACTIVITIES	5	4
RESULTS	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	A-	B+

POLITICAL DIALOGUE	TOTAL SCORES	B+	POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4	INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	5	5	STRATEGIC VISION	5	5	ACTIVITIES	4	4	RESULTS	4	4
ECONOMIC COOPERATION	TOTAL SCORES	B+	POLITICAL INTEREST	4	5	INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	5	5	STRATEGIC VISION	5	5	ACTIVITIES	4	4	RESULTS	4	4

POLITICAL DIALOGUE

As far as the EU-Ukraine political dialogue is concerned, the year 2020 will be remembered for its ambiguity. On the one hand, support for Ukraine's European integration among officials remains stable. On the other hand, there has been a significant slowdown in implementing EU norms and standards compared to the previously set pace in practical terms. The constitutional crisis that erupted immediately after the local elections and the protracted reform of law enforcement, including the SSU, raise particular concerns.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2020, the keynote speakers on European integration included government officials, primarily the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and, to a lesser extent, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The activities were carried out with full support for the chosen course from the President, the Prime Minister, and the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada.

Cooperation with the EU was declared a priority in the President's Address to the Verkhovna Rada, his and the Minister of Foreign Affairs' speeches at the annual Ambassadorial, and numerous interviews. At the same time, the analytical report to the President's Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada mentions a number of problems, namely the lag behind the AA implementation schedule due to unrealistic deadlines, obsolescence of some of Ukraine's commitments, institutional weakness and, as a result, the slowdown of its implementation.

Several problems arose during the year because some draft bills contradicted Ukraine's commitments to the EU. The Parliamentary Committee on European Integration tried to attract MPs' attention to this issue, but not always successfully.

Institutional Cooperation

In March, O. Honcharuk Government's resignation led to personnel changes, which complicated the consistent implementation of state policy in many areas. However, this has hardly affected European integration as all three high-ranking officials, who served as Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration during the year (D. Kuleba, V. Prystaiko and O. Stefanishyna), had considerable experience and competence in this area.

The Commission for the Coordination of the EU Association Agreement Implementation was established in September. It is a temporary advisory body under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine that will analyse a state of the AA implementation, prepare proposals involving key actors, improve legislation on European integration, coordinate the actions of the executive bodies during a dialogue with the EU, as well as at the level of bilateral institutions of the EU-Ukraine association. These activities are expected to contribute to a clearer identification of priorities and accelerate the pace of reforms.

The regionalisation of European integration, namely the opening of the European Integration Offices in Kherson (October) and Dnipro (December), was a novelty of 2020.

Strategic Vision

In 2020, officials at all levels continued to refer to the constitutional changes of 2019, which consolidated Ukraine's movement towards EU membership as a strategic course, and to the Association Agreement.

In accordance with the National Security Strategy approved in September, Ukraine seeks to ensure the full implementation and further adaptation of the AA, integration of the national economy into the European Economic Area and compliance with the Copenhagen criteria for the EU membership.

In addition, the Action Plan for the implementation of the AA, a document listing about 2,000 tasks in more than 20 areas, continues to be a roadmap of European integration for over 100 Ukrainian government agencies. Each of the tasks corresponds to a separate clause of the Agreement or implements certain law rules (*acquis communautaire*) of the EU.

Activities

Despite coronavirus restrictions, Ukraine has become one of the few countries to maintain an intensive face-to-face (as well as online) dialogue at the top and high levels thanks to the meetings of President V. Zelenskyy, Vice Prime Minister O. Stefaniushyna and Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba with the EU leaders and officials.

The annual meeting of the Association Council was postponed from December 2020 to February 2021. Following the agreements and Article 481 of the AA, at the meeting, Ukraine will initiate an assessment of AA implementation and propose changes to it, including annexes related to deepening sectoral integration and updating trade parameters (tariff and non-tariff).

In general, despite the authorities' efforts to maintain the set course and pace, the "coronavirus year" has taken its toll. According to the "Pulse of the Agreement" system for monitoring progress under the AA implementation action plan, in 2020, Ukraine delivered on only 30% of its commitments, which is the lowest indicator in all the years of the AA implementation. The gap between the declarations and actions of individual authorities hindered the ambitious action plan's performance for AA implementation in 2020. These include the delay of SSU reform, which had been foreseen by the AA section "Political Dialogue, National Security, Defence," and the slowdown of anti-corruption reforms.

Results

While most international events were cancelled due to the pandemic, the 22nd EU-Ukraine Summit in Brussels, in which President V. Zelenskyy took part, sent a good signal the positive tone of the Joint Statement adopted at the end. In particular, the EU expressed unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and its intention to maintain sanctions against Russia until the complete restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity. The Joint Statement welcomed the start of land reform, the adoption of a law on banking and progress in decentralisation, as well as judicial reform, which, at the time of the statement's adoption, looked more promising than a month later, when the Constitutional Court reviewed the authority of anti-corruption bodies and requirements to electronic tax declarations.

By the end of the year, the government and parliament agreed on legislative priorities regarding European integration, including 30 bills on energy, transport, trade, the Green Deal, etc., and the launch of the EU Days in the Verkhovna Rada when only bills on European integration get considered. The Cabinet of Ministers also approved about 20 documents necessary for the EU-Ukraine Summit decisions' implementation and preparation for a meeting of the Association Council.

During the year, the Heads of the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Association Committee adopted three joint communiqués in Ukraine support.

In 2020, the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine's EU Integration considered almost 1,000 bills and prepared conclusions to them; held more than 40 meetings; adopted more than 20 conclusions on bills of which the Committee was in charge; submitted recommendations on 15 international documents, which were eventually ratified by the Verkhovna Rada.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

The year 2020 in relations with the EU is best described by the stability of relations, the implementation of the AA/DCFTA, meetings in traditional formats, and dialogue on sectoral integration. The pandemic has not substantially impacted the development of economic cooperation between Ukraine and the EU, although

most interactions took place online. The EU is still among the top foreign economic partners of Ukraine, providing it with financial assistance and containing Russian aggression with sanctions. Ukraine's hopes that 2020 could be the year of a new quality of dialogue on the prospects for deeper economic and eventually political integration with the EU have been put on hold until 2021.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2020, political interest in economic cooperation with the EU was not as distinctive as in the previous years. The stakeholders have focused on routine work in the framework of AA/DCFTA implementation and 20 deliverables of the Eastern Partnership.

Political interest in 2020 began to focus on updating the AA/DCFTA due to the completion of a five-year cycle, after which it is possible to review its provisions because the EU's position usually is technical and based on the desire to limit changes to those happened in the EU legislation within that period. The Ukrainian leadership has been signalling the country's ambition for more profound change dictated by comprehensive transformations in recent years, which should be considered.

Traditionally, the efforts of Ukrainian diplomacy, in particular at the level of the MFA, were required to ensure that the EU maintains economic pressure on Russia, extends sanctions over the annexation of Crimea and aggression in eastern Ukraine, and provides support for reforms in Ukraine as well as macro-financial assistance. The need to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic was added to the list this year.

Institutional Cooperation

The level of institutional cooperation remains high despite frequent reshuffles in key government posts. The Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration continues to oversee internal coordination in the executive. As far as the economy is concerned, the Ministry of Economic

Development, Trade and Agriculture plays the leading role. This year, the Export Promotion Office was made subordinate to the Cabinet of Ministers. A novelty of 2020 was an establishment of a Commission on the AA implementation coordination in line with the Cabinet of Ministers' Resolution issued on 2 September. The Prime Minister noted at the commission meeting that the Government had prepared more than 100 regulations that, once adopted, would facilitate the implementation of the AA.

Strategic Vision

The AA/DCFTA continues to offer a strategic framework for Ukraine's economic cooperation with the EU. The final declaration of the EU-Ukraine Summit (October) acknowledged the previous economic commitments of the sides and outlined priorities for strengthening economic integration and regulatory convergence within the AA, in particular accession to the Digital Single Market; targeted dialogue on climate change, environment, marine ecosystem, education, energy, transport, and agriculture; improving communication to facilitate trade, further develop secure and sustainable transport links and maintain people-to-people contacts; full compliance with commitments under the DCFTA (intellectual property rights, public procurement, trade protection, sanitary and phytosanitary standards). In 2021, it is planned to conduct a comprehensive review of the AA implementation progress. The Export Strategy of Ukraine (Roadmap for Strategic Development of Trade) for 2017–2021 continues to play an important role despite the need to start work on its new version.

Activities

As in the previous years, economic activities took place in various formats: forums, platforms, panels, meetings at ministerial and expert levels. They were significantly affected by the pandemic, as a result of which some events were delayed or cancelled, while online communication technologies started playing a stronger role.

The economic part of the agenda of the 22nd EU-Ukraine Summit, which met in Brussels on 6 October despite the COVID-19 risks, included a wide range of issues. Ukraine's activities in the field of economic integration with the EU are aimed at integration into the Union's internal market and economic development through the preparation and update of AA/DCFTA provisions, sectoral integration, improvement of living standards through the adoption of the European standards in environment, transport, and digital infrastructure, the implementation of the European Green Deal, joint practical projects concerning coal regions in transition, renewable energy sources, etc.

The EU-Ukraine Association Committee (13.11) held its 6th meeting by video conference, focusing on updates to AA annexes, digital agenda, the integration of energy markets and the implementation of the Green Deal.

At the bilateral level, Kyiv continued to cooperate with the EC Support Group for Ukraine in the AA and Eastern Partnership (multilateral) formats. The Government is preparing for Ukraine's accession to the Convention on Common Transit, the Convention on the Simplification of Formalities in Trade in Goods, the implementation of the Authorized Economic Operator programme, and the improvement of the system of protection of intellectual property rights at customs.

Work on concluding the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA) has intensified. The 13th round of negotiations was held in December, and the mission will publish a report at the end of the first quarter of 2021.

Results

An important result of 2020 was the 22nd EU-Ukraine Summit, which both avoided sharp criticism and achieved no breakthrough. The sides commended the launch of the mission for a preliminary assessment of Ukraine's readiness for the ACAA, Ukraine's participation in the EU programmes, the importance of the Erasmus+ and Creative Europe programmes, and Ukraine's readiness to join the future EU Horizon Europe research and innovation framework programme and the EU4Health programme. However, the issue of concluding a Common Aviation Area Agreement remains unresolved, although this may be done in the near future.

The progress in AA implementation is estimated at 42%. Among the most important long-standing European integration laws adopted in 2020 were the Law “On Inland Water Transport” and the Law “On Electronic Communications,” bringing Ukraine closer to the EU Digital Single Market.

Two regional European Integration Offices were opened in Kherson and Dnipro in cooperation with the EU Delegation to Ukraine.

The EU has traditionally been at the top of Ukraine’s list of trading partners. In 2020, trade (including with the United Kingdom) reached USD 42.4bn (USD 18bn in exports and USD 23.5bn in imports). In December, the EU allocated the first tranche of EUR 600 mln in emergency macro-financial assistance.

Eastern Partnership

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	4	3
ACTIVITIES	5	3
RESULTS	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	B	C

COVID-19 has completely changed the usual course of events within the framework of the Eastern Partnership as all traditional formats had to be moved online. Dashed were the hopes that the 2020 cycle based on the implementation of the 20 key deliverables will end on a high note and give new impetus to a new cycle of the initiative. Reinforced by the other two signatories to the Association Agreement, Ukraine's calls for deepening cooperation in the A3 format (Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) were little regarded, while the EU chose a business-as-usual approach. However, the reformulated priorities have not been officially acknowledged and are yet to be approved at the Eastern Partnership summit, which was once again postponed until 2021.



Political Interest / Engagement

The President and other high-ranking officials clearly stated that Ukraine would like the Eastern Partnership to consider the European integration ambitions and development of the A3 format (Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine). This was reflected in their calls to deepen the dialogue on the DCFTA, gradual sectoral integration in the areas of justice, digital economy, energy, transport, and ecology. The window of opportunity, which emerged due to the completion of the current cycle and the beginning of a new one, led to intensified negotiation efforts both at the official level and by means of public, civil, and expert diplomacy.

The President did not specifically mention the Eastern Partnership in his annual speeches. Still, the Deputy Head of the Presidential Office addressed the issue in an interview in June. The action plans of both governments did not specifically mention the Eastern Partnership.

Due to COVID-19, significant adjustments were made to the calendar of partner meetings. This prevented a “live” informal discussion of the results of previous consultations on the future of the Eastern Partnership. At the end of the year, interest in the topic decreased, including due to the EU’s rejection of the idea of deepening cooperation in the A3 format.

Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation was ensured mainly by the MFA together with the Government Office for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, which also oversees internal coordination. Structured interaction with civil society organizations, to an extent, has lost momentum due to the end of institutional support from the EU-funded Civic Synergy project, which ensured cooperation with decision-makers both in Ukraine and at the level of European institutions. In 2020, officials made more effective attempts to coordinate positions with partner countries, in particular the signatories to the AA.

Strategic Vision

The EU, as a founder of the Eastern Partnership, continues to define the vector of its strategic development. Despite Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova's efforts to establish a deeper format of cooperation, the EU is approaching the Eastern Partnership's prospects as "business as usual." The completion of the project's cycle in 2020 involved extensive consultation and analytical work, as a result of which the European Commission formulated the following five priorities for the Eastern Partnership: an economic partnership that creates jobs, contacts between countries, and opportunities for young people; strengthening of government institutions, respect for human rights, gender equality, and the rule of law; digital transformation, modernization of relevant infrastructure; sustainability, climate change, an adequate response to them; reporting on the results achieved by the Eastern Partnership countries while working with the EU. Thus, Ukraine's strategic interest in the Eastern Partnership as a format, which may give it and other interested partner states the prospect of the EU membership and transform the initiative into a connecting link with enlargement policy, remains unattainable.

Activities

Activities continued in the traditional formats: ministerial meetings and meetings of the Ukrainian National Platform. Due to COVID-19, the meetings could not be held according to practised scenarios and had to be moved online.

Instead of the summit planned for 18 June, the leaders of the Eastern Partnership held a video conference. However, they agreed to hold an offline summit in Brussels in 2021. The President's speech there concerned the coordination of efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the prospects for Ukraine's membership in the EU.

During the year, the Eastern Partnership agenda was discussed with Poland, Sweden, and V4. Ukraine's Mission to the EU was active on this front.

The practice of holding meetings of thematic platforms, panels, forums, conferences, etc. (online) continued, which, however, did not significantly impact achieving qualitative changes within the country. As in the previous periods, the main efforts were focused on achieving the 20 deliverables by 2020.

Results

The results of 2020 are modest, especially given the end of the cycle, in which the EU relied on a set of practical opportunities outlined in the document “Eastern Partnership — 20 Deliverables by 2020: Focusing on key priorities and tangible results.” This approach did not find much response in Ukraine as it did not offer a prospect of future membership. Traditional annual monitoring by the Ukrainian National Platform of the EaP CSF revealed sporadic rather than systemic work measured against the 20 key deliverables, especially in comparison with the implementation of the AA. Problems in the partner countries made it difficult to implement the policy (Azerbaijan-Armenia war, post-election processes in Belarus, the parliamentary crisis in Georgia).

The positives included the results of a virtual meeting between the EU and Eastern Partnership leaders, at which the EU expressed solidarity with its partners in mitigating the heavy aftermath of the pandemic, support in health care as well as in economic recovery. To overcome the crisis caused by COVID-19, the EU allocates EUR 18 mln to the EaP countries. The next financial package (EUR 800 mln) is meant to support economic recovery. In December, Ukraine received the first tranche under a new macro-financial (credit) assistance programme, nominally worth EUR 600 mln, in the form of a long-term loan at an interest rate of 0.125% to be repaid in June 2035.

European Energy Community

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	4	3
ACTIVITIES	4	3
RESULTS	4	2
TOTAL SCORES	B-	C-

The year 2020 posed a considerable challenge for all areas of cooperation between Ukraine and the Energy Community. A systematic political dialogue on energy reforms has mostly been replaced by a situational response to the Ukrainian authorities' decisions hastily. Often, they were not aimed at overcoming the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and addressing energy issues in a sophisticated manner but were the result of infighting between oligarchic groups. As a result, Ukraine has not developed an Integrated Energy and Climate Plan until 2030 or a plan to implement the second stage of the Energy Strategy until 2035. The problems of electricity (cross-subsidisation, support for renewable energy sources), the gas market (monopoly influence of regional gas companies,) and energy efficiency (the core law has not been adopted) remain unresolved.



Political Interest / Engagement

During 2020, the Energy Community was in the focus of political interest on certain occasions only. For example, at the beginning of the year, this has to do with a concept of the Ukrainian Green Deal and completion of the dialogue on the unbundling of the gas transport system operator (at the level of the Minister of Energy). Later it acted as a mediator in a conflict between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and green energy investors. In his Address to the Verkhovna Rada, the President of Ukraine did not mention the role of the Energy Community in the context of maintaining the transit of Russian gas. The Prime Minister and the Acting Minister of Energy mostly had to respond to the Energy Community's public statements about violations of the principles of cooperation and coordination of legislative activities, as well as delays in the development of strategic documents.

At the level of the Verkhovna Rada, the Committee on Ukraine's EU Integration showed the most vivid interest in the Energy Community. Political factions and the Committee on Energy, Housing, and Utilities Services, on the other hand, did not show any great interest in the matter. Representatives of the Voice party were active with regard to the Green Deal.

Institutional Cooperation

The year 2020 was marked by inconsistencies in Ukraine's energy policy, primarily due to government reshuffles and the growing influence of oligarchic groups on the work of relevant institutions. The initiation of the Ukrainian Green Deal in the first quarter was replaced by a U-turn towards traditional energy. After the change of government at the end of the first quarter, the conflict between the executive and the legislature deepened, especially between the chairman of the relevant parliamentary committee and the acting Minister of Energy, over decisions concerning nuclear and coal-fired generation, assignment of special commitments, and regulation of the "green tariff." The standoff between the parliamentary factions and even certain groups within the Servant of the People party intensified in the Verkhovna Rada, which, in particular, prevented MPs from appointing a new Minister of Energy at the end of the year.

In the second and third quarters, non-transparent efforts were made to develop an Integrated Energy and Climate Plan until 2030, which was never made public or submitted to the Energy Community for consideration.

Strategic Vision

In 2020, the Ukrainian authorities' strategic vision of the role and importance of the Energy Community blurred. The planned documents and decisions on further energy reform until 2030 have not been prepared.

Activities

Active cooperation was launched in the context of the European Green Deal and Ukraine's involvement in it at the beginning of 2020. Economic slowdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic and systemic energy problems (renewable energy sources (RES), cross-subsidies, financial debts) have led to a sharp curtailment of reforms and even to resumed support for a coal-fired generation despite the criticism from NGOs and solar farms. Political populism and oligarchic influence have been the main causes of inconsistent energy policy (transition from support to criticism of RES), weak dialogue and coordination of efforts to solve problems in the energy market, including financial debts of its players.

The further misunderstanding was caused by the complicated process of reviewing the "green tariff," which was accompanied by rising debts and frequent regulatory changes, while the signed settlement memorandum did not solve the industry's problems. Neither did it unblock the further development of RES on market terms.

The Ministry of Energy was put in charge of government energy efficiency policy. By September, it had only finalised the basic law on energy efficiency and discussed it with the Energy Community. The approval procedure at the executive level was not completed by the end of the year.

The National Commission for State Regulation of Energy and Public Utilities was able to establish the most systematic dialogue with solar farms on regulatory policy in the energy market. Still, due to its subordination to the Cabinet of Ministers and numerous interventions in the energy markets, it did not live up to its potential as an independent and equidistant regulatory body.

Results

Success stories of cooperation in 2020 include the launch of the retail gas market for households and the development of the regulatory framework at the level of the National Commission for State Regulation of Energy and Public Utilities. Still, further effective dialogue on other areas of cooperation, including a Ukrainian Green Deal, development of renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, and the independence of the energy regulator, was effectively blocked.

Political populism on the eve of the local elections prevented the launch of a procedure for eliminating cross-subsidisation, while frequent government reshuffles hindered the development of an effective policy to overcome systemic problems in the energy sector.

Ukraine completed 2020 without an Integrated Energy and Climate Plan until 2030, the second national defined contribution, an implementation plan for the Energy Strategy until 2035, a law on energy efficiency, and a clear goal for energy and climate protection.



EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION (NATO)

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	5	5
ACTIVITIES	4	5
RESULTS	4	5
TOTAL SCORES	B+	A-

Ukraine's joining of NATO's Enhanced Opportunities Partnership program and the first procurement through NATO's procurement system were the key accomplishments of 2020. Meanwhile, there were certain flaws in political interest and institutional cooperation, reflected in controversial statements by the Minister of Defence and representatives of some parties, as well as in delayed signing of the 2020 Annual National Program and appointment of Ukraine's Head of Mission to NATO by the President. Despite the pandemic, Ukraine continued active participation in joint exercises and maintained the pace of dialogue, both online and offline, at the level of ministries of foreign affairs and defence, General Staff of Ukraine's Armed Forces and Government Office for Coordination on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration.

Political Interest / Engagement

Throughout 2020, the issues of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration and cooperation with NATO were constantly on the agenda and regularly raised at the level of the executive and legislative powers, the President and his Office. The key themes included the Enhanced Opportunities Partner's status, involvement in the Reflection Process, preparation of the new NATO 2030 Strategy, and security sector reforms in line with NATO standards.

President Zelenskyy mentioned NATO only briefly in his Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada in the context of becoming the Enhanced Opportunities Partner, continuing implementation of NATO standards and interoperability of Ukraine's Army with NATO forces. He spoke about the strategic course of NATO membership at the Ambassadorial in December.

At the same time, modest interest and engagement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is noteworthy. Foreign Minister did not mention NATO as part of the seven priorities for 2021 while only briefly recognizing the receipt of the MAP as one of the current tasks, essentially highlighting that the issue of NATO is in the focus of the respective Vice Prime Minister and Defence Minister.

New Defence Minister A. Taran made controversial statements. When appointed in March, he said that interoperability with NATO forces should be ensured "instead of the goal of fully adjusting the Armed Forces of Ukraine to NATO standards — ambitious but unattainable in the near future." That statement triggered concern and criticism from experts and politicians as it countered the key strategic documents. In H2'2020, however, Minister Taran was clearly defining Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic course of Ukraine and the aspiration to receive MAP in 2021 in various interviews and statements and meetings with NATO representatives.

Political parties represented in the Verkhovna Rada have different approaches to the partnership with NATO. In September, the Opposition Platform — For Life published a statement on its official website saying that "the illegal presence of NATO forces on Ukraine's territory is a creeping occupation for which President Zelenskyy should be held accountable." What the Opposition Platform — For Life referred to as "illegal presence" was the participation of the UK military in the Joint Efforts exercises and joint flights of the US and Ukraine military aircrafts in May and September. Apart from that, both the Opposition Platform — For Life and

Batkivshchyna oppose some reforms that are part of the ANP, including the reform of the Security Services of Ukraine.

The Programs of both O. Honcharuk's and D. Shmyhal's Cabinets referred to the unchanging track of Euro-Atlantic integration and its importance in strengthening Ukraine's defence. Prime Minister Shmyhal's Program (June) highlights the strategic course towards membership, approximation to NATO standards, reforms and resilience building in partnership and in line with NATO standards. The Government's long-term priorities include the use of NATO PA events, preparation of the procedure for joining the EOP program, gradual transition to NATO standards to accomplish interoperability and develop cooperation, coordination of the NATO-Ukraine Platform on Countering Hybrid Warfare, etc.

Institutional Cooperation

Government Office on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, MFA, MoD, and the Verkhovna Rada were engaged in implementing the state policy on Euro-Atlantic integration and cooperation with NATO. Apart from that, over 80 government agencies, enterprises, education facilities, etc., participated in the implementation of the 2020 Ukraine-NATO Annual National Program.

The Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, the MoD, Government Office, State Committee on Television and Radio, independent experts and international advisors actively coordinated efforts in preparing the Strategy for Communicating Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic Integration to inform the public about the process.

Heads of Ukraine's Mission to NATO and Government Office for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration were not appointed in 2020. Apart from that, the President signed the 2020 ANP only on May 26, after the Government approved it on February 5.

Strategic Vision

NATO and Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration have an important role in all strategic documents, primarily the Constitution of Ukraine after it was amended

in 2019. The adoption of the new National Security Strategy, where “interaction — the development of strategic relations with the key foreign partners, primarily the EU and NATO” is listed as one of the fundamental elements of the Strategy, was an important development of 2020. In addition to that, “developing a special partnership with NATO to pursue Ukraine’s full membership in it” is defined as a tool for implementing the key priorities of the Strategy. Its section on Vectors and Objectives of Reforming and Developing the Security and Defence Sector also has a strong focus on NATO.

Activities

In 2020, the Ukraine-NATO dialogue was intense at all levels despite the pandemic. President Zelenskyy met with NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg at the Munich Security Conference (February).

In February, Defence Minister Zagorodnyuk visited NATO Headquarters, where he participated in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council with Resolute Support Operational Partner Nations and had several bilateral and multilateral meetings with ministers of partner-states and a General Manager of NATO Support and Procurement Agency. Among others, a meeting with heads of defence ministry delegations from the UK, Canada, Poland, Lithuania, and the US took place in the QUINT format, where participants spoke about coordinating efforts and helping the Ukrainian Navy.

D. Kuleba, Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, informed NATO Assistant Secretary-General for Operations J. Manza at the meeting (January) of Ukraine’s readiness to become an operational partner in NATO’s Mission in Iraq. In July and December, O. Stefanishyna, Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, visited NATO Headquarters and participated in the meeting of Ukraine-NATO Commission at the level ambassadors, met with NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg and other NATO top officials.

Practical cooperation mostly centred around the MoD and General Staff in the format of consultations, joint events, the work of foreign advisors in Ukraine, and adjustment of the respective standards and procedures. In January, General Staff Chief R. Khomchak visited Brussels to participate in the NATO Military Committee

meetings at the level of Chiefs of General Staff, visited Allied Command Operations, and met with Supreme Allied Commander Europe, other NATO top officials and Chiefs of General Staff of member-states. In February, members of the NAC met with the Ukrainian Consultation and Expert Group of the Reform Committee of the MoD and Armed Forces to exchange opinions on the agenda for Ukraine's reforms and current priorities. In July, Defence Minister Taran spoke with Secretary General Stoltenberg on the telephone. On December 1, Ukraine's Defence Minister met with representatives of NATO member-states to discuss the defence aspects of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration.

In December, Foreign Minister Kuleba participated in the North Atlantic Council meeting with Ukraine and Georgia focused on the Black Sea security. Ukraine's delegation also joined the meeting of the Civil Emergency Planning Committee in January.

In 2020, Ukraine tried to proactively join the NATO reflection process focused on drafting NATO's new Strategic Concept. As part of the NATO-initiated discussion on strengthening its political aspect, First Deputy Foreign Minister E. Dzhaparova joined the online discussion with the High-Level Expert Group on June 8. This issue was repeatedly raised in meetings and online discussions with Vice Prime Minister O. Stefanishyna.

In 2020, the range of Ukrainian actors involved in the dialogue with NATO entities expanded. In March, a delegation of the Ukrainian Start-up Fund discussed promising areas of possible cooperation in cybersecurity, defence, and energy security with NATO representatives in Brussels. A delegation of NAK Naftogaz met with NATO representatives in Brussels in September, where they discussed the Black Sea security, among other things.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the NATO PA in Kyiv was first postponed to the fall, then to 2022. Still, the Permanent Delegation of the Verkhovna Rada to the NATO PA joined its 66th annual session online in November.

Despite the pandemic, joint exercises took place both within NATO and with individual member-states throughout 2020 (see International Security section for more details). Among other things, the 2020 Joint Efforts exercises in September in Ukraine focused on training interaction within the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the military of NATO member-states. Ukraine's participation in the Noble Partner 2020 in September in Georgia was also important. This exercise focused on the

skills for the NATO Response Force. Coherent Resilience 2020, a joint command and staff exercise to protect critical infrastructure in the Black Sea, was scheduled for the first time in October.

In 2020, the Ukrainian national contingent continued to serve within the NATO Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan and the multinational KFOR mission in Kosovo. The increase of staff announced earlier did not take place. Despite statements, the Ukrainian military was not practically involved in the NATO mission in Iraq or Operation Sea Guardian, as announced back in mid-2019.

Cargo flights under the SALIS consortium with AN-124 Ruslan and AN-225 Mriya planes delivering medical cargo to the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany, France, Spain, Poland, Denmark, and the USA was important for creating Ukraine's positive image as a reliable NATO partner.

2020 saw intense preparations of the Strategy for Communication of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic Integration. It is to replace the previous document and to be approved in 2021.

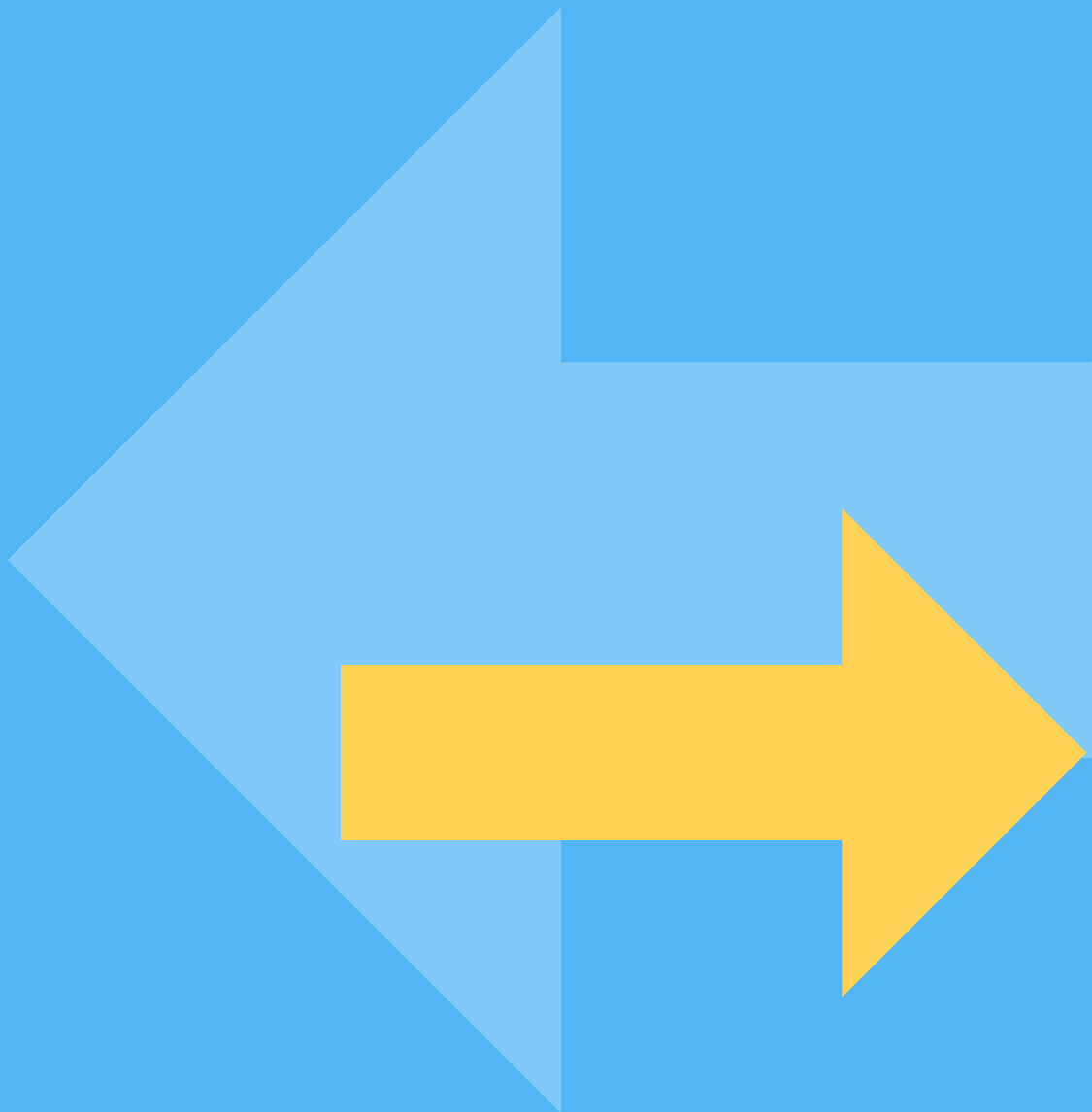
Results

The fact that Ukraine joined NATO's Enhanced Opportunities Partnership Program in June can be seen as the key accomplishment of 2020.

Ukraine's Defence Ministry made its first military procurement through the NATO Support and Procurement Agency in December after Ukraine joined the Agency in early 2020.

The implementation of the NATO-Ukraine Program for retraining the military (280 people in 2020) and the Defence Education Enhancement Program continued. The MoD had a strong focus on reforming the Armed Forces of Ukraine, complying with NATO standards, and accomplishing interoperability.

Even though the 2018 Government Program planned for Ukraine to join the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence, the process was not completed in 2020. The North Atlantic Council recognized Ukraine as a potential operational partner for NATO's Training Mission in Iraq in April. Still, the Presidential Order was never signed, and national personnel never sent. The blocking of the Ukraine-NATO Commission by Hungary remained unresolved.



BILATERAL RELATIONS

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

Belarus

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	5	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	3
ACTIVITIES	5	4
RESULTS	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B-

The year 2020 was a negative turning point for Ukrainian-Belarusian relations, which deteriorated sharply after Minsk had made hostile statements and steps in response to Kyiv's decision to align itself with the EU in its assessment of the presidential election. High-level official contacts have been put "on hold"; the Forum of Regions of Ukraine and Belarus, which was to take place with the participation of the presidents in October, has been postponed. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected mutual trade and human contacts.

Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest in Belarus increased in 2020 due to the crisis there and Minsk's shift towards Moscow. President V. Zelenskyy and Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba aligned themselves with the EU's assessment of the events in Belarus, condemning the violence against protesters and calling for dialogue. The analytical report to the President's Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada expressed hope for a peaceful solution to the crisis in Belarus but warned that unfriendly steps regarding Ukraine would not go unnoticed.

In July, D. Kuleba invited his Belarusian counterpart V. Makei as an honorary guest to a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Ukraine, Lithuania, and Poland within the framework of the Lublin Triangle initiative. Also, in July, the Verkhovna Rada announced the creation of an inter-faction group "For Democratic Belarus."

Parliamentary parties promptly responded to the post-election crisis in Belarus. The European Solidarity, Golos and Batkivshchyna parties, and part of Servant of the People expressed solidarity with the protesters and condemned Belarusian law enforcers' brutality. Opposition Platform-For Life, for its part, sided with A. Lukashenko. The Verkhovna Rada adopted a statement on the non-recognition of the elections in Belarus, condemnation of the violence, and inadmissibility of interference by Russia and the CSTO.

Institutional Cooperation

Ukraine's state actors worked in a coordinated manner to implement the country's policy on Belarus. In particular, a high level of coordination was observed during the preparation and holding of meetings of the Ukrainian-Belarusian working groups on mutual trade, interregional and cross-border cooperation during the visit of the Ukrainian government delegation to Minsk.

Ukrainian institutions and high-ranking officials generally responded in unison to the political crisis in Belarus. The NSDC has intensified coordination of efforts involving relevant agencies and special services due to the growing risks of Russian military intervention in Belarus.

Strategic Vision

The new National Security Strategy of Ukraine briefly mentions Belarus together with Moldova in the context of developing “pragmatic relations” with these states. The Action Programme and the Priority Action Plan of the Government for 2020 contain several important points on Belarus, particularly on production and R&D cooperation of defence industry enterprises, preparation of water transport projects, and completion of border demarcation. The plan of consultations between the Foreign Ministries of Ukraine and Belarus for 2020–2021, the plan of state border demarcation for 2018–2026 are in effect.

At the same time, the possible scale of the political crisis in Belarus and destructive interference by the Russian Federation were underestimated.

Activities

Activities with regard to Belarus have continued to focus on mutually beneficial economic cooperation. A boost to cooperation was discussed during telephone conversations between V. Zelenskyy and A. Lukashenko (August), D. Kuleba and V. Makei (April, July); a meeting of the Ukrainian-Belarusian High-Level Working Group on Mutual Trade (Minsk, February); an online conference “Ukraine — Belarus: economic cooperation in times of global challenges” (May); an online meeting of the Working Group on Interregional and Cross-Border Cooperation (June); a visit to Minsk by the Ukrainian government delegation headed by Vice Prime Minister O. Reznikov, which also included Minister of Defence A. Taran, head of the parliamentary committee on legal policy A. Kostin, and Head of the President’s Office A. Yermak (June); an online meeting of the Advisory Council with the participation of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry (November).

The MFA conducted systemic coordination work. The Embassy in Belarus was also active. Ukraine’s Ambassador I. Kyzym met Belarusian Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Makei and Deputy Emergencies Minister A. Yurzhits.

Kyiv’s initial reaction to the post-election crisis in Belarus was restrained. However, the need to show solidarity with the EU, as well as Minsk’s unfriendly

statements and the transfer to Russia of Wagner private military company members wanted by Ukraine, forced Kyiv to make more assertive statements about not recognition of the election results. The Minister of Foreign Affairs summoned the Ambassador to Belarus for consultations in Kyiv. Ukraine co-sponsored the UNHRC Resolution “Situation of human rights in Belarus in the run-up to the 2020 presidential election and in its aftermath” (September).

V. Zelenskyy’s decree on simplifying employment procedures for Belarusian entrepreneurs and IT specialists in Ukraine was a demonstration of support for Belarusian society. Ukraine joined the first package of the EU personal sanctions against Belarusian officials. However, Kuleba called the introduction of economic sanctions inexpedient at this stage.

Results

At the end of 2020, political and diplomatic relations between Ukraine and Belarus were in crisis, with high-level official contacts being put “on hold” and the Forum of the Regions postponed. Despite the strained relations with Minsk, Kyiv managed to secure the release of Ukrainian citizens detained by Belarusian law enforcement services during the protests in August and settle the problem of Ukrainians’ access to Belarus for treatment.

The deterioration of political relations has not yet affected economic cooperation, while bilateral trade decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic rather than politics. By the end of 2020, Belarus ranked sixth among Ukraine’s trading partners. Turnover amounted to USD 4.4bn, which is 20.7% less than in 2019. The trade balance had positive dynamics for Ukraine, although it remained negative (USD –1.52bn). As of 1 October 2020, direct Belarusian investments in the Ukrainian economy amounted to USD 87.4 mln, while Ukrainian investments in Belarus reached USD 2.1 mln.

The holding of a bilateral Advisory Council in November and the extension of the agreement on the transit of Azerbaijani oil to Belarus via Ukraine in 2021 (December) give hope for further economic cooperation despite the uncertain future of political relations.

Georgia

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	4	5
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	B-	B-

The Georgian vector of Ukraine's foreign policy in 2020, as in the previous year, was directed at strengthening the strategic partnership aimed at defending common interests in accelerating European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Despite misunderstandings about the place and role of former Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili in Ukrainian politics, Ukraine and Georgia have continued to seek effective mechanisms to restore the territorial integrity of both states as a result of Russian aggression.

Political Interest / Engagement

Shared interests in relations with NATO and the EU, Russia's hybrid aggression against both countries and the Saakashvili factor traditionally underlaid Ukraine's principal foreign policy steps regarding Georgia in 2020. However, neither decrees nor orders of the Head of State (except for the new National Security Strategy of Ukraine) nor the current Government Programme (including the Government's Priority Action Plan for 2020) mention Georgia among the issues of the bilateral relations agenda.

Nevertheless, despite the pandemic, during the year, representatives of the executive at the level of Prime Minister D. Shmyhal and Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba confirmed Ukraine's continued interest in holding the 10th Session of the Joint Ukrainian-Georgian Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation in 2021 (the Commission has not met since April 2017) and in accelerating the implementation of the 2019 Regulation on the Ukrainian-Georgian High-Level Strategic Council.

The MFA of Ukraine was also active in supporting Georgia in its diplomatic confrontation with Russia. This includes a statement condemning Russian cyber-attacks against Georgia's web resources, state authorities, local governments, commercial companies, and the media (20.02); the Joint Statement on behalf of the 15 OSCE member states condemning the so-called "presidential election" in the occupied territory of Abkhazia (22.02); the condemnation of the illegal process of so-called "borderization" carried out by the Russian occupying authorities in the Georgian territories under its control (18.04).

The Verkhovna Rada and its committees, in particular on foreign policy and inter-parliamentary cooperation, did not prioritise Georgia.

A surge of political interest in Georgia was observed after M. Saakashvili was appointed chairman of the Executive Committee of the National Reform Council

under the President of Ukraine, which led to a cooling in bilateral relations. The crisis was also exacerbated by Saakashvili's numerous personal statements about the parliamentary elections in Georgia in the summer of 2020, as well as some statements by the head of the Servant of the People ruling party faction D. Arakhamiia.

Both Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba and President V. Zelenskyy were involved in settling the exacerbation in diplomatic relations during this period (in particular, Tbilisi summoned Georgian Ambassador to Ukraine T. Sharashenidze for consultations on 8 May; the Georgian MFA invited Ukrainian Ambassador I. Dolhov to explain the situation on 10 July). At a briefing in Luhansk Region (8.05), V. Zelenskyy stressed that Ukraine has excellent relations with Georgia but considers Tbilisi's reaction to Saakashvili's appointment a mistake. During an online briefing (14.07), Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba acknowledged that Saakashvili's statements had caused certain tension in relations with Georgia but added that Saakashvili spoke in his personal capacity, and his comments did not reflect Ukraine's position on the situation in Georgia.

Institutional Cooperation

Relevant ministries and agencies, including the Presidential Office, the Cabinet of Ministers and the Verkhovna Rada, continued making efforts to further develop Ukrainian-Georgian relations. Arrangements were made for a bilateral dialogue between the states' leaders (primarily in the form of remote online communication), particularly in a multilateral format within the PACE, BSEC, GUAM and under the auspices of NATO and the EU.

However, the worsening in diplomatic relations with Georgia over Saakashvili and the statements of some Ukrainian MPs indicate a lack of coordination. Such inconsistencies in foreign policy positions of the Servant of the People, the MFA, and the President's Office could have highly negative consequences for bilateral relations.

Strategic Vision

As in the previous year, in 2020, Ukraine's foreign policy on Georgia relied on the Declaration on the Establishment of Strategic Partnership between the two states. To protect its national interests and strengthen regional security, Ukraine has confirmed its course for implementing a strategic partnership with Georgia in the new National Security Strategy, indicating the corresponding strategic vision for the future of bilateral relations.

Activities

President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister of Georgia G. Gakharia (10.01) in connection with the death of Ukrainian citizens in the air crash in Iran.

During an online meeting (30.12), Prime Ministers D. Shmyhal and G. Gakharia discussed topical issues of bilateral cooperation and the countries' integration into the EU and NATO.

Deputy Minister of Justice V. Vasylyk paid a working visit to Georgia (February) and held a bilateral meeting with First Deputy Minister of Justice of Georgia M. Sarjveladze, during which they discussed the current state and prospects for international legal cooperation between the two countries. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine V. Bodnar held a bilateral meeting with First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia V. Makharoblishvili on the sidelines of the GUAM's Council of National Coordinators meeting (February) to discuss the implementation of the Regulation on the Ukrainian-Georgian High-Level Strategic Council. V. Bodnar also paid a working visit to Tbilisi (September), the main result of which was the confirmation from Georgia that it is ready to support Ukraine's nomination for the post of Secretary-General of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat and to facilitate consultations between the Foreign Ministries of both countries at the level of deputy ministers and department directors.

Defence Ministers A. Taran and I. Garibashvili met in Tbilisi (19.08) to discuss the security situation in Ukraine, Georgia, the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea area, measures to curb the spread of the coronavirus in the armed forces, development of cooperation in the NATO-Georgia-Ukraine format. The sides shared their experience of transforming the armed forces in conditions of Russian aggression, discussed priorities for bilateral defence cooperation in strategic communications, cyber defence, defence industry, joint participation in military exercises, and implementation of NATO standards.

Permanent Representative of the President of Ukraine to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea A. Korynevych and former Kremlin political prisoner O. Sentsov paid a visit to Georgia (18–21.02) to take part in a round table “De-occupation: Joint Efforts of Ukraine and Georgia,” organised by the Embassy of Ukraine on the sixth anniversary of the temporary occupation of Crimea.

Ukraine’s Ambassador to Georgia I. Dolhov and Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia G. Arveladze discussed further development of bilateral trade and economic relations during the pandemic (25.05). I. Dolhov and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia A. Khvtisiashvili met (7.07) to discuss further bilateral cooperation within the BSEC. The Ambassador also met First Deputy Minister of Defence of Georgia L. Chikovani (25.11) to discuss the security situation in Ukraine, Georgia, and the Caucasus, the development of military cooperation in the NATO-Georgia-Ukraine and Georgia-Ukraine formats.

Ukraine supported Georgia during the adoption of the Resolution “Cooperation with Georgia” during the 43rd session of the UNHRC (27.02), co-authored together with Georgia the Resolution of the 74th session of the UN GA “Status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/ South Ossetia, Georgia” (3.09). The MFA of Ukraine expressed support for Georgia on the 12th anniversary of Russia’s armed aggression against it (7.08). In turn, Georgia co-authored such important for Ukraine Resolutions of the 75th session of the UN GA as “Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine” (18.11) and “Problem of the militarisation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov” (07.12).

Results

Given a certain slump in bilateral relations in 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic and an argument over M. Saakashvili, Ukraine and Georgia nevertheless confirmed their interest in maintaining the course for a strategic partnership in all areas. Statements in the spirit of good neighbourly relations and full commitment to the strategic partnership made by the President of Ukraine, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and other officials during the year have shown that this partnership stood the test in 2020.

President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy signed (14.01) the Law of Ukraine “On the Ratification of the Protocol between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of Georgia on Amendments to the 9 January 1995 Agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Georgia on Free Trade” (the Protocol entered into force on 26 March). In addition, Ukraine and Georgia approved and signed a Programme for Cooperation between the Ministries of Defence.

However, all diplomatic efforts to hold the 10th Session of the Joint Ukrainian-Georgian Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation in 2020 were unsuccessful.

According to the State Statistics Committee, exports of Ukrainian goods to Georgia in 2020 decreased by 6.7%, amounting to USD 366.4 mln, while Georgian imports to Ukraine decreased by 25.6%, down to USD 135.4 mln.

Israel

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	5	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	2
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	5	2
TOTAL SCORES	B+	C-

The COVID-19 pandemic and domestic political processes in Israel had a negative impact on the scope of bilateral activity in 2020. A delay of the FTA launch till January 1, 2021, prevented the intensification of economic and trade cooperation and use of this agreement the potential. The interest of Ukraine focuses on trade, investment, and innovation. Given Israel's experience in the areas that are important for Ukraine, including development amidst war or innovative technology, and significant opportunities for interaction, the available potential for cooperation was not exploited.

Political Interest / Engagement

Interest towards Israel declined among Ukrainian politicians in 2020. The country was mentioned in the context of the need to deepen cooperation in the key spheres of bilateral cooperation, but they were not consistent. Intensification of trade and economic cooperation constitutes the main sphere of interests.

The President of Ukraine referred to Israel as one of Ukraine's key trade partners in the region during his visit there (23–24.01). O. Stefanishyna, Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, spoke about the interest in intensifying economic and investment cooperation and the readiness to guarantee an uninterrupted supply of food products to Israel at the meeting with the Israeli Ambassador (17.08).

Military technical cooperation is another interesting sphere for Ukraine. O. Danylov, Secretary of the NSDC, spoke about deepening cooperation on cybersecurity between the agencies of the two countries at his meeting with Israeli Ambassador J. Lion (31.07). In his interview for The Jerusalem Post in September, President Zelenskyy spoke of the need to strengthen the military, defence, and intelligence cooperation. I. Zhovkva, Deputy Head of the Presidential Office, referred to Israel as a reliable partner in military-technical cooperation and R&D sectors in his interview for Interfax Ukraine (18.06).

Innovations offer another promising vector in bilateral relations. This is reflected in Foreign Minister D. Kuleba's telephone conversation with Z. Yelkin, co-chair of the Ukrainian-Israeli Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation (25.06), where he focused on the IT sector as an area where outstanding results can be accomplished, among other areas of cooperation. Deputy Foreign

Minister V. Bondar also highlighted this in political consultations between the MFAs of the two countries (4.06). President Zelenskyy spoke about this during his visit to Israel.

Neither the President's Address to the Verkhovna Rada nor the analytical report that came with it mentioned Israel. D. Shmyhal's Government Action Plan does not mention Israel either.

Institutional Cooperation

Coordination of actions on the implementation of the policy on Israel remained poor among Ukrainian authorities. Cooperation exists between the President's Office, MFA, and Ukraine's Embassy in Israel triangle. On September 10, Ukraine appointed its new ambassador to Israel, and the rotation took less than a month. The Ukrainian side had completed its work on establishing the FTA in 2019, but there were no tasks on coordination in this area as the launch of the FTA was postponed given a delay of ratification by Israel due to early parliamentary election there.

Strategic Vision

The Memorandum of Understanding and the key principles of cooperation between Ukraine and the State of Israel, dating back to January 12, 1993, remains the key document on bilateral relations. At the same time, Ukraine's main strategic documents have no mentions of Israel. Ukraine's 2017 Export Strategy is an exception as it includes Israel in the top 20 promising export markets. The FTA agreement matches this vision. The draft Vectors of Economic Development, part of an effort to develop a national economic strategy, presented by the Government on November 6, defines Israel as a preferable investor and sets the objective of "revising the FTA conditions with Israel to expand the range of goods subject to lower import duty."

Activities

The COVID-19 pandemic and snap election in Israel negatively impacted interaction between the two countries. Activities shrunk at all levels — for the lack of possibility to conduct visits, among other things. The meeting of the Joint Ukrainian-Israeli Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation did not take place. Israel delayed FTA ratification and its approval as it was in the process of forming a new parliament and government, which prevented intensification of activities in this sphere.

There were activities on the top level, however. Before borders closed, President Zelenskyy went on a working visit to Israel to attend the fifth World Holocaust Forum (23–24.01). He met with Israel President R. Rivlin, Prime Minister B. Netanyahu, Knesset Speaker Y. Edelstein, and representatives of the business community, including the digital and IT industry, construction and infrastructure companies, where he presented the programs Ukraine offers to investors. Further top-level contacts were maintained via telephone conversations between the countries' leaders (25.05 and 14.08).

The MFA invested efforts into maintaining contacts with the Israeli side with online meetings or telephone conversations. These included political consultations between the MFAs of the two countries (4.06) and telephone conversations of Ukraine's Foreign Minister with the newly-appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel, G. Ashkenazi (15.06) and Z. Yelkin, co-chair of the Ukrainian-Israeli Trade and Economic Cooperation Commission (25.06).

Some activities were maintained on the parliamentary level, including an online meeting of the parliamentary groups of friendships (15.12) and a telephone conversation of Verkhovna Rada Speaker D. Razumkov with Knesset Speaker Y. Levin (28.07).

On October 27, the third Ukrainian-Israeli Innovation Summit took place in a mix of online and offline formats. It focused on the challenges and opportunities resulting from the COVID-19 crisis. The summit participants discussed the responses of the two countries to the pandemic in governance, healthcare, and technology, investment opportunities amidst the crisis and rethinking of innovations.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting ban for foreign citizens to enter Ukraine between August 28 and September 28, Hasidic pilgrims who come to celebrate Rosh Hashanah every year in Uman, Ukraine, were not allowed to enter Ukraine's territory. This caused a diplomatic scandal and some misunderstandings in bilateral relations. Throughout July-September, regular contacts took place at all levels between Ukraine and Israel. As a result, the Joint Ukrainian-Israeli Statement was published (18.08), calling on the pilgrims to refrain from visiting Uman. The attempt of around 1,500 pilgrims to get to Ukraine through the Ukraine-Belarus border led to a crisis. Despite the Israeli Minister of the Interior's request to Ukraine's President to allow them into Ukraine, no exceptions were made for the restrictions in place at the time.

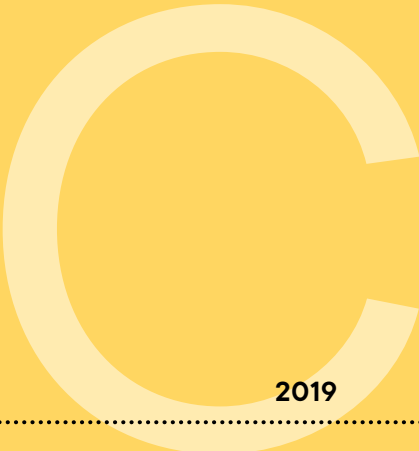
Results

As a result of the pandemic and few contacts, there were no significant results in 2020. There was no progress, pledged a year before, in strengthening cooperation between the two countries border and law enforcement agencies to reduce the number of entry rejections for Ukrainian citizens travelling to Israel.

An agreement was reached to hold a regular meeting of the Joint Ukrainian-Israeli Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation once the epidemiological situation improves. Heads of states, ministers of foreign affairs, and parliament speakers of Ukraine and Israel invited each other to visit the respective countries after the pandemic.

On January 1, 2021, the FTA comes into effect. This should create new opportunities in the practical field. According to the State Statistics Committee, trade amounted to USD 734.5 mln in 2020 between Ukraine and Israel. This is lower than 2019, including 9.1% down for exports and 17.3% down for imports. Still, Ukraine maintains a significant surplus. Trade in services amounted to USD 240.16 mln, including exports going down 16.5% and imports plummeting 40%.

Iran



	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	1	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	1	4
STRATEGIC VISION	2	2
ACTIVITIES	1	3
RESULTS	1	3
TOTAL SCORES	E+	C

In 2020, Ukraine's policy towards the Islamic Republic of Iran characterized by two opposite trends: on the one hand, there was a significant increase in bilateral meetings due to the UIA plane crash (shot down by Iranian air defence in January 2020); on the other hand, continued decline in trade, due to both US sanctions against Iran and the COVID-19 pandemic.



Political Interest / Engagement

Compared to previous years, Ukraine's interest in Iran somewhat grew. This is primarily due to the infamous event — the downing of a Ukrainian plane by Iranian air defence forces of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (8.01), which killed 176 people. In this regard, 2020 was marked by bilateral talks to sort out the details of the catastrophe and the Ukrainian side's efforts to obtain compensation for its victims. All the statements of high-ranking officials concerned this very topic. According to the head of the Ukrainian delegation, Deputy Foreign Minister Y. Yenin, “progress in the negotiation process on the Ukrainian aircraft will contribute to the normalization of cooperation with Iran in all areas.”

Institutional Cooperation

The MFA, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the Ministry of Infrastructure, and the Ministry of Justice took care of Ukrainian-Iranian relations in 2020. The Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Iranian Joint Commission on Economic and Trade Cooperation, in particular, coordinates these activities. The Commission is not particularly effective due to sanctions and the current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic. Besides, in 2020, Ukraine set up a special commission to investigate the plane crash, headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Y. Yenin. In total, the commission included 16 representatives of other state agencies, including the Ministry of Justice, the MoD, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Department of Air Transportation, and the State Investigative Committee.

Strategic Vision

The strategic vision of cooperation with Iran (formed at the level of statements in 2016) is based on three principles: the friendly nature of relations between the two countries; preventing interference and obstruction of cooperation by

third countries; mutual interest: Iran as a guarantor of Ukraine's energy security, and Ukraine as a guarantor of Iran's food security. At the same time, Ukraine's capacity for energy cooperation with Iran is critically diminished, mainly due to the US sanctions on Iran's nuclear program, which inevitably affects the practical development of relations. This situation is an indicator of not very effective cooperation between Ukraine and Iran.

Activities

In 2020, the bilateral dialogue intensified. However, this was only due to the investigation of the January UIA plane crash circumstances and the settlement of issues related to it. In particular, for the first time since 2002, the presidents of Ukraine and Iran talked by telephone (9.01 and 11.01). In addition, after a telephone conversation between the presidents, the foreign ministers of the two countries met in January. In July and October, a series of meetings at the level of ministers and deputy ministers of foreign affairs happened to discuss issues related to the catastrophe. The ministries, whose representatives were included in the commission to investigate the catastrophe details, were involved, in particular, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Security Service of Ukraine, etc.

At the same time, the issue of bilateral relations became a subject of intergovernmental communication at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers. Unfortunately, the states failed to reach a mutual understanding in this direction. In particular, Iran has not submitted to Ukraine the final technical report on the plane crash.

Ukraine, Canada, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Afghanistan, whose citizens died due to the catastrophe, established the International Coordination and Response Group to conduct an international investigation.

Results

In 2020, Ukraine's relations with Iran were mixed. On the one hand, the UIA plane crash led to a significant intensification of Kyiv and Tehran's political contacts. On the other hand, trade and economic indicators of cooperation remain relatively low due to the continuation of the US global sanctions against Iran. However, despite the coronavirus pandemic, compared to 2019, there was some increase in total trade between Ukraine and Iran (exports from Ukraine to Iran increased by 20% and imports from Iran remained almost unchanged — 98.5% of 2019). Though, these figures remain low compared to 2017, the last year before the US sanctions against Iran resumption. The increase in trade compared to 2019 can be explained by the fact that retail trade suffered the least from the coronavirus pandemic within the structure of the economy, which is often based on products imported from Iran (nuts, dried fruits, vegetables). Ukraine's exports to Iran in 2020 amounted to only USD 258.85 million, and imports — USD 48.2 million. The trade balance is positive for Ukraine.

China

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	4
ACTIVITIES	2	4
RESULTS	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	C	B

2020 saw a surge of political interest in Ukraine–China relations. Institutional cooperation became more profound, bilateral activities intensified, and economic indicators improved. Still, some controversial aspects in bilateral relations persist.



Political Interest / Engagement

President V. Zelenskyy made a general reference to Asia in his address at the video conference on Foreign Policy Strategic Priorities (Annual Ambassadorial). But the President's interest in China was notable at other events.

In an extensive interview for the Chinese news agency in October, President Zelenskyy said that full-fledged political dialogue between the two states should be resumed at the level of heads of Governments, Parliaments, and leaders, invited China's President Xi Jinping to visit Ukraine and informed about his aspiration to visit China. The priority areas of practical cooperation he mentioned include lending and investment, agriculture, machine building and transportation. President Zelenskyy noted that Ukraine was one of the first supporters of China's Belt and Road initiative and that Kyiv had the economic and industrial potential for effective engagement in the project. President Zelenskyy mentioned that Ukraine was interested in coordinating efforts against the COVID-19 pandemic with China further, including on vaccine provision.

The analytical report on Ukraine's domestic and international position for the President's Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada references China. Inter alia, it mentions China among the technological leaders that place bets on introducing industrial robots and robust new centres for economic growth. At the same time, the report mentions the COVID-19 crisis that crystallized the rise of strategic competition between the US and China, which is gradually becoming a determinant factor in the system of international relations and tensions in the South China Sea. The report notes that China is growing more persistent in promoting its interests via the Belt and Road geostrategic project.

Foreign Minister Kuleba and Deputy Head of the Presidential Office Zhovkva mentioned the important role of China in their interviews for Ukrainian media.

Verkhovna Rada Speaker D. Razumkov paid attention to China too. In September, he said in an interview with the Chinese media that Ukraine was interested in intensifying trade and economic cooperation with China and planned to resume intense cooperation between Parliaments after the pandemic. Y. Tymoshenko stood out among political parties and their leaders: she said that Chinese healthcare helped her battle COVID-19 in an interview for a Chinese outlet in October. China's Embassy organized consultations with Chinese doctors for Y. Tymoshenko's doctors and provided the necessary medicines.

Institutional Cooperation

Positive examples of institutional cooperation include interaction between central executive authorities of the two countries in preparing the Fourth Meeting of the Commission on Cooperation between the Governments of Ukraine and China. The ministries of healthcare and foreign affairs, the State Emergency Service, the State Customs Service, and the State Border Guard Service enjoyed high-level institutional cooperation with the Chinese counterparts when evacuating Ukrainian citizens from China, including Uhan city.

Strategic Vision

Ukraine's National Security Strategy, dated September 14, 2020, mentions the growing rivalry for global leadership between the US and China. At the same time, the Strategy does not mention China as a strategic partner or a partner. It does not specify Ukraine's interests in China either. In 2017, the Ukraine-China Action Plan was signed to implement the initiative on joint construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The National Exports Strategy (December 2017) mentions China as an important partner.

Activities

In response to the March request of the President of Ukraine, China repeatedly, throughout the year, provided assistance to Ukraine, including a wide range of medical products that are necessary to counter the spread of COVID-19.

Four out of seven industry sub-commissions on healthcare, culture, space, trade and economy within the governmental Commission on Cooperation met during 2020.

As part of the Asia Week in April, Foreign Minister Kuleba had a telephone conversation with China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi. Based on the conversation, Ukraine's MFA stated that Ukraine and China were interested in developing and strengthening strategic partnership, including under the Belt and Road initiative.

In July, President Zelenskyy met with the representatives of Chinese business. The participants made a preliminary list of projects with an investment potential

of nearly USD 10bn, which Ukraine plans to implement jointly with Chinese private and state-owned companies. The National Investment Council chaired by the President was designated coordinator of these projects.

In September, First Deputy Foreign Minister E. Dzhaparova had a video conference with Vice Foreign Minister Le Yucheng. They discussed interaction in international organizations and ways to intensify trade and economic cooperation, as well as joint participation in China's Belt and Road global initiative.

In December, the Fourth Meeting of the Commission on Cooperation between the Governments of Ukraine and China took place in the video conference format, co-chaired by Vice Prime Ministers Liu He and O. Stefanishyna. They agreed to work jointly against the COVID-19 pandemic and deepen cooperation under the Belt and Road initiative.

Results

Trade between Ukraine and China hit the record-breaking USD 15.42bn in 2020. Ukraine saw its exports to China grow an unprecedented 98%, while its trade deficit shrunk seriously.

Ukraine introduced a temporary visa-free travel regime for Chinese tourists from August 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021 to improve conditions for tourism development.

On October 22, the two states signed a new five-year cooperation program in the space industry, planning to implement 69 projects in this field. Worth USD 70 mln, the program is scheduled to take place over 2021–2025.

Lithuania

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	5
STRATEGIC VISION	4	5
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	5	4
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B+

Despite the Lithuanian President's postponed visit to Ukraine, relations between the two countries remain at a traditionally high level. Lithuania continues to be Ukraine's largest trading partner among the Baltic states and one of its top advocates. In particular, this is reflected in the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, which describes Lithuania as a strategic partner. In 2020, Lithuania joined Ukraine and Poland in launching the Lublin Triangle regional initiative.



Political Interest / Engagement

In 2020, Ukraine's political interest in Lithuania was not articulated as clearly as in the previous few years. The President's Address to the Verkhovna Rada, as well as numerous speeches and interviews by the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, mentioned Lithuania only in the context of the Lublin Triangle being created as a "platform for political, economic, and social cooperation."

Nevertheless, during the talks with his Lithuanian counterpart, President V. Zelenskyy noted the country's continued commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, support for Ukrainians, rehabilitation of servicemen, financial support for the Armed Forces in accordance with NATO standards, and humanitarian aid for victims of Russian aggression.

During a visit to Vilnius, Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada D. Razumkov thanked Lithuania for its constant support for Ukraine in the international arena.

Institutional Cooperation

Agencies were busy coordinating efforts to arrange the 20th meeting of the Ukrainian-Lithuanian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, and R&D Cooperation. Ukraine was represented by officials of the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Health, the State Space Agency, Naftogaz of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, who attended the meeting and were involved in its preparation. The MFA and the Government Office for Coordination of European Integration (Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration O. Stefanishyna and First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs E. Dzhaparova) joined forces during the 14th meeting of the Standing Ukrainian-Lithuanian Commission on European Integration.

Strategic Vision

The updated National Security Strategy of Ukraine describes Lithuania as one of the key strategic partners. The Declaration on the Development of Strategic Partnership between Ukraine and Lithuania for 2020–2024 has been guiding the two countries' relations since 2020.

Activities

Despite quarantine restrictions, Ukrainian and Lithuanian high-ranking officials have maintained active contacts. Because of COVID-19, President of Lithuania G. Nausėda postponed his visit to Kyiv until 2021. Nevertheless, the Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania had three phone conversations in 2020.

Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada D. Razumkov paid an important visit to Lithuania (September) to meet Speaker of the Seimas V. Pranckietis, President G. Nausėda, and Prime Minister S. Skvernelis.

The 14th meeting of the Standing Ukrainian-Lithuanian Commission on European Integration (July) held its 14th meeting (July) and was co-chaired by Ukrainian Vice Prime Minister O. Stefanishyna and Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs L. Linkevičius.

Ukrainian Minister of Defence A. Taran met Lithuanian Ambassador to Ukraine V. Sarapinas (August) to discuss cooperation in military education, training of military units, development of the sergeant corps, cybersecurity, and the special operations forces.

As far as economic diplomacy is concerned, there was a meeting between the Ukrainian-Lithuanian and Lithuanian-Ukrainian business councils (September). The 20th meeting of the Ukrainian-Lithuanian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic and R&D Cooperation (29.09) was held through a video conference. Minister of Infrastructure V. Kryklii headed the Ukrainian delegation. The sides discussed cooperation in transport, energy, oil and gas, electricity, healthcare, space, European integration and reforms, etc.

Results

The strategic results include the creation of the Lublin Triangle as a new format for interstate cooperation. The issues of security, counteraction to hostile disinformation, as well as trade development and infrastructure projects, have been identified as the project's priorities. The new initiative participants agreed to harmonize steps to protect international law both in tripartite coordination and international organizations — NATO, the UN, the EU, the Council of Europe, and the OSCE. They also reaffirmed their non-recognition of the illegal occupation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and called on Russia to withdraw troops from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. The participants in the Lublin Triangle supported NATO's recognition of Ukraine as an Enhanced Opportunities Partner.

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine issued an order “On the signing of the Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on consular fees for long-term (national) visas.”

Lithuania became one of Ukraine's 20 largest trading partners in 2020. Exports grew by 5% to USD 431.5 mln. On the other hand, imports decreased by more than a third, compared to 2019, and reached USD 813.2 mln. Trade in services fell by 20% to USD 89 mln. During the year, Lithuania provided humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, including 15,000 protective face shields from Vilnius as part of the “Ukraine — Lithuania #Stronger Together” campaign.

Moldova

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	2	2
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	3
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	C	C+

2020 witnessed the gradually ascending dynamics of Ukrainian-Moldovan relations. The results achieved were more in line with the declared ambitions and activity level than in the previous years. The dialogue between the heads of state resumed after M. Sandu won the Moldovan presidential election. The sides identified the priorities and laid the foundation for boosting bilateral cooperation. However, a strategic vision of cooperation is still lacking.



Political Interest / Engagement

The President of Ukraine did not mention Moldova in his Address to the Verkhovna Rada and his speech at the annual Ambassadorial in 2020.

However, Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba and a Deputy Head of the Presidential Office, I. Zhovkva, mentioned Moldova in their interviews (mainly in the context of the need for proactive policy amid M. Sandu's election as a President of Moldova). President V. Zelenskyy also congratulated M. Sandu on her election, while D. Kuleba stressed that Ukraine was looking forward to closely cooperating with her.

The analytical report to the President's Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada mentions Moldova only in the context of settling the frozen conflict in Transnistria and failure to make the full use of economic cooperation potential.

Institutional Cooperation

The MFA was particularly active in terms of cooperation between ministries and agencies, in particular in coordinating the efforts of the Joint Ukrainian-Moldovan Demarcation Commission and the Joint Ukrainian-Moldovan Working Group on Preparation of Final Demarcation Documents.

Strategic Vision

There were only sporadic references to Moldova in strategic documents. The Military Doctrine mentions Moldova in the context of current threats, in particular, the presence of the "Russian military contingent in Moldova's Dniester region," while the Energy Strategy of Ukraine until 2035 speaks about the need to "prepare the necessary legal framework and implement relevant steps to integrate the electricity markets of Ukraine and Moldova." The updated National Security Strategy of Ukraine (September) mentions Moldova in the context of the need to develop pragmatic relations (along with Belarus).

Activities

Six high-level contacts (both phone conversations and video conferences, as well as visits) took place last year. In April, Prime Ministers D. Shmyhal and I. Chicu discussed anti-epidemic measures over the phone.

In July, the Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, Minister for Reintegration of TOT, O. Reznikov, had a video conference with Moldovan Deputy Prime Minister for Reintegration C. Lesnic. The sides discussed interaction within the trilateral interdepartmental platform for the experience exchange in the reintegration of non-government-controlled territories and counteraction to Russia's influence.

Moldovan Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration O. Țulea visited Ukraine (4.08). During the visit, he met Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba, and the two signed the Plan of Consultations between the Ministries for 2021–2022. The Moldovan minister also had a meeting with Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, O. Reznikov.

In early October, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine V. Bodnar visited Moldova. He met the State Secretary at the Moldovan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration D. Cujbă.

During his December visit to Moldova, Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba met newly-appointed President M. Sandu, Minister of Foreign Affairs A. Ciocoi, Deputy Prime Minister S. Pușcuță and Parliament Speaker Z. Greceanii.

Results

In 2020, expectations of increasing mutual trade to USD 1bn, as stated in the previous years, did not materialize. In 2020, it reached USD 753.8 mln only.

The 44th meeting of the Joint Ukrainian-Moldovan Working Group on Preparation of Final Demarcation Documents of the Joint Ukrainian-Moldovan Demarcation Commission (Kyiv, January) can be considered an achievement. During the meeting, the sides approved the final demarcation documents, including the state border delineation protocol, as well as the protocols on border signs, the catalogue of coordinates and heights of border signs in the northern sector of the Ukrainian-Moldovan state border. The Joint Working Group also approved and initialled the demarcation map of the northern sector of the Ukrainian-Moldovan state border.

In addition, Kyiv and Chisinau resumed dialogue on some problematic issues (above all, the package agreement concerning the Dniester hydroelectric station and the Odesa-Reni motorway).

The Honorary Consulate of Ukraine was opened in Comrat (Moldova's autonomous region of Gagauzia).

Poland

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	4
ACTIVITIES	5	5
RESULTS	4	5
TOTAL SCORES	B+	A-

Relations between Ukraine and Poland maintained a tendency to deepen in 2020. The evidence is an intensification of political dialogue between the states and an introduction of new formats of cooperation (Lublin Triangle) despite the coronavirus pandemic and domestic political issues. The strategic partnership was confirmed by the adopted documents and declarations, as well as practical cooperation. The parties also made efforts to overcome their historical contradictions that have hindered the development of bilateral relations in previous years. Poland became Ukraine's third-largest trading partner.



Political Interest / Engagement

Despite the pandemic, interest in Ukrainian-Polish relations remained high, including attempts to overcome the problems that have accumulated between the countries in recent years.

In his Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada, President V. Zelenskyy said that Ukraine was building a constructive dialogue and good neighbourly relations with Poland, citing the founding of the Lublin Triangle as an example. The issues of historical memory continue to significantly impact the atmosphere of Ukraine's relations with Poland. Their resolution calls for a continued dialogue above all at the level of experts and historians of both countries' institutes of national memory, as was suggested by various officials.

During the year, the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs mentioned Poland both separately and as part of the newly created Lublin Triangle initiative, including during the annual Ambassadorial in December. Poland is also mentioned in the Action Programme of D. Shmyhal's Government.

During a meeting with Senate Marshal T. Grodzki (9.09), Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, D. Razumkov, said that the security situation in the region required further active cooperation in international organisations between the parliamentary delegations of Ukraine and Poland. Also, D. Razumkov noted the importance of cooperation in energy security, including opposing the construction of Nord Stream 2. During A. Duda's official visit to Ukraine (11–13.10), D. Razumkov noted Poland's unshakeable and exemplary position in support of the territorial integrity of Ukraine. He added that Poland is a strategic partner and advocate of Ukraine in the EU.

In September, 230 Ukrainian MPs upheld S. Yurash's (Servant of the People) initiative to establish a parliamentary group called "Intermarium."

Institutional Cooperation

The MFA, Office of the President of Ukraine, CMU, and the Ministry of Economy coordinated efforts concerning Poland. In particular, the Ukrainian part of the Ukrainian-Polish Youth Exchange Council's composition was approved in accordance with the Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine

and the Polish Government (25.06). Preparations were made for a meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation scheduled for the first quarter of 2021.

The Ministry of Economy held a public discussion of the draft Concept for achieving Goal 7.6 of the Government Programme “Ukrainian exporters get better working conditions when barriers to the export of Ukrainian goods and services are reduced.” Among other things, the meeting discussed proposals on how to combat the smuggling of dairy from Poland (11.03).

Strategic Vision

Poland remains a strategic partner of Ukraine. The National Security Strategy of Ukraine (2020) mentions a strategic partnership with Poland.

Much was said about the strategic nature of the partnership and friendship between the two countries during A. Duda’s official visit to Ukraine (11–13.10). In particular, the joint statement by the Presidents of Ukraine and Poland (12.10) highlighted the “importance of Ukrainian-Polish bilateral relations, which are of strategic partnership nature.”

Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada D. Razumkov and Marshal of the Polish Senate, T. Grodzki, discussed the development of a bilateral strategic partnership through interaction between the parliaments (9.09).

During D. Kuleba’s visit to Poland (27–28.07), the two countries agreed to develop a tripartite memorandum (Ukraine, Poland, the USA) on cooperation in the energy sector (strategic level document).

Activities

Despite the unfavourable epidemic situation, bilateral dialogue, particularly at the top level, has been quite active. However, due to quarantine restrictions, some meetings took place online. During the year, there were ten meetings, 11 telephone conversations at the top and high levels, two meetings of bilateral institutional mechanisms, and nearly 40 visits/negotiations, including those held online.

President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy had two meetings with Polish President A. Duda: during a working visit to Poland (January) and during the Polish President's official visit to Ukraine (October). In addition, V. Zelenskyy had three telephone conversations with A. Duda (March, April, and September).

The Heads of the Government of Ukraine and Poland had one meeting (January, Davos) and one telephone conversation (April). Vice Prime Minister for European and European Integration O. Stefanishyna paid a working visit to Warsaw in August.

There were two meetings at the level of foreign ministers (Munich in February and Lublin in July) and five telephone conversations.

The two parliaments had a busy cooperation agenda. The Presidium of the Parliamentary Assembly of Ukraine and Poland held its 12th meeting (June, video conference). Chairman of the VRU D. Razumkov met Polish Senate Marshal T. Grodzki (September, Warsaw), Deputy Speaker of the VRU O. Kondratyuk and Deputy Marshal of the Sejm R. Terlecki held a telephone conversation (January) and a meeting (February, Krasieczyn).

The NSDC of Ukraine and the Polish National Security Bureau had pertinent contacts (P. Soloch's visit to Kyiv in January, O. Danylov and P. Soloch's telephone conversation in September, and O. Danylov's visit to Warsaw in October).

There was active interdepartmental and sectoral cooperation (energy, agriculture, aerospace, finance and taxation, defence and military-technical cooperation, transport, education), as well as humanitarian and interregional cooperation, as evidenced by numerous bilateral visits and events. More than 40 bilateral events in the economy, trade, investment and tourism took place during the year, including the Ukrainian-Polish Economic Forum with the participation of Presidents V. Zelenskyy and A. Duda (October, Odesa), the 12th International Forum "Polish-Ukrainian Business Days" (September, Warsaw), and Weeks of Ukrainian Economic Diplomacy in Poland (September, Warsaw).

There was focused interaction between the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory and the Institute of National Remembrance — Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation.

The Joint Consultative Commission of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the Ministry of National Education of Poland held a meeting in July to discuss the education of representatives of the Ukrainian national minority in Poland and the Polish national minority in Ukraine.

The Ukrainian-Polish Joint Commission on International Road Transport held a meeting to discuss the key issue of providing both countries' carriers with permits in 2021. The Ministries of Infrastructure of both countries agreed that Ukraine should be provided with additional 5,000 permits by the end of 2020.

The Embassy of Ukraine in Poland played an active role in the implementation of the Ukrainian-Polish agenda.

Results

Relations between Ukraine and Poland are strategic, and it is in both countries' interests to deepen them. Kyiv and Warsaw officially see eye to eye on security and defence policy. It is important that Poland's position on the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity within the internationally recognised borders remains unchanged, including when it comes to mounting pressure on Russia by aligning itself with sanctions. Poland's support for Ukraine's EU and NATO membership is also essential. The sides are interested in taking practical steps to deepen cooperation in energy, cybersecurity, and other sectors. Poland strongly objects to the construction of Nord Stream 2 and has also shown readiness to help Ukraine in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

A practical dimension of cooperation between Ukraine and Poland in regional formats and initiatives was the Presidents' Joint Statement, in which Poland confirmed its interest in Ukraine's deepening cooperation with the Intermarium initiative, as well as the launch of the Ukrainian-Polish-Lithuanian cooperation format Lublin Triangle in July. The most important clauses of the joint declaration include a commitment never to recognise the Russian occupation of Ukraine's Crimea and Sevastopol, to promote military cooperation between the three countries and with NATO, to use this format to coordinate responses to security challenges and broader matters. The document highlights the strategic importance of intensifying cooperation between the EU, NATO, and EaP countries, and effective cooperation within the Three Seas Initiative framework.

As the presiding country, Poland supported Ukraine in the Visegrad Group. This included support for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic ambitions, and an invitation to Ukrainian Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief R. Khomchak to participate in the

Visegrad Four defence ministers meeting security situation in Central and Eastern Europe was discussed.

Compared to 2019, trade between the countries fell by 1% only, down to USD 7.4bn. In 2020, Poland became Ukraine's third-largest trading partner (after China and Germany). With a volume of USD 3.3bn, Poland is also the second-largest market (after China) for Ukrainian exports of goods. Trade in services decreased to USD 608 mln. In the first half of the year, Ukraine raised more than USD 800 mln in Polish investments.

The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the state-owned company Administration of Seaports of Ukraine and the Administration of the Port of Gdansk during A. Duda's visit to Ukraine marked another step towards increasing bilateral trade.

Poland has handed over more than 130 tonnes of humanitarian aid, supported the EU's decision to allocate EUR 190 mln to Ukraine for dealing with the COVID-19 (as well as for the reintegration of Donbas). Ukraine's "Mriya" and "Ruslan" planes delivered medical cargo to Poland from China. At the end of the year, Ukraine began negotiations on Poland's mediation in securing a coronavirus vaccine from the EU.

To optimise the network of offices providing consular services to Ukrainian citizens in Poland, it was decided to open the Consulate General of Ukraine in Wroclaw in 2021 (in addition to the existing consular offices in Lublin, Krakow, and Gdansk).

There has been progress concerning the Ukrainian-Polish agreement on a tied aid loan. In December, the VRU passed a bill seeking to unblock a Polish loan of up to EUR 100 mln to develop border road infrastructure.

Continued efforts to overcome historical contradictions were important. The heads of the institutes of national memory met for the first time in three years. They decided to establish a working group to address memorial sites' issues (such as restoring the original inscription on the memorial plaque to Ukrainian Insurgent Army soldiers on the Monasterz mountain).

Romania

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	3
ACTIVITIES	3	4
RESULTS	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	C	C+

In 2020, the level of political dynamics in relations between Ukraine and Romania increased compared to the previous year. The implementation of the Law “On Education” remains a controversial issue on the bilateral agenda. At the same time, relations in other areas have stayed at the level of 2019 or even made some progress. Romania is a partner of Ukraine on its path for European and Euro-Atlantic integration. While, in practice, relations are at the level of strategic partnership, this is not reflected in Ukraine’s strategic documents.



Political Interest / Engagement

In his Address to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the President says that “today, we are actually restoring a constructive dialogue and good neighbourly relations with [...] Romania [...].” In his interviews, Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba also highlighted the changing sentiment in relations with Romania. However, the analytical report to the President’s Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada only mentions Romania once in the context of possible economic cooperation. Another highlight is the issue of settling the frozen conflict in Moldova’s Transnistrian region with the participation of Kyiv and Bucharest.

President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy, Parliament Speaker D. Razumkov, and Prime Minister D. Shmyhal did not mention Romania in their statements.

Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation in organizing the work of the Joint Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Romanian Commission on national minorities continued in 2020.

The joint Ukrainian-Romanian exercise Riverine-2020 took place on the Danube in early September thanks to the efforts of Ukraine’s MFA, the State Border Service, and the MoD.

Strategic Vision

The strategic vision has not changed. There are no direct references to Romania in the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy,” the new National Security Strategy of Ukraine (which only mentions South-eastern Europe), the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, and the Strategy “Ukraine-2020.” However, the 2035 Energy Strategy mentions Romania, albeit in general terms.

Activities

Despite a general reduction in direct bilateral contacts in many areas, the two countries' MFAs and MoDs maintained a remarkably high level of cooperation in 2020. In early June, Ministers of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba and B. Aurescu agreed over the phone to extend the 7th meeting of the Mixed Ukrainian-Romanian Commission on national minorities. In particular, the heads of the diplomatic offices agreed to cooperate in education, energy, border issues, and trade development. Separately, they discussed security in the Black Sea region and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The co-heads of the Mixed Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Romanian Commission on national minorities held a video conference in July. Ukraine was represented by Deputy Minister of Culture and Information Policy S. Fomenko and Romania by the State Secretary of the MFA D. S. Neculăescu. They agreed to continue dialogue, launch expert negotiations by way of video conferences in order to approve further the draft protocol of the 7th meeting of the commission.

Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba visited Romania (7–8.09) to meet Romanian Prime Minister L. Orban and hold negotiations with Minister of Foreign Affairs B. Aurescu. During the visit, the sides discussed sensitive issues concerning the protection of national minorities' rights. The meeting with the Prime Minister of Romania focused on the issues of economic cooperation: cross-border cooperation, and the increase in trade. The sides also agreed to establish a working group for developing energy cooperation.

Military cooperation continued. Ukrainian Minister of Defence A. Taran visited Romania (5.09). The bilateral Ukrainian-Romanian exercise Riverine-2020 held on the Danube in September was an important event.

Results

According to the State Statistics Committee, the trade turnover between Ukraine and Romania increased by 5% in 2020 and amounted to USD 1.76bn, which is a good indicator amid the global economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The signing of the Agreement on Military-Technical Cooperation between the Cabinet of Ministers and the Government of Romania is an indisputable achievement in the security sector. The agreement sets the legal framework for military-technical cooperation and foresees the simplification of state procurement procedures in this area.

Another notable achievement was the launch of a ferry across the Danube between Orlivka and Isaccea in August.

In September, Ukraine announced the opening of a consulate in the border town of Sighetu Marmației.

In July, Romania decided to provide Ukraine with USD 2 mln worth of humanitarian aid, which would include medicines, disinfectants, and personal protective equipment (for objective reasons, the decision has not been implemented by the end of 2020).

In December 2019, the Gas Transmission System Operator of Ukraine (LLC Gas TSO of Ukraine) and Transgaz signed an interconnection agreement under European regulations, effective as of 1 January 2020. The agreement was for one point of interconnection only. LLC Gas TSO of Ukraine is ready to sign four more, but the process has been delayed.

Slovakia

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	3	3
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	4	5
TOTAL SCORES	B-	B

Ukrainian-Slovak cooperation is not a key topic in Ukrainian political discourse, although both Ukrainian and Slovak politicians gradually become more interested in expanding bilateral cooperation. Limited trade, economic, military and political cooperation, humanitarian contacts, a reactive approach to addressing current problems instead of developing an ambitious bilateral agenda do not suggest that the potential of bilateral relations is being used in full. At the same time, the starting conditions for increasing the momentum of political-diplomatic dialogue are good, namely due to smooth relations.



Political Interest / Engagement

The issue of Ukrainian-Slovak relations is usually mentioned in the following contexts: Slovakia's political and diplomatic support for Ukraine; cooperation in transport (the development of combined transportation between Asia (China) and Europe (Slovakia), as well as the creation of multimodal logistics centres in Chop, Mukachevo, and Košice for cargo handling along this route); cooperation in energy and customs; the introduction of joint border controls, etc.

While Ukrainian politicians are little interested in Slovakia, the gradual growth of Ukraine's interest in bilateral cooperation is a welcome development. The issues of Ukrainian-Slovak cooperation became more prominent in Ukrainian political discourse during and following the official visit of President V. Zelenskyy to Bratislava in September.

Slovakia was less mentioned in Ukraine's political discourse than other western neighbours. In particular, Slovakia was not mentioned in most keynote speeches (e.g., the President's Address to the Verkhovna Rada).

Institutional Cooperation

Since the coronavirus pandemic has slowed down the bilateral dialogue, some issues have not lost their relevance. These include the exchange of preliminary customs information, the introduction of joint border controls, and infrastructure development at the Ukrainian-Slovak border checkpoints. The Government Programme assigns these tasks to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and, as the Ukrainian side admits, their implementation is delayed due to financial difficulties. At the same time, an important reason for the delayed approval of the Draft Agreement on the introduction of joint border controls with Slovakia is a contradiction of some provisions of Ukrainian legislation to the EU laws (in particular the Schengen Borders Code).

Strategic Vision

The Cabinet of Ministers' Action Programme (June) does not mention Slovakia in the section "Deepening cooperation with key international partners." Ukraine's National Security Strategy (2020) only singles out a strategic partnership with Poland and pragmatic relations with Belarus and Moldova, among other neighbours, without mentioning Slovakia. This attests to distinctive asymmetry with which the countries regard each other in their strategic documents. Both the new Slovak Government's Programme and Slovakia's new Security Strategy, and Defence Strategy contain a number of important statements about Ukraine, support for its Euro-Atlantic aspirations and non-recognition of Crimea annexation.

Activities

Political dialogue has been limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the Presidents, Heads of Government and Ministers of Foreign Affairs of both countries holding negotiations over the phone.

President V. Zelenskyy's visit to Slovakia (23–24.09) has had a positive impact. The Slovak side highlighted its importance as this has been the first official visit by the President of Ukraine since 2011.

First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs E. Dzhaparova and Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration O. Stefanishyna paid working visits to Slovakia to attend the GLOBSEC forum (October).

Consultations on the renewal of the Agreement on Labour Migration continued. Its text was partially agreed upon, but the Ukrainian side considers it necessary to upgrade the level of the agreement to an intergovernmental one.

Results

During President V. Zelenskyy's visit, the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine and the Slovak Ministry of Transport and Construction signed a Memorandum of Cooperation in combined transportation between the EU and Asia through Ukraine and Slovakia. The governments of Ukraine and Slovakia signed an agreement on the provision of aviation maintenance services by a Ukrainian provider in the part of the Slovak airspace applicable to Uzhhorod Airport, which will allow it to resume full operation.

The coronavirus pandemic affected the dynamics of trade between Ukraine and Slovakia. In 2020, the total turnover amounted to USD 1.39bn compared to USD 1.49bn in 2019.

The issue of convening a meeting of the Intergovernmental Joint Commission on Economic, Industrial, and R&D Cooperation, whose co-chair was finally appointed by the Slovak side, is still on the agenda. The commission last met in 2013.

In 2020, Slovakia helped Ukraine to overcome the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the floods in its western regions (according to Slovak partners, the country has provided Ukraine with humanitarian assistance worth EUR 10 mln since 2014).

Another important result of the year was Slovakia's official agreement to join the Crimean Platform.

Turkey

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	2	5
ACTIVITIES	4	5
RESULTS	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	C+	A-

Turkey has retained the status of a strategic partner in the new National Security Strategy of Ukraine. The political dialogue was actively developing: despite the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 was marked by a record number of reciprocal visits and high-level meetings. The key areas of bilateral relations were economic, political, security, and defence industry cooperation.



Political Interest / Engagement

In contrast to previous years, in 2020, Turkey received much more attention from higher state authorities. The President of Ukraine and his diplomatic advisers, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and members of the Parliamentary Friendship Group with Turkey repeatedly mentioned “time-tested strategic partnership,” “mutually beneficial,” “pragmatic,” and “unproblematic” relations in official statements and interviews.

The Annual Address of the President to the Verkhovna Rada paid special attention to Turkey in the context of the support of Ukraine’s territorial integrity, the launch of the Crimean Platform, and development of military-technical cooperation (building of corvettes, engines, and military drones, development of air defence systems). Turkish Foreign Minister M. Cavusoglu was the guest of honour at the Conference of Ukrainian Ambassadors 2020, while cooperation with Turkey was called an example of successful development of friendly relations.

There is no direct mention of cooperation with Turkey in the D. Shmygal Government’s Program of Activities.

Institutional Cooperation

In general, the activity of Ukrainian state authorities in the Turkish direction can be considered systemic, and the level of interdepartmental coordination is satisfactory. The positions of the main decision-making centres are coherent. Annual meetings of the High-Level Strategic Council, where the representatives of key ministries and agencies are present, help coordinate positions regularly. Vice Prime Minister — Minister for the Development of Strategic Industries O. Urusky is in charge of cooperation in the defence industry. At the same time, the lack of coordination between non-core ministries leads to complicated bureaucratic conciliation procedures and delays implementation of the reached agreements on the Ukrainian side.

Strategic Vision

Ukraine's National Security Strategy approved in September 2020 identified Turkey as one of its five "strategic partners."

The 8th HLSC meeting in 2020 resulted in a Joint Declaration, which defines strategic cooperation priorities between the two countries. First of all, it highlights the importance of maintaining Ankara's political support in the Crimean issue, updating the positions in FTA negotiations, deepening cooperation in the military-technical and naval fields. Over the course of the year, Ukraine and Turkey signed several bilateral agreements in the military sphere.

The availability of up-to-date action plans, joint statements, declarations of intent, and other tactical documents in key ministries suggests the existence of a strategic vision for the development of relations in the medium term.

Activities

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, over the year, two presidents paid mutual visits (February, October). The Prime Minister of Ukraine (November) and the Vice Prime Minister — Minister for the Development of Strategic Industries of Ukraine (August, November) visited Turkey. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs (July, December) and the Ministers of Defence (July, December) paid mutual visits, and the Minister of Infrastructure and the Trade Representative of Ukraine visited Turkey (November). Apart from the traditional range of topics of bilateral interest (economy and defence industry), other issues appeared on the agenda: combating coronavirus; exchange of experience in the development of public-private partnerships, including medical field; Ankara's involvement in the Crimean platform; assistance in Crimean Tatars' settling on mainland Ukraine; and release of Kremlin's political prisoners. In December, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine D. Kuleba paid a one-day working visit to Turkey to attend the NATO North Atlantic Council meeting with the involvement of Ukraine and Georgia.

The 8th HLSC meeting took place in Kyiv in February under the co-chairmanship of the two presidents. The Joint Strategic Planning Group met in Antalya in July for the 8th time to prepare for the next HLSC summit in 2021.

Besides, the first meeting in the new “Quadrige” format (two heads of the MFAs + two heads of the MoDs) took place in Kyiv in December. The main purpose of this format was “to combine political, diplomatic, and military efforts to strengthen peace and security along the perimeter of the borders of both states.” In practice, this format involves regular discussions of a wide range of regional security issues and coordination of Kyiv and Ankara’s actions in key areas of bilateral interest. They put particular emphasis on deepening military cooperation (joint exercises, military education programs for Ukrainian servicemen in Turkey, development of cooperation within NATO).

In October, two countries held the 12th meeting of the Joint Ukrainian-Turkish Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation (Ankara) and the 7th meeting of the Joint Ukrainian-Turkish Commission on Tourism (Antalya). FTA negotiations continued online.

The Ukrainian Institute delegation headed by First Deputy Foreign Minister E. Dzhaparova paid a working visit to Ankara and Istanbul in October to plan Ukraine’s public and cultural diplomacy in Turkey for 2021.

Results

In 2020, the relations were most actively developing in the military-technical sphere. Several documents were signed to facilitate the implementation of agreements in the defence industry. In particular, during the HLSC meeting (February), the parties signed a framework agreement on military-financial cooperation, which provided for the allocation of military assistance to the Ukrainian Armed Forces in the amount of about USD 36 million. During President Zelenskyy’s working visit to Turkey in October, the governments of Ukraine and Turkey signed a Military Agreement creating a legal basis for expanding bilateral cooperation in this field (21 different areas). Ministry of Defence of Ukraine and State Agency for Defence Industry of Turkey also signed a Memorandum of Intent.

In December, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine concluded direct foreign economic agreements on military goods — defence contracts with Turkish companies — for the first time. Okean shipyard signed a memorandum with the Turkish State Defence Agency on joint activities to implement a project on building a series of corvette-class ships for the Ukrainian Navy. According to official data, partnership in aerospace and defence industries currently includes more than 30 projects. Agreements on the establishment of joint ventures for the production of Ukrainian engines in Turkey and Turkish drones in Ukraine, and production of aircraft power units based on the state enterprise Ivchenko-Progress developments, as well as on cooperation in armoured engine construction and peaceful space exploration are among the most promising.

During the summer visit of the Turkish President's Foreign Policy Adviser to Ukraine, two states signed a Roadmap for Ukrainian-Turkish cooperation for 2020.

Despite quarantine restrictions, the countries managed to avoid a sharp drop in bilateral trade and tourism. According to the 2020 results, Turkey is among the five biggest trade partners of Ukraine. The positive balance was secured despite the 7% drop in exports. The total trade in goods turnover in 2020 was USD 2,8bn. Trade in services dropped by 25% and amounted to USD 570 mln.

Contrary to the declared intentions, the FTA was not signed, while Turkey increased import duties on some categories of goods, in particular confectionery, by 15–20%.

Ukraine's active cooperation with Turkey within international organizations has ensured Ankara's support for all Ukrainian resolutions on the situation in Crimea and the Black Sea.

Hungary

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	2
STRATEGIC VISION	2	2
ACTIVITIES	3	4
RESULTS	3	2
TOTAL SCORES	C-	C-

In 2020, Ukraine and Hungary had a rollercoaster relationship: whereas the first half of the year saw an intensified dialogue, a series of meetings between the ministers of foreign affairs, preparations for a meeting between V. Zelenskyy and V. Orban, and NATO recognising Ukraine as Enhanced Opportunities Partner in the absence of Hungarian veto; the second half of 2020 was marked by Ukraine declaring two top Hungarian officials persona non grata, Kyiv accusing Budapest of meddling in Ukrainian elections, searches at Hungarian institutions in Transcarpathian Region, and so on. Ukrainian-Hungarian relations are at their lowest point, experiencing the greatest crisis since the establishment of diplomatic relations in the 1990s. Therefore, the most one can hope and strive for in 2021 is to normalise relations.

Political Interest / Engagement

Throughout the year, Hungary was the centre of Ukraine's political attention not only because of conflicts and scandals but also because of both sides' public statements on their readiness to relaunch relations at the top level.

President V. Zelenskyy and Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba commented on relations between the two countries on more than one occasion during the year. They were also mentioned in the President's Address to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

In late 2019 and 2020, Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba assumed the key role in relations with Hungary, being equally proactive with the media and in using diplomatic means.

Institutional Cooperation

Contrary to the previous years of crisis in relations with Hungary, institutional cooperation in 2020 mainly developed along the lines of the MFA — the President — the Transcarpathian Regional State Administration. The MFA has become Ukraine's key policymaker with regard to Hungary.

The ambiguous role played by the Security Service of Ukraine should be mentioned separately. Budapest regarded the SSU's investigative actions concerning Hungarian institutions and the leader of the Transcarpathian Hungarian Culture Society (KMKSZ), V. Brenzovych, as unfriendly steps by Kyiv.

Strategic Vision

The President's Decree "On Urgent Measures to Reform and Strengthen the State" (8.11.2019) mentions the development of good relations with neighbouring states among foreign policy priorities. In particular, this concerns Ukraine's bilateral relations with individual neighbouring EU member states. Also, the new National Security Strategy of Ukraine approved in autumn 2020 states that "in order to protect its national interests and strengthen regional security, Ukraine will develop close neighbourly relations with the countries of Central and South-eastern Europe."

Despite this and the three-year conflict with Hungary, Kyiv has failed to develop a strategic vision of both bilateral relations and its own policy in Central and Eastern Europe. Hungary is currently being viewed primarily through the prism of the conflict in bilateral relations and as an obstacle to Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration rather than as an equal partner.

Activities

In the first half of 2020, there was every reason to expect a relaunch of the Ukrainian-Hungarian dialogue. Some signs of this included public gestures by both sides and more active dialogue between Kyiv and Budapest at the level of the foreign ministers, who, despite the coronavirus pandemic, met three times in person in January-June.

The intergovernmental economic commission, which has not met for seven years, resumed its work in June. Following its meeting, D. Kuleba announced that the leaders of the two countries might meet as soon as in July. In addition, at a press conference on the first year of his presidency, V. Zelenskyy stated his desire and readiness to sign a memorandum with V. Orban, which would settle the whole range of arguable issues. The Ukrainian side prepared the text of the memorandum and handed it over to Hungary.

During the next six months, Ukraine's political interest in Hungary did not dwindle but made a U-turn: in autumn, Kyiv repeatedly warned Budapest

and eventually accused it of interfering in the Ukrainian election campaign. A number of high-ranking Hungarian officials were barred from Ukraine. The year culminated with SSU searches at the offices of the Transcarpathian Centre for Economic Development Egan Ede charity and its director and KMKSZ head V. Brenzovych.

Results

Ukraine's policy on Hungary in 2020 finally became proactive and even creative, allowing in June to avoid the Hungarian veto when NATO recognised Ukraine as an Enhanced Opportunities Partner.

At the same time, due to exacerbations in the second half of 2020, there are grounds to say that the dialogue between Kyiv and Budapest is at its lowest point since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1991.

The coronavirus pandemic has had little effect on bilateral relations, at least from the negative point of view; rather, it was a pretext for constructive communication. In particular, this concerns the coordination of border efforts and humanitarian aid delivery.

Still, most of the economic and infrastructure projects announced in the previous years (a EUR 50 mln loan from Hungary for the reconstruction of a bypass road near Beregove, the opening of new checkpoints on the Ukrainian-Hungarian border and the reconstruction of existing ones) have never taken off.

The trade turnover between the countries in 2020 amounted to USD 2.48bn amid a 20% fall in exports.

Czech Republic

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	3
ACTIVITIES	5	4
RESULTS	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	B-	C+

In 2020, relations between the two countries maintained positive dynamics. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine paid an official visit to the Czech Republic. The Ukrainian Embassy was active in promoting the country's interests in the Czech Republic. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the implementation of the scheduled agenda in full but, at the same time, highlighted a high level of mutual support between Ukraine and the Czech Republic.

Political Interest / Engagement

The Czech Republic traditionally remained out of focus for the key political players. The media covered bilateral relations in February when Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko paid an official visit to Prague. The sides noted the importance of deepening cooperation in implementing a series of mutually beneficial projects, in particular in energy, transport, and investment.

Institutional Cooperation

In early 2020, Ukrainian institutions (the MFA, the Ministry of Economy) coordinated preparations for the 9th meeting of the Ukrainian-Czech Joint Commission on Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technical Cooperation in Ukraine. The meeting was scheduled for March but did not happen again, this time due to an escalation in the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine O. Stefanishyna was appointed a co-chair of the Ukrainian part of the Commission. The possibility of holding the next meeting of the Commission in Kyiv in the first half of 2021 is being tentatively discussed.

In the course of the year, the MFA, the MIA, the State Border Service of Ukraine, airlines and railway companies coordinated efforts in mitigating the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the evacuation of Ukrainians from the Czech Republic in March, transportation of Chinese humanitarian cargo by Ukrainian planes to the Czech Republic, and reception of medical aid from the Czech Republic and V4.

Strategic Vision

There is no direct reference to the Czech Republic in strategic documents, but they vaguely mention countries of the region. The new National Security Strategy of Ukraine emphasises that in order to protect its own national interests and strengthen regional security, Ukraine will develop close and good neighbourly relations with the countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe. The sides did not conclude any bilateral documents or medium-term roadmaps in 2020.

Activities

Ukraine's policy on the Czech Republic was implemented mainly in the format of intensive bilateral contacts, as well as cooperation in international organisations. In February, Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko paid a visit to Prague where he met Prime Minister of the Czech Republic A. Babiš, President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament R. Vondráček, Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs T. Petržíček and President of the Czech Chamber of Commerce V. Dlouhý, representatives of Czech business and leaders of Ukrainian diaspora organisations in the Czech Republic. The Ukrainian-Czech Forum launched during the visit was attended by leading experts from both sides. Foreign Ministers D. Kuleba and T. Petržíček had several telephone conversations in March and April. The national secretariats of the Ukrainian-Czech Joint Commission on Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technical Cooperation held online consultations.

The Embassy of Ukraine in the Czech Republic was active both in strengthening political dialogue and in using the tools of public (and in particular cultural) diplomacy. The Czech media published interviews with Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko, several interviews with Ambassador Y. Perebynis and his articles explaining Ukraine's position on the main issues on the Ukrainian agenda. The sides had contacts on the matters of culture, trade and economic development, and defence policy.

Interparliamentary dialogue also intensified. In March, representatives of the Committee on Defence in the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament visited Ukraine. The delegation was headed by committee head J. Černochová.

Results

At the government level, the Czech Republic has consistently supported Ukraine, the development of its civil society, and Euro-Atlantic integration. The first inaugural meeting of the Ukrainian-Czech Forum took place in February. There the State Archives Service of Ukraine and the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian

Regimes, and the Security Services Archives of the Czech Republic signed a cooperation agreement.

Direct air link between Kyiv, Lviv and the Czech city of Pardubice was opened in September. Czech Ambassador R. Matula (and the ambassadors of other V4 countries) visited the Zolote checkpoint in Luhansk Region (3.09). As far as the defence sector is concerned, the sides agreed that the Ukrainian Armed Forces would receive the first batch of Czech-made Dana M2 self-propelled howitzers in 2021.

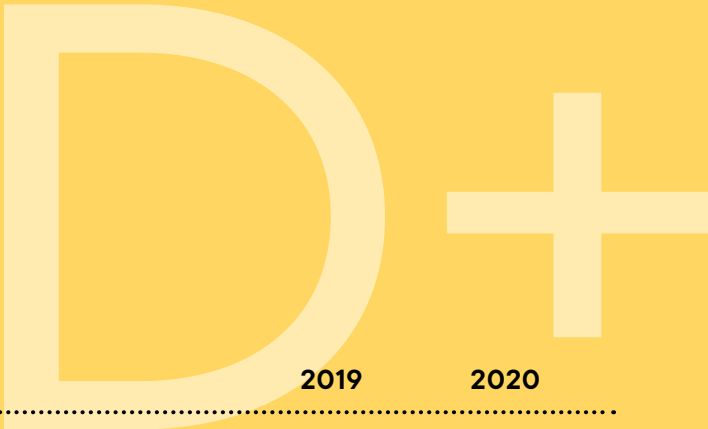
In April, the Czech Republic initiated the V4EastSolidarity programme under which the Eastern Partnership countries are allocated EUR 250,000 to help them fight COVID-19, including EUR 125,000 for Ukraine. The Czech Republic has provided Ukraine with humanitarian medical aid worth over EUR 200,000. The return of more than 7,000 Ukrainians from the Czech Republic was organised due to the pandemic. In addition, Ukraine's "Ruslan" aircraft delivered humanitarian cargo from China to the Czech Republic.

The Embassy's active contacts with representatives of the Czech government have ensured that Prague has consistently supported sanctions against Russia, as well as Ukraine's course towards EU and NATO integration. The Czech Republic co-authored a number of the UN GA draft resolutions on Crimea, which were initiated by Ukraine, and supported Ukraine's Crimean Platform initiative.

Amid the economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the Ukrainian-Czech trade turnover decreased to USD 1.799bn in 2020. Exports from Ukraine to the Czech Republic decreased by 11% and amounted to USD 826.3 mln. Imports fell by 17% and amounted to USD 972.6 mln. Given that the comparison is made against the year of record-high mutual trade (2019), the results for 2020, especially in terms of Ukrainian exports, can be considered satisfactory.

The main bilateral achievement was that the pandemic did not stop the interstate dialogue. Neither did it change the position of the Czech Republic in supporting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, as well as demonstrating readiness to provide significant medical and humanitarian assistance.

Russia



	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4-	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3+	2+
STRATEGIC VISION	3-	3
ACTIVITIES	3	2+
RESULTS	2+	2
TOTAL SCORES	C	D+

POLITICAL RELATIONS	TOTAL SCORES	D+	3	INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	2	STRATEGIC VISION	4	2	1				
		C-	2							4	2	3	2
		C-	4							1	3	2	3
ECONOMIC COOPERATION													
ENERGY RELATIONS													

POLITICAL RELATIONS

2020 was another year of stagnation in the Ukrainian-Russian political dialogue when the ruling political team lost certain illusions about the possibility of improving relations with Russia without compromising on the security and national interests of Ukraine. The lack of significant positive results from diplomatic and political measures and steps taken during the year (in the context of resolving burning issues on the Ukrainian-Russian agenda) only exacerbated a fundamental problem of the lacking of the comprehensive vision of an effective model of political dialogue with Russia at both bilateral and multilateral levels.

Political Interest / Engagement

Despite the absence of positive dynamics in the Ukrainian-Russian dialogue in the short and medium-term, Ukraine and Russia's political relations remain one of the key factors of Ukrainian domestic policy.

In his Address to the Verkhovna Rada (20.10), President V. Zelenskyy focused not only on the fact that the main achievements of the Ukrainian government and the state concern dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic but also stressed that the most important for him and Ukrainians is “the end of the war in Donbas, the onset of peace, and the return of our people and territories.”

Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba, who was appointed to the post in March, announced that Ukraine would engage in “offensive diplomacy” in relations with Russia and upgrade the status of its delegation to the Trilateral Contact Group.

Political relations with Russia during the year were viewed mainly in the context of the de-occupation of certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions (ORDLO) and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, security in the Black Sea region, and sanctions against Russia, as evidenced by numerous interviews and speeches by President V. Zelenskyy, Minister D. Kuleba, Head of the Presidential Office A. Yermak, and his deputy in charge of foreign policy.

Representatives of political parties both at the level of the VRU and local self-government have shown significant interest and involvement in the topic of Ukrainian-Russian relations. The so-called “pro-Russian political camp” was observed to step up its activities during the year due to a significant weakening of the Servant of the People party’s position at both central and local levels.

Institutional Cooperation

The power and political distribution in Ukraine, which formed in the wake of the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2019, was in some way transformed as a result of the local elections (October-November 2020). The declining trust in the Servant of the People party led to a greater diversity of political parties in local self-government. Political parties whose manifestos declared opposition to the central government were elected to local self-government in a significant number in central and south-eastern regions of Ukraine. This is especially true of the vision of relations with Russia in the case of the Opposition Platform-For Life party, which has built a notable presence in various regions of Ukraine. Such changes will distort institutional cooperation in the Ukrainian state quadrangle “Verkhovna Rada — Government — President — Local Self-Government” by weakening their consolidated position on the Russian issue. A clear example of such a change is Opposition Platform-For Life’s campaign seeking to certify, manufacture, and use the Russian Sputnik-V vaccine in Ukraine.

A certain expansion of the number of actors in this foreign policy domain and the acquisition of the status of a top decision-making authority by the Office of the President of Ukraine (at the level of the Head of the Office and advisers to the President of Ukraine) pose a particular threat to Ukraine.

Strategic Vision

Strategic legal documents (the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy,” the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, etc.) define Russia as a significant and long-term threat to Ukraine. The updated National Security Strategy (2020), in contrast to its previous version (2015), clearly highlights the need to put up active resistance to Russian aggression. It also states that it is necessary to take international legal, political, diplomatic, and other steps aimed at ending the Russian occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. In addition to identifying Russia as an aggressor state, the Strategy also states “the need to introduce a model of Ukraine’s relations with the Russian Federation, which should ensure the end of aggression and the restoration of Ukraine’s territorial integrity.”

Activities

Direct political dialogue between Kyiv and Moscow remains at its lowest level. During the year, there was only one telephone conversation between the Presidents (14.02) and one between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs (in the Normandy format on 30.04). The presidents’ talk focused on the implementation of agreements reached during the Normandy Summit in Paris (9.12.2019), as well as on preparations for the next meeting of the Normandy Four leaders. Communication between the MFAs of Ukraine and Russia was limited to multilateral formats, and there is no bilateral dialogue at this level.

To some extent, interstate communication is preserved in multilateral formats and contact groups (the Minsk and Normandy formats). As a result of the pandemic, interstate communication has largely taken the form of video conferences (all meetings of the Trilateral Contact Group have been held online). There was no meeting of the Normandy Four heads of state in 2020.

Traditionally, diplomatic representation in both countries remains at the level of *chargé d’affaires ad interim*. The diplomatic activity of Ukrainian consulates remains the main institutional component for urgent issues in bilateral relations

(legal support for Ukrainian hostages in Russia, representation of Ukrainian citizens in Russia, etc.).

A confrontation between Ukraine and Russia within the framework of international organizations (the UN, the OSCE, the CoE, etc.), international and arbitration courts persists.

Results

Political dialogue in Ukrainian-Russian relations continues to be low with a tendency towards further cooling, compared to the previous year. According to Minister D. Kuleba, there is currently no communication channel between the Foreign Ministers of Ukraine and Russia, while President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy says that he has had no telephone conversations with V. Putin because there was nothing to discuss. Instead, the two presidents engaged in offensive political rhetoric. V. Zelenskyy said in an interview at the end of the year that in the event of a possible Russian attack on Ukraine, there would be a “great war with the full mobilization of the population,” while V. Putin said that Russia would increase support for Donbas.

The following issues remain unresolved: Ukrainian hostages (there was hardly any progress in the exchange process during the year); the continued issuance of Russian passports to ORDLO residents and simplification of the procedure of acquiring Russian citizenship for Ukrainian citizens; military tension on the Ukrainian-Russian border accompanied by an increase in Russia’s military and administrative presence in the occupied territories of Ukraine.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

As in the previous years, economic cooperation with Russia was not among Ukraine's foreign policy priority, thus further sliding into the shadows. Ukraine's official economic contacts with Russia aim to defend national positions in international courts and maintain the international sanctions regime. There is still no strategic vision of economic leverage over the aggressor state to make it return Donbas and Crimea while continuing business contacts help Russia maintain its place among Ukraine's main trade partners. The pandemic has not had any significant impact on the implementation of Ukraine's foreign economic policy in this sector.

Political Interest / Engagement

The year 2020 saw a continued trend towards a decline in political interest in Ukraine's economic relations with Russia. The state leadership hardly made any statements on the matter. For example, only in rare cases did the President express hope for pragmatic economic relations in the future. Unlike in the previous years, both "hard" and "soft" alternatives to building economic relations with Russia by the authorities and the expert community have disappeared from public discourse.

Stakeholders continue to determine the prospects for economic cooperation through the prism of losses incurred by the Ukrainian economy and reluctance to discuss drastic changes to the existing approach, in which Russian and Ukrainian goods enter national markets both directly and through third countries.

Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation in the economic sector is still based on maintaining an international consensus on continuing sanctions pressure on Russia and litigation in international courts. The main actors of foreign economic policy in this area (the President, the NSDC, the VRU, the Cabinet of Ministers, the NBU, and the SSU)

continue to act in a coordinated manner according to the established mechanisms. The noteworthy innovations of 2020 include a parliamentary initiative to create a special authority that will monitor compliance with sanctions against Russia and operate under the NSDC's auspices. The scope of work of the Trilateral Contact Group on Donbas hardly covers economic issues.

Strategic Vision

A strategy for economic cooperation with Russia as an aggressor state has not been developed yet. The National Security Strategy envisages economic measures aimed at ending Russia's illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. Ukraine considers most of Russia's activities illegal and mainly responds with trade restrictions in a reactive or inertial manner. Ukraine's tactic is still based on maintaining a policy of sanctions in the interests of national security and preserving international pressure without a realistic chance of tightening it. Legal wars have now become the main tactical element of the economic standoff.

Activities

In 2020, as in the previous years, economic relations between Ukraine and Russia revolved around sanctions and court cases. However, business interactions take place outside this domain and ensure stable foreign trade turnover between the countries that have been de facto at war over all the years since the beginning of Russian aggression (for example, in 2020, the Ukrmashbud association initiated a request to lift Russian sanctions on Ukrainian machine-building plants).

Courts are considering Ukraine's lawsuits against the Russian Federation. In particular, the Swiss Federal Supreme Court upheld the Geneva arbitration award, which had ordered Russia to pay more than USD 80 mln to 12 Ukrainian companies as compensation for their losses due to the annexation of Crimea. The ECHR is considering five interstate cases. The UN International Court of Justice granted an

extension of the time-limit for the filing of the Russian counter-memorial in the case of applying the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Results

Despite concerns, Ukraine retains international support for countering Russian aggression. Although the sanctions have seen no radical changes, they get extended annually. In November, the Cabinet of Ministers extended trade sanctions on goods originating from Russia until 2022. It is planned to impose national sanctions and initiate new international ones in response to the seizure and sale of the Masandra winery in occupied Crimea. Russia is taking symmetrical steps and has now expanded its list of personal sanctions to 849 Ukrainian citizens.

Despite the termination of the agreement on trade missions, the sanctions, and court cases, Russia has retained a leading position among Ukraine's trade partners, ranking fourth by the end of the year. However, there was a significant drop in both exports (by 17%) and imports (by 35%). Trade turnover in 2020 amounted to USD 7.2bn. Exports of goods from Ukraine to Russia amounted to USD 2.7bn, Russian imports to USD 4.5bn. The range of Ukrainian exports is quite wide, mostly consisting of inorganic chemicals, ferrous metals, and products made out of them, nuclear reactors, boilers and machinery. Imports from Russia invariably represent the group of commodities "Mineral fuels, mineral oils, and products of their distillation." Other items include nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery, and ferrous metals. Trade in services fell by half (both exports and imports) to USD 2.8bn with a significant positive balance for Ukraine.

ENERGY RELATIONS

The 2020 milestones included Russian Gazprom's decision to stop gas supply to Ukraine on the terms set by the Stockholm Arbitration, new international court cases, and political fight over imports of Russian electricity and oil products, as well as a further confrontation over bypass pipelines across the Baltic and the Black Seas. Russia stepped up discreet efforts to exert control over Ukraine's atomic power generation but has not had much success amid domestic developments in Ukraine connected to the COVID-19 pandemic and infighting among oligarchic groups. However, significant dependence on imports of Russian hydrocarbons (coal, oil products, and liquefied gas) persists, being further complicated by the political situation in Belarus.

Political Interest / Engagement

The year 2020 was marked by a tense political struggle over the issue of Russian electricity imports, which became especially hot in the second quarter during the deepest decline in economic activity due to measures aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus. In particular, representatives of Batkivshchyna, Opposition Platform-For Life and Servant of the People political factions initiated numerous bills aimed at restricting or banning the import of electricity from Russia and even Belarus. However, they were primarily guided by the interests of domestic business groups seeking to maintain a monopoly status in the market.

In February, the President of Ukraine issued an order to limit the imports of electricity and coal from Russia. In the spring, the Prime Minister of Ukraine also repeatedly announced the maximum restriction on imports, given the surplus in the energy system.

In March, there was a brief surge of political interest due to Gazprom's surprise decision to cut off the gas supply to Ukraine.

The President of Ukraine raised the issue of Russian gas bypass pipelines during a meeting with the President of Poland.

Institutional Cooperation

In 2020, institutional cooperation between the legislature and the executive left much to be desired. In most cases, both parliament and the government tried to act independently within their remits, which resulted in contradictions and frequent changes in the rules. In particular, the VRU initiated special duties on imports of Russian oil products and repeatedly discussed the terms of Russian and Belarusian electricity import. At the same time, the government tried to block such imports using its resolutions and the power to influence the National Commission for State Regulation of Energy and Public Utilities. In some months, this led to a public conflict with the head of the relevant parliamentary committee and mutual accusations of lobbying the interests of oligarchic groups, as well as unbalancing the market. A similar situation happened with Russian liquefied natural gas imports when the government decided to change tariffs, having thus complicated traders' work.

The conflict manifested itself during the Minister of Energy appointment when the Parliament rejected all candidates nominated by the Prime Minister. A conflict around the new candidate for Energy Minister broke out at the end of the year when the media portrayed him as favouring a resume of the Russian gas imports.

Strategic Vision

A clear strategic vision of energy relations with Russia was not formed in 2020. However, the National Security Strategy (2020) contains provisions on strengthening energy security through integration into the European gas and electricity markets. Although this indirectly indicates a desire to minimize energy relations with Russia, the lack of clear wording creates significant uncertainty.

Delays in the development of an Integrated Energy and Climate Plan until 2030, the implementation programme of the second phase of the Energy Strategy until 2035, the second national defined contribution to the Paris Climate Agreement, minimal funding for energy efficiency measures and increased political populism around high energy prices send negative signals which may directly or indirectly be attributed to Russian influence.

Activities

In 2020, there was a clear trend when members of the legislature and the executive divided into lobbyists of oligarchic groups' interests and those who conflicted with each other (regarding the import of Russian energy resources).

State-owned energy companies have achieved some success. Despite the difficult financial situation, Energoatom continued implementing the Central Spent Fuel Storage Facility project, thus reducing its dependence on Russia. The Gas Transport System Operator concluded a number of operating agreements with partners from neighbouring countries, expanding the options for gas imports, in particular, through "virtual reverse." The electricity transmission system operator conducted tests at generation facilities, thus implementing another stage of the plan of preparation for integration into the European electricity market.

Mainly individual politicians, government officials, experts, and Naftogaz of Ukraine, whose team was strengthened, continued resisting Russia's bypass pipelines. The issue of Nord Stream 2 was raised in negotiations with many European leaders and EU representatives.

Results

The annual results can be described as inertial consequences of the processes launched in previous years, including the strengthening of Energoatom's independence in storing spent nuclear fuel, expansion of opportunities for gas imports from the west, and the implementation of a programme for preparation for integration into the electricity market. These measures have consistently strengthened Ukraine's energy independence from Russia.

At the same time, the failure to prepare an Integrated Energy and Climate Plan until 2030, the absence of the Energy Minister, and the growing influence of oligarchs continued to unbalance the energy system, creating preconditions for an increasing influence of pro-Russian forces and growing public discontent.



REGIONAL COOPERATION

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

Asia-Pacific Region

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	4
STRATEGIC VISION	2	3
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	C	B-

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, political interest in Asia-Pacific countries increased in 2020. There was some institutional coordination in improving relations with ASEAN countries, including in trade and economy. Ukraine had a proactive political dialogue with Singapore, South Korea, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Meanwhile, Ukraine's Embassy in Vietnam remains without an Ambassador.

Political Interest / Engagement

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine showed interest in strengthening cooperation with the countries of the region in 2020. Among other things, it seeks to gain observer status at the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA). VRU Speaker D. Razumkov sent a letter expressing this position to AIPA Secretary General Nguyen Tuong Van. Vice Speaker O. Kondratiuk spoke about this at the meeting with A. Syamsuddin, Deputy Speaker of the People's Representative Council of Indonesia (2.11).

O. Honcharuk's Government Program (March) mentioned South Korea and Australia in the context of visa liberalization.

Foreign Minister D. Kuleba proactively pushed for cooperation with ASEAN countries throughout 2020. At the "Ukraine-Malaysia: New Markets, New Opportunities" webinar (6.10), Deputy Foreign Minister D. Senik said that South-East Asia was determined as the key priority of Ukraine's foreign policy in Asia. At the meeting with ambassadors of ASEAN countries (9.07), Minister D. Kuleba said that Ukraine was seeking to increase trade with them to USD 5bn. He mentioned relations with Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, and Thailand in the list of accomplishments of 2020.

In 2020, groups of friendship with Indonesia (28.04), Thailand (2.10), and Australia (2.10) were created at the Verkhovna Rada. The group of friendship with the Philippines still lacks members.

Institutional Cooperation

Within the institutional framework, 2020 saw interest and some multi-level coordination of the work on approximation with countries in the region and ASEAN as a regional international organization.

In November, Ukraine appointed a new Ambassador to Singapore and officially opened an honorary consulate in Denpasar (Bali, Indonesia). Meanwhile, Ukraine's Embassy to Vietnam has been without an Ambassador since July 2019.

Strategic Vision

In 2020, the MFA worked on the Asia strategy of Ukraine's foreign policy. In December, Minister D. Kuleba said the document was completed and "de facto implemented," although it has yet to be officially approved.

The updated National Security Strategy (14.09) mentions the region as an area where the impact of the rivalry between the US and China will be noted. In the context of Ukraine's foreign policy activities, the Strategy says that Ukraine will develop mutually beneficial economic cooperation with Asia countries. Ukraine's 2017–2021 Export Strategy lists Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Japan as the markets with serious potential for Ukrainian exporters.

Activities

The first two months of 2020, before the lockdown restrictions, saw fairly active cooperation with the region. Foreign Minister V. Prystaiko went for an official visit to Singapore (13–14.01). During that visit, he met and held talks with Prime Minister L. Hsien Loong, Foreign Minister V. Balakrishnan, Interior and Justice Minister K. Shanmugam, and Senior State Minister for Trade and Industry Koh Poh Koon. From the onset of the lockdown, Ukraine's embassies in the region worked proactively to help Ukrainian citizens return home as soon as possible from resorts in the area, including Thailand, Vietnam, and Indonesia.

President Zelenskyy held a telephone conversation with South Korean President Moon Jae-in (10.04). President Zelenskyy thanked him for the fast implementation of the contract to sell 100,000 PCR tests to Ukraine, discussed success stories with South Korean investment projects in Ukraine, and reached an agreement on humanitarian assistance for Ukraine.

Throughout 2020, Ukraine intensified cooperation with Indonesia at different levels. Foreign Minister V. Prystaiko met with Indonesia's Foreign Minister R. Marsudi at the 43rd session of the Human Rights Council (24.02). They exchanged invitations for bilateral visits at the level of heads of states. Ukraine's Ambassador to Indonesia V. Pakhil and the delegation of representatives of the Ukrainian military industry met with Indonesia's Defence Minister Prabowo Subianto (12.02).

In the spring of 2020, the MFA held Asia Week for the first time. In this context, Foreign Minister D. Kuleba spoke on the telephone with Indonesia's Foreign Minister R. Marsudi (30.03), where he pointed to Ukraine's aspiration to intensify political cooperation with ASEAN and highlighted the readiness to receive Indonesian President in Kyiv. Also, he spoke to Singapore Foreign Minister V. Balakrishnan (3.04). Minister D. Kuleba met with Ambassadors of South Korea and Japan to Ukraine.

In April, I. Petrashko, Ukraine's Minister for the Development of Economy, Trade, and Agriculture, met with Kwon Ki Chang, South Korea Ambassador to Ukraine, to discuss the key aspects of bilateral cooperation, including the increase of South Korea's direct investment into Ukraine's economy.

Vice Speaker O. Kondratiuk held a working meeting with A. Syamsuddin, Deputy Speaker of the People's Representative Council of Indonesia (2.11), where they discussed intensification of cooperation through bilateral multi-level visits and Ukraine joining the AIPA.

At the end of 2020, Ukraine's MFA and embassies in the region focused on improving trade and economic cooperation. Ukraine-Malaysia: New Markets, New Opportunities webinar took place (6.10), with Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister Senik and Malaysia's Deputy Minister for International Trade and Industry Datuk Lim Ban Hong participation. The aim was to catch up on the current challenges and opportunities in trade cooperation between the two countries. Together with the Korea Importers Association and the Exporters and Investors Council at Ukraine's MFA, Ukraine's Embassy in South Korea held a similar event for Ukrainian exporters (24.11).

O. Merezhko, Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Policy and Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation, met with Ambassadors Kwon Ki Chang of South Korea (13.02) and with Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah of Malaysia (2.03).

Ukraine's Ambassador to Australia M. Kulinich met with Senators Bilyk and Van of the Australian Parliament (26.02), where they discussed the development of inter-parliamentary dialogue between the two countries.

In September, Ukraine's MFA reached an agreement with Ambassadors of ASEAN countries to open the ASEAN Centre at the Institute of International Relations of Kyiv National University.

Results

The key accomplishments of 2020 are in relations with Singapore. Ukraine passed the Law to Ratify the Protocol on Amending the Agreement between the Governments of Ukraine and the Republic of Singapore to Avoid Double Taxation and Prevent Income Tax Evasion (14.01). During the visit of Foreign Minister V. Prystaiko to Singapore in January, the Memorandum on Cooperation between the Council of Exporters and Investors and the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry was signed. Singapore opened its market for Ukrainian pork in 2020.

An important move was made in relations with Australia and New Zealand. The Presidential Decree (21.07) abolished visas for travelling to Ukraine for the citizens of these countries. The Government approved the Draft Agreement on Mutual Visa Abolition with the Government of Indonesia (18.11).

D. Kuleba highlighted cooperation with the countries of the region as part of the MFA's accomplishments in 2020, including the online conference with businessmen of Ukraine and Malaysia, the entry of Ukrainian meat products to the Singapore market, the approval of a sanitary certificate for exports of some animal products to South Korea, and contacts of a Ukrainian beer producer with partners in Thailand.

Countries of the region provided humanitarian assistance to help Ukraine fight the pandemic. South Korea offered COVID-19 testing kits to Ukraine in June, and Vietnam sent 300 ventilators in July.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, exports to Vietnam almost doubled to USD 193 mln. Meanwhile, exports to South Korea fell 7% to USD 351.5 mln. Exports to Indonesia remained unchanged at USD 735.6 mln and Malaysia at USD 181mln.

Middle East

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	4
STRATEGIC VISION	2	3
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	C+	B-

In 2020, Ukraine's policy on the Middle East and North Africa was traditionally focused on deepening cooperation in trade and economy and attracting investments. The economic focus of Ukraine's interests gained a more systemic nature. The Persian Gulf countries and the Arab Maghreb Union remain the most interesting destinations for cooperation. Ukraine had the strongest focus on interaction with Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. 2020 was notable for stronger interest in Algeria, Egypt, and Oman. While the pandemic did not affect the intensity of contacts with the countries in the region greatly, it impacted the work results. The lack of a regional strategy and systemic activities hampers a shift to a strategic scale in relations with these countries.



Political Interest / Engagement

In 2020, the interest of Ukrainian politicians in MENA was limited to investment and the economy. These remain the key interests in this direction. Promoting Ukrainian exports in Middle Eastern markets and drawing investment from there are defined as targets in diversifying Ukraine's foreign policy activity, as noted by President Zelenskyy at the annual Ambassadorial (17.12). He listed the Gulf countries, including Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, as promising ones for stronger cooperation.

The greatest focus is on the Gulf States, including Qatar and the UAE. They are among the ten preferred destinations for Ukrainian exporters based on the Exporters and Investors Council's survey at the MFA. Foreign Minister D. Kuleba has highlighted this repeatedly, including in his speech at the meeting with the respected Parliamentary committee (3.06) and at the 2020 concluding online briefing (24.12), where he noted positive dynamics of interaction with the countries of this subregion.

2020 saw stronger interest in Afghanistan. President Zelenskyy noted the need to intensify dialogue with the country when he received credentials from Afghanistan's Ambassador to Ukraine (30.06). Foreign Minister joined the Afghanistan 2020 international conference, mentioning Ukraine's engagement in NATO Resolute Support, confirming Ukraine's readiness to join the restoration of Afghanistan and highlighting the fact that Ukrainian companies could participate in restoration projects.

Ukraine is interested in the Middle East countries' support concerning violations of human rights of the Crimean Tatar population in occupied Crimea. First Deputy Foreign Minister E. Dzhaparova noted this in talks with the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. She renewed Ukraine's request for observer status at the OIC, which will help Ukraine get to a new level of interaction with the region.

The MFA pointed in its official statements to increased tensions in Iraq (January) and Idlib, Syria (February), the termination of military actions in Yemen (April), and the Aden airport attack in Yemen (December).

President Zelenskyy did not mention MENA in his Annual Address to the VRU, while references in the analytical report that comes with the Annual Address,

are general and feature it in the context of global security problems. It says that the experience of wars in the region should be considered in drafting Ukraine's defence strategy.

Parliamentary groups of friendships were established with Egypt, Qatar and Lebanon in 2020.

Institutional Cooperation

The absence of a regional foreign policy strategy has a negative impact on institutional cooperation involving all elements of the Ukrainian government. Still, the President's Office and the MFA have a high level of coordination in outlining and implementing specific objectives. The President has issued decrees on interaction with the countries in the region (Decree on Humanitarian Assistance to Lebanon, Decree on Visa-Free Travel for the Citizens of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, etc.). In 2020, new ambassadors were appointed to Morocco and Tunisia. Ukraine's Ambassador to Jordan, appointed in 2019, began her service in that role. The legislature is engaged in implementing policies in this area by ratifying a number of agreements with Jordan, Qatar, and Morocco.

Strategic Vision

Most of Ukraine's foreign policy documents have no mentions of MENA. Ukraine has no bilateral strategic agreements with the countries of the region, but in 2020, it signed bilateral documents in the military domain with Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The new 2020 National Security Strategy mentions the Middle East. Among other things, it notes that Ukraine should "take into account the lessons of military actions in the Middle East in its new doctrinal approaches to guaranteeing its military security." It also mentions an intent to develop mutually beneficial economic cooperation with the countries in the region. The 2015 Military Doctrine mentions the region in the broader context of international security.

The 2017 Export Strategy mentions MENA through individual countries, including Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, as promising markets. The

region is mentioned in the Government's Vectors for Economic Development project that is part of the effort to draw a national economic strategy (6.11): it defines deeper economic relations with the Arab states of MENA as a strategic goal.

Activities

The overall level of activities remained relatively high in 2020 despite the decreasing number of direct contacts or delegation visits compared to 2019 due to the pandemic. Ukraine managed to make several visits, including the unofficial visit of President Zelenskyy to Oman (5–6.01), the visit of Deputy Head of the President's Office I. Zhovkva to Egypt (26–29.10), and the visit of Foreign Minister D. Kuleba to the UAE (7.12).

Military technical cooperation intensified. Delegations from Defence Ministries of a number of countries visited Ukraine. Ukraine's Defence Minister and Deputy Defence Minister of Saudi Arabia met in February to discuss cooperation in the defence industry, IT, military education, and healthcare. Defence ministers of Ukraine and Iraq discussed opportunities in exchanging battlefield experience, cooperation in military education, and other priority areas in bilateral talks in September. Ukraine's Vice Prime Minister — Minister for Strategic Industries met with the delegation of the Jordan Armed Forces led by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to discuss deeper cooperation, while the chair of the Jordanian delegation praised the capacity of Ukrainian defence enterprises.

Despite the lockdown, top-level contacts were not suspended. President Zelenskyy spoke to the leaders of the UAE (13.04), Qatar (6.05), and Egypt (24.07) on the telephone, while Foreign Minister spoke to his colleagues in Libya (23.04), Qatar (7.05), Egypt (29.07), Saudi Arabia (10.08), Morocco (17.09), and Algeria (13.10).

The intensity of contacts at the government level declined, and a number of regular meetings of intergovernmental commissions were not held. However, some of this cooperation continued in an online format. This includes political consultations with deputy foreign ministers of Ukraine and Saudi Arabia (6.10) and heads of the MFA's departments with Tunisia (8.12); talks of deputy foreign ministers of Ukraine and Oman (12.11). Ukraine worked proactively with Qatar. In addition to the dialogue between the leaders and foreign ministers of Qatar

and Ukraine, Ukraine's Minister of Infrastructure visited the country (18.02), Deputy Head of the President's Office spoke to Qatar's Minister of Transport and Communications (14.05), and Minister of Trade, Economy and Agriculture spoke to his Qatari colleague (15.12).

These activities mainly focused on expanding the geography of Ukraine's economic contacts, intensifying trade and drawing investment, and on accomplishing Ukraine's goal of becoming a guarantor of food security for the Middle East countries as discussed in bilateral talks with representatives of the region. Ukraine discussed preferential trade regimes with Egypt and Tunisia, more active cooperation in the space industry with Egypt, the establishment of an intergovernmental commission with Algeria (the parties agreed on a draft agreement to set up the commission in 2020, and it is ready to be signed); the next rounds of meetings for intergovernmental commissions, consultations, and business fora with the countries of the region. There is an ongoing dialogue on deeper industry cooperation in priority areas, including infrastructure, the defence industry, the space industry, and energy.

The intensity of interparliamentary cooperation remained low, just like in previous years. Chairs of the group for parliamentary ties with Algeria had an online conference on October 28.

In August, a decision was taken to provide humanitarian assistance to Lebanon based on the respective Presidential Decree and Instruction from the Cabinet of Ministers.

Results

The results of these activities do not match their intensity because of the pandemic. Ukraine signed a number of agreements at the level of different government agencies. Following the visits of delegations from Arab countries to Ukraine, cooperation in the military-technical domain strengthened with the Agreement between the Governments of Ukraine and Saudi Arabia on Defence Cooperation (5.02); Memorandum of Understanding on Military Cooperation between the Ministries of Defence of Ukraine and Iraq (4.09); and Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Strategic Industries of Ukraine and the

Armed Forces of Jordan (4.11). So did the investment segment with the Agreement between the Ministry of Infrastructure, Administration of Seaports of Ukraine and QTERMINALS WLL (Qatar) on Concession of Olvia Specialized Seaport in Mykolaiv (20.08) and the Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation between UkrOboronService and QTerminals Olvia LLC, a project company of QTerminals W.L.L., the Qatari port operator (22.12).

Trade with the Middle East countries (except for Israel, Turkey, and Iran) shrank by USD 800 mln to USD 6.3bn in 2020 compared to 2019. Exports amounted to USD 5.8bn (11.8% of Ukraine's total exports) while imports hit USD 450.3 mln (0.8% of total imports). Trade in services was at USD 591.2 mln. Export of services was at USD 428.5 mln or 3.8% of the total number, while import hit USD 162.8 mln or 3.1% of the total. Despite the 30% decline in trade with Egypt and 12% with Saudi Arabia, they remain Ukraine's key trade partners in the region. Exports to Qatar increased by 75%, followed by 26% with Morocco. It doubled with Afghanistan.

14 Ukrainian citizens, a crew of the Ruta tanker, were released from a Libyan prison in the summer.

Western Balkans

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	2
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	1
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	C+	C-

Ukraine's foreign policy activities on Western Balkans were not intense in 2020 and traditionally focused on neutralizing the impact of Russia's aggression and supporting Ukraine's EU and Euro-Atlantic integration. No visits of Ukraine's top officials to the countries of the region and the lowest intensity of parliamentary cooperation since 2013 further weakened the political dialogue and limited it to the ministerial level. COVID-19 had a negative impact on all aspects of bilateral relations. In economic cooperation, there was a small intensification with Albania, North Macedonia, and Slovenia.



Political Interest / Engagement

Countries of the Western Balkan region were traditionally beyond the focus of Ukraine's government. They were not mentioned in official political documents, speeches by President Zelenskyy, MPs or others.

There are groups of friendship with Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia at the Verkhovna Rada. Like before, Ukraine's priorities within the region were primarily focused on the EU member-states. Ukraine's interest increased in Albania as a country with excellent transformation results. In 2020, Ukraine showed more interest in North Macedonia after its relations with Greece had been resolved in 2019. Serbia remained the key problem given its orientation at Russia and Russia's proactive efforts to destabilize the situation in the region. Ukraine's involvement in regional cooperation formats intensified somewhat compared to 2019 within the Danube Commission. The pandemic had a relatively small impact on the scale of political interest of Ukrainian authorities in the Western Balkan region as it has always been low.

Institutional Cooperation

All of Ukraine's government agencies were involved in developing relations with Western Balkan countries. However, the overall decline of their activity was notable. The MFA was the exception as it played a key role in maintaining relations with countries in the region. Institutional cooperation with these countries was not intense.

In July, V. Kyrylych, Ukraine's Ambassador to Croatia, was also appointed as an Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Strategic Vision

The Western Balkan region traditionally remains beyond Ukraine's strategic priorities. Western Balkan countries are barely mentioned in Ukraine's strategic documents. Meanwhile, the 2020 National Security Strategy points to the countries of Southeast Europe, including Western Balkan countries, as Ukraine's partners.

Activities

Ukraine's foreign policy activities on Western Balkan countries was of low intensity. There were no top-level visits to the countries of the region. Ukraine's parliamentary cooperation with them was at a low level too. The pandemic had a serious negative impact on the work in this direction. Ukraine's embassies in the region worked proactively to evacuate Ukrainian citizens from abroad in March. Slovenia proved to be a reliable partner for Ukraine yet again as it helped solve the problems with Ukrainian automobile transport returning from Italy.

E. Rama, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Prime Minister of Albania, visited Ukraine in January. He met with President Zelenskyy, VRU Speaker D. Razumkov and Foreign Minister V. Prystaiko.

President Zelenskyy had a telephone conversation with Croatian Prime Minister A. Plenkovic to coordinate changes in the procedure for border crossing in July. Prime Ministers of Ukraine D. Shmyhal and Croatia A. Plenkovic discussed anti-COVID-19 activities, and EU and Euro-Atlantic integration in a telephone conversation in April. In October, Vice Prime Minister O. Reznikov went on a working visit to Croatia to study its experience of de-occupation and reintegration of the occupied territory and open the first Zagreb-Kyiv direct flight. Meetings took place at international organizations at the level of the MFA. Foreign Minister V. Prystaiko met with G. Radman, Croatia's Minister for Foreign and European Affairs, at the 43rd session of the UNHRC in February. The Croatian Prime Minister was planning to visit Ukraine in the second part of the year, but it was postponed as the pandemic surged.

Foreign Minister D. Kuleba held a telephone conversation with B. Osmani, the newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia (September).

In addition to this, meetings with ambassadors of Balkan countries took place in Kyiv. VRU Deputy Speaker O. Kondratiuk met with Croatia's Ambassador A. Djamic (July); Deputy Minister V. Bodnar met with Montenegro's Ambassador L. Misurovic and Charge d'Affaires of Albania F. Peni (July); First Deputy Foreign Minister E. Dzhaparova met with Slovenian Ambassador T. Mencin (October), Montenegro's Ambassador D. Ponorac (November), and others.

Ukrainian embassies and consulates ensured contacts with the leadership of the countries in the region. On September 1, Ukraine's Ambassador Shkurov presented credentials to Albania President I. Meta.

Online conferences became a new trend. It made serious progress with Slovenia. In September, the two countries held Ukraine-Slovenia: Trade and Economic Cooperation Amidst Global Change. This online conference was attended by T. Kachka, Deputy Minister for the Development of Economy, Trade and Agriculture in Ukraine; I. Grmek, Director General at the MFA of Slovenia; M. Rogelj, Director of the International Relations Department at the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce; and O. Rohoza and D. Olaj, co-chairs of the Ukrainian-Slovenian Business Council. Chaired by V. Bodnar and Slovenian State Secretary T. Kajzer, the first in the history of bilateral relations, the interagency Ukrainian-Slovenian cyber consultations took place as a video conference (October).

Ukrainian and Serbian companies held B2B talks at the online conference titled Cooperation Prospects: Ukraine — Serbia in November.

The Ukrainian contingent in the KFOR mission in Kosovo contributed to the positive image of Ukraine in the region. Ukraine's assistance to Albania and Croatia in January was another important contribution to its image.

Results

Ukraine's low-intensity political dialogue with the Western Balkan countries results from both little political interest and the pandemic that had a generally negative impact on the implementation of the agreements reached in the past years.

Ukraine enjoyed relatively productive cooperation with the Western Balkan countries as part of regional organizations. In December, Ukraine's Ambassador to Hungary, L. Nepop, was elected chair of the Danube Commission for 2021–2023. Ukraine's chairmanship can contribute to its eurointegration and economic development, improvement of relations with countries in the region.

As a result of the pandemic, the movement of citizens and all kinds of transport was limited. Some countries in the region decided to ban the exports of goods related to anti-COVID-19 measures, as well as of some essential goods that are important for the population, between March and May-June. However, timely

actions somewhat softened the negative impact of the pandemic on Ukraine's economic exchange with the Western Balkan countries. Agriculture dominated the economic sphere.

Little progress was visible in Ukraine's economic cooperation with the Western Balkan countries. The best growth of trade and economic cooperation was with Albania, where exports increased 30% and imports 15%, while total trade hit USD 36.95 mln; and North Macedonia where exports grew 74% and total trade was USD 96.3 mln. Total trade with Slovenia increased by 3%, amounting to USD 293.7 mln.

The greatest slump was with Montenegro as exports to it halved, and imports amounted to just 13% of the 2019 number, leaving total trade at USD 5.2 mln. Exports to Serbia halved too, leaving total trade at USD 301.9 mln. Exports to Croatia fell 21%, down to the total trade of USD 82.4 mln, and trade with Bosnia and Herzegovina went down 17% to USD 30.9 mln.

The biggest trade in goods in 2020 was with Serbia and Slovenia. Ukraine had a trade surplus with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and North Macedonia; and a trade deficit with Croatia, Slovenia, and Serbia.

Trade in services plummeted with all eight countries in the region, except for Albania, where trade in services is growing. Croatia leads with just 42% of 2019 exports and 19% of imports of services. The greatest amount of trade in services in 2020 was with Serbia at USD 30.77 mln and Slovenia at USD 16.83 mln, with a surplus for Ukraine.

Economic cooperation was developing the most with Slovenia that supports decentralization in Ukraine. The construction of sewage purification facilities in Zhytomyr by the Slovenian Esotech d.d. company was an important project.

Ukraine and North Macedonia are now connected with regular flights after direct flights were launched between Kyiv and Skopje. North Macedonia joined #CorrectUA — #KyivNotKiev, an international awareness-raising campaign.

The VRU ratified an Agreement on International Automobile Transportation of Passengers and Cargo between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of Montenegro (5.11).

Cooperation intensified with Albania thanks to its chairmanship at the OSCE, the launch of direct flights to Albania, and the opening of the Albanian Embassy in Ukraine. Albanian Charge d'Affaires Peni presented a diplomatic letter on the

opening of Albania's Embassy to Ukraine (2.07).

Croatia that presided in the EU in the first half of 2020, and Albania that chaired the OSCE, expressed support to Ukraine in countering Russia's aggression and Ukraine's future membership in the EU and NATO. As NATO member-states, Albania, Croatia, and Slovenia provided important assistance to Ukraine, including humanitarian demining, material and technical supplies, rehabilitation of the military, and reforms based on NATO standards.

The Ukrainian-Croatian Academic Forum was founded in October as a platform for academic discussions on Ukraine-Croatia relations. Slovenia invited Ukrainian students and young researchers to use the opportunities of state-funding studies there.

Meanwhile, Ukraine failed to convince Serbian leadership to at least take a neutral stance on decisions of international organizations condemning Russia's aggression. Ukraine's non-recognition of Kosovo's independence persisted as another problem in bilateral relations, although Ukraine recognized its passports in September.

Baltic States

	B+	
	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	4
ACTIVITIES	5	5
RESULTS	5	4
TOTAL SCORES	A-	B+

The summary of Ukraine's foreign-policy accomplishments on the Baltic vector in 2020 should consider both the number and quality of bilateral contacts and the overall change in the nature of interstate relations as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions. While official visits were replaced with online meetings and international talks with video conferences, the dynamics of mutual relations slowed down, and part of events cancelled or rescheduled.



Political Interest / Engagement

The stance of Ukraine's authorities on the Baltic States did not change significantly in 2020. Maintaining support for Ukraine's sovereignty and extension of sanctions against Russia as a result of its military aggression in the East and illegal annexation of Crimea remained the priority goal.

In their major speeches and interviews throughout 2020, neither the President nor the Minister of Foreign Affairs mentioned the Baltic States individually. Lithuania was referred to in the context of establishing the Lublin Triangle. The analytical report that came with the President's Address to the VRU did not mention the Baltic region as a uniform unit. Instead, interaction with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are viewed as part of the practical approach to the Association Agreement and the deepening of Ukraine's sectoral integration with EU member-states in energy, digital economy, customs, justice, democratic freedoms, and security.

The Verkhovna Rada's vision of relations with the countries of the region matches that of the President's Office. VRU Speaker made a special point on the importance of coordinated work within PACE and the newly created informal group "Baltic Plus," as well as friendship groups with the three countries.

Institutional Cooperation

The MFA remained the key institution that coordinated interaction on the Baltic States with other state agencies in 2020. The development of trade and economic relations, digital transformation, e-governance, energy, transport, and education are the priority areas of cooperation. The Ministry of Digital Transformation, the MEDT, the State Border Guard Service, Chamber of Commerce, the Department of Economic Policy at the President's Office, UkraineInvest Investment Promotion Office, groups for parliamentary links, and the Ukrainian League of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs were engaged in joint initiatives.

Strategic Vision

The National Security Strategy notes that Ukraine will develop a strategic partnership with a number of countries to protect national interests and strengthen its regional security. Lithuania is mentioned individually. Cooperation with Estonia and Latvia falls into the category of “partner relations” along with the countries of Northern Europe.

The Law on Domestic and Foreign Policy does not focus on the region, while countries are only viewed in the context of ensuring Ukraine’s integration into the European political, economic, and legal space in pursuit of EU membership. The Military Doctrine mentions them as part of NATO activities.

Lithuania and Ukraine are currently guided by the Joint Declaration on the Development of Strategic Partnership in 2020–2024 in their bilateral relations.

Activities

The political dialogue between Estonia and Ukraine was maintained at the level of presidents and ministers of foreign affairs. Ukraine’s Prime Minister and Estonian Prime Minister J. Ratas had a video conference. The Ukrainian delegation led by the First Deputy Minister of Healthcare visited Estonia (February). The Ukrainian-Estonian online investment forum took place with the support of Ukraine’s Embassy in Estonia. The head of Ukraine’s State Border Guard Service had an online meeting with the Director-General of the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board. They agreed to sign the Cooperation Development Plan for 2021–2022.

The readiness of the Three Seas Initiative states, including Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, to support infrastructure projects in non-EU countries was an important signal for Ukraine at the 5th annual summit of the Initiative.

Economic contacts between Ukraine and Latvia developed proactively. Among others, the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Latvian Commission for Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technical Cooperation held its 8th meeting. Foreign

ministers of Ukraine and Latvia stayed in online contact, while Deputy Head of OPU I. Zhovkva had a video conference with S. Silkalna, Foreign Policy Advisor to the President of Latvia.

Politically, Lithuania was in the focus of the President's Office — MFA — Verkhovna Rada triangle. President V. Zelenskyy spoke on the telephone with Lithuanian President Nausėda twice. Foreign Minister D. Kuleba initiated a conversation with Lithuania's new Foreign Minister G. Landsbergis and invited him to Ukraine in 2021. V. Yatsenkivsky, Ukraine's Ambassador to Lithuania, had a number of meetings in 2020, including with A. Pikzirnis, Advisor to Lithuania's Prime Minister on national security and domestic policy, and M. Kvietkauskas, Minister of Culture.

Throughout 2020, the Ukrainian-Lithuanian and Lithuanian-Ukrainian Business Councils had video conference meetings. So did the Ukrainian-Lithuanian Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, where an emphasis was made on the need to launch cargo deliveries along the Viking train route. In December, the 6th Ukrainian-Lithuanian online economic forum was held where both countries' government and business circles were represented extensively.

The issue of the fight against COVID-19 was raised at the interstate level in the context of measures taken in each of the countries and the need to consolidate efforts in the fight against its economic and social impact. Despite the lower intensity of international activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, VRU Speaker visited Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in February and September, both before and during the lockdown, thus emphasizing the political importance of the region for Ukraine.

Results

In 2020, the Baltic States continuously expressed uniform support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and eurointegration aspirations. Among the EU member states, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are some of the harshest critics of Nord Stream 2 and oppose its construction. Representatives of authorities in these countries proactively cooperate with Ukraine within EaP and favour the Crimean Platform.

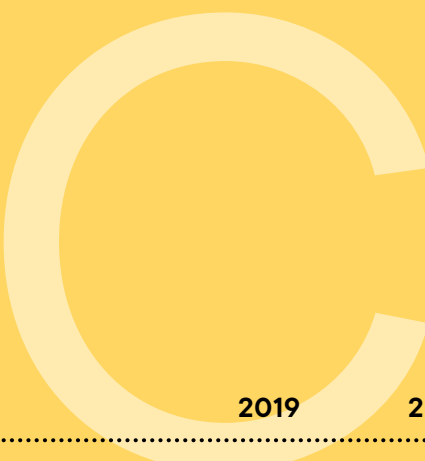
In 2020, total trade with Lithuania was USD 1.24bn, with Latvia USD 388.3 mln, and with Estonia USD 286.71 mln. Trade with Lithuania and Estonia shrank somewhat while trade with Latvia increased a little. The work of the Ukrainian Trading House in Riga contributed to the growth. Its accomplishments include the establishment of the joint company with Odesa Cable; the signing of memorandums on partnership with Ukraine's Export Promotion Office and UkraineInvest Investment Promotion Office; and the organization of the Ukrainian-Latvian forum in Kyiv with the administration of the Ukrainian and Latvian chambers of commerce and diplomats from both countries. Total trade in services shrank 20% on average to USD 239 mln with Estonia, USS 80 mln with Latvia, and USD 89 mln with Lithuania.

In July 2020, Ukraine, Lithuania, and Poland launched the Lublin Triangle, a new format where they agreed to coordinate actions on international law, investment, and joint infrastructure projects.

The regular meeting of the Council of Presidents of Ukraine and Lithuania and an annual conference "Ukraine Reform" in Vilnius did not occur due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The latter was rescheduled to 2021.

In November, the governments of Ukraine and Estonia reached an Agreement on Technical and Financial Cooperation that will cover all programs implemented in Ukraine and funded by Estonian partners. The two countries continue their joint work on the "Diya 2.0" application, launching the Bug Bounty process in December.

Visegrad Four



	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	2	3
STRATEGIC VISION	4	3
ACTIVITIES	3	3
RESULTS	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	C	C

In 2020, the Visegrad Four was chaired by the Czech Republic and the Republic of Poland. Although its priorities were identified by the V4 member states that are friendly to Ukraine, the agenda of cooperation between Ukraine and this regional initiative has not improved dramatically. Instead, the countries cooperated one on one or in the V4+EaP format. V4 East Solidarity, a programme under which Ukraine has received significant medical assistance to mitigate the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, deserves a separate mention.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2020, main political actors did not articulate political interest in the Visegrad Group as a regional initiative in their statements and speeches. The analytical report to the President of Ukraine's Address to the VRU mentions individual V4 member states (Poland and Hungary). President V. Zelenskyy did not even discuss the need to strengthen cooperation with the V4 during his meeting with Polish President A. Duda (October). Instead, the focus was made on cooperation within the Lublin Triangle (Lithuania-Poland-Ukraine) and Ukraine's interest in joining the Three Seas initiative.

Institutional Cooperation

The preparation of a meeting of the V4+EaP ministers of foreign affairs, which eventually did not take place, has required coordinated efforts by the Ukrainian side. The MFA, the MoD, and the Luhansk Regional Military-Civil Administration were coordinating efforts to arrange a V4 ambassadors' visit to Luhansk Region in December. The level of institutional interest in V4+Ukraine cooperation was low because the format did not offer a variety of themes.

Strategic Vision

The new wording of the 2020 National Security Strategy says that, in order to protect its national interests and strengthen regional security, Ukraine will develop a strategic partnership with the Republic of Poland and close neighbourly relations with countries in Central and South-eastern Europe. The 2035 Energy

Strategy says that Ukraine needs to integrate its energy grids into the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas (ENTSO-G), which includes the V4 member states.

A strategic vision of the development of cooperation with the V4 as a regional international alliance that has its own political weight and tools has not been proposed.

Activities

In 2020, cooperation was mostly limited to active bilateral contacts, especially with the countries, which chaired the V4. Ukraine's Foreign Affairs Minister V. Prystaiko visited the Czech Republic (4.02), and Polish President A. Duda came to Ukraine (11–13.10).

The only manifestation of V4+Ukraine cooperation was a regular meeting of the armed forces' commanders (Warsaw, 30.09), and was attended by Ukrainian Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief R. Khomchak.

As V4 countries account for a significant share of labour migration from Ukraine (especially Poland and the Czech Republic), Ukraine's embassies there are deeply involved with Ukrainians abroad, providing support for migrant workers and local diaspora organisations. In 2020, much work was done to help Ukrainian citizens return home after borders closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic in spring.

Results

It is still a positive fact that at the regional level, V4 member states demonstrate support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine regardless of the somewhat varying dynamics of their bilateral relations with Kyiv. Although V4 countries have not made too many political statements about Ukraine, they continue to show solidarity, including in the provision of medical and humanitarian assistance.

Although the Czech Republic and Poland took turns chairing the Visegrad Group in 2020, positive expectations of the group's closer work with Ukraine

did not materialise. In particular, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic T. Petříček said in one of the interviews that the V4 does not have a unanimous position on Ukraine. This may be due to the fact that all decisions in the V4 are made by consensus, while Hungary's position on blocking high-level political cooperation with Ukraine still had its negative impact in 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected Ukraine's cooperation with the V4. As part of the V4 East Solidarity Programme for the Eastern Partnership Countries (V4EastSolidarity) launched in April, EaP member states are allocated to EUR 250,000, including EUR 125,000 to Ukraine (Luhansk and Chernivtsi regions being the priority areas). The money will be used to improve the medical, social and economic sustainability of vulnerable groups affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The International Visegrad Fund manages the projects. The Fund also continues to provide grant support for Ukrainian non-governmental organisations.

In December, the ambassadors of the V4 member states visited Luhansk Region, including the Zolote checkpoint, to deliver assistance under the V4EastSolidarity programme.

The Visegrad Group member states also provide military and technical assistance, treat and rehabilitate wounded Ukrainian servicemen, and participate in individual and collective efforts to train the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

However, despite previous arrangements made during the visit to Ukraine by Czech Prime Minister A. Babiš in autumn 2019, Ukraine has not been invited to any of the V4 summits.

The total trade turnover with the four countries in 2020 amounted to USD 12.9bn, including USD 7.36bn with Poland, USD 1.3bn with Slovakia, USD 2.5bn with Hungary, and USD 1.8bn with the Czech Republic. Exports to Slovakia and Hungary fell by over 30%. Imports from Slovakia raised by 30%/ Both imports and exports with the Czech Republic dropped by almost 20%.

Latin America & the Caribbean

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	2	2
STRATEGIC VISION	2	2
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	C-	C-

The ambitious agenda for 2020 declared last year at the Office of the President and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whereby the Latin American vector was to “get its spotlight with the President,” was not implemented. The COVID-19 pandemic made personal meetings and consultations impossible at all levels and resulted in a slow increase in Ukrainian exports. Apart from that, Ukraine once again did not have support in countering Russia’s aggression from the ruling elite in Latin America and the Caribbean countries, as reflected in the UN GA voting. In terms of Ukraine’s interests in the LAC region, intensification of cooperation with Brazil in the last months of the year can count as the accomplishment of 2020.

Political Interest / Engagement

Despite the statements by Foreign Minister V. Prystaiko and Deputy Head of OPU I. Zhovkva (at the VRU on September 18, 2019), claiming that the Latin America vector would “get its spotlight with the President” in 2020, including through a tour of visits to the countries in the region (see Scorecards 2019), there was no proper intensification in this area.

The necessity to expand and deepen cooperation with Brazil and Cuba was highlighted in President Zelenskyy's statements in the telephone conversation with Brazil President J. Bolsonaro (4.11) and at the ceremony of receiving credentials from the newly appointed Cuba Ambassador N. Diaz Aguilera (15.04). Still, most statements and interviews of the President, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and others only mentioned Latin America in the general context of the need to intensify “relations with Asia, Africa, and Latin America.” The President's Address to the Verkhovna Rada (20.10) and the analytical report that came with it did not mention LAC.

O. Honcharuk's Government Program highlighted the protection of Ukrainian citizens abroad, including visa issues, in the foreign policy section. The total list of 21 countries mentioned nine LAC countries in this concern. D. Shmyhal's Government Program expressed interest in the region in general terms. This interest is guided by the need to maintain political support in countering the Russian aggression, restoring Ukraine's export potential, looking for new markets and expanding the current ones, and engaging foreign investment, including via support of the Ukrainian diaspora. Cooperation with G20, where Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico are members, is mentioned as a standalone objective.

Intensification of cooperation with LAC countries was discussed at the meeting of Ukrainian ambassadors in the Western hemisphere in Washington (22.02), chaired by minister Prystaiko. The MFA declared “Ukraine’s course towards intensifying cooperation with Central America and the Caribbean” in a comment following political consultations with Costa Rica (1.12).

Ukraine joined the Joint Statement on a peaceful and democratic resolution of the institutional crisis in Venezuela with 28 countries, including member-states of the Lima Group, the International Contact Group, the EU and the US.

The Priorities of Parliamentary Cooperation in 2020 (1.07) list similar points on the LAC region with those of the Cabinet of Ministers. However, the analysis of the respective parliamentary committee’s work points to the fact that the Latin America vector is not a priority one. The study of public speeches by individual MPs in 2020 shows that the interest in some countries of the region mainly was reflected in the context of exploring their historical experience and comparisons to the Ukrainian situation. Representatives of the Opposition Platform-For Life and Batkivshchyna were the ones making such points most often. Argentina’s experience of the recent partial default and the prospect of Ukraine’s further cooperation with the IMF, the dangerous pace of COVID-19 spread in LAC, and the situation with the land market in these countries (the experience of Argentina and Brazil was referred to most often) were mentioned among other things.

New groups for parliamentary relations with Chile (10.02), Argentina (03.03), and Peru (06.07) were established in the 9th Verkhovna Rada in 2020.

Institutional Cooperation

Cooperation on appointments between the MFA and OPU raises questions as there has been no Ukrainian Ambassador to Argentina for over a year and a half now, and to Cuba since January 2013. President Zelenskyy dismissed I. Tumasov from the post of Ukraine’s Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Peru (appointed in June 2018) on September 1 and has not yet found a replacement candidate, although an important project to deliver an AN-178 plane to the Peruvian Ministry of the Interior is being implemented in Peru. Ambassadors were

rotated in Mexico at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic: R. Spirin was dismissed on August 12, and O. Dramaretska was appointed on the same day.

The planning of the First Defence Industry Dialogue, a defence cooperation forum with Brazil, was somewhat questionable. It took place on December 1–2 in Kyiv as the term of Brazil's Ambassador in Ukraine expired while the new Ambassador presented his credentials on December 24.

Establishing cooperation among several centres for coordination and support of exports would potentially contribute to the consolidated promotion of the Ukrainian business' interests abroad. However, there is still inconsistency among different institutions in charge of promoting exports at the MFA, the Ministry for Development of Economy, Trade, and Agriculture, and UkraineInvest Office for Attracting and Supporting Investment that reports to the Prime Minister of Ukraine.

Strategic Vision

A number of strategic documents on Ukraine's foreign policy did not mention the Latin America region as a potential object of focus in the short-term prospect. At the same time, some programs described in the Concept of Ukraine's Security and Defence Sector Development and Ukraine 2020 Strategy of Sustainable Development can be implemented exploiting its potential, among other things. LAC regional markets were not considered promising for Ukraine either, as reflected in Ukraine's 2017–2021 Export Strategy. By contrast, the National Security Strategy approved on September 14, 2020, notes that Ukraine will develop economic cooperation with a number of regions, including South America.

Activities

The pandemic affected the work of Ukrainian embassies in LAC. In spring, embassies in the region focused primarily on looking for ways to bring Ukrainian citizens back to Ukraine as they ended up stuck in the region when regular international traffic stopped. Ukraine helped evacuate 25 citizens of Argentina, Costa

Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Salvador, and Panama from Wuhan in China (20.02). As the pandemic continued, Ukrainian embassies in Chile and Brazil helped with the successful rotation of the 24th Ukrainian Antarctic Expedition.

In early May, embassies in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Peru switched to video conference meetings. However, the different time zones between Ukraine and LAC hampered the effective use of this tool to communicate with different authorities.

Ukraine's MFA initiated a series of online political consultations. These took place with the MFAs of Guatemala in June (the previous round dates back to 2008), Panama in August, Belize in September, and Costa Rica in December (following the previous round in 2012). Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and Chile had a telephone conversation (29.07).

The expected breakthrough in relations with Brazil — V. Zelenskyy was planning to visit the country — failed to occur due to the pandemic. Still, several important events took place, including a telephone conversation between Presidents Zelenskyy and Bolsonaro (4.11), video conference meetings between ministers and deputy ministers of foreign affairs (18.11 and 5.05 respectively), and the international video conference on the key areas of defence cooperation between Ukraine and Brazil (24.09). Apart from that, the First Defence Industry Dialogue took place in the offline format on December 1–2 in Kyiv with the Prime Minister of Ukraine, Vice Prime Minister for Strategic Industries, top officials from both countries, representatives of the military, defence companies, and companies specialized in biosecurity and biotechnologies participating.

Despite the lockdown restrictions, other ministries and agencies intensified their work. Deputy Ministers of the economy of Ukraine and Mexico had a video conference to discuss the Agreement on Incentives and Mutual Protection of Investments (21.07). Ukraine's Minister of Economy spoke to the Peruvian Minister of the Interior on the telephone (07.07). Deputy Ministers of economy, trade and agriculture (05.08, 13.08) and foreign affairs (14.09), and head of the State Service on Food Safety and Consumer Protection (30.07, 01.09, and 11.12) held working meetings with the Ambassador of Argentina to Ukraine. Ukraine's Prime Minister had a short conversation with the Ambassador of Argentina at the Agro 2020 agricultural expo (11.08). The Minister of Infrastructure (16.07) and Deputy Minister of Social Policy (08.10) had brief working meetings with Cuba's

Ambassador to Ukraine. Deputy Minister of Education and Science met with the Ambassador of Mexico (18.02).

In October, Ukraine voluntarily contributed to the budget for fighting COVID-19 at the Organization of American States.

Ukrainian ambassadors met with local officials, representatives of the space industry, industry ministries, students and media in the countries of the region. Ukraine's embassies in Mexico and Brazil were the most proactive.

Sadly, Ukraine lost honorary consuls in the Dominican Republic and Bolivia due to the pandemic, and Ukraine's honorary consul in Panama died in a car accident.

The Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in cooperation with the diplomatic missions abroad, the Ministry for Development of Economy, Trade and Agriculture and Ukraine's embassies in the LAC countries, held a series of online business events with entrepreneurs in Brazil (26.11), Argentina-Ukraine Commerce Chamber (04.08), and the Embassy of Cuba in Ukraine (30.04 and 24.06).

The framework plan of the respective parliamentary committee scheduled a roundtable concerning economic and diplomatic relations with South America countries (as well as countries in other regions), and a roundtable on international economic issues with representatives of the MFA and the Ministry for Development of Economy, Trade and Agriculture, at the 3rd and 4th sessions of the 9th VRU. These plans were never brought to life. The committee hearing on international legal support for Ukraine's foreign policy in the space industry (16.12) raised the unresolved issue of ownership of the property after Brazil unilaterally terminated the agreement on long-term bilateral cooperation to build the Alcântara Launch Centre with Ukraine.

While the VRU now has six groups of MPs for parliamentary relations with the LAC countries, the MPs are still passive in this work. Throughout 2020, only members of friendship groups with Brazil, Cuba, and Mexico met with the LAC countries ambassadors. Chairs of groups of friendship with Mexico (05.12) and Brazil (14.12) had video conferences with their colleagues in these countries.

Results

Agreements to extradite offenders, transfer convicted persons, and provide mutual assistance in criminal cases were ratified between Ukraine and Argentina after they were signed in 2018. Ukraine joined the Inter-American Convention on Serving Criminal Sentences Abroad.

The MFA intensified its efforts to expand the list of visa-free countries for Ukrainians, signing visa-free travel agreements with Grenada (16.07) and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (25.11). Agreements on mutual abolition of visa requirements came into effect with the governments of Ecuador (02.04) and Colombia (17.04). On March 14, the Protocol to Amend the Agreement between the Governments of Ukraine and Argentina on Abolition of Visas came into force.

According to its national laws, Ukraine launched sanctions against Nicaragua after it appointed an “honorary consul” in the occupied Crimea.

Following the Ukraine-Brazil defence forum, the two countries signed the four-year Memorandum of Understanding to develop the production and commercialization of defence products and the Memorandum of Understanding on scientific and technical cooperation in the defence sector.

Ukraine’s Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Argentina’s Chamber of Commerce signed a Memorandum of Understanding (11.03).

The meetings of Joint Governmental Commissions on Cooperation with Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Paraguay, and Peru did not take place in 2020. Meanwhile, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Ukrainian World Congress signed a Memorandum on Cooperation (11.12), laying the institutional foundation for the cooperation of Ukraine and its diaspora in economic and investment sectors.

Ukraine agreed to launch talks for a bilateral Free Trade/Trade Preferences Agreement with Chile.

Throughout 2020, the authorized agencies of the countries in the region took four protectionist actions against Ukrainian products, including three in Mexico and one in Brazil. In all four cases, the Ministry for Economy ensured that the interests of Ukrainian producers were protected.

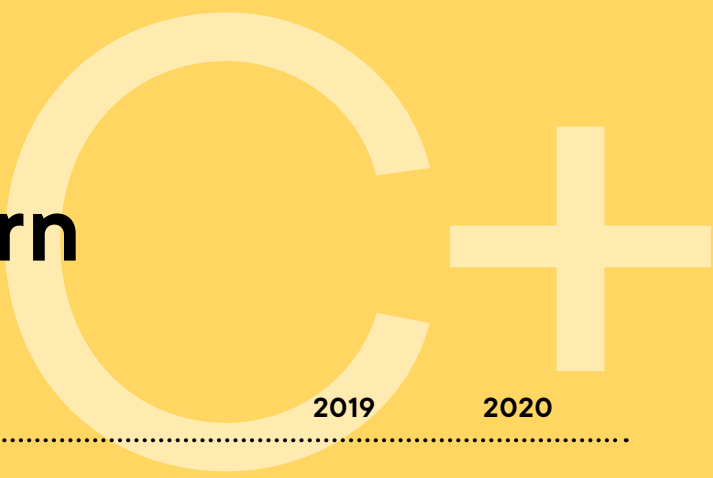
In May, the Kavetsky Institute of Experimental Pathology, Oncology, and Radiobiology of Ukraine’s National Academy of Sciences signed a Memorandum

of Understanding with the Cuban BioCubaFarma for cooperation on oncology. In December, the State Aviation Administration of Ukraine and the Institute of Civil Aeronautics of Cuba signed an Airworthiness Agreement.

Thanks to support from the Ministry of Economy, Ukrainian exporters can ship car tires to Brazil free of anti-dumping duties. 2020 saw an increase of Ukrainian exports of goods by over USD 89 mln, a 23% increase from 2019. Imports from the countries of the region grew by around USD 49 mln or 5%.

In the humanitarian dimension, Ukraine reached an agreement to mark the 130th anniversary of Ukrainian emigration to Brazil with a series of events; Ukraine's Diplomatic Academy signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Diplomatic Academy of Chile (16.01); and the Ukrainian film *Atlantyda* (*Atlantis*) was screened at the 10th FICUNAM international film festival in Mexico in March. Several events were dedicated to commemorating Ukrainian M. Skybytsky (Miguel Skibicki), including the unveiling of the second monument for him and the exchange of copies of historical documents between the archives of Peru and Ukraine.

Northern Europe



	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	2
STRATEGIC VISION	3	4
ACTIVITIES	5	4
RESULTS	4	3
TOTAL SCORES	B	C+

The radical changes caused by the pandemic have, to some extent, affected the intensity of communication between Ukraine's and Nordic countries' officials, and some visits had to be postponed. The countries of the region continue to provide Kyiv with political support in the international arena, reaffirm their commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and integrity, and securing sanctions against Russia. Although in 2020, Ukraine finally appointed its ambassadors extraordinary and plenipotentiary to some Northern European states, the potential for cooperation with the countries of the region is still insufficient.

Political Interest / Engagement

Interest in Nordic countries is not reflected in key annual documents or top officials' policy statements. One of the rare exceptions is the analytical report to the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada, which mentions countries of the region in the context of research spending in various European countries.

The level and contents of communication between Ukraine's and Nordic countries' top officials gave a partial idea of the Ukrainian authorities' priorities in the region. The lion's share of such talks concerned joint counteraction to coronavirus spread, the Eastern Partnership and support for Ukraine in this format, as well as keeping international partners abreast on the current situation in Donbas.

Institutional Cooperation

An example of institutional cooperation is a meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine's EU Integration chaired by I. Klympush-Tsintsadze with the participation of Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine D. Kuleba. The meeting supported draft laws concerning agreements between the governments of Ukraine and Denmark. There was also a meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission on Cooperation in Trade, Entrepreneurship, and Economy (12.11).

In October, a new ambassador to Finland was finally appointed following the resignation of the previous one in May 2019.

Strategic Vision

The new National Security Strategy of Ukraine defines relations with Nordic states as “partnership.”

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine D. Kuleba and Icelandic Minister for Foreign Affairs G. Thór Thórdarson reached a clear agreement to intensify the elaboration of the Agreement on Promotion and Mutual Protection of Investments, as well as the Air Transport Agreement.

Activities

During the year, several meetings were held with senior officials from Northern Europe both online and offline.

The Swedish track was the most active one. Chairman of the VRU D. Razumkov and Speaker of the Swedish Riksdag A. Norlén had an online meeting (25.05) to discuss the decentralization and territorial integrity of Ukraine and cooperation between the parliaments. In March, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden A. Linde paid a visit to Ukraine. She met Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Prystaiko and Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine A. Yermak, visited Stanytsya Luhanska, etc.

D. Kuleba’s telephone conversation with his Swedish counterpart A. Linde (18.09) was pertinent in the context of preparations for a video conference of the EaP Foreign Ministers and the chairmanship in the OSCE. The Ukrainian MFA’s active communication was supplemented both at the level of deputy ministers and ambassadors to the countries of the region. Much attention in Ukraine’s communication with the Swedish leadership was paid to the country’s chairmanship in the OSCE in 2021, as well as joint coordination of assistance to the victims of the crash of Ukraine International Airlines Flight PS752, which was shot down in Iran in early 2020.

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark J. Kofod visited Ukraine in February to meet his counterpart V. Prystaiko and visit the Joint Forces Operation area.

As far as Norway is concerned, contacts took place at the level of the MoDs and MFAs. In particular, in February, Minister of Defence of Ukraine A. Zagorodnyuk met Norwegian Defence Minister F. Bakke-Jensen to discuss, among other

things, legislation regulating national security, defence and cooperation of special operations forces. In April, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs had a phone conversation about COVID-19, NATO, and counteraction to Russia's attempts to lift sanctions. In September, the ministers held an online meeting on bilateral cooperation, focusing on trade, economy, and investment, and support for Ukraine in international organizations.

The Ukrainian-Norwegian Intergovernmental Commission on Cooperation in Trade, Entrepreneurship, and Economy held its third meeting (12.11) chaired by Minister of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine O. Tkachenko and Minister of Trade and Industry of Norway I. Nybø. There was also the Ukrainian-Norwegian Business Forum.

During the 43rd session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva (24–25.02), Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine V. Prystaiko spoke with his Danish counterpart J. Kofod, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland P. Haavisto and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland G. Thór Thórdarson.

There is active cooperation with the countries of the region in the energy sector. Negotiations were held within the Ukrainian-Danish Energy Centre framework and during the meeting of Deputy Minister of Energy and Environmental Protection of Ukraine O. Ryabchyn and State Secretary for the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy of Norway O. Emil Ingebrigtsen in Oslo (12.02).

Results

The changes caused by the pandemic did not have much effect on the intensity of contacts between Ukrainian and Nordic countries' officials. The governments of the region continue to provide Kyiv with political support in the international arena, reaffirm Ukraine's sovereignty and integrity, and help maintain the sanctions against Russia. Sweden responded immediately to Ukraine's request for assistance (material, technical, and professional) during the floods in its western regions.

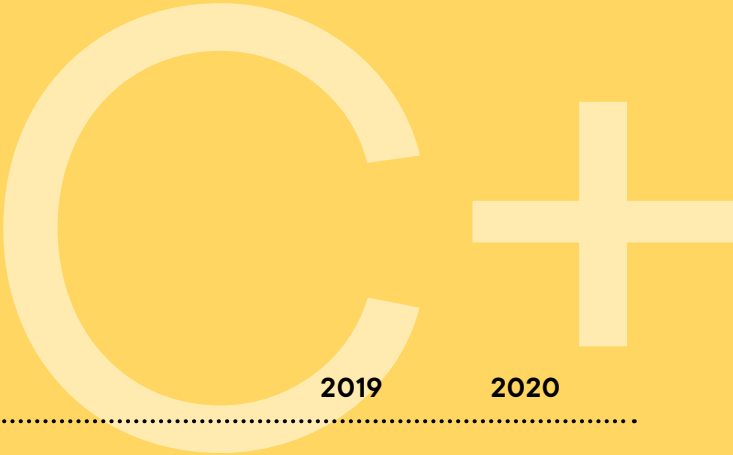
The meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine's EU Integration, which was attended by Vice Prime Minister D. Kuleba, discussed and approved the draft law on ratification of the Framework Agreement between the Government

of Ukraine and the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark on general terms and procedures, organizational measures and financial conditions for the Danida Business Finance programme in Ukraine. This allowed the two countries to expand cooperation and raise funds to implement investment projects in Ukraine.

The Norwegian MFA and NORD University have signed an agreement on the implementation of a three-year phase of the Ukraine-Norway project in 2020–2022, which provides assistance in retraining, social adaptation, and employment of discharged military, veterans and their families, as well as families of fallen soldiers.

In 2020, the trade turnover between Ukraine and Sweden decreased to USD 500.5 mln (exports fell by 6%, imports by 13%). The trade turnover with Denmark also decreased to USD 437.8 mln (exports fell by 15%, imports by 20%). Trade with Iceland remained almost at the same level, USD 91.55 mln. Exports to Finland increased significantly (by 18%), with the total turnover amounting to USD 303.7 mln in 2020. Oppositely, imports from Norway increased (by 8%), with the total turnover amounting to USD 315.6 mln. A significant negative balance with all countries, except Denmark, persists.

South Asia



	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	4
ACTIVITIES	4	3
RESULTS	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	C+	C+

Despite the COVID-19 challenges, 2020 saw an increase in political interest in South Asia. Ukraine's Foreign Affairs Minister and Prime Minister spoke in interviews and statements about strengthening cooperation with the countries in the region, including India. Trade doubled with Pakistan but decreased with Sri Lanka. Bangladesh and Nepal remain out of Ukraine's focus. During 2020, Ukraine worked on the Asia strategy for its foreign policy, which points to the interest in more strategic cooperation with the region. There is a pressing need to expand Ukraine's diplomatic representation in the area, and the pandemic crystallized it yet again.



Political Interest / Engagement

The President's Annual Address to the VRU did not mention South Asia. Yet, India is mentioned as a new powerful hub of economic growth in the analytical report for the Annual Address. Foreign Minister D. Kuleba, in his interviews, repeatedly named India a player with which Ukraine seeks stronger cooperation in the region.

President V. Zelenskyy supported visa liberalization for tourists from China and India at the meeting with the Cabinet of Ministers (14.07). India has long been raising the issue of visa liberalization, so this statement from Ukraine is important. Still, Ukraine simplified the visa regime only for the citizens of China by the end of 2020.

The 2020 Program of D. Shmyhal's Cabinet (approved on June 12 but never ratified by the Parliament) mentions Asia as a region for expanding the geography of Ukraine's cooperation. The Government's long-term priorities also include creating a favourable framework for intensifying trade and economic cooperation with the G20 countries that encompass India.

Ukraine's Minister of Foreign Affairs and representatives of the President's Office spoke about establishing cooperation with Asia and working on the Asia strategy at the annual Ambassadorial (17.12) and in many interviews. But they did not outline specific countries of the region, other than India.

Groups of friendship with India and Pakistan were set up at the Verkhovna Rada. Groups of friendship with Sri Lanka and Bangladesh still lack members.

Institutional Cooperation

The pandemic has hampered cooperation with the countries of the region at the level of ministries, including the meetings of joint inter-government commissions. In 2020, no such meetings with any of the region's countries took place. Among Ukrainian institutions, the MFA and diplomatic missions, as well as the ministries of defence and economic development are engaged the most in cooperation with the countries in the region. All Ukrainian institutions shared a common focus on strengthening trade and economic cooperation in particular.

In April, President Zelenskyy appointed a new Ambassador to Pakistan. Ambassador to Tajikistan, appointed in 2019, now also serves as Ambassador to Afghanistan.

Strategic Vision

The updated National Security Strategy (14.09) mentions the region as an area where the impact of the rivalry between the US and China will be noticed. In the context of Ukraine's foreign policy activities, the Strategy says that Ukraine will develop mutually beneficial economic cooperation with Asia countries.

In May, Ukraine's MFA and the renewed Council of Exporters and Investors compiled the list of top 10 most promising markets for Ukrainian exporters. These include India, among other countries. Ukraine worked on the Asia strategy throughout 2020. Foreign Minister D. Kuleba said in December that the document was completed and "de facto implemented." However, it is still to be approved de jure.

Activities

The pandemic was a serious challenge for the embassies in the region and cooperation at the level of ministries. With the onset of lockdown restrictions and the closure of borders, embassies focused on evacuating Ukrainian citizens from the countries of the region. As eight countries in the region share just three Ukrainian embassies between them, while Ukraine's Embassy in India covers six countries, the shortage of human resources and representative missions was noticeable on the ground (Ukraine has honorary consulates in Mumbai and Kathmandu, while the honorary consulate in Sri Lanka shut down when the Honorary Consul died there). The appointment of Ukrainian citizens, who reside in Sri Lanka and Goa in India, as authorized embassy representatives offered a partial solution. But the systemic problem remains unsolved.

At the beginning of the pandemic, India provided pills with hydroxychloroquine as humanitarian assistance to Ukraine (5.05). At the meeting on this occasion,

Foreign Minister D. Kuleba and India's Ambassador P. Satpathy noted that the cooperation between Ukraine and India in the pharmaceutical domain is growing fast. Overall, India provided medicines as humanitarian assistance to Ukraine thrice in 2020. Prime Minister D. Shmyhal met with Ambassador Satpathy of India to Ukraine (24.09) to speak about deepening trade and economic cooperation and cooperation in education and healthcare. Among other things, Prime Minister Shmyhal noted that Ukraine was prepared to hold the seventh meeting of the India-Ukraine Inter-Governmental Commission on trade, economic, scientific, technical, industrial and cultural cooperation in an online format or right after the pandemic-driven situation is normalized. The NSDC met with India's Ambassador (17.09) to discuss the prospects of cooperation in the military technology domain.

Deputy Foreign Minister D. Senik invited Indian businesses to invest in Ukraine's economy at the interactive ministerial session of the 26th Partnership Summit (16.12), organized by India's Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Confederation of Indian Industry.

On February 6, before the pandemic, the Ukrainian delegation of UkrOboronProm managed to present its products at DefExpo 2020, the biannual expo in India.

When it comes to Pakistan, I. Petrashko, Minister of Economic Development, Trade, and Agriculture, met with Ambassador of Pakistan to Ukraine, N. I. Khokhar (17.12), to discuss the intensification of cooperation. They spoke about the possible engagement of Ukrainian companies in wide-scale projects in Pakistan, including the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Also, they discussed the option of the First Meeting of the Ukraine-Pakistan Commission for Economic Cooperation and the resumption of the Ukraine-Pakistan Business Council.

Ukrainian Air Force Commander S. Drozdov visited Pakistan (3.03) and met with the Pakistani Air Chief Marshal M. Anwar Khan. They discussed the areas of further professional cooperation, including military technology and personnel training. In June, the Ukrainian UkrSpetsExport company won a tender to repair the Il78 aerial refuelling tanker for the Pakistan Air Force.

Representatives of Ukraine's Embassy in Pakistan met with Prof. Dr Y. Khushk, Chairman of the Pakistan Academy of Letters (8.12). They spoke about joint translations of literature from the two countries. Since Ukraine has little cultural

cooperation with the countries in the region, such a meeting and agreements can contribute to its development.

The MFA held Asia Week in the spring. During this week, Foreign Minister D. Kuleba met with the Ambassador of India and spoke on the telephone with foreign ministers of other countries in the region. They discussed ways to keep the dynamics of bilateral trade, new incentives for political dialogue, and other issues.

Results

While the pandemic slowed down cooperation with the region to some extent, India remains one of Ukraine's key trade partners in agriculture, while trade with Pakistan almost doubled. India remains one of the top three importers of Ukrainian agricultural produce. Total trade in goods and services between Ukraine and India was at USD 2.8bn in 2020 even as exports of services dropped 20% while exports of goods fell just 3%. Bilateral trade between Ukraine and Pakistan was at USD 331 mln, or fivefold of the previous year. Exports to Sri Lanka almost halved in 2020 (USD 72 mln). Trade with Bangladesh was at USD 456 mln, and exports there dropped 20%. Export to Nepal increased by 56% and accounted for USD 23 mln.

There were some positive changes in the voting for Ukrainian resolutions at the UN. The Republic of Maldives voted in favour of the Resolution on the Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov at the session of the UN GA (7.12). Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka abstained. Notably, the Republic of Maldives also abstained in the voting for this resolution the year before. Just like before, India voted against, Bhutan voted in favour, and other countries of the region abstained in the vote on the Resolution on the Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine) (16.12).

Students from India remain the largest community of foreign students in Ukraine. According to the Ministry of Education and Science, 18,429 students from India studied in Ukraine in 2020.

Sub-Saharan Africa

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	2	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	2	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	3
ACTIVITIES	3	2
RESULTS	3	2
TOTAL SCORES	C-	C

Ukrainian political leadership officially recognized the importance of the African region for strengthening Ukraine's export potential and expanding the range of its international partners. Key Ukrainian institutions were in consensus on the work on the African vector. However, Ukraine still lacks a strategic vision or coordination mechanisms for complex actions. The COVID-19 pandemic has a strongly negative impact on Kyiv's relations with the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa as it limits political and personal communication and negatively impacts international economic activities. There is a trend of declining trade with African partners.

Political Interest / Engagement

Throughout 2020, all branches of the Ukrainian government demonstrated general interest in Africa. President Zelenskyy noted that Ukraine was preparing the National Economic Strategy until 2030 that would include support to exports and trade diplomacy in order to increase exports of goods, including to African countries. In the video conference with ambassadors in December, President Zelenskyy spoke about the need to exploit the economic potential of African markets, referring to Africa as an important region. According to the President, Ukraine should increase its diplomatic presence there, and he was ready to consider the respective proposals from the MFA. President Zelenskyy also mentioned that he was personally willing to engage in the work and solve issues at the level of heads of states and governments. As a result, Ukraine is preparing a tour of the President and Minister of Foreign Affairs to several countries in Africa to take place in 2021.

Interest in African countries is notable in D. Shmyhal's Government Action Plan (June). Among other things, it notes the need to expand the geography of Ukraine's economic presence internationally by seeking new forms of economic cooperation with Africa.

Foreign Minister D. Kuleba noted in May that Africa would be in the focus of the renewed Exporters and Investors Council at the MFA as developing cooperation and good relations with African states is a foreign policy priority. Ukraine will be especially happy to increase the number of students from Africa. It will also keep working on increasing staff at Ukrainian diplomatic missions in African countries.

The survey of Exporters and Investors Council at the MFA revealed a strong interest of Ukrainian exporters in Ethiopia as it made it into the top 10 preferred cooperation destinations.

Progress on the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa is notable at the VRU: MP groups for parliamentary ties with South Africa and Ethiopia were established in February and July, respectively. In July, the Parliamentary Committee on

Foreign Policy and Interparliamentary Cooperation approved the Priorities of the Parliamentary Cooperation in 2020. It seeks to open “new” areas of cooperation with countries beyond Europe and North America, including Africa, as part of the “new economy.”

Among MPs, European Solidarity MP P. Poroshenko said in an interview with the Current Time TV channel that Russia uses foreign policy tools that are dangerous both for Ukraine and Libya and other countries of Africa. Servant of the People MP Y. Yasko noted in December that parliamentary cooperation should continue despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Since Ukraine needs new friends and allies, work began on the African vector, and it will continue in 2021.

Meanwhile, political forces that are not in the Parliament politicize the African issue in a negative way. In June, V. Bobko, a member of the Ternopil Oblast Council, requested the police and SSU to deport six foreigners of African origin who held an anti-racism rally in Ternopil. In October, National Resistance, a little known radical right-wing organization, planned to have a group with the slogan “Stop genocide of the white” (against “ethnic gangs of migrants” from Asian and African countries) at the UPA Rally on the Day of Defender of Ukraine.

Institutional Cooperation

Throughout 2020, Ukrainian public institutions had well-coordinated positions on the African vector, but no joint coordination mechanisms were created.

According to the Government Action Plan, the MFA analysed relations with the countries of the region. This should serve as a foundation for designing policy and a standalone strategy. The positions of Ukrainian ambassadors to Angola, Ethiopia, and Senegal remain vacant, and the appointment is in the President’s hands. This is a serious limitation to the implementation of the Africa policy declared by the President and Minister of Foreign Affairs. In West Africa, the Ukrainian embassy plays an important role in Senegal — it will have the status of a hub embassy for seven countries of the subregion. The appointment of ambassadors in South Africa in April and Nigeria in September was a positive development in relations with them.

Strategic Vision

The 2020 National Security Strategy mentions the African region in general terms. It places an accent on the development of mutually beneficial economic cooperation with the leading African countries. In this context, the need to strengthen partnership with Kenya as the top partner in the subregion of East Africa should be highlighted. For this purpose, efforts were intensified to prepare an intergovernmental convention to avoid double taxation, prevent evasions of income and capital gain taxes, and prepare an agreement on mutual incentives and investment protection.

The MFA drafted the concept “Africa as a Vector of Ukraine’s Foreign Policy,” that is undergoing expert evaluation by the central executive authorities involved.

Activities

The COVID-19 pandemic had a serious negative impact on Africa policy implementation, resulting from limitations of interstate visits and events at multilateral interstate institutions.

The participation of the MFA delegation led by M. Shcherbatiuk, Director of the Department for the Middle East and Africa Countries, in the 36th session of the African Union with foreign ministers of member-states in February was the most important development in Ukrainian-African relations. It was the first such engagement since Ukraine gained observer status at the African Union in June 2016 and showed Ukraine’s readiness to develop cooperation with African states with new dynamics. The delegation met with representatives of the Comoros, Ghana, Rwanda, South Africa, and Zambia.

Tools of economic promotion of Ukraine in African markets via third countries and joint events gained relevance in the difficult context of the pandemic. This was possible thanks to the talks of Foreign Minister D. Kuleba with representatives of France in November and Brazil in December, among other things. Ukraine’s Embassy in South Africa held proactive online consultations with Ukrainian and South-African businesses.

The preparation of the Kenyan Foreign Minister's visit to Ukraine was announced publicly. Interstate dialogue with South Africa intensified. Firstly, it focused on preparing intergovernmental agreements on airline connection and commercial shipping by sea and the memorandum to recognize the diplomas/certificates of professional sailors. Secondly, the parties will work on a roadmap for cooperation in education and science and a cooperation agreement.

Kyiv's aspiration to intensify in 2021 bilateral relations with Sudan in all areas following the respective political consultations between deputy foreign ministers is worth noting.

In the context of Ukrainian embassies in Sub-Saharan Africa work, diplomatic missions to Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa and Senegal worked proactively to expand and improve the framework of laws and agreements, support businesses and interact within international organizations. The Embassy to Nigeria invested significant efforts in freeing Ukrainian sailors taken hostage by the pirates along the coasts of Benin, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea.

Important developments in the humanitarian area included the virtual open space titled Ukrainians of Africa: Horizons of Joint Growth under the aegis of the Ukrainian Association in South Africa and participation of the Embassy in Nairobi in Kenya in the Eyes of Diplomats, a photo exhibition.

Continued engagement of the Ukrainian military in UN peacekeeping operations contributes to the improvement of Ukraine's authority internationally and regionally, primarily in the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, where Ukraine has the largest peacekeeping presence. As of the end of 2020, 278 Ukrainian peacekeepers were in Africa as part of the four UN missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, the Abyei Area, and Mali.

Results

Despite the significant growth of attention for the African region from Ukraine's political leadership, the trend points to the weakening of political dialogue and Ukraine's economic stance due to the unfavourable international situation. The visits of Ukraine's President to a number of African countries scheduled for 2020 did not take place and were postponed for an indefinite period.

Political support for Ukraine from Sub-Saharan states at the UN did not change much. This was reflected in the vote on the UN GA Resolution on the Situation on human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine). Botswana, Liberia, and South Sudan supported Ukraine, while Angola, Eritrea, the Comoros, Sudan, and Zimbabwe voted against it.

In July, the Export Credit Agency concluded the first contract to insure the risks of Ukrainian exporters to African countries. In September, Deputy Foreign Minister D. Senik reached an agreement to establish the Ukrainian-South African Business Council and a series of thematic bilateral online business events.

The launch of the centralized issuance of Ukrainian e-visas to South African citizens by the Ukrainian MFA was a positive move. However, the restrictions caused by the pandemic had an impact on the crossing of interstate borders. The number of African students arriving to study in Ukraine in 2020 halved.

2020 saw a 2.1% decline in Ukrainian exports in goods to the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2020, the share of countries from this region in total Ukrainian exports was 1.9% or USD 950 mln in absolute terms. Still, Ukraine maintains a trade surplus of USD 375 mln with the region. Ethiopia, Senegal, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, and Tanzania are the biggest buyers of Ukrainian products. Ukraine's position weakened in the markets of South Africa, Djibouti, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Togo. Exports almost stopped to Zambia, Uganda, Malawi, Botswana and shrank significantly to Angola.

The Ukrainian companies that did business in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2020 included UkrOboronProm (aircraft maintenance), Motor Sich (aircraft gas turbine engines), AeroMech (grain separators), AvtoKrAZ (trucks), MetInvest (metallurgy products), and MHP, Terra, USPA Fruit and AgroProdService for agricultural produce.

Central Asia

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	2	2
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	2	3
ACTIVITIES	3	3
RESULTS	2	3
TOTAL SCORES	D+	C-

Heavy political, economic, and security reliance of Central Asian countries on the Russian Federation and the current absence of major economic projects between Ukraine and the countries in the region significantly reduce the potential of this foreign policy vector. Geographic remoteness of the area and restrictive measures from Russia continue to impact the negative dynamics of Ukraine's economic relations with these countries. Meanwhile, Ukraine's efforts to increase its economic presence as part of its Asian Strategy and the interest of Central Asia in developing economic projects with Ukraine offer opportunities to intensify economic relations.

Political Interest / Engagement

Ukraine's political interest in Central Asia is low. Neither the President's Address to the VRU nor the speeches of the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Ambassadorial in December mentioned Central Asia.

The topic of developing relations with countries in the region, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, is absent from virtually all platforms of Ukrainian political parties or official speeches, or statements by influential Ukrainian politicians. Generally, the thought prevails that full-scale and standalone partnership with Central Asia countries is impossible. The development of relations with them is primarily viewed in the context of developing cooperation with Asia countries overall or as part of global, transnational infrastructure projects.

Still, the issue of developing relations with Central Asia countries intensified somewhat after the MFA held the Asia Week (30.03–05.04) and following the MFA's declaration of launching the drafting of Ukraine's new Asia Strategy. According to Ukraine's leadership, this document will help expand Ukrainian exports and draw investment to Ukraine's economy if implemented. Foreign Minister D. Kuleba mentioned interest in developing business cooperation with Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan in telephone conversations with his colleagues in Central Asia.

At the same time, the development of the Central Asian vector as a standalone area of Ukraine's international cooperation or a focus of political investment is likely to be seriously limited as Russia's hybrid war against Ukraine continues.

Institutional Cooperation

The scale of coordination among different Ukrainian government institutions in cooperation with Central Asia countries can be defined as satisfactory. There are no conflicts on the current cooperation issues with the region's states. MPs of the Foreign Policy Parliamentary Committee and Ukrainian embassies in Central Asian countries had a video conference on developing relations with the region (20.10).

Positive developments of 2020 include Ukraine's new ambassadors' appointments to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. As of the end of 2020, embassies in all countries of the region were with ambassadors.

Strategic Vision

Bilateral relations with countries in the region are not seen as promising or strategic. Most documents, including the Law of Ukraine on the Basics of Domestic and Foreign Policy, 2020 Strategy of Sustainable Development, 2017 Export Strategy or 2035 Energy Strategy, have no mentions of Central Asia. Some documents mention the feasibility of developing economic cooperation with the "leading countries in Asia" overall (Ukraine's National Security Strategy) and in the context of security challenges (Ukraine's Military Doctrine).

Activities

Compared to the generally low intensity of Ukraine's relations with countries in the region in recent years, 2020 saw some intensification of activity in the Central Asia direction through diplomatic missions, some executive authorities, business entities, companies, and civil society.

President Zelenskyy and Kazakhstan's Ambassador D. Kaletayev discussed the implementation of a number of industrial, machine building, agricultural, and IT projects and the development of the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (15.04).

The major events of 2020 include the Kazakh-Ukrainian investment forum (15.10), where the participants outlined the key sectors for expanding bilateral cooperation. These include infrastructure projects, energy sector, agriculture, processing of fuels and joint industrial companies, space and machine building. Unless reliable alternative routes are found for the shipment of products, the development of bilateral cooperation will be limited by Russia, which has repeatedly blocked freight delivery from Ukraine to the countries of Central Asia via its territory. In order to overcome this barrier, Ukraine's Infrastructure Minister V. Krykliy visited Kazakhstan (9.11). Minister V. Krykliy and B. Kamaliyev, Vice Prime Minister of Industry and Infrastructure Development in Kazakhstan, discussed the prospects of further cooperation in transport infrastructure, creation of competitive routes, and the environment for freight transportation that would enhance the scale of it. Ukraine proposed switching to the system of sharing digital certificates for freight transportation by trucks to strengthen this cooperation and highlighted the potential for making the TRACECA more competitive by introducing a single transit certificate for all states involved in the project.

On Uzbekistan, Ukraine focused on expanding and diversifying trade to bring it up to USD 1bn, improving delivery chains for Ukrainian products and creating joint companies in agriculture. At the conference of exporters and investors at the MFA (3.11), the participants discussed the establishment of direct links between Ukrainian producers in agriculture and representatives of the Uzbek Republican Commodity Exchange, development opportunities for Ukrainian business in Uzbekistan via exchange mechanisms, new preferences and simplified accreditation of Ukrainian agricultural companies for trade at Uzbekistan's exchange. According to Deputy Foreign Minister D. Senik, "Ukraine is ready to become a reliable contributor to food security in Uzbekistan and other countries of Asia amidst instability of traditional trade chains."

Ukraine intensified trade contacts with Kyrgyzstan, including via a business forum, preparations to open an office of the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, exchange of business delegations, talks with a Kyrgyz airline concerning opening direct Bishkek-Kyiv flights, etc.

With Tajikistan, Ukraine continued negotiations to supply four aggregates for the Rogun Dam produced by EnergoAtom and ElektroTiazhMash, two

Ukrainian companies. There were no significant events concerning Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan.

Overall, Ukraine's more proactive efforts on the Asian vector will contribute to developing relations with Central Asia countries despite the current lack of breakthrough projects. Economic cooperation remains its key component.

Results

As expected, little foreign policy activity — there were no meetings of presidents or prime ministers in 2020 — and Russia's efforts to hamper the development of Ukraine's cooperation with countries in the region prevented the development of the Central Asia vector of Ukraine's foreign policy. The lack of direct flights from Ukraine to Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan makes economic and humanitarian cooperation more difficult. Negotiations on this issue did not deliver results in 2020.

Central Asian countries remain traditionally negative or neutral in the voting on Ukrainian resolutions at the UN. In the vote on the UN GA Resolution on the Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov (7.12), Kyrgyzstan voted against it, Kazakhstan abstained, while Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan did not vote. In the vote on the UN GA resolution on the Situation on human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine) (16.12), Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan voted against it, Tajikistan abstained, while Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan did not vote.

While 2020 was not a year when Ukraine restored its position in Central Asia, the economic fora and meetings of the respective ministers that took place in 2020 reflect the interest of the countries in the region in developing mutually beneficial cooperation with Ukraine in a number of areas, including high-tech industries, joint companies, etc. In September, the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry appointed its Representative in Kyrgyzstan.

Despite quarantine restrictions and difficulties with business contacts as a result of COVID-19, the pandemic could positively impact the development of relations between Ukraine and countries in the region. Among others, this can happen as these countries try to ensure their food security amidst deteriorating supply chains, which Ukraine can use to promote its products in the local markets. For example, the President of Uzbekistan signed Decree No-5978 on April 3, 2020, introducing zero import and excise duties for goods, including agricultural products of Ukrainian exporters, to prevent a deficit of some goods in the domestic market. Kazakhstan's support in delivering medical products from China to Ukraine creates a positive media background for the development of bilateral relations.

In 2020, trade shrank with Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan and increased with Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Total trade in goods with Central Asia countries amounted to USD 1.348bn in 2020, including USD 760.5 mln with Kazakhstan, USD 432.5 mln with Uzbekistan, USD 85.5 mln with Turkmenistan, USD 44.3 mln with Kyrgyzstan, and USD 25 mln with Tajikistan. Ukraine generally maintains a trade surplus with the countries of this region, except for Kazakhstan.

Black Sea Region

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	4
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	B-	B

The Black Sea region remained one of the important areas for Ukraine's national interests. The strategic vision of Ukraine's policy in the region improved, and trends of proactive approach for de-occupation of Crimea crystallized. Alongside countering Russia's policy and a focus on security and cooperation with NATO, Ukraine expressed interest in the work of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and cooperation with the Black Sea countries in economic issues.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2020, the focus of Ukrainian public institutions in the Black Sea was on military security and legal defence of its interests in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, as well as on economic cooperation. Ukraine nominated its candidate for Secretary-General of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation for the first time in the history of this organization and offered its own vision on further development and priorities of the BSEC.

The President declared an intent to build two naval bases to protect the Black Sea region in his Address to the Verkhovna Rada. Capacity building and restoration of infrastructure of Ukraine's Navy, cooperation with Romania, and development of strategic partnership with Turkey on the Black Sea basin security were mentioned in the analytical report that accompanied the President's Annual Address.

Security in the Black Sea region, countering Russia's aggression and restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty over the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea and ORDLO were repeatedly mentioned in bilateral contacts and interactions with international organizations, including the BSEC and NATO, as well as in official statements.

President V. Zelenskyy proposed paying more attention to the work of GUAM-Organization for Democracy and Economic Development and "giving a new life to this organization" in a telephone conversation with Azerbaijani President I. Aliyev (May).

Speaking at the 75th UN General Assembly's general debate in September, President Zelenskyy called on the friends of Ukraine to join the Crimean Platform.

When he spoke at the Ambassadorial in December, President Zelenskyy noted

that the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity and return of Donbas should be raised on every occasion in all countries where Ukraine has its diplomatic missions. He called on the diplomats to work proactively to engage stakeholders in the Crimean Platform. Minister D. Kuleba highlighted the launch of the Crimean Platform as one of the top seven priorities of Ukraine's MFA for 2021 at the December Ambassadorial.

The Program of D. Shmyhal's Government (June) only mentions the Black Sea region in the context of countering Russia's aggression.

The interest for this region was not limited to the issues of national security alone. In its August statement on the 12th anniversary of Russia's armed aggression against Georgia, the MFA called on the international community to increase international pressure and sanctions against Russia to force it to stop aggression against Georgia and Ukraine and de-occupy their sovereign territories. During 2020, Ukraine repeatedly spoke in favour of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. In May, the MFA condemned the so-called parliamentary and presidential elections in Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan) and expressed support of a political resolution based on sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan following yet another flare-up on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border in July and the resumption of full-scale military actions in September.

Parliamentary activities slowed down following the COVID-19 pandemic. Still, MP groups for parliamentary ties with Romania, Bulgaria, and Azerbaijan were established at the Verkhovna Rada. The Crimean Platform association of MPs from different factions was established in Parliament as well.

Institutional Cooperation

Generally, cooperation among different power institutions, including the President's Office, the MFA, the CMU, and the VRU, was fairly productive. Coordination of positions in promoting the Crimean Platform between the President's Office and the MFA is notable. So is the fact that both the MFA and the Ministry of Infrastructure were committed to developing relations within BSEC.

Still, the Crimean and the Donbas cases continue to be viewed separately. As a result, there is some division of responsibility for each of the two areas. The President's Office continues dealing with the issues of the Trilateral Contact Group and the termination of the war in Donbas, while the MFA is in charge of the Crimean vector.

Strategic Vision

The new National Security of Ukraine, approved with the President's Decree on September 14, 2020, strongly focuses on Ukraine's policy in the Black Sea region. Most mentions are associated with the threats resulting from Russia's actions and the temporary occupation of Crimea and ORDLO. The region is viewed more broadly as the Black Sea-Caspian or the Baltic-Black Sea. The National Security specifies that Ukraine will develop functional interaction with NATO member-states in guaranteeing security in the Black Sea basin to protect its national interests and strengthen regional security. It will also expand its potential as a naval state by protecting marine traffic, using resources of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov efficiently, and developing commercial shipping and the Ukrainian Navy.

Activities

Security of the Black Sea region remained a priority for both government teams throughout 2020. Defence Minister A. Zahorodnyuk discussed Black Sea security with Romania's National Security Minister N. Ciucă at the Munich Security Conference (14.02). In a telephone conversation (9.07), Defence Minister A. Taran and NATO Secretary-General J. Stoltenberg agreed to strengthen military presence in the Black Sea region.

The COVID-19 pandemic affected the traditional Sea Breeze exercises in July. In 2020, they were limited to just the maritime phase with the involvement of aviation. PASSEX-type joint exercise with Ukrainian, US, and Romanian vessels took place in the Black Sea. Ukrainian-Romanian Riverine 2020 exercises took place in 2020 as well.

The initiative of Ukraine's MFA to establish the Crimean Platform, a new format for consultations and coordination, was a significant development. The objective is to increase the effectiveness of the international response to the occupation of Crimea and strengthen international pressure on Russia.

Black Sea region security was discussed during the visit of Turkey's Defence Minister H. Akar and Foreign Minister M. Çavuşoğlu to Ukraine to attend the first session of political-security consultations with ministers of foreign affairs and defence of the two countries under the 2+2 formula (Quadriga Format) and in their meetings with President V. Zelenskyy and Prime Minister D. Shmyhal.

Overall, bilateral dialogue with the Black Sea countries intensified noticeably. This was reflected in the visit of President Zelenskyy to Turkey in October, Prime Minister D. Shmyhal in November and the Defence Ministry delegation led by Deputy Minister Myroniuk in August (see Turkey section for more details); the visits of Foreign Minister Kuleba to Romania in September, Turkey and Moldova in December, and of Defence Minister Taran to Romania in September. Bulgaria's Foreign Minister Zakhariyeva visited Ukraine in September.

Foreign Minister D. Kuleba expressed his vision of the prospects for further development of the BSEC and its adjustment to modern challenges and threats at the 42nd meeting of ministers of foreign affairs of BSEC member-states in November. Deputy Foreign Minister V. Bodnar, nominated for BSEC Secretary-General, presented the vision in working visits to Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, and Moldova in September-October.

The concept of the Crimean Platform was presented at the regular round of Ukraine-EU consultations on the consequences of the Crimea occupation in December. That same month, Foreign Minister Kuleba held a separate event on International Response to the Occupation of Crimea: The Next Steps at the 27th meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council. In his presentation, he shared the priorities of the Crimean Platform.

Results

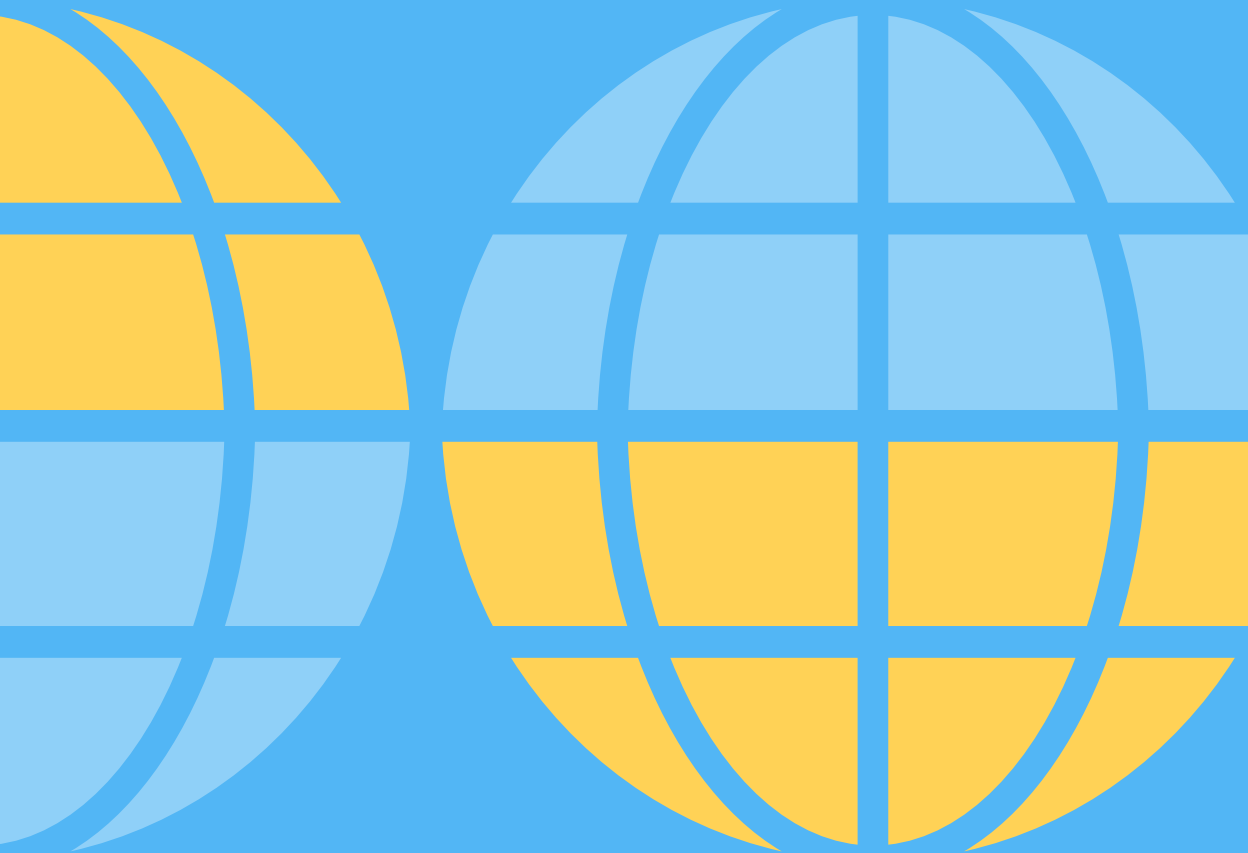
The December statement of the International Criminal Court prosecutors on sufficient grounds to start an official investigation under Ukraine's lawsuit on war crimes and crimes against humanity in Eastern Ukraine and annexed Crimea was a clear accomplishment for Ukraine.

Representatives of the EU, US and a number of other countries agreed to support the Crimean Platform. The summit is scheduled to take place in August 2021.

Ukraine managed to strengthen its position with the UN GA resolution on the Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov adopted in December.

The signing of several bilateral agreements with Turkey and Romania (see the respective sections) can be seen as an accomplishment.

At the same time, trade shrank with all Black Sea countries, except for Romania, due to the pandemic.



INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

OSCE	B+
United Nations	B
Council of Europe	B

OSCE

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	5	5
STRATEGIC VISION	4	4
ACTIVITIES	4	5
RESULTS	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B+

In 2020, Ukraine's activities in the OSCE continued to focus on countering Russian aggression and its consequences. The COVID-19 pandemic forced to minimize personal visits. However, coordinated, effective online work and an active position of the Permanent Mission in Vienna allowed Kyiv to keep Russian aggression among the OSCE priorities. This is despite the organization's objectively increasing attention to the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict and political crisis in Belarus. In the second quarter of 2020, Ukraine chaired the OSCE Security Cooperation Forum for the first time and successfully held several important online meetings.

Political Interest / Engagement

Ukraine's political interest in the OSCE in 2020 was the same as in previous years, mainly concerned with countering Russian aggression, particularly in the context of the effectiveness of the OSCE SMM and the possible expansion of its mandate. There also was considerable interest in the work of the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission in Ukraine.

In his Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada, President mentioned the OSCE only in the context of Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office M. Sajdik's visit to Donbas. At the same time, the Address's analytical report did not reflect on cooperation with the OSCE. The vast majority of interviews with the President and his diplomatic adviser, as well as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, mentioned the OSCE only in the context of consultations within the Trilateral Contact Group and SMM activities. The President and Minister of Foreign Affairs did not pay attention to the OSCE in their speeches during the annual Ambassadorial in December.

The parties represented in the parliament that paid most attention to cooperation with the OSCE are Servant of the People, European Solidarity, and Batkivshchyna. This is mostly due to the activity of their MPs in the Permanent Delegation of the Verkhovna Rada to the OSCE PA, working contacts with the OSCE/ODIHR local election observation Mission. The Voice party addressed the OSCE in its Cold De-occupation Strategy (February).

Institutional Cooperation

The activities of the state bodies of Ukraine in OSCE-related foreign policy implementation stayed at an appropriate level of coherence and compliance with the tasks set in the Government Program of Activities. The MFA successfully

organized the coordination of state bodies and institutions' work, particularly during Ukraine's chairmanship at the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation. Permanent Mission to International Organizations in Vienna managed to keep the OSCE's focus on the issues of importance for Ukraine. Cooperation between Ukraine and the office of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine and with the ODIHR was effective, in particular in organizing the work of the local election observation mission in Ukraine.

Strategic Vision

Ukraine's strategic line within the OSCE, same as in previous years, focused on involving the organization's mechanisms and capabilities to consolidate international support in countering Russian aggression, restore Ukraine's territorial integrity, and protect the rights of Ukrainian citizens on the occupied territories. The corresponding vision of cooperation with the OSCE is enshrined in the National Security Strategy of Ukraine approved in 2020, in the Government's Action Programme and Priority Action Plan for 2020. At the same time, official documents lack a vision of Ukraine's priorities in fully utilizing the OSCE's potential in other areas of the organization's work.

Activities

Although the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on the number of international visits, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office E. Rama managed to visit Kyiv in January. He discussed the issues of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict in the priorities of the Albanian chairmanship and Kyiv's initiative on expanding the OSCE SMM technical capabilities to ensure the implementation of the 24/7 mandate with President V. Zelenskyy and other Ukrainian high-ranking officials. In October, First Deputy Foreign Minister E. Dzhaparova discussed the problems of the territories temporarily occupied by Russia during meetings in Vienna with Deputy Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council E. Dobrushin, Acting OSCE Secretary General T. Yrjölä, and several Permanent Representatives to the OSCE.

In their statements at the OSCE Permanent Council meetings, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna E. Tsymbaliuk and his deputy I. Lossovskiy regularly reminded of the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine; informed about the destructive position of the Russian Federation in the negotiations, and the facts of Russian non-compliance with the ceasefire and arms withdrawal regime, about human rights violations, deteriorating environmental situation in the occupied territories, and militarization of the Black and Azov Seas recorded by the OSCE SMM; as well as called on the ODIHR and the High Commissioner on National Minorities to take measures to monitor and ensure respect for human rights in the occupied territories and to ensure regular reporting on the observance of minority rights in the Russian Federation.

During the forced break in the meetings of the OSCE Permanent Council due to quarantine restrictions in March-April 2020, the Permanent Mission in Vienna established a regular mechanism of informing the delegations of participating States on current events in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict in the form of news digests describing corresponding Ukrainian positions and approaches.

Ukraine regularly joined the EU statements in the OSCE and made its own statements, particularly in support of Moldova and Georgia's territorial integrity and of resolving the political crisis in Belarus through dialogue and without Russian intervention.

The work of the permanent delegation of the Verkhovna Rada at the OSCE PA winter session (21–22.02), as well as the participation of Deputy Head of the delegation A. Gerasymov in the meeting of the OSCE PA Bureau (2.12), helped to keep attention on Russian aggression and illegal occupation of Ukrainian territories.

In the second trimester of 2020, Ukraine chaired the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation for the first time and held a series of meetings. The Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba opened the first one, and Minister of Defence A. Taran attended the final one. The following meetings took place during Ukraine's presidency and with the participation of its officials: a forum on small arms, ammunition and mines (with the participation of Deputy Minister of Defence A. Petrenko); UN Security Council Resolution 1325 "Women, Peace, and Security" (with the participation of Deputy Minister of the Internal Affairs T. Kovalchuk); regional security in the Azov-Black Sea region (with the participation of the Permanent

Representative of the President of Ukraine to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea A. Korynevych); private military and security companies (with the participation of Major General V. Skybitskyi, Chief Directorate of Intelligence of the MoD); Vienna Document 2011 (with the participation of Lt. General L. Holopatiuk, Main Directorate for Military Cooperation and Verification of the Armed Forces of Ukraine); hybrid threats and modern methods of warfare (with the participation of the Director of National Institute for Strategic Studies O. Lytvynenko) and others.

Both the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, the Prime Minister of Albania E. Rama, and the Swedish Foreign Minister A. Linde, who will chair the OSCE in 2021, noted the high priority of resolving the “conflict in and around Ukraine,” including Donbas and Crimea in their speeches at the 27th meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council (3–4.12, online). D. Kuleba stressed that the OSCE, as a security organization, should give priority to the issues of conflict resolution and overcoming the consequences. Kuleba held a special event “International response to Crimea’s occupation: the next steps,” as part of the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting. During the event, he told more than 150 delegates from about 50 OSCE participating states about the priorities of the Ukrainian “Crimean Platform” initiative to promote international efforts on the de-occupation of Crimea.

D. Kuleba invited the newly appointed OSCE Secretary General H. Schmid to pay her first visit to Ukraine with the possibility of visiting Donbas and the administrative border with the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

The work within the Trilateral Contact Group framework continued. The priority sites’ demining plan and new zones of separation of forces and means were preliminarily agreed upon. TCG reached an agreement on the opening of new entry-exit checkpoints in Zolote and Shchastya.

The Ukrainian side cooperated with the office of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, in particular in preparing for local elections, the work of the relevant OSCE/ODIHR observation mission, countering the COVID-19 pandemic, establishing democratic control in the Armed Forces, combating corruption, promoting gender equality and human rights, developing civil society, promoting judicial reform and legal education, combating human trafficking and domestic violence, providing medical and psychological assistance to victims of military conflict, protecting the environment, etc.

Results

Despite the pandemic-related restrictions and objective strengthening of the OSCE's attention to the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict and political crisis in Belarus, Ukraine managed to pursue a fairly effective policy in 2020. It not only kept Russian aggression among the OSCE priorities but also actualized attention to Crimea through the "Crimean Platform." Despite some mixed initiatives and statements within the TCG, Ukraine was able to get 20 Ukrainian citizens released from captivity (April) and achieve a significant reduction in shelling and casualties following the introduction of a full and comprehensive ceasefire on 27 July. The OSCE SMM mandate was extended for 12 months, although due to the Russian blockade, it was not possible to ensure SMM's access to all occupied territories nor to expand the SMM activities to the entire uncontrolled part of the Ukrainian-Russian border.

Ukraine successfully chaired the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation in the second trimester of 2020, drawing attention to Russia's aggression in the context of various aspects of European security.

Ukraine received generally positive assessments of the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission and successfully cooperated with the OSCE Project Co-ordinator's office in Ukraine.

United Nations

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	3
ACTIVITIES	5	4
RESULTS	4	5
TOTAL SCORES	B	B

Ukraine's main focus in the UN is on Crimea and Donbas and the adoption of relevant resolutions and decisions despite Ukraine's strengthening position in the governing bodies of human rights and social development structures. During 2020, the main activities took place at the level of permanent missions in New York and Geneva. Apart from Foreign Minister V. Prystaiko's working visit to New York and Geneva in February, most events took place online due to pandemic-related restrictions in the countries hosting headquarters. Ukraine managed to maintain support for the Crimean resolutions in the UN GA and significantly strengthen their content.

Political Interest / Engagement

Political interest regarding the UN centred around the issue of countering Russian aggression, the adoption of relevant resolutions, and making decisions by the UN General Assembly, as well as taking corresponding measures within the UN Security Council. Issues related to food security, protection of human rights (in particular in Belarus, Myanmar, Syria, North Korea, and Iran), attaining sustainable development goals, strengthening Ukraine's participation in peacekeeping operations, and fighting the pandemic came up separately.

During his online speech in the course of the high-level UN GA debate in September, President V. Zelenskyy traditionally spoke about Donbas, Crimea, and Black Sea region security. Besides, he touched upon reforming the UN SC, information threats, and the consequences of COVID-19. The President addressed the issues of international support for countering Russian aggression and the adoption of relevant annual UN resolutions in his December Ambassadorial speech.

The Annual Address of President V. Zelenskyy to the Verkhovna Rada, the introductory speech of the Minister of Foreign Affairs D. Kuleba at the annual Ambassadorial, and the 2020 final press conference mention the UN only in the context of the adoption of relevant "Ukrainian" resolutions.

The D. Shmyhal Government Program of activities (June) contains references to the global Sustainable Development Goals until 2030 (set by the UN GA) as a basis for the country's development. Also, "maintaining attention to the issue of aggression of the Russian Federation in the framework of key international organizations, including the UN..." is named among the tasks of the MFA.

The MPs' interest in the topic in 2020 was mostly limited to sustainable development and gender equality issues. The Verkhovna Rada appealed to the UN regarding Russia's illegal actions in the occupied Crimea. In his Address on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the UN, the Speaker of the VRU, D. Razumkov, called cooperation with the UN one of the priorities in foreign policy.

Institutional Cooperation

The UN agenda and Ukraine's activities within the UN system do not cause any contradictions in different branches of government. For the most part, ministries and agencies focus on fulfilling their obligations under the relevant UN sectoral conventions and decisions of the UN General Assembly and Security Council. Interaction lies along the lines of human rights protection, participation in peacekeeping operations, and activities in jurisdictional bodies.

Strategic Vision

Most of Ukraine's current strategic documents mention the UN, except for the Law on the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy. At the same time, the new version of the National Security Strategy of Ukraine emphasizes the use of "all existing mechanisms of the UN, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and other international organizations to consolidate Ukraine's international support in combating Russian aggression."

The UN cooperation issues are usually scattered in the working documents of various ministries that cooperate with individual UN institutions or fulfil Ukraine's obligations under certain conventions. Ukraine and the UN continue to cooperate based on the Ukraine-United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPF) for 2018–2022.

Activities

Due to the pandemic, Ukraine's activities within the UN in 2020 have almost entirely moved to the level of relevant missions in New York, Geneva, and Vienna, as well as to the online event format.

In September, the President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy addressed the UN GA in New York (online) and the High-Level Event on the Occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the Organization. Among other issues related to Russian aggression, he proposed "to initiate the establishment of the International Office for Countering Disinformation and Propaganda with headquarters in Kyiv."

President Zelenskyy spoke with UN Secretary-General A. Guterres (April) about the UN's role in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic and Ukraine's support. He also extended an invitation to Ukraine after the epidemiological situation stabilizes.

In February, Foreign Minister V. Prystaiko paid a working visit to the UN Headquarters in New York, where he addressed the UN GA plenary session and met with several permanent representatives of Ukraine's partner countries. The same month, UN SC also held a meeting on Ukraine. Deputy Minister S. Kyslytsia gave a speech at the meeting. V. Prystaiko visited Geneva, where he met with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, addressed the High-Level Segment of the 43rd Session of the UN Human Rights Council, and took part in a ministerial side event on occupied Crimea.

Most events over the year took place online. In December, Minister D. Kuleba participated in a special session of the UN GA. D. Kuleba also gave online speeches on the impact of the COVID-19 situation on international peace and security as well as Russia's attempts to use the COVID-19 pandemic for political purposes (March). Additionally, he spoke at the UN SC Arria formula meeting on cybersecurity (May), ministerial video conference on the digital response to COVID-19 (July), the Ministerial Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism (September), the UN SC Arria formula meeting on the situation in Belarus, and an urgent debate on the situation in Belarus at the 45th session of the UN Human Rights Council (September).

The Ukrainian delegation spoke at various-level UN meetings in New York on transitional justice and peace (February); youth, peace, and security (April); protection of civilians in armed conflict (May); humanitarian issues (June and December); children in armed conflict (June); sexual violence during conflicts (July); the link between terrorism and organized crime (August); macroeconomic policy during pandemics; the role of information technology for sustainable development; agricultural development and food security; nuclear weapons and conventional arms control (thematic debate, October); human rights in Crimea (November and December). The delegation also presented Ukraine's position during the consideration of the draft UN GA resolution "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States" (November) and the discussion of measures to combat international terrorism (October).

In November, an online thematic event on the situation in the temporarily occupied Crimea took place with the participation of First Deputy Foreign

Minister E. Dzhaparova and the Permanent Representative of the President of Ukraine to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea A. Korynevych.

Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration O. Stefanishyna presented the first Voluntary National Review of progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Ukraine (July) at the ECOSOC High-Level Political Forum.

The Head of the State Agency of Ukraine on Exclusion Zone Management, S. Kalashnyk, took part in a meeting of the Interdepartmental Group on Chornobyl-related issues under the auspices of the UNDP and presented a virtual photo exhibition “Chornobyl: Renaissance” (April).

Ukraine’s mission in Vienna traditionally focused on OSCE activities, given the Russian aggression issue’s priority on the OSCE agenda. The UN direction observed fewer dynamics: activities took place along the lines of relevant agencies.

The Permanent Mission of Ukraine in Geneva was actively involved in the relevant UN institutions’ activities based in Geneva. Key events during 2020 focused on indigenous peoples’ rights, protection from gender-based violence and discrimination, freedom of peaceful assembly and association, racial discrimination, modern forms of slavery, as well as refugees, land mines, intellectual property protection, and migration. Ukraine took an active part in the UN Human Rights Council’s work, which has conducted four interactive dialogues on human rights with a focus on the occupied territories. Ukraine chaired a meeting of the parties to the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture. Besides, representatives of Ukrainian ministries took part in virtual meetings. In particular, Minister of Health M. Stepanov took part in the 73rd session of the World Health Assembly (May, November); Deputy Minister of Economy O. Romanishyn in the 61st series of meetings of the Assembly of States-Members of the WIPO (September), First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs E. Dzhaparova in the Interactive Dialogue on Ukraine during the 45th session of the UN HRC (October). E. Dzhaparova also held many online meetings over the year, in particular with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, which were devoted to human rights issues in Crimea and Donbas.

In 2020, the VRU maintained a dialogue with the UN within Ukraine. In particular, the First Deputy Speaker of the VRU, R. Stefanchuk, took part in the High-Level Discussion on Strengthening the Verkhovna Rada’s Role in Achieving

the Sustainable Development Goals as part of the EU-UNDP Parliamentary Reform Project (September). Deputy Speaker O. Kondratyuk, together with co-chairs of the interfraction MPs association “Equal Opportunities,” held a working meeting with the new UN Women Representative in Ukraine.

As of the end of 2020, 308 representatives of Ukraine (military, police, and civilian personnel) participated in six UN missions: Kosovo, Sudan, South Sudan, Mali, Cyprus, and the DR Congo (the largest representation). Military representation continues to outnumber civilians and police by far.

Results

Ukraine managed to retain the UN GA support concerning the two “Crimean” resolutions and further develop their substantive part. For the fifth year in a row, the UN GA (16.12) voted in favour of the resolution “Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine).” The resolution was supported by 64 countries, which is one less than in 2019. At the same time, two countries changed their attitude from “in favour” in 2019 to “abstained” in 2020 — Djibouti and Kiribati, and one country voted “in favour” — Papua New Guinea. The list of co-sponsors of the resolution expanded to 41 states. The resolution contains new elements: a clear definition of “the occupying power” of the Russian Federation, violations of religious rights, UN and OSCE monitoring in Crimea, healthcare during the pandemic, etc. For the third year in a row, the UN GA adopted a resolution “The problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov” (7.12). In particular, the resolution calls on Russia to stop conscription of Ukrainian citizens, the attempts to expand its jurisdiction over nuclear facilities, return the equipment seized during the attack in 2018 to Ukraine, and refrain from obstructing the freedom of navigation (the number of “in favour” votes remained unchanged (63), but the number of “against” decreased from 19 to 17 due to abstention votes by Burundi and the Philippines).

The Ukrainian delegation to the UN managed to counter Russia’s attempts to review sanctions policies, use the COVID-19 pandemic for political purposes, and legitimize representatives of the Crimean and Donbas occupation administrations

through informal Arria formula meetings with UN SC members' participation.

Work within international judicial institutions remained an important element. In particular, in February, the Arbitration Tribunal, established under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, reaffirmed its jurisdiction over Russia's violation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov in 2018 and continued its consideration.

In order to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Ukraine and the UN agencies prepared a Humanitarian Response Plan to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic in Ukraine (cost — USD 165 million). Funding will be used to strengthen the health care system's capacity and support health facilities, countering the negative effects of the pandemic in social and economic spheres.

Cooperation with the UN agencies on the provision of humanitarian assistance to residents of eastern Ukraine continued. Ukraine raised USD 126.8 million to implement the Humanitarian Response Plan for 2020.

Ukraine supported the introduction of the format of video statements for high-level events at the UN General Assembly in September and co-authored a UN GA resolution enabling remote voting at the UN General Assembly, which allowed to unblock the work during the lockdown.

In 2020, the Permanent Representative of Ukraine was elected Vice-Chairman of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for the period of 2020–2021. Ukraine was re-elected to the Human Rights Council (2021–2023) and elected to the Commission on Population and Development (2021–2024). The representative of Ukraine chaired the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Ukraine was also elected Vice-Chair of the 10th Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

Ukraine continued active cooperation with the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine and the Secretary-General of the Organization on monitoring the situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Council of Europe

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	5	5
STRATEGIC VISION	4	4
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	3	4
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B

The priorities of Ukraine's interaction within the CoE did not change. They include overall support in continuing and successfully implementing reforms, strengthening the rule of law and democratic institutions, improving election procedures, protecting human rights, judiciary, decentralization, and the policy to counter Russia's aggression and strengthen sanctions against Russia. The return of Russia to the PACE dramatically undermined the attitude of Ukraine to cooperation with the Council of Europe and led to a serious decline of political interest on the part of Kyiv. Overall, the political level was lowering in Ukraine-CoE relations throughout 2020, while the dynamics of expert and project support remained stable



Political Interest / Engagement

The level of political interest in interaction and cooperation with the Council of Europe declined seriously in Ukraine and was fairly sensitive in 2020. This resulted from PACE's decision to return the Russian delegation in full in June 2019 and approve its members in January 2020. Among others, this factor increased tensions in Ukraine-CoE relations, also triggering a lasting heated debate in Kyiv on further participation of the Ukrainian delegation in PACE. It resulted in favour of continuing and enhancing that participation, including by strengthening partnership with delegations from friendly states (reflected in the Baltic Plus informal format, among others).

In their key addresses and interviews throughout 2020, the President and Minister of Foreign Affairs did not mention the CoE. The Government Action Plan did not mention it either. Still, Prime Minister D. Shmyhal said in a statement in May that Ukraine counts on the condemnation of crimes against people in the Russia-occupied territory of Crimea and ORDLO by the CoE. Ukraine's MFA expressed disappointment in February with the fact that the CoE Committee of Ministers approved a decision to introduce the "complementary procedure in response to a violation by a member-State of its statutory obligation" that minimizes possible punishment for violations.

PACE-Verkhovna Rada remained mainline of public interest. In January, the VRU instructed the Permanent Delegation of Ukraine to PACE to submit its request to be confirmed for participation in the annual PACE session in 2020. 348 MPs supported that resolution. According to Y. Yasko, Chair of the Permanent Delegation, priorities included gender equality and environment, in addition to Russia's aggression against Ukraine (January).

Institutional Cooperation

Just like before, the respective units of Ukrainian ministries and agencies are in charge of institutional cooperation within the CoE. The MFA coordinates the discussion and drafting of political decisions.

The Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Court, the Prosecutor's General Office, the Government Agent before the European Court of Human Rights, the Ministry of Reintegration of the TOT, the Ministry of Regions and others are engaged in a number of the CoE projects in Ukraine on the rule of law, judiciary reform, legal protection of IDPs, violations of citizens' rights in the temporarily occupied territory, countering corruption, support to decentralization, regional development, and strengthening of democratic procedures.

Cooperation increases in projects and initiatives to develop social human rights among the Ministry of Social Policy, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ombudsman, the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy and others.

The Ministry of Digital Transformation joined the effort to design the legal foundation for the development of Artificial Intelligence. The State Financial Monitoring Service is engaged in important work on pan-European efforts against money laundering, while the SSU and the Ministry of the Interior are engaged in the fight against cybercrimes.

As before, local authorities, local governments, and NGOs remain important partners in institutional cooperation.

Strategic Vision

The CoE Action Plan for Ukraine for 2018–2021 is the primary document that outlines the strategic vision for relations between Ukraine and the CoE. Importantly, this Action Plan proved to be an effective mechanism for the CoE's interaction and support for Ukraine. Therefore, the CoE Committee of Ministers decided in July to extend it to the end of 2022 to make sure that all objectives listed in the document are accomplished.

Ukraine's policy on the CoE was reflected in the new National Security Strategy alongside other international organizations. The Strategy says that "all available mechanisms of the UN, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and other international organizations should be utilized to consolidate international support for Ukraine in countering Russia's aggression, restoring territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine."

Activities

In early 2020, Kyiv decided to return Ukraine's delegation to PACE despite the return of the Russian delegation there. The activities took place in mixed online and offline formats. To expand its opportunities, Ukraine developed a partnership within Baltic Plus, a group of CoE member-states that share Ukraine's view on the CoE sanction policy on Russia.

In January, the Ukrainian delegation to PACE appealed against the powers of the Russian delegation and the appointment of P. Tolstoy, a delegate from Russia, as PACE Vice-President, albeit to no effect. When amendments were discussed, however, two important amendments for Ukraine were approved: on Russia's fulfilment of recommendations listed in resolutions 1990 (2014), 2034 (2015), and 2063 (2015), and on the unchanging stance of PACE on Crimea as a territory that was illegally annexed by Russia.

S. Aseyev, a Ukrainian journalist, released from captivity, spoke at the event titled "Compliance of the Russian Federation with its obligations seven years after the last PACE monitoring report" at the PACE session in January.

In May, the Ukrainian delegation managed to avoid the blocking of Ukraine's initiative on preparing a report on the situation around the armed aggression and damage to the environment at the Bureau of the Assembly and PACE Standing Committee.

Chairs of delegations from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the UK signed the declaration initiated by Y. Yasko, chair of Ukraine's permanent delegation to PACE, on Belarus's developments (16.08), previously agreed upon with the Baltic Plus group. In her working meetings, Y. Yasko also drew the attention of her European colleagues on the protection of indigenous peoples of the Russian Federation.

Just like in previous years, Ukraine's Permanent Mission to the Council of Europe worked efficiently.

Government Agent before the European Court of Human Rights that operates under the Ministry of Justice represented Ukraine at the ECHR in various cases, including those related to Ukraine's international complaints against Russia.

18–19 comprehensive projects focused on supporting reforms of the judiciary, criminal justice, prison system, decentralization and local governance, the development of the election system and more, were implemented on an ongoing basis as part of the CoE's Action Plan for Ukraine.

Some dynamics were notable in the ratification of the Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. The Government drafted a bill to ratify the Convention and presented it for public discussion. However, the draft law was never submitted to the VRU.

Results

Despite the additional intensification of Kyiv's efforts on the Russian case at PACE throughout 2020, Ukraine and its partners failed to profoundly change the situation in their favour. PACE approved the powers of the Russian delegation in January. Representatives of Ukraine, Georgia, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden, and the UK, put forward a declaration of disagreement with the confirmation of the powers of the Russian delegation at PACE.

In January, MP O. Merezhko was elected PACE Vice President. He automatically joined the Bureau of the Assembly that coordinates PACE work by preparing agendas for plenary sessions and determining the themes of reports. In January, PACE approved resolution No2320 (2020) on the state of the monitoring procedure with critical notes on Russia. Among other things, it called on Russia to fully comply with the Minsk agreements — of which it is part (that provision was added upon Ukraine's proposal) — to stop the military intervention and the support for illegal armed formations in Eastern Ukraine, and to abolish the illegal annexation of Crimea.

In March, the CoE Congress of Local and Regional Authorities monitored Ukraine's compliance with its obligations under the European Charter of Local Self-Government. Congress also conducted distance observation of local elections in Ukraine (25.10). Ukraine's accomplishments that received positive assessments

from the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities included the fact that IDPs were guaranteed the right to vote in local elections in Ukraine.

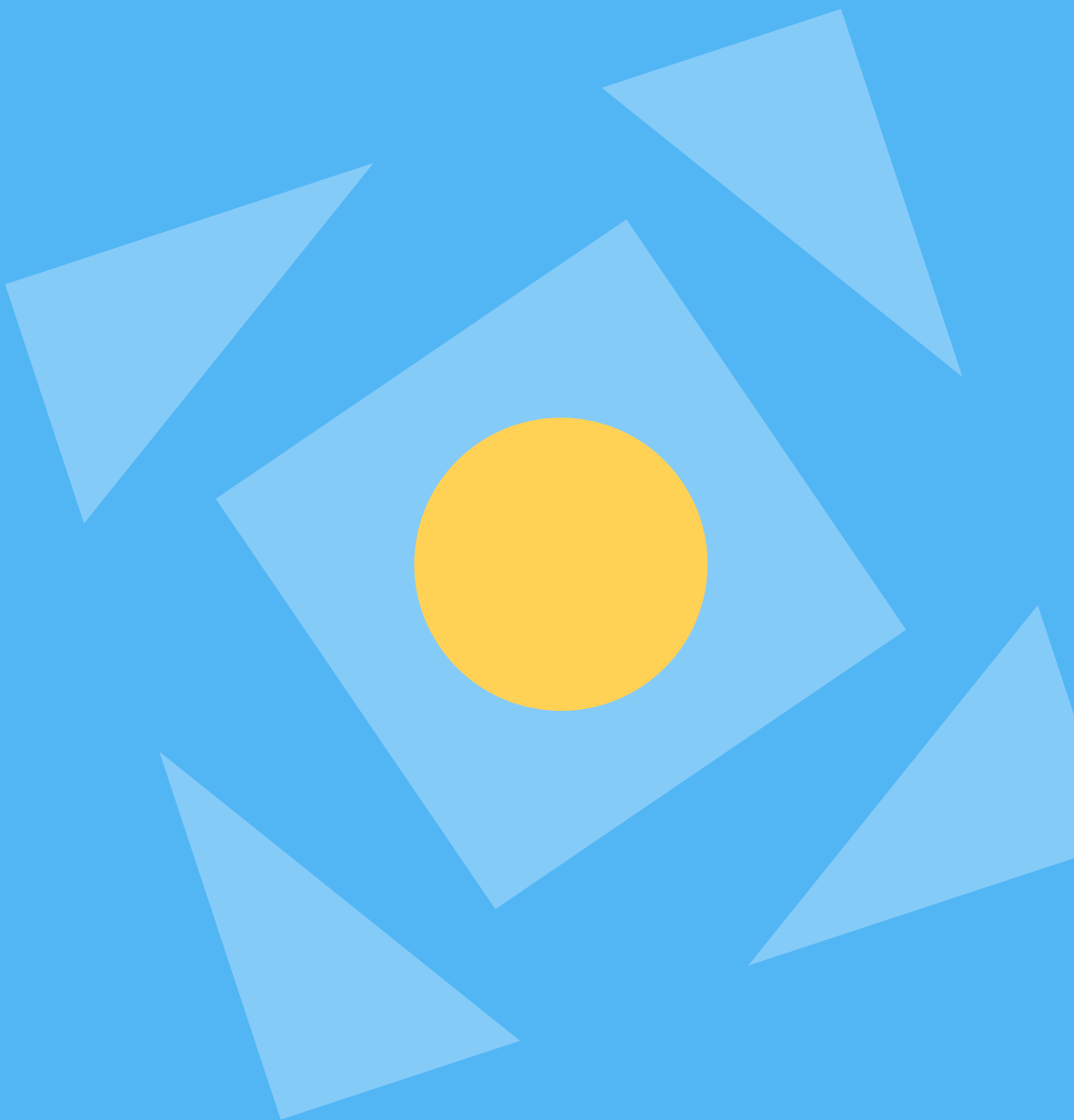
In May, Ukraine ratified the CoE Convention on Access to Official Documents (Tromsø Convention). It came into effect in December.

In January, Ukraine became the 41st member of the European Cinema Support Fund (Euroimages).

The Cabinet of Ministers passed the National Strategy for Solving the Problem of Non-Compliance with Court Verdicts by the Debtors Backed by Public Authorities or State Enterprises, Institution or Organization through 2022. It regulates the enforcement of the respective verdicts by the ECHR (30.09).

Despite the Russian case, both the CoE and Ukraine recognize accomplishments in dozens of projects underway in Ukraine. At the same time, the CoE has pointed to a number of problematic issues to Kyiv, including in anti-corruption policy, reform of the judiciary, and the issues of constitutionalism.

Interaction on the Venice Commission line intensified in the second half of 2020, as it was engaged in preparing important conclusions on the change of legislation on the judiciary, the draft law on referendum, and the Constitutional Court crisis in Ukraine.



MULTILATERAL INITIATIVES

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

Human rights

	B+	
	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	4	4
STRATEGIC VISION	3	4
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	B-	B+

In the context of human rights, the priorities of 2020 included dealing with the impact of the pandemic, increasing the focus on the temporarily occupied territory, maintaining activity within international intergovernmental organizations, and returning the citizens detained abroad and in the occupied territory to the Ukrainian territory. Ukraine's foreign policy in the context of human rights remains controversial from the perspective of the state's duties and their implementation. The markers of Ukraine's efficient work included a number of victories and accomplishments in international courts, even if not final.

Political Interest / Engagement

Human rights were among the key themes in the President's Address to Ukrainian diplomats at the video conference in late 2020. Throughout 2020, President Zelenskyy's statements and comments referred to violations of human rights in the temporarily occupied territory and protection of the rights of Ukrainian citizens in high-profile international cases, including the pandemic, the downing of a Ukrainian airplane in Iran, and the trial of National Guard serviceman V. Markiv in Italy.

At the MFA level, a relative increase of interest in human rights can be associated with the appointment of D. Kuleba as Minister. His interest was reflected in statements and initiatives, including the establishment of the Crimean Platform, the publicity campaign to free the people held hostage in some regions of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (ORDLO) and a focus on the gender issue at the MFA.

In the context of local elections, yet another surge of political tensions around the minority community in Zakarpattia between Ukraine and Hungary was the only theme associated with human rights and politics. MPs remained proactive within PACE, even in the online format. A draft law on strengthening the human rights component in the Law of Ukraine on the Basics of Domestic and Foreign Policy was registered in Parliament.

Institutional Cooperation

Different government entities mostly coordinated their policies, including in the context of investigating the downing of the Ukrainian airplane in Iran, and of cooperation of the MFA, the Ministry of Justice, and the Prosecutor General's Office to synchronize Ukraine's position in international courts. Representative of the President of Ukraine in Crimea joined the range of proactive actors. The trend of

recent years whereby the MFA has been growing more open, including interaction with human rights organizations, increased in 2020, as NGOs were involved in developing the concept of the Crimean Platform.

In the context of the pandemic and a more complex process of approving administrative and appointment decisions, the efficiency of the Ministry for Reintegration of the TOT and IDPs remained very limited. The Commission on the persons who went missing under extraordinary circumstances never started working. The lack of coordination among different entities was noticeable at times. While the MFA made harsh statements in support of protesters in Belarus, the Government only managed to ensure better conditions in Ukraine for the people who fled Belarus for political reasons by the end of the year. There are reasons to believe that some extraditions and forced deportations to the countries with problematic situations in human rights (Azerbaijan, Turkey) are carried out by Ukraine for political interests amidst top-level visits or stronger security and military cooperation. While calling on the West to reinforce sanctions, including for violations of human rights, Ukraine has not established systemic provision of the necessary information to Western partners to implement restrictions.

Strategic Vision

The new National Security Strategy titled Security of a Person — Security of the Country defines the protection of human rights in the temporarily occupied territory as one of the issues Ukraine has to keep on the international agenda.

A long-awaited development was the passing of the Resolution on Establishing the Commission to Implement Decisions of the European Court of Human Rights by the Cabinet of Ministers. In 2020, Ukraine prepared and published the first Voluntary National Review on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

A number of strategic documents are in the process of drafting. These include the Strategy of Foreign Policy and the Strategy of Human Development. Fundamental documents on the strategic vision of human rights in the context of the temporarily occupied territory, including the Strategy of De-occupation and Reintegration, were never published or approved. The Commission on Legal

Reform under the President drafted the concept for transitional justice, but it was neither published nor approved. The Action Plan for the 2021–2023 National Human Rights Strategy was not approved by the end of the year.

Activities

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected foreign policy activities both in terms of priorities (bringing Ukrainian citizens back to Ukraine was a test for the MFA in the first half of 2020, and getting vaccines, a task announced at the top level, was the test for the rest of the year) and in terms of policy implementation (activities in international intergovernmental organizations and Minsk talks were shifted to the online format).

The Crimean Platform, developed by the MFA upon the President request, was one of the key themes of negotiations with the partners. By the end of the year, countries in the EU and North America supported the idea.

Human rights protection was part of Ukraine's cooperation with UN and OSCE entities (see the respective sections for more details).

Results

Ukraine managed to bring many of its citizens detained in the occupied territory and other countries, from Italy to Syria, back to Ukraine. MFA's public stance shows that it is trying to present the return of Ukrainian citizens as one of the key criteria of its efficiency. Interim progress in international courts, including ICC and ECHR, was a sort of reward for efficient work and coordination among different entities.

With the proactive stance of the Ukrainian Government at the UN GA, the third resolution on the militarization of Crimea, the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov was passed, pinning an important connection between human rights and security in the context of illegal recruitment of Ukrainian citizens to the Russian military; the fifth resolution was passed on human rights in Crimea, and the report of the UN Secretary-General on the situation in Crimea was published.

Climate Change

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	3	3
ACTIVITIES	4	3
RESULTS	4	2
TOTAL SCORES	C+	C-

2020 was one of the most challenging years for the country's climate policy. The integrated Ministry of Energy and Environmental Protection was split into two government offices, while the COVID-19 pandemic has undermined the importance of climate policy on the Cabinet of Ministers' agenda. Although the separated ministry was involved in developing an Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan until 2030 and an action plan for the implementation of the second phase of the Energy Strategy until 2035, it failed to ensure the development of government climate policy. The state has no ombudsperson for climate change who would coordinate preparations for the greening of the economy and the transition to sustainable development.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2020, Ukraine saw ups and downs in political interest in climate policy. The first quarter was marked by a surge of interest at the level of the Ministry of Energy and Environmental Protection, which was reflected in the presentation of Ukraine's ambitious climate goals until 2050. However, as soon as in March, opponents of these changes, including Servant of the People, Opposition Platform-For Life and Batkivshchyna parties, brought this interest to nought, having ousted O. Honcharuk's Government.

The second and third quarters were characterised by political interest with a minus sign when both the parliamentary political factions (Opposition Platform-For Life, Servant of the People) and government officials used the coronavirus pandemic, economic downturn, and income slump to criticise climate goals and green energy, and made numerous statements on the need to preserve coal mines and power plants. The Voice and European Solidarity parties were quite reticent about climate policy, possibly for fear of losing electoral support. In contrast, Opposition Platform-For Life and a part of Batkivshchyna have insisted on the need to review commitments on the monitoring, reporting, and verification of greenhouse gas emissions and defer the decommissioning of thermal power plants.

Institutional Cooperation

The presence of an integrated ministry in O. Honcharuk's Government ensured a high level of institutional cooperation. However, coordination has deteriorated significantly after his resignation and due to the coronavirus pandemic. The newly established Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources continued

to work on draft climate policy regulations, but the process of their approval and adoption has slowed down notably.

The ministry made the most consistent efforts to develop climate policy. At the same time, other central executive bodies and parliament did not ensure the development, approval, and adoption of the necessary regulations. In particular, the deadlines for preparation and submission of the second national defined contribution under the Paris Agreement and the Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan until 2030, the action plan for the implementation of the second stage of the Energy Strategy until 2035 were not met. The VRU did not ensure the consideration and adoption of several laws on emissions, principles of state environmental control, emission quotas and integrated permits.

In particular, no consensus has been reached on what to establish and how: a climate fund or a decarbonisation fund. It is also difficult for the ministry to engage in a dialogue on agricultural reform, urban planning and transport, where climate policy is often seen as a factor that hampers development.

Strategic Vision

The year 2020 saw a discreet struggle to change the strategic vision of climate policy between the proponents of sustainable energy development and lobbyists of oligarchic groups seeking to minimise financial losses that may be incurred by industrial and energy companies as a result of the introduction of climate policy that reflects the country's existing commitments under the Paris Agreement and the EU Association Agreement.

Ukraine was expected to formulate its vision for participation in the European Green Deal and the global fight against climate change in a number of strategic documents. However, only drafts of some documents have been prepared. Thus, the Green Energy Transition Concept, presented in January, mentions Ukraine's aspiration to become a climate-neutral economy by 2070 and outlines medium-term goals that should be detailed in the integrated National Energy and Climate Plan. One of the tasks named in the National Security Strategy (2020) is to

prepare a Strategy for Environmental Security and Adaptation to Climate Change. Political dialogue on the European Green Deal and, in particular, on the border mechanism for regulating the carbon footprint could only be relaunched at the end of the year.

Activities

International political contacts with the participation of President V. Zelenskyy took place at the end of the year only. There Ukraine reaffirmed its climate commitments and involvement in the global fight against climate change. There was a difficult dialogue with the Energy Community Secretariat on commitments concerning emissions by large combustion plants and renewable energy sources, while the revision of the “green tariff” did not help the payment discipline or search for sources to cover the difference between the tariff and the market price.

Funding for energy efficiency measures from both the state and local budgets and at the business level has also been significantly reduced.

Results

One of the most important results of the country’s climate policy is the preparation of a national system for the monitoring, reporting, and verification of greenhouse gas emissions to be launched in 2021. The Ministry of Environmental Protection has also developed a significant number of sectoral documents for industry, agriculture, and forestry.

However, in 2020, Ukraine did not deliver on its commitment to prepare and submit the second national defined contribution under the Paris Agreement and the integrated national plan for energy and climate until 2030. It was not until the end of the year that the authorities revisited the issue of developing a national version of the European Green Deal. However, the significant influence of financial and industrial groups may hinder the adoption of relevant legislation.

Nuclear Non-proliferation

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	1	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	1	1
ACTIVITIES	2	3
RESULTS	1	2
TOTAL SCORES	D-	D+

In 2020, Ukraine's foreign policy in the field of non-proliferation somewhat revived compared to the previous year. It remained quite passive in the areas that did not directly affect state interests. Ukraine continued to comply with its international obligations on physical protection, export controls, and international safeguards.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2020, there was a slight revival of the political elite's interest in nuclear non-proliferation. The Budapest Memorandum and its implementation traditionally attracted particular attention. Given the systemic violations of the terms of the document, the Office of the President of Ukraine sees the need to revise it and possibly create new international instruments that would protect states that renounce nuclear weapons or intentions to develop them. The President of Ukraine called on the population to support his initiative. The issue of "security assurances" under the Budapest Memorandum was among the issues initiated in the nationwide poll (25.10).

In the arms control realm, Ukraine made its position clear on the need to maintain the Open Skies Treaty (the United States announced its withdrawal). According to the MFA's comments, Ukraine supported the Treaty under the condition that all parties continue its implementation. Ukraine will oppose any manipulation of the Treaty.

Regarding the non-proliferation of chemical weapons, on the Day of Remembrance of Victims of Chemical Warfare (29.04), the MFA expressed deep concern over the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian armed forces, which killed dozens of civilians. Ukraine reaffirmed its clear position "that chemical weapons use by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances is a gross violation of international law, and those responsible for such actions must be brought to justice." The MFA also supported the Statement of the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons in connection with the publication of the first report of the Investigation and Identification Team concerning the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic by the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (8.04).

Institutional Cooperation

In 2020, institutional cooperation took place in the manner prescribed by law. It remained sporadic within existing working groups and coordination platforms, mainly in the context of cooperation with international organizations (IAEA, UN, NATO, and OSCE).

In early December, the President of Ukraine signed the Decree “On Ensuring Ukraine’s Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions on Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Preventing Their Use for Terrorist Purposes,” which coordinated interdepartmental cooperation in fulfilling non-proliferation obligations. According to this Decree, the MFA of Ukraine is entrusted with the function of coordinator of the UN SC resolutions on non-proliferation implementation.

Strategic Vision

The strategic vision of the foreign policy on non-proliferation in the reporting year was limited by the restrained (neutral) and passive position of the Ukrainian side.

Ensuring the application of state export control measures for international transfers of military and dual-use goods is mentioned among the priorities and measures in the ANP 2020. The focus is on preventing their use for terrorist and other illegal purposes in the context of overcoming traditional and new security threats. In addition, the Program also provides for the effective exchange of data with international partners in the field of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as well as the introduction of an electronic system in the field of state export control.

The new National Security Strategy of Ukraine (14.09) highlights Ukraine’s commitment to active participation in combating terrorism, countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, international crime, etc., among the main directions of the country’s foreign and domestic policy to ensure its national interests and security.

Activities

2020 observed Ukraine's recent typical activity: participating in program events without any specific further practical actions — implementing the non-proliferation policy.

Representatives of the Ukrainian delegation stressed the importance of complying with all existing legal obligations to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, related materials, equipment, and technologies during a thematic debate of the First Committee of the UN GA (30.10). The speech cited Russia's violation of the provisions of the Budapest Memorandum. At the same time, Ukraine also noted the ineffectiveness of the existing legal form of security guarantees in ensuring sovereignty, territorial integrity, and inviolability of borders.

The IAEA Conference on Nuclear Security (ICONS 2020) took place from 10 to 14 February. Together with diplomatic statements on further support for cooperation, the Ukrainian delegation stressed the importance of the Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan for 2019–2021, developed jointly with the IAEA, not only for Ukraine but also for the whole region. Ukraine continued to work with the IAEA on strengthening nuclear safeguards. Thus, the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine hosted a meeting of the Safeguards Implementation Review Group on the application of IAEA safeguards in Ukraine (8.07). In particular, the event participants discussed further measures necessary to increase the effectiveness of safeguards implementation.

The establishment of a professional association of women in Ukraine's nuclear sector — “WiN Ukraine” — was an important step in the further development of the safe and secure use of nuclear energy. Women in Nuclear Ukraine Annual Conference (27.11) included a statement by the IAEA Director General, Rafael Grossi, announcing the IAEA Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Program with the first 100 fellows coming from 71 member states, including Ukraine.

Particular attention should be paid to the intensifying discussion on the issues of the environmental catastrophe caused by the radioactive hazard in the uncontrolled part of the Donetsk region. Vice Prime Minister — Minister for Reintegration of the TOT, O. Reznikov, addressed the IAEA to conduct an

examination, a monitoring mission in the occupied territories, in particular on the Yunkom mine, to be able to find an effective solution to this problem.

The MFA actively defended state interests regarding the Open Skies Treaty. In particular, in response to the Russian Foreign Ministry's statement on Crimea, the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs accused Russia of encroaching on Ukraine's territorial integrity, violating the Treaty, and trying to escalate tensions in the region.

An online meeting of the OSCE Forum on Security Co-operation on Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (8.07) started a vigorous discussion on the importance of enforcing UNSCR 1540 and related resolutions in combating terrorist groups' efforts to seize WMD. Ukraine also reminded about Russia's commitments under non-proliferation and disarmament treaties, including the commitments under the Budapest Memorandum, which were reaffirmed in the 2019 declaration of the OSCE Ministerial Council.

Results

In 2020, it is necessary to note a slight revival of the vector of non-proliferation and arms control on the foreign policy agenda. At the same time, Ukraine lacked clarity and strategic certainty on particular issues.

Separately, a clear and timely formulation of Kyiv's position on the Open Skies Treaty, as well as an adequate response to Russia's attempts to manipulate it to legitimize the attempt to annex Crimea is worth noting.

Ukraine continued to meet its commitments and was an active participant in international non-proliferation cooperation platforms.

It should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic did not significantly affect Ukraine's activity in this direction.

International security

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	2	3
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	2	3
ACTIVITIES	3	3
RESULTS	2	2
TOTAL SCORES	D+	C-

In 2020, the thematic of the international security agenda remained in the basket of secondary issues. Participation in the UN and NATO peacekeeping operations as well as consultations on information security, combating hybrid threats, and security challenges of the pandemic continued. In a way, Ukraine set its priorities during its OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation chairmanship. Ukraine's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh war was sluggish and uncoordinated.



Political Interest / Engagement

During 2020, Ukraine continued to focus on national security issues and regional security challenges in the Black Sea region. Its statements on international platforms also focused on Ukraine's agenda or Russia's actions affecting regional and global security. Most of the security speeches took place at the UN and OSCE.

In his Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada, President Zelenskyy emphasized the idea of establishing the headquarters of the International Office for Countering Disinformation and Propaganda in Kyiv, among other things. However, this idea did not develop further. The President also spoke about global information threats at the Ambassadorial in December. During his speech at the UN GA annual session opening, V. Zelenskyy did not address security issues on the world agenda, except for information security and the fight against COVID-19.

D. Shmyhal's Government's Program of activities (June) determines "ensuring the participation of the Armed Forces units in international peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the UN, EU, NATO, and other international security organizations" among the expected results and indicators of the MoD for 2020.

Over the course of the year, Ukraine paid the greatest attention to cybersecurity, information security, protection of civilians during armed conflicts, and nuclear security (see the UN section for details). The issues of "borderization" in Georgia, the OSCE Minsk Document, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the situations in Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria (under the OSCE auspices) were also discussed.

In its official statements, the MFA drew attention to the aggravation of the situation in Iraq (January) and Idlib (February), non-recognition of elections in self-proclaimed Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh (March), cessation of hostilities in Yemen (April), shelling on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border (July), the anniversary of the Russian-Georgian war (August), and the attack on Aden Airport in Yemen (December). The MFA and missions to international organizations repeatedly drew attention to the issue of nuclear proliferation. The MFA also gave comments in support of statements by international organizations and individual countries: of the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons on the use of chemical weapons in Syria (April) and of the US Secretary of State on charges against Russian GRU officials in cybercrimes (October).

At the same time, Ukraine's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was sluggish and uncoordinated. In particular, President V. Zelenskyy spoke about this only in the context of a comparison of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR) and Donbas (October) and of the response to false accusations by an Armenian film director about the supply of phosphorus bombs to Azerbaijan (November). Also, he noted that Ukraine would not supply weapons to any of the parties, in contrast to the statements by individual MPs regarding such a possibility (MP from the Servant of the People party L. Marchenko). The MFA of Ukraine issued a statement only at the end of the war (11.11), while at the beginning, Ukraine only made a statement at the OSCE delegation-level at a special meeting of the Permanent Council (29.09). The basis of Ukraine's position is to support the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Defence Minister A. Taran made a statement about his desire to increase national contributions to the NATO-led operations and, in particular, to join the NATO Training Mission in the Republic of Iraq and Operation Maritime Guard (December). Besides, A. Taran spoke about the interest in cooperation under the Permanent Structured Cooperation program of the European Union (December).

Ukraine's MPs did not show interest in the issues of the international security agenda. Some MPs came across as negative during the Nagorno-Karabakh war in October, including L. Marchenko (Servant of the People) due to commenting on military support for Azerbaijan and I. Kiva (Opposition Platform — For Life), who called the conflict “a continuation of the millennial confrontation between the Christian and Muslim worlds” and called for helping Christian Armenia. Both statements resulted in diplomatic scandals and contradicted the official position of the state.

Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation on international security in 2020 remained sporadic. The coordination of work took place mainly in the framework of cooperation with international organizations (the UN, OSCE, and NATO) among the MFA, MoD, MIA, and the Government Office for Coordination on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration.

Strategic Vision

The strategic vision of international security issues and Ukraine's participation in their resolution during 2020 remained the same. Documents adopted in previous years address these issues mainly in the format of the country's subregional security or Euro-Atlantic course, with an emphasis on the Black Sea security. Ukraine's National Security Strategy adopted in September does not contain references to international security issues, except for hybrid threats, mainly from the Russian Federation.

Activities

Ukraine's international activities to support peace and security in 2020 did not change significantly and remained at a low level. The main activities focused on the UN and NATO peacekeeping missions, work within the OSCE and the UN, involvement in information security issues, and the provision of medical supplies to combat the pandemic.

From April to August, Ukraine chaired the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation, which was held online for the first time. Certain measures devoted to strengthening the role of the OSCE in resolving the conflict in eastern Ukraine; security situation in the Black Sea-Azov region; countering hybrid warfare; the use of private military companies in conflict zones; COVID-19 pandemic; combating illicit arms trafficking; managing stockpiles of conventional ammunition; mine action and demining of territories; strengthening of trust and security in the military field; as well as the implementation of the resolutions on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the UN SC resolution "Women, Peace, and Security," etc. were among the priorities of the Ukrainian presidency. In addition to representatives of the MFA, representatives of the MoD, the MIA, and the Permanent Representative of the President of Ukraine to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea also took part in the meetings.

In 2020, MPs, MFA officials, ministries' officials, and the President did not participate in major international forums and conferences due to their rescheduling or cancelling. However, President Zelenskyy spoke at the Munich

Forum (February); Vice Prime Minister O. Stefanishyna spoke online at the CEPA Forum (September), Halifax (November), and Ukraine in Washington 2020 (December), and took part in GLOBSEC (Slovakia) offline, etc. Foreign Minister D. Kuleba spoke at the Warsaw Security Forum (November) and the high-level conference “Afghanistan 2020” (Geneva, November), and others.

At the same time, political involvement, even in traditional regions, was minimal. Ukrainian representatives at the UN and the OSCE provided reactive responses to the security situation aggravation or human rights violations due to the unresolved conflicts in Moldova and Georgia. Ukraine’s activity in resolving international conflicts was virtually equal to zero. During the Armenian-Azerbaijani war in Nagorno-Karabakh in October, Ukraine limited itself to a few restrained statements within the framework of international organizations and the President’s statements about the absence of plans to supply weapons to either side in the conflict.

As of 2020, representatives of the Armed Forces (over 350 in total) were present in nine international peacekeeping and security missions, namely in the UN missions in the DRC, Kosovo, South Sudan, Mali, as part of the UN Interim Force for Abyei, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, the KFOR Multinational Force in Kosovo, and NATO’s Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, as well as the Joint Control Commission in the security zone of the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova. 27 Interior Ministry officials participated in four UN missions in South Sudan, DR Congo, Cyprus, and Kosovo.

Despite the pandemic, the AFU representatives participated in international military exercises, including Combined Resolve-XIII and XIV (Germany, January, and September), Brave Band (UkrPolLit brigade, February), Military Ski Patrol 2020 (Poland, February), Saber Junction 2020 (Germany, August), Rapid Trident 2020 (Ukraine, September), Platinum Eagle 2020 (Romania, September), Premier 2020 (Danube, September), Noble Partner 2020 (Georgia, September), Warrior Watcher 2020 (Ukraine, October), PASSEX (Black Sea). The Sea Breeze 2020 exercises (Ukraine, July) took place without a ground component but with the participation of NATO’s Second Permanent Mine Action Group ships, etc.

The MoD and certain branches of the military continued to cooperate with international partners. In particular, the Ukrainian Navy held a video conference with partners from the Armed Forces of the UK, the US, Canada, and Denmark

within the framework of the Joint Maritime Commission's Subcommittee (August); the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine R. Khomchak took part in a meeting of the V4 states Armed Forces commanders in the format that included Ukraine (Poland, September); the MoD of Ukraine's Chief Directorate of Intelligence held an international "Intelligence Alliance Conference" with the participation of military intelligence delegations from Canada, the UK, the US, and Ukraine (January).

Results

In fact, Ukraine's results in the field of international security are reduced to its activities within international organizations, including the UN, OSCE, and NATO (see relevant sections). The focus on human security in the context of Russia's ongoing aggression continues.

Consolidation of International Support on Countering Russian Aggression

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	3	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	5
ACTIVITIES	3	4
RESULTS	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	C+	B+

Despite several threatening trends, 2020 has generally strengthened Ukraine's international support in countering Russian aggression. The emergence of new Ukrainian initiatives and bilateral formats of cooperation has helped to counter Russia's expansion and maintain anti-Russian sanctions. It also created necessary preconditions for systemic expansion of personal and sectoral sanctions pressure against the Kremlin.



Political Interest / Engagement

During 2020, maintaining consolidated international support for countering Russian aggression remained a key element for Kyiv's policy of de-occupation and deterrence of the Kremlin in its systemic "hybrid" offensive against Ukraine. Fierce internal political confrontation (not only among parliamentary parties but also different groups of influence within the power structure); generally cautious President Zelenskyy team's rhetoric on the aggressor country; inability/unwillingness of the authorities to get out of the Minsk process deadlock; and intensification of destructive activities by pro-Russian groups — this whole set of negative factors did not change official Kyiv's focus on the maximum involvement of foreign partners in countering Russian aggression.

In his Annual Address to the Verkhovna Rada and during his speech at the Ambassadorial, V. Zelenskyy focused on Kyiv's unblocking of the Normandy process. He also named Ukraine's main foreign policy priority: the EU, the USA, Canada, the UK, Turkey, and other partners' continued support in the process of de-occupation of Ukrainian territories. The speech emphasised the creation of the Crimean Platform in the context of coordinating and consolidating international support for the de-occupation of Crimea. President Zelenskyy paid special attention to preserving the international coalition's support for Ukraine and encouraged reaching a new level. In particular, he mentioned bipartisan support from the United States, the formalisation of a strategic partnership with the UK, and reaching an unprecedented level of partnership with Turkey. Another important aspect noted was the need to preserve and strengthen the "world coalition" in support of Ukraine's struggle against hybrid Russian aggression, especially in terms of sanctions pressure and bringing the Kremlin to justice for violating international law.

In his speech at the UN GA (October), V. Zelenskyy called for further unity in the international community's support for restoring Ukrainian territorial integrity and expressed readiness to initiate the establishment of the International Office for Countering Disinformation and Propaganda with headquarters in Kyiv.

The MFA was a locomotive in consolidating Ukraine's international support in countering Russian aggression. The announcement of the Crimean Platform creation in May and subsequent activities to involve international partners became

an important new initiative of 2020. In particular, the Crimean Platform is designed to provide a multilevel international format of Crimea's de-occupation process to prevent the removal of this issue from the international agenda.

The Deputy Head of the OPU I. Zhovkva noted the impossibility of implementing the Crimean Platform initiative without Brussels while emphasising the importance of the EU's support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine in bilateral relations.

The Cabinet of Ministers' Programme of activities (June) expressed the need for international partners' support in modernising the Donbas dialogue with Russia and creating a separate high-level dialogue platform on Crimea and Sevastopol. In addition to specialised tasks for the MFA, the preparation of Ukraine's consolidated complaint against Russia on the implementation of its international legal responsibility for armed aggression against Ukraine was among the long-term government priority activities under the Ministry of Reintegration.

Institutional Cooperation

In 2020, the tendency to strengthen the leading role of the OPU and their efforts to monopolise the policy of de-occupation and the formation of a counter-strategy against Russian aggression continued. In fact, Donbas (Minsk) issues are now under OPU control, and Crimean matters are under the MFA.

At the same time, Ukraine managed to balance the negative trends in institutional cooperation observed in the previous year in consolidating international support. This was achieved primarily through consistent work and the clearly articulated principled stance of the MFA on countering Russian aggression. In particular, the Ministry established a position of the Special Representative on Sanctions Policy.

Separately, it should be pointed out the institutional strengthening of the Crimean Tatar direction in MFA activities (an appointment of E. Dzhaparova to the position of the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine), and an appointment of O. Reznikov, a key negotiator in the TCG, to the position of Vice Prime Minister for Reintegration of the TOT. O. Reznikov was also introduced into the National Security and Defence Council.

Developments in the area of interdepartmental cooperation were marked by the strengthening role of the Cabinet of Ministers through the defence industry and military-technical cooperation. The establishment of the Ministry of Strategic Industries of Ukraine was a strategic step in this regard. Within a short period, the ministry conducted a series of visits and negotiations, and the Turkish direction particularly stood out.

All parliamentary fractions, except for the Opposition Platform — For Life, have naturally complemented the MFA and OPU and acted in a coordinated manner to consolidate international support for countering Russian aggression in the international arena. Despite the political competition, the opposition European Solidarity party was very active in communicating with Ukraine's international donors.

The release of V. Markiv from an Italian prison resulted from the fruitful interdepartmental work by the “Free Markiv” interfraction association at the VRU, the MFA, the MIA/National Guard of Ukraine, OPU, and others.

Strategic Vision

Strengthening international support for Ukraine remained a strategic direction within the framework of political and legal instruments to counter Russian aggression. A new National Security Strategy of Ukraine (14.09) added to the existing legal framework. It determines the highest priority of establishing peace, restoring the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised state borders. One of the foundations for achieving this key goal is the development of strategic relations with key foreign partners, primarily with the EU and NATO, and their member states, as well as the United States.

The attainment of the priorities set by the Strategy should be ensured, among other things, through continued implementation of defence and deterrence measures, active use of various negotiation formats, consolidation of international pressure on Russia as a conflict escalation prevention measure, and reduction of tension and cessation of armed aggression by Russia.

The adoption of the Law of Ukraine on Defence Procurement (17.07) may also become determinant in consolidating international support for countering

Russian aggression. In particular, the Law provides for the harmonisation of Ukrainian legislation in the field of defence procurement with European norms and accepted practices.

Preparation of the De-occupation Strategy has started.

Activities

The work on building up international support for Ukraine in combating Russian aggression through international platforms (the UN, OSCE, and PACE — see relevant sections) was supplemented by the establishment of new bilateral formats of cooperation. During his visit to London (8.10), President V. Zelenskyy signed a bilateral agreement on strategic partnership with Great Britain. The main areas of focus are defence and security. After Brexit, London intensified its foreign policy, where, among other things, it has a substantive interest in supporting Ukraine in counteracting Russian aggression and further expansion of the Kremlin (for more details, see the section on the UK).

Ukraine and Turkey launched a new “2+2” format of cooperation in Kyiv (18.12). The format implies political and defence consultations among the two countries MFAs and MoDs. The key areas of work are ensuring security and countering Russian domination in the Black Sea region, developing strategic partnerships with Turkey, and gaining full membership in NATO (for more details, see the section on Turkey).

Besides, a new tripartite format — the Lublin Triangle — came into being. Ukraine, Poland, and Lithuania agreed, in particular, to coordinate actions to protect international law in the context of Russia’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine.

A series of joint exercises with US and British military units (as an aspect of developing strategic bilateral cooperation) became clear signals to the Kremlin in the run-up to and during the active phase of Russia’s Caucasus 2020 military exercises. Caucasus 2020 practised various scenarios for further aggression against Ukraine. During the talks of the advisers to country leaders within the restored Normandy Format framework, the Ukrainian side insisted on having fulfilled its obligations and emphasised the systemic violations of the arrangements by Russia.

This helped consolidate Ukraine's international support but, partially because of the OSCE's amorphous stance, made it impossible for Kyiv to implement Plan B (an alternative to the Minsk process in Donbas, which is deadlocked).

V. Zelenskyy discussed the launch of the Crimean Platform with the USA, the UK, Canada, and Turkey representatives. At the OPU and MFA level, the issue was discussed with the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy J. Borrell.

Ukrainian diplomacy has been active in international courts, such as the Ukraine vs Russia case in the European Court of Human Rights. Consolidation of international support created the preconditions for court decisions in favour of Ukraine on lawsuits in response to Russian armed aggression, as well as the occupation of Crimea and parts of Donbas. Ukraine emphasised the aggressor's responsibility for human rights violations, holding a "referendum" in Crimea at gunpoint, and other acts of violence.

Results

2020 consolidated Kyiv's international support for countering Russian aggression despite some threatening trends within Ukraine and in the context of the ongoing international security system erosion. Ukrainian diplomacy created preconditions for maintaining and strengthening sanctions pressure (both personal and sectoral) against the Kremlin in 2021.

The diversity of bilateral formats, platforms, and initiatives for de-occupation will help consolidate Ukraine's international support. On the negative side, Kyiv's unwillingness to quit the impasse of the Minsk format in de-occupying a part of Donbas and start the transition to "Plan B" remain detrimental.

A joint statement following the 22nd Ukraine-EU Summit (6.10) confirmed the invariability of the EU's policy to assist Ukraine in the process of de-occupation of its territories. The EU extended its economic sanctions against Russia, the duration of which remains directly tied to the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements.

The Ukrainian National Guard trooper V. Markiv's release (3.11) from the Italian prison (he was unjustly sentenced to 24 years in jail in Italy) was an unconditional victory of Ukrainian diplomacy.

The United Kingdom, Canada, Moldova, the United States, Slovakia, and Turkey agreed to participate in the Crimean Platform.

In December, the UN GA adopted a resolution “The situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine),” with significantly strengthened provisions. The resolution defines the illegitimacy of the Russian Federation bodies and officials in Crimea. For the first time, the UN officially recorded that such officials should be considered only “the occupying power” of the Russian Federation. The resolution systematically focuses on the facts of mass human rights violations in the temporarily occupied Crimea. At the same time, one less country voted in favour of the resolution (64) than in 2019, and three more countries abstained (86). The voting on the annual resolution of the UN GA on the militarisation of Crimea and the Black Sea showed that the support remained at the same level as in 2019 (63 countries “in favour”), while the number of those who voted “against” decreased from 19 to 17.

Economic diplomacy

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	5	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	4
ACTIVITIES	4	4
RESULTS	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	B	B+

Economic diplomacy has finally established itself among Ukraine's political ambitions. The dualism of functions in foreign economic policy made it difficult for relevant institutions to cooperate. Still, their coordination of efforts was sufficient to implement initiatives in strategic areas. The parliamentary dimension of economic diplomacy centred on investment. Despite the high activity of top officials, the intentions to increase interstate cooperation remained largely at the level of previous agreements. In the conditions of the coronavirus crisis, Ukrainian exports maintained their position thanks to traditional raw materials sold in the already developed markets. Owing to the government's economic bloc efforts, the opportunities of Ukrainian foreign trade entities have expanded geographically and sectorally.

Political Interest / Engagement

There has been progress along the course for economising foreign policy announced by the President of Ukraine. V. Zelenskyy personally oversees the implementation of the task of promoting exports and attracting foreign investment by relevant state institutions. The pro-presidential initiative was carried forward in O. Honcharuk's Cabinet of Ministers' programme and was listed among the priorities of D. Shmyhal's government.

In their statements, the President of Ukraine, the Prime Minister, the heads of relevant ministries and the NSDC touched upon the strengthening of national positions in international trade by diplomatic means, including the development of the export potential of strategic business sectors (primarily the defence industry). V. Zelenskyy and D. Kuleba emphasised the strengthening of economic cooperation in their speeches at the annual Ambassadorial.

Due to different positions on building relations with external partners, the factions did not make joint statements on trade policy. Thanks to the activities of the interfaction association "Invest in Ukraine," and the creation of a temporary special commission for the protection of investors' rights in the VRU, parliament's involvement in creating a favourable investment climate has increased. The issue of developing a sanctions strategy was repeatedly raised at joint committee hearings.

Institutional Cooperation

In 2020, there were significant transformations in the system of institutions to support Ukrainian exports and stimulate foreign investment in Ukraine. To strengthen support for Ukrainian business abroad, the Division of Economic Cooperation at the MFA was expanded to the Department of Economic Diplomacy,

the Council of Exporters and Investors was reset, and criteria for assessing the effectiveness of increasing trade and investment were introduced in foreign diplomatic missions. This amplified the dualism of foreign economic policy since a significant list of tasks in this area was still assigned to the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade, and Agriculture. A number of functions related to foreign trade were transferred from Trade Representative of Ukraine T. Kachka to Deputy Minister O. Romanishyn.

Control over the Export Promotion Office, for its part, was transferred from the Ministry of Economy to the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers. The Single Export Web Portal was launched in partnership with the Export Promotion Office and the Ministry of Economy. Agreements on cooperation reached with the exporters and banking institutions' community by the Export Credit Agency have confirmed the latter's readiness to join efforts to support Ukrainian exports.

There has been little public activity in terms of interaction between state institutions of the foreign economic bloc, in particular in the format of the International Trade Council. Cooperation in the investment sector was promoted more actively. A temporary special commission for investor protection and the government's Office for Attracting and Supporting Investments have signed a Memorandum of Cooperation. The MFA of Ukraine announced the strengthening of cooperation with UkraineInvest. Parliament and the government cooperated on economic diplomacy, with representatives of the MFA and the Ministry of Economy taking part in the meetings of relevant parliamentary committees.

Strategic Vision

The main vector for the integration of the national economy into the European economic space through the implementation and adaptation of the AA/DCFTA has remained unchanged in the new National Security Strategy. At the same time, the state stimulation of exports, as well as the expansion of investment and innovation opportunities, is listed among the priorities of economic security.

The Economic Security Strategy of Ukraine and the Foreign Policy Strategy are being prepared to be updated with regard to the above-mentioned foreign economic guidelines. The draft National Economic Strategy 2030 mentions the

development of economic diplomacy in the section “International Economic Policy and Trade.” The adoption of the law on investment “nannies” became a catalyst for attracting foreign investment.

Activities

Two priority areas — Europe and Asia — have been observed in economic policy. In the course of the year, the MFA was hammering out the Asian strategy. The focus on this area was clearly seen during the MFA's and the Ministry of Economy's meeting with representatives of the Gulf countries, ASEAN, China, and Japan. Negotiations have been initiated by the relevant institutions to renew existing free trade agreements, while preparations have begun to conclude such agreements with key partners (China, Egypt, Indonesia, etc.).

For the first time since 1992, Ukraine has nominated a candidate for the post of Secretary-General of the BSEC Secretariat (elections will be held in the spring of 2021).

The MFA and business interacted using modernised tools such as online briefings for Ukrainian exporters with the participation of Ukrainian ambassadors. Ukraine's delegations to the parliamentary assemblies of various international organisations were also instrumental in promoting economic diplomacy. Numerous business forums and trade missions to the EU, Asia, Africa, and Latin America were also held online (see relevant sections).

Following the preparatory work (consultations with the European side and Ukrainian business, joint expert assessment), the arguments in favour of updating the AA/DCFTA were developed, which was announced at the EU-Ukraine summit in Brussels (October). Progress in the EU-Ukraine “industrial visa-free dialogue” is evidenced by the launch of a preliminary EU assessment mission, which is to prepare an early report and outline further legislative and regulatory steps.

Ukraine's Trade Representative focused predominantly on the EU, the United Kingdom, Turkey, and, to a lesser extent, on China and the United States. T. Kachka was busy promoting agro-industrial exports, as well as resolving trade issues at the intersection of Ukraine's national interests and international commitments (regarding the export of roundwood, import of mineral fertilisers, etc.).

Results

Although COVID-19 has undermined global economic activity, its decline was relatively low — 1.8%, due to the dominance of commodity groups in domestic exports. The total turnover in 2020 amounted to USD 103.3bn. The negative foreign trade balance shrank to more than half of what it was (from USD 10.2bn to USD 4.9bn). This dynamic was achieved, among other things, thanks to the government's economic bloc's joint efforts to reduce barriers to Ukrainian exports.

In the meantime, foreign trade in services fell significantly: exports by 28.5% and imports by 25% while the balance was positive for Ukraine, reaching a total of USD 16.4bn.

The activities of the Office for Export Promotion were recognised as successful at the European level (European Enterprise Promotion Awards 2020). The reformatting of the Export Credit Agency made it possible to conclude the first insurance contracts.

The signing of the Free Trade and Strategic Partnership Agreement with the United Kingdom (October) became a milestone. The FTA agreement with Israel was ratified and will come into force on 1 January 2021. On the other hand, negotiations with Turkey became an unpleasant surprise for Ukrainian food exporters: instead of progress in signing a free trade agreement, they faced an increase in import duties on more than 100 types of goods.

Public Diplomacy

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	5	4
STRATEGIC VISION	4	4
ACTIVITIES	5	5
RESULTS	4	4
TOTAL SCORES	B+	B+

Public diplomacy faced two significant challenges in 2020. The global COVID-19 pandemic was the first one. An attempt to seriously cut its funding in spring was the second one, demonstrating the domestic problem of the lacking understanding of how important public diplomacy is. Despite this, political interest in public diplomacy grew in 2020 thanks to the involvement of the MFA leadership and the proactivity of the Ukrainian Institute. Presentation of the five-year Strategy of the Ukrainian Institute and the completed draft Strategy of Public Diplomacy that has been undergoing approval were important improving steps in this area.



Political Interest / Engagement

Public diplomacy was not prioritized in Ukraine's President or the President's Office's key speeches and interviews. At the same time, interest in public diplomacy increased significantly after D. Kuleba was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs. To him, public diplomacy is a priority in promoting Ukraine's image across the world. First Deputy Minister E. Dzhaparova is highly engaged, and public diplomacy is among her key focuses.

The agenda of the current VRU did not have a specific focus on public diplomacy or its components. Still, Y. Yasko, chair of the subcommittee on interparliamentary cooperation, bilateral and multilateral relations, was highly proactive in this field. First Lady O. Zelenska focuses on cultural diplomacy.

Public diplomacy and the promotion of Ukraine's positive image in the world are defined as a standalone priority in D. Shmyhal's Government program.

Institutional Cooperation

A series of discussions on Ukraine's cultural diplomacy organized by the Ukrainian Institute jointly with the MFA in July, the drafting of a public diplomacy strategy under the leadership of the MFA in September, the International Forum of Cultural Diplomacy in November, development of Ukraine.ua, a website about Ukraine for foreign audiences, and other developments were successful cases of interaction among government agencies, experts, and civil society in 2020.

Cooperation between the Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Policy and Interparliamentary Cooperation and the MFA resulted in the drafting of Priorities for the VRU's Interparliamentary Cooperation in 2020. Two out of six priorities are elements of public diplomacy, including "the promotion of Ukraine's image abroad and cultural cooperation" and "improvement of awareness about Ukraine and increasing the number of 'friends of Ukraine'." The President's Office and the MFA work on joint projects under Ukraine NOW, a campaign to promote the brand of Ukraine abroad that engages all ministries and agencies in the communication.

Despite the progress in cooperation among different government agencies, there is an urgent need for mechanisms of inter-institutional coordination and modes of cooperation among all entities involved in this field that remains unmet.

The attempt to seriously cut the budget planned by the Ministry of Finance in spring put at risk the operation of the entire public diplomacy sector and the work of the Ukrainian Institute, Ukrainian Cultural Fund, Ukrainian Book Institute and others. The MFA also saw its budget cut as a result of the pandemic.

Strategic Vision

The Law on the Basics of Domestic and Foreign Policy, last amended in 2018, does not have a specific accent on public diplomacy. It notes, however, that Ukraine should get a leading spot in the system of international relations, strengthen its international authority, increase its role and place in global sports, etc., as some of the fundamental elements of its foreign policy. In practical terms, all this is accomplished through the efforts of public diplomacy. The same applies to the 2020 National Security Strategy.

The documents that do mention public diplomacy in the context of strategic communications include the 2015 Military Doctrine and the 2017 Information Security Doctrine. Public diplomacy is also reflected in the Concept for Promoting Ukraine in the World and Promoting Ukraine's Interests in the Global Information Space from 2016.

In summer, the Ukrainian Institute presented its five-year Strategy. The Strategy for Public Diplomacy has been drafted and is currently at the stage of approval.

Activities

The MFA system gets a central role in the field of public diplomacy. Currently, the Department of Communications and Public Diplomacy, established under the MFA Decree (12.08), is directly in charge of the public diplomacy functions. Some events to promote Ukraine's positive image abroad, focused mostly on countering Russia's aggression and de-occupation of Crimea, were held under the budget program of Financial Support for a Positive Image for Ukraine Internationally and Events to Support Ties with Ukrainians Residing Abroad.

Ukrainian Institute is the most proactive and visible in this field. In addition to a range of public discussions, including within the International Forum of

Cultural Diplomacy in November, the Ukrainian Institute implements a number of important programs and projects with an accent on cultural diplomacy first and foremost. These include a program to support art residences abroad (EXTER), support to Ukrainian studies abroad, presentation of Ukraine's visual culture online via Ukraine Everywhere, support for proMOTION, a campaign to promote Ukrainian films internationally, and more.

In order to debunk myths and stereotypes about Ukraine and to communicate Ukrainian culture and history to international audiences, the Ukrainian Institute and Internews Ukraine launched *Ukraine in 2 Minutes*; Ukrainian Institute and Ukraïner made a series of stories about Ukraine translated into Polish, Czech, and French; Ukrainian Institute, Kyiv Mohyla Academy and EdEra studio for online education launched the first course on Ukraine titled *Ukraine: History, Culture, and Identities* in English, etc. The MFA launched a campaign to fill Wikipedia with information about Ukraine in various languages with the Wikimedia Ukraine NGO aiming to counter disinformation, and continued information campaigns, such as #CrimeaIsUkraine, #StopRussianPropaganda, #Fight4Truth, #NeverAgain, #ExportNow, #ExploreUkraineNOW, #ДипломатіяРівнихМожливостей (#EqualOpportunitiesDiplomacy), etc. The promotion of Ukrainian cinematography and books continues, and new audioguides in Ukrainian are being launched in museums in the world.

Empirical research, including on the perceptions of Ukraine abroad, initiated by the Ukrainian Institute was an important step. Its results will be used to further project planning activities promoting Ukraine's image in the world.

The global pandemic hampered government plans to develop tourism to Ukraine that should expand awareness about Ukraine abroad. Still, the Ukrainian State Agency for Development of Tourism launched *Mandruï Ukrayinoyu* (Travel around Ukraine) project, while the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy designed a roadmap for developing tourism in Ukraine with international experts. Jointly with the Office for Public Policy Development, the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports presented the *Strategy for Developing Sports and Physical Activity through 2032* for public discussion. Among other things, it highlights the improvement of Ukraine's authority and image in the world thanks to the accomplishments of Ukrainian athletes.

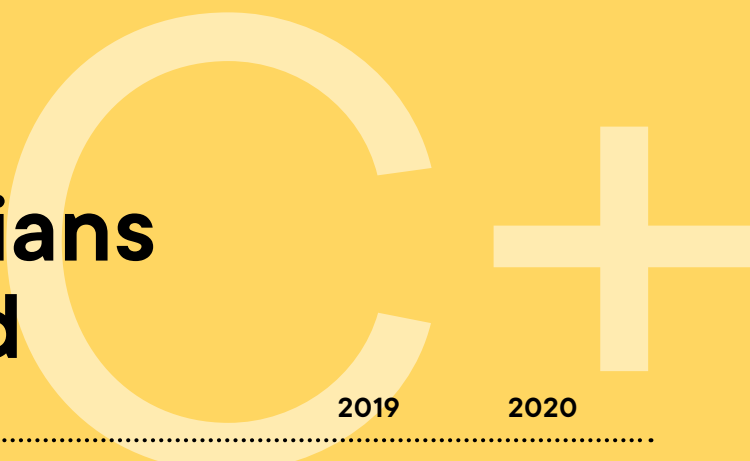
Results

Public diplomacy faced two key challenges in 2020. The COVID-19 global pandemic was the first one, preventing the strengthening of personal contacts, residences and more, forcing a revision of the formats of work. The Ukrainian Institute's Strategy through 2024, presented in the summer, highlighted the creation of quality digital content to enable the proper functioning of public diplomacy in the new environment.

The attempt to seriously cut the budget for public diplomacy in spring was the second serious challenge. While the key stakeholders largely managed to defend the funding, this situation demonstrated the obvious weak spots, including the often insufficient scope of interinstitutional cooperation and, at times, a lack of comprehensive understanding in Ukraine of how important public diplomacy instruments are.

Despite these serious challenges, the key stakeholders continued to work proactively. The Ukrainian Institute changed the formats of many scheduled events and conducted most of them online, rather than cancelling them, with an extensive audience reach both in Ukraine and abroad. Quite a few important projects were launched to inform foreign audiences about Ukraine, debunk stereotypes, establish Ukraine's place in the global academic community, etc. 42 out of 44 events scheduled under the MFA's budget program were carried out, mostly online. The question of which of the current public diplomacy actors will be in charge of planning and ensuring the operation of expert and academic diplomacy and how institutional cooperation will take place among all stakeholders remains unanswered for now. The Strategy for Public Diplomacy would have to clarify this. The opening of Ukrainian Institute offices abroad is still undecided as well.

Ukrainians Abroad



	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	4	4
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	3	3
STRATEGIC VISION	4	4
ACTIVITIES	4	3
RESULTS	3	3
TOTAL SCORES	B-	C+

The dynamic development of Ukraine's relations with its compatriots abroad in 2020 was hampered by the pandemic, which made it impossible for the state leadership to meet people of Ukrainian origin abroad and, thus, to gain an insight into their problems and needs. The old practice of calling on Ukrainians abroad to provide comprehensive assistance has returned instead of the widely-announced measures to improve legislation and modalities of cooperation. The issues of dual (multiple) citizenship, labour migration and broader opportunities for holders of the status of a Ukrainian-abroad remain unresolved.

Political Interest / Engagement

In 2020, the Ukrainian leadership maintained a high political interest in the issues of Ukrainians abroad. However, because of the pandemic, the emphasis again shifted towards calls on those living abroad to assist Ukraine. The government's attempts to develop a systemic policy to protect the interests of Ukrainians abroad have not been implemented in practice. The President of Ukraine's attempt to resolve the problem of dual (multiple) citizenship, which is an issue for the majority of Ukrainians abroad, was widely criticised by the opposition. Bill No 2590 submitted by the President to the VRU was withdrawn from the agenda in May.

During the year, the country's leadership expressed hope that Ukrainians abroad may help attract investment and facilitate the development of economically strong Ukraine, further counteraction to Russian aggression, and the delivery of humanitarian aid, including the purchase of medical equipment and drugs to combat the COVID-19 crisis.

D. Shmyhal's Government Programme addressed the issue of Ukrainians abroad. D. Kuleba described it as a task for 2021 at the end-of-year press conference in December in the context of a new policy on Ukrainians abroad.

Institutional Cooperation

Traditionally, it is the MFA, namely the Directorate General for Worldwide Ukrainians, Cultural, and Humanitarian Cooperation, that oversees the issue of Ukrainians abroad. The National Commission for Ukrainians Abroad also continues

to operate under the MFA. In 2020, it met quarterly as scheduled (21.01, 16.06, 15.07, and 06.11) under the chairmanship of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Bodnar, who is in charge of this sector. These meetings primarily focused on the issues of granting, terminating, and refusing the status of a Ukrainian abroad. Despite numerous complaints about the essence of the status of a Ukrainian abroad and the red tape, no legislative or practical changes have been adopted so far. In 2020, the MFA's funding under the budget programme "Financial support to ensure Ukraine's positive international image, measures to maintain ties with Ukrainians living abroad" on cooperation with NGOs of Ukrainians living abroad was drastically cut.

Ukrainian state institutions' contradictory signals and statements on travel permits for Ukrainian seasonal workers during the pandemic posed a problem (in the spring and summer).

Strategic Vision

The issue of Ukrainians abroad is addressed in a number of official documents of strategic nature, ranging from the Constitution of Ukraine and corresponding laws to doctrines, concepts, and state programmes. However, most of these documents are outdated and do not face up to modern challenges. In 2020, the State Programme of Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad expired, while the draft Concept of the State Targeted Programme of Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad until 2023 was not presented to the public until the end of the year.

At the same time, the President of Ukraine's statements and the government programme promise foreign Ukrainians to meet their national, cultural, linguistic, and educational needs and systematically cooperate with clusters and organisations of Ukrainians abroad in their countries of residence. In practice, this currently translates into, among other things, mutual interest in the development and support of Ukrainian schools, recognition of the 1932–1933 Holodomor (famine) as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people and recognition of the 1944 deportation of the Crimean Tatar people as another act of genocide.

Activities

Ukrainian authorities maintain contacts with Ukrainians abroad in two ways: through the country's foreign diplomatic missions and the international coordination association of Ukrainian communities in the diaspora, the Ukrainian World Congress.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the UWC President held a discussion with the ambassadors at the Ambassadorial (21.12). Its main goal was to discuss the development of a new, more ambitious policy for Ukrainians abroad by improving legislation, creating effective mechanisms of supporting Ukrainian communities abroad, and providing the necessary resources and institutional framework.

Work was underway to update policy documents on interaction with Ukrainians abroad, in particular on the draft Concept of the State Targeted Programme of Cooperation with Ukrainians Abroad until 2023.

The issues of Ukrainian migrant workers and border-crossing permits climbed high on the agenda in the spring and summer due to coronavirus restrictions. Significant work has been done with the governments of Austria, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and the UK. The outdated legislation on external labour migration, in particular protection of the rights and interests of Ukrainian workers abroad, the number of which remains quite significant even despite the pandemic, remains an unresolved issue.

Results

Despite loud statements about more active contacts with Ukrainians abroad being a priority, the practical results of efforts looked very unconvincing in 2020. About 400 citizens received the status of a Ukrainian abroad during the year. At the same time, some people lost it due to their anti-Ukrainian activities. Apart from an appreciation of patriotic feelings, the benefits of this status continue to be insignificant, and opportunities for its holders have not been expanded.

The sequestration of the state budget due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 resulted in a significant reduction in funding for NGOs of Ukrainians abroad, which led to the cancellation of the vast majority of activities and projects.

A positive shift in 2020 was the inventory of information on Ukrainian Saturday and Sunday schools operating under the auspices of the NGOs of Ukrainians abroad, as well as the publication of the list of prominent Ukrainians' burial sites abroad on the Foreign Ministry's website. The list of over 500 officially registered NGOs of Ukrainians abroad, which cooperate with Ukraine's foreign diplomatic missions, was also updated. However, the systematisation of this information is not commensurate with the need to resolve a whole range of issues, primarily the legal ones.

The Cabinet of Ministers and the Ukrainian World Congress signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (10.12), having agreed to develop cooperation in Ukraine's trade and economic relations with other countries, attracting investment in the Ukrainian economy, restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity, building civil society in Ukraine, and developing Ukrainian community life in the diaspora. A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Office for Investment Attraction and Support UkraineInvest and the Ukrainian World Congress (11.12).

COVID-19 pandemic

B

	2019	2020
POLITICAL INTEREST	n/a	5
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	n/a	3
STRATEGIC VISION	n/a	4
ACTIVITIES	n/a	5
RESULTS	n/a	3
TOTAL SCORES	n/a§	B

The challenges linked to the fight against COVID-19 tested the capacity of Ukrainian institutions to provide timely assistance to Ukrainian citizens. Despite chaotic actions in the early stages, Ukrainian institutions managed to apply digital diplomacy tools and expand the range of online services. Ukraine signed a cooperation agreement with COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX), worked proactively with individual countries to guarantee the rights of Ukrainian citizens and receive humanitarian assistance.



Political Interest / Engagement

The President's Address to the VRU in October featured messages about the importance of overcoming the COVID-19 crisis. In this context, China and South Korea were mentioned as the countries with which Ukraine intensified "mask cooperation" to obtain elements of individual protection, ventilators, protective clothes, and more. President Zelenskyy tasked the diplomats with obtaining a quality anti-COVID-19 vaccine. This will remain a priority for the MFA in 2021. More generally, anti-COVID-19 efforts are defined as the second most serious challenge for Ukraine's foreign policy in 2021, following efforts to counter Russia's aggression and strengthen Ukraine's security (based on the concluding press conference of the Minister). Dealing with the impact of the pandemic will also remain a priority for the Government and Parliament.

Institutional Cooperation

Institutional cooperation in dealing with COVID-19 challenges can be described as "wavelike" as it had its peaks and chaotic segments. March 17–19 were illustrative when Ukraine began to evacuate its citizens from all over the world. The evacuation was not sufficiently coordinated between those who shut the borders urgently, such as the State Border Guard Service, and those in charge of organizing the evacuation and helping Ukrainian citizens abroad, such as the MFA. Later on, the MFA, Ministry of Infrastructure, Migration Service, Health Ministry, and State Aviation Administration were engaged. Unfortunately, the lack of coordination and a relatively short timeframe given for the citizens to return to Ukraine, cancellation of flights and the absence of alternative options confirmed the lack of institutional cooperation. The Ministry of the Interior gradually worked on the model for crossing the border on foot or by car with the Health Ministry. Protection of Ukrainian seasonal workers' rights in leaving to the countries that invited them for work remained unresolved.

The MFA became an outpost of coordination to ensure interaction among the agencies in charge of evacuating Ukrainian and foreign citizens and providing

humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and other countries in need. Representatives of donor organizations funded an office of special advisor on humanitarian issues at the MFA.

Strategic Vision

The spread of COVID-19 and the risks of dealing with the impact of the pandemic were reflected in the 2020 National Security Strategy, particularly the section on the current and forecasted threats to national security and Ukraine's national interests (para. 11, 12, and 29 of Section II). Ukraine supported the Global Declaration on the Digital Response to COVID-19 initiated by Estonia and Singapore and called on the world to join efforts in strengthening the security of cyberspace amidst the pandemic challenges.

Activities

Dealing with the consequences of the pandemic remained a priority issue in the course of the political dialogue of heads of states, governments, and individual agencies throughout 2020.

The work of the MFA was vital in ensuring the unprecedented return of Ukrainians and citizens of some other countries, such as Lithuanian citizens from India or foreigners from China, in the first part of the year. It worked proactively to guarantee transit through European countries via special corridors and ensure the work of border crossing points with neighbour-states. In some countries, such as Sri Lanka, where Ukraine has no embassies, the MFA granted representation powers to responsible Ukrainian citizens. Some of Ukraine's most proactive diplomatic missions were in Ankara, Berlin, Budapest, Chisinau, Istanbul, Frankfurt, Prague, São Paulo, Vienna, Warsaw, and Zagreb.

As one driver, the MFA proactively joined the effective use of digital diplomacy tools. For example, it organized the first virtual visit of Minister Kuleba to Germany. Ukrainian citizens began to receive digitized services, including electronic waiting

lines to the consulate. The Protection program launched at the MFA, and more proactive use of the DRUG (Friend) application contributed to helping Ukrainians abroad. But the efficiency and timeliness depended on individual countries and the work of Ukraine's embassies there. The map of online travelling around the world during the COVID-19 created by the MFA was useful.

Experience exchange in healthcare was a key area of foreign policy interaction. The UK, Italy, and other countries responded to the request of Ukrainian epidemiologists and medical professionals to hold several series of web-seminars on diagnosing and treating COVID-19. Similar initiatives were implemented via the cooperation of some heads of unified territorial communities (UTCs) and their peers in EU countries. In one example, the mayor of Vo' municipality in Italy shared his experience with representatives of UTCs in Ukraine. Ukrainian doctors visited Italy in spring to obtain experience of assistance at hospitals.

There were proactive efforts to obtain humanitarian medical assistance, including individual protective gear, ventilators, masks, respirators, protective clothes, thermometers, etc., in various countries of Europe, America, and Asia and to purchase medical equipment. Ukraine is in negotiations with the European Investment Bank and the World Bank to get EUR 50 mln and EUR 25 mln loans, respectively, to buy vaccines.

In the context of economic diplomacy and the trend of production facilities being moved closer to destination markets, the MFA was engaged in establishing contacts with the investors that were willing to invest in Ukraine's economy at the time of the pandemic.

Ukrainian cargo planes delivered necessary medical supplies to France, Spain, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Denmark, and the USA from China and other countries. The engagement of Ukrainian AN-planes in meeting the SALIS program needs through December 31, 2021, primarily for NATO countries, was a breakthrough in foreign policy.

Results

Ukraine received humanitarian assistance from Azerbaijan, Denmark, China, Japan, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Singapore, South Korea, Turkey, the USA, the UAE, Vietnam, etc.

Ukraine and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development signed the Second Additional Financing Agreement of USD 300 mln to deal with the impact of COVID-19. Ukraine received EUR 190 mln of non-refundable aid from the EU, USD 14.5 mln from the US, and EUR 165 mln from the UN and its agencies. Ukraine is a candidate for tranches from different international partners for vaccination needs ranged from USD 100,000 to USD 50 mln.

Ukraine signed the cooperation agreement with the COVAX fund, including technical documents, to provide 8 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccines to Ukraine. COVAX approved Ukraine's request to supply vaccines to Ukraine (12.12). By the end of 2020, however, Ukraine did not sign a single contract to purchase vaccines, including as a result of foot-dragging by the Health Ministry.

The fact that Ukraine was included in the list of priority countries to be allocated vaccines for healthcare professionals and senior people after talks with the EU can be seen as a 2020 accomplishment. In December, the European Commission was in the process of designing a mechanism to provide or sell vaccines to third countries, including Ukraine.

Ukraine and Switzerland signed a memorandum on the grant of CHF 1.5 mln to build a line for the production of lung ventilation machines in Khmelnytsky (3.12). At the same time, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the imports of Favipiravir (Avigan), an experimental Japanese treatment that can help against COVID-19. Ukrainian healthcare professionals agreed to conduct clinical trials with this treatment.

In March, Ukraine and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs designed the Emergency Response Plan for the COVID-19 Pandemic. It included the analysis of Ukraine's humanitarian crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and helped coordinate donor assistance to Ukraine to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Amidst travel restrictions, a special operation was organized to rotate the Ukrainian Antarctic Expedition due to the cooperation of Ukraine's diplomatic missions in Turkey, Brazil, Chile and the MFA.

Foreign policy scores 2020

Foreign policy directions	General Score			Political Interest	Institutional Cooperation	Strategic Vision	Activities	Results
	2018	2019	2020					
G-7 COUNTRIES								
United Kingdom	B+	B+	A-	5	4	5	5	5
Italy	C+	C+	B+	5	4	4	5	4
Canada	A-	B+	B+	4	3	5	5	5
Germany	B+	B+	B+	5	4	5	4	4
USA	A-	B+	B+	4	3	5	5	5
France	B-	C+	B-	4	3	3	4	4
Japan	C+	B-	C+	3	4	3	3	3
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION	B-	B+	C+	3.3	3.5	3.7	3.3	3.0
European Union	A-	A-	B+	4.0	4.5	5.0	4.0	4.0
Political Dialogue	A-	A-	B+	4	4	5	4	4
Economic Cooperation	A-	A-	B+	4	5	5	4	4
Eastern Partnership	B-	B	C	3	3	3	3	3
European Energy Community	C+	B-	C-	3	3	3	3	2
Euro-Atlantic Integration	A-	B+	A-	4	4	5	5	5
BILATERAL RELATIONS								
Belarus	B+	B+	B-	5	4	3	4	3
Georgia	B-	B-	B-	3	3	5	4	3
Israel	B-	B+	C-	3	3	2	4	2
Iran	D-	E+	C	3	4	2	3	3
China	C+	C	B	4	4	4	4	4
Lithuania	A-	B+	B+	4	5	5	4	4
Moldova	B-	C	C+	2	3	3	4	4
Poland	B+	B+	A-	5	4	4	5	5
Romania	B-	C	C+	3	3	3	4	4
Slovakia	B-	B-	B	4	4	3	4	5
Turkey	B	C+	A-	5	4	5	5	4
Hungary	C-	C-	C-	4	2	2	4	2
Czech Republic	-	B-	C+	3	3	3	4	4
Russian Federation	C+	C	D+	3.0	2.3	3.0	2.3	2.0
Political relations	C+	C-	D+	3	2	4	2	1

Foreign policy directions	General Score			Political Interest	Institutional Cooperation	Strategic Vision	Activities	Results
	2018	2019	2020					
Economic relations	C+	C+	C-	2	4	2	3	2
Energy relations	C-	C	C-	4	1	3	2	3
REGIONAL COOPERATION								
Asia-Pacific Region	C+	C	B-	4	4	3	4	4
Middle East	B-	C+	B-	4	4	3	4	3
Western Balkans	B-	C+	C-	2	3	1	4	3
Baltic States	B+	A-	B+	4	4	4	5	4
Northern Europe	B	B	C+	3	2	4	4	3
Latin America	C-	C-	C-	3	2	2	4	3
South Asia	C+	C+	C+	4	3	4	3	3
Sub-Saharan Africa	C-	C-	C	5	3	3	2	2
Central Asia	D	D+	C-	2	3	3	3	3
Visegrad Four	C+	C	C	3	3	3	3	3
Black Sea Region	B-	B-	B	4	4	4	4	4
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS								
OSCE	B+	B+	B+	4	5	4	5	4
United Nations	B+	B	B	4	4	3	4	5
Council of Europe	A-	B+	B	3	5	4	4	4
MULTILATERAL INITIATIVES								
Human Rights	B-	B-	B+	5	4	4	4	4
Climate Change	C	C+	C-	3	3	3	3	2
Non-Proliferation	C	D-	D+	3	3	1	3	2
International Security	C-	D+	C-	3	3	3	3	2
Consolidation of International Support Against Russian Aggression	B+	C+	B+	4	4	5	4	4
Economic Diplomacy	C+	B	B+	5	4	4	4	4
Public Diplomacy	B+	B+	B+	4	4	4	5	4
Ukrainians Abroad	C+	B-	C+	4	3	4	3	3
COVID-19 Pandemic	-	-	B	5	3	4	5	3
TOTAL SCORE	B-	C+	B-	3.74	3.51	3.53	3.93	3.56

Recommendations



1. Based on the Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine, develop separate regional concepts/roadmaps for a clear strategic and substantive approach to the promotion of Ukrainian national interests in different regions. These documents should cover political, security, military-technical, economic, humanitarian, and consular aspects. Some of the proposed directions are:
 - Ukraine's neighbourhood policy;
 - Ukraine's Black Sea policy;
 - A strategy of relations with countries in the Middle East and North Africa.
2. Optimise the process of appointing heads of the foreign diplomatic missions, especially in important regions and organisations. Appoint Ukraine's ambassadors to Angola, Argentina, Cuba, China, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Ireland, Peru, Senegal, South Korea, Romania, Vietnam, the Holy See, and the head of the mission to NATO.

PARLIAMENTARY DIMENSION

3. Intensify interparliamentary dialogue in the groups of friendship with Asian and Latin American countries, Israel, including by using digital communication platforms.
4. Promote the parliamentary dimension of the Crimean Platform. Before the August summit of the Crimean Platform, hold online consultations with representatives of friendship groups to discuss possible mechanisms for the stable functioning of the Crimean Platform's parliamentary dimension.
5. Resume interparliamentary contacts and meetings of the Georgia-Moldova-Ukraine Interparliamentary Assembly.

6. Enhance political dialogue with Christian Democratic Union leaders seen as the party's potential candidates for German Chancellor. Given the parliamentary elections in Germany in September 2021, intensify work with the country's largest political forces to support issues that are important to Ukraine (anti-Russia sanctions, deepening of EU-Ukraine cooperation, EU and NATO membership, settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine, and the restoration of territorial territory) on the international agenda and in parties' election manifestos.
7. Invite British MPs to visit Ukraine with a needed trip to Donbas.
8. Hold parliamentary hearings on a long-term strategy for developing Ukrainian climate policy and adopt a resolution to support the course for achieving climate neutrality following the example of the EU, the USA, Japan, and China.
9. Hold committee hearings at the Verkhovna Rada with the participation of representatives of Ukrainian business, the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture on legislative, financial, and organisational support for Ukrainian exports, taking into account the specifics of different regions (it is recommended to hold separate hearings on each region).
10. Ensure regular parliamentary control of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration by holding parliamentary and/or committee hearings, including on the implementation of Annual National Programmes under the aegis of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, and other issues on the NATO-Ukraine agenda.
11. Improve interaction between parliamentary committees, as well as between the legislature and the executive, in order to screen bills for compliance with the EU legislation (*acquis communautaire*) and consider expert conclusions while preparing them for consideration at the Verkhovna Rada's plenary sessions.

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

12. Complete Ukraine's accession to key agreements and conventions in the context of economic cooperation with the EU, including the Convention on Common Transit, the Convention on the Simplification of Formalities in Trade in Goods, implementation of the Authorized Economic Operator programme, improvement of the protection of intellectual property rights at customs, etc.
13. Join efforts to update the Eastern Partnership policy until 2030 considering Ukrainian interests. In particular, focus efforts on promoting Ukraine's European integration ambitions and developing the A3 format (Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine), particularly by including relevant provisions in the Declaration of the Eastern Partnership summit in 2021.
14. Clearly state an intention to pursue a course for energy integration and build relations based on the European energy acquis and the procedures used by the EU member states.

EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION

15. Review the existing legal framework in the field of security and defence (much of which is already outdated) in relations with neighbouring countries in order to account for the new status of Ukraine as a NATO's Enhanced Opportunities Partner and aspirant country, and to include elements of cooperation within NATO and improvement of the interoperability of forces according to NATO standards.
16. Initiate the establishment of a Coordinating Council of NATO's Enhanced Opportunities Partners aimed at developing a shared vision for the content of the programme and coordinate new initiatives.

17. Intensify practical cooperation within the framework of the NATO-Ukraine Platform on Countering Hybrid Warfare and involve experts in it. Consider preparing thematic analytical materials, as well as conducting a series of online events jointly by experts from Ukraine and NATO member countries.
18. Analyse the possibility of developing a Danube security strategy, which would cover both a response to natural disasters, the safety of navigation, and additional access to the Black Sea and a full-fledged security component. Since the EU Strategy for the Danube Region does not cover security issues, this dialogue can be initiated within NATO. Enlist the support of the Visegrad Four and Romania.
19. Strengthen the cyber component of cooperation with NATO, in particular in terms of conducting joint operations to identify and counter threats, share experience, etc. The Czech Republic, Estonia, Romania, and the United Kingdom are among the potential main partners.
20. Develop joint systems of crisis response and management in the event of non-military challenges (manmade and military catastrophes, pandemics, etc.).

REGIONAL POLICY OF UKRAINE

21. Single Ukraine's cooperation with the **Visegrad Four** out into a separate strategic direction of Ukraine's foreign policy, develop a respective vision and a plan for enhanced bilateral cooperation.
22. Develop a plan to promote Ukrainian exports in **Northern Europe** and stimulate investment in Ukraine's economy by countries of the region.

23. Elaborate a quintuple roadmap for defence cooperation with the **Baltic States** and **Poland**, which would include joint exercises and personnel training, crisis management planning, civil defence, and the development of deterrence measures. The Ministry of Defence could come up with this initiative.
24. Hold a summit of the **Lublin Triangle** heads of states, which could focus on enhancing security cooperation.
25. Initiate the launch of exchange programmes between the Cyber Police Department of Ukraine, the Estonian Defence League's Cyber Unit (Küberkaitseliit), the Information Technology Security Incident Response Institution of Latvia (CERT.LV) and the Lithuanian National Cyber Security Centre with the possible further involvement of ENISA and the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Tallinn. This initiative could come from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Security Service of Ukraine.
26. Establish a dialogue with **Western Balkan** countries on the exchange of experience in receiving donor support, including EBRD, EU, IBRD, IMF and USAID programmes, and intensification of further sectoral interaction between Ukraine and the EU.
27. Initiate the establishment of a permanent naval unit (the Navies of Ukraine, Romania, and Bulgaria, Georgia's Coast Guard) for joint patrols in the **Black Sea** and a specialised forum for representatives of the Black Sea region countries' naval forces.
28. Facilitate the expansion of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank's presence in Ukraine and increased funding for infrastructure projects.
29. Initiate the creation of the BSEC public initiatives fund to finance educational, cultural, and information projects.

30. Intensify cooperation on building resilience, in particular on the possible development of the Black Sea Resilience Strategy within the BSEC.
31. Consider expanding exports of value-added products (not raw materials) to deepen trade and economic relations with **Middle Eastern** countries while taking into account Ukraine's interest in becoming a regional guarantor of food security. Intensify efforts to inform representatives of the Middle East and North Africa about investment opportunities by publishing the lists of assets for privatisation, online maps of investment contact points, and other documents on investment opportunities and procedures in Arabic on the websites of the Ukrainian foreign diplomatic missions. Consider the creation of a separate portal in Arabic.
32. Consider establishing a free trade area with the Gulf countries and intensifying efforts to establish preferential trade arrangements with Egypt and Tunisia.
33. Open Ukraine's embassy and create groups of friendship with Oman and Bahrain, given the interest in cooperation with the Gulf States and the intensification of dialogue with Oman.
34. Identify main foreign policy interests and goals regarding **Latin America and the Caribbean**. Optimise the diplomatic presence in the region.
35. Expand Ukraine's diplomatic presence in **South Asia**, in particular by opening an embassy or consulate general in Sri Lanka.
36. Step up Ukraine's public diplomacy efforts in South Asia. Among other things, consider the establishment of Ukrainian universities' alumni associations in South and Central Asia.

37. Intensify negotiations with the countries of **Central Asia**, the EU, the South Caucasus, and Turkey on the development of alternative transport and energy routes from Central Asia through the Caspian and the Black Seas.
38. Continue to hold national events and take part in international ones in Central Asian countries in order to enter new markets, demonstrate the potential and capabilities of Ukrainian companies, as well as study the potential and regional market features.
39. Pay attention to cultural cooperation with Central Asian countries to form a positive image of Ukraine and lay the foundation for further cooperation in strategic sectors. Use opportunities provided by expert discussions, conferences, student exchanges, etc.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

40. Together with think-tanks, identify the vital interests of Ukraine and Belarus, which require cooperation, check out the opportunities to diversify the supply of critical goods from Belarus to Ukraine (in case they need to be replaced), check possible options for reorienting Ukrainian exports.
41. Take steps to ensure the safety of Ukrainian nationals in Belarus and beef up Ukraine's security at the Belarusian border with regard to possible negative scenarios involving the growing Russian military presence in Belarus.

42. Develop a roadmap for the modernisation and re-equipment of the Ukrainian fleet following the provisions of the annexe to the **UK-Ukraine Strategic Partnership Agreement**. Focus on building the infrastructure and construction capacity to implement agreements on the modernisation of the Ukrainian Navy reached in October 2020.
43. Intensify dialogue with the United Kingdom on such issues as cybersecurity, counteraction to hybrid and terrorist threats, money laundering and corruption, development of national and global resilience, counteraction to misinformation, stronger cooperation between intelligence services, the maritime sector, green energy, gender issues, technical assistance to the reintegration of temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, visa liberalisation, etc.
44. Hold the 10th session of the **Ukrainian-Georgian Joint Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation** in 2021 without further delay.
45. Resume the work of the **Ukrainian-Estonian Joint Intergovernmental Commission for Economic, Industrial, and R&D Cooperation**.
46. Initiate joint roundtables in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and experts to study and discuss the experience of **Israel** as a country that has been actively developing in conditions of war.
47. Intensify efforts to create innovation centres, given the significant potential for deepening innovation cooperation between Ukraine and Israel.
48. Strengthen **Ukrainian-Italian** investment relations, in particular by concluding a new intergovernmental agreement on the facilitation and mutual protection of investments, which should expand prospects for the implementation of investment projects, development of cooperation, public-private partnerships with Italian investment companies, and become the basis for further contractual relations between Ukrainian and Italian businesses.

49. Develop a plan of measures to explain developments in eastern Ukraine and Crimea to the Italian public. In particular, the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the friendship group and in cooperation with the Ukrainian Institute, should organise visits by key Italian media and opinion-makers to Ukraine. In addition to the political situation, they should highlight the cultural and historical components, develop materials on joint success stories, stories of Italians living in Ukraine and Ukrainians in Italy, etc.
50. Establish a dialogue with members of Italian regional councils, taking into account the regions' influence on the Italian political agenda.
51. Promote the expansion of economic and trade cooperation with **Canada** and attract Canadian investments, which requires updating the Free Trade Agreement and expanding it to trade in services.
52. Continue the visa liberalisation dialogue with Canada to facilitate joint business, tourism, and education initiatives.
53. In addition to trade relations between Ukraine and **China**, ensure the development of joint ventures in Ukraine, investment attraction, technological and scientific cooperation, cooperation in energy, oil and gas, infrastructure. Given the problems in relations between the USA and China, it is necessary to clearly communicate both priority areas for cooperation and the red lines and sensitive areas.
54. Initiate the creation of **Ukrainian-Lithuanian** information and educational products about the common cultural heritage.
55. Intensify the use of public diplomacy tools to improve Ukraine's image in Germany, especially in the eastern states, given that ordinary Germans mainly associate Ukraine with the war and the conflict with Russia. Continue efforts to raise awareness of Ukraine's losses during World War II, the need to further maintain anti-Russia sanctions, and support Ukraine in the war against Russia.

56. Hold the seventh meeting of the **Ukrainian-Polish** Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation in Kyiv.
57. Implement the agreements reached during Polish President A. Duda's visit to Ukraine, in particular on the practical implementation of documents signed during the visit, which give clear prospects for facilitating Polish investment in the Ukrainian economy, the implementation of infrastructure projects, including those aimed at building and merging the transport and transit potential. This also concerns increasing cooperation in such strategic areas as energy, aerospace, defence, tourism, and IT.
58. Strengthen and expand cooperation with **Romania**, taking into account the positive dynamics in the bilateral military-political dialogue. The idea of joining (at least as an observer) the mechanism of regular tripartite Turkish-Polish-Romanian military-political consultations at the level of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs remains relevant.
59. Initiate the creation of the Ukrainian-Romanian Battalion (possibly involving third parties, such as Bulgaria or Poland), taking into account the political significance and practical success of the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade, the Multinational Engineer Battalion Tisa (Ukraine, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia).
60. Take into account the following main tasks in the context of a policy on the **Russian Federation**: to develop a strategy of optimal communication with Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia, to mount more sanctions and restrictions on Russia, to continue active work in international courts, to define a strategy of economic cooperation with Russia concerning its aggression against Ukraine.

61. Enhance the coordination of efforts to counter Nord Stream 2 (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Naftogaz of Ukraine), taking into account the Democratic Party's election success in the USA, the position of the European Parliament, and changed positions of individual member states (for example, France).
62. Develop a joint approach with **Slovak** partners to organising the movement of container trains along the new Silk Road through the territory of both countries for negotiations with China. Explore the possibility of joint fundraising to create a logistics centre between Ukraine and Slovakia in Chop. Start the reconstruction of the European-type rail from Chop to Uzhhorod, which can help turn Uzhhorod into a transport hub and increase passenger traffic with Slovakia, Hungary, and other EU countries.
63. Focus on developing security cooperation with the **United States** by expanding joint training programmes, deepening intelligence exchange, supporting the Ukrainian Navy, and cooperating in cybersecurity.
64. Strengthen Ukraine's public diplomacy in the United States while expanding its outreach to other audiences, not limited to representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora (taking into account the results of the Ukrainian Institute's study of the perception of Ukraine in the United States). Intensify Ukraine's diplomatic and cultural activities outside Washington.
65. Continue negotiations with **Turkey** on a free trade area, taking into account the interests of Ukrainian producers, in order to restore a positive trade balance for Ukraine.
66. Intensify the implementation of Ukraine and Turkey agreements in the military-technical sector, defence industry, aviation and space industries; increase cooperation in the energy and transport sectors.

67. Strengthen institutional cooperation with Turkey, primarily in developing public-private partnerships, creating organised industrial zones, technology parks, and incubators for start-ups in Ukraine using the Turkish experience.
68. Abandon the idea of “breakthrough meetings” in relations with **Hungary** and instead focus on the development of a long-term action plan for a full-fledged relaunch of bilateral relations.
69. Take measures to resolve the issue of Hungarian state investments in Ukraine through an interstate agreement or its preparation.
70. Intensify the Ukrainian-Hungarian dialogue at the level of experts and intergovernmental commissions. In particular, initiate joint projects with Budapest to counter Russian disinformation and hybrid influence on Ukrainian-Hungarian relations.
71. Focus efforts on public diplomacy in **France** and work with the political and expert community, given that most potential presidential candidates in the 2022 elections prioritise relations with the Russian Federation.
72. Hold a meeting of the **Ukrainian-Czech** Joint Commission on Economic, Industrial, and R&D Cooperation that has been repeatedly postponed. Strengthen intergovernmental cooperation to identify and reduce existing barriers to trade and investment at the bilateral level.
73. Facilitate joint initiatives between non-governmental organisations of the Czech Republic and Ukraine to counter the spread of Russian disinformation in the information space (primarily through the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy). Ensure that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine facilitates the holding of the Ukrainian-Czech Forum on a regular basis and provides funding for this initiative.

74. Strengthen cooperation with **Japan** in research cooperation, IT, space and aviation, environment and nuclear safety.
75. Develop a communication campaign to promote the culture and tourism potential of Ukraine in Japan (taking into account the recommendations of the Ukrainian Institute's study of how Ukraine is perceived in Japan).

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND MULTILATERAL INITIATIVES

76. Promote initiatives aimed at extending the OSCE SMM mandate to the water areas of the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea adjacent to certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions (ORDLO) and Crimea, initiate a broader use of far-range drones and night vision devices by the OSCE SMM, and hold Russia politically and financially liable for any damage to this equipment caused from the occupied territories.
77. Establish effective cooperation between the Trilateral Contact Group and relevant committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, organise effective communication on TCG operation in order to prevent political speculations polarising society.
78. Intensify cooperation on the OSCE “second track,” in particular in the OSCE Parallel Civil Society Conference, the OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions, the Civic Solidarity Platform.

79. Reinforce consultations, improve the content and coordination of interaction with partner states' delegations to the **PACE**, especially within the Baltic Plus group. Pay attention to Luxembourg, Lichtenstein, San Marino, and others whose delegates maintain a rather active position on many issues of interest to Ukraine. A promising area for partner search in the Council of Europe could be parties present in the PACE, primarily the European People's Party Group, the European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance.
80. Intensify cooperation with the Council of Europe outside the PACE, in particular with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, on decentralisation and local development.
81. Ensure that government and parliament representatives take a more active part in international forums and meetings held under the **UN** aegis, which will not only promote Ukraine's position in the international arena but also enhance its image of a country prepared to take part in settling global issues.
82. In addition to the protection of Ukrainian interests, expand the list of priorities of work with the UN to include nuclear non-proliferation and security, food security, environmental protection, protection of civil society and children in conflicts, counteraction to domestic violence, gender equality, the Sustainable Development Goals, protection of cultural heritage and indigenous peoples, and reform of the UN Security Council.
83. Appoint a special envoy for **new global challenges** to monitor, analyse, and coordinate Ukraine's position.
84. Update the 2009 Peacekeeping Strategy of Ukraine, which does not reflect the current situation, Ukraine's foreign policy priorities, and peacekeeping activities.

85. Coordinate the activities of the National Security and Defence Council, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and various agencies, and cooperation with NGOs in order to streamline the process of providing Western partners with quality information in order to introduce personal sanctions against individuals involved in **human rights violations** in the temporarily occupied territories.
86. Enshrine the de-occupation of Crimea in the Crimean Platform's foundation documents and formulate human rights goals such as a release of illegally detained individuals, promotion of sanctions against representatives of the occupying administration involved in human rights violations.
87. Stop the practice of extraditions and forced deportations, in violation of Ukraine's international commitments, to states which systematically abuse human rights and freedoms.
88. Publish the draft integrated National Energy and Climate Plan until 2030 (Ministry of Energy) for public consideration and set the deadline for its approval by the Cabinet of Ministers.
89. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources should complete the development of the second National Determined Contribution, hold a public discussion on the matter and submit it to the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change following the established procedure.

FUNCTIONAL DIRECTIONS

90. As part of **strategic communications**, determine which messages should be sent globally to achieve Ukraine's foreign policy goals and make it attractive to the world.
91. Ensure stable funding for **public diplomacy**. Make it possible for the Ukrainian Institute to do budget planning for three years ahead.
92. Provide prompt reactive approach in public diplomacy when working with countries where the perception of Ukraine has been negatively affected as a result of certain events. For this, facilitate the resolution of legal irregularities, in particular when it concerns foreign public procurement by the Ukrainian Institute.
93. Enhance Ukraine's **science diplomacy**. Ensure stable presence of Ukrainian researchers affiliated with Ukrainian rather than foreign institutions at international research events through a competitive grant support system (for example, through the National Research Foundation of Ukraine or the Ukrainian Institute).
94. Develop a system of grant support for Ukrainian NGOs/think-tanks with international operations in order to strengthen expert support and analysis.
95. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economy and the Verkhovna Rada should develop and adhere to a common **strategy of foreign economic communication** with the key regions of Ukraine's interest (the EU, Eastern Europe, Asia), which should be taken into account in the next edition of the Export Strategy of Ukraine. Develop mechanisms for joint emergency response with partner states in the event of trade restrictions caused by epidemics or another force majeure.

96. Relaunch the International Trade Council and involve relevant experts in thematic meetings in order to improve coordination of foreign policy and export support institutions. The Cabinet of Ministers' Secretariat should be assigned a coordinating role to achieve the parity of relevant ministries' influence on the Council's decisions.
97. Strengthen national policy on boosting trade, economic, and investment relations with the EU at the regional, subregional (in particular, by using investment opportunities provided by the Lublin Triangle, the Trio Strategy 2030, and expanding trade within GUAM) and bilateral (intergovernmental bodies should work more closely with EU countries while taking into account business expectations and potential areas for trade and investment growth) levels of economic diplomacy.
98. Simplify the procedure for granting the status of a **Ukrainian abroad** and expand the benefits for its holders.
99. Legally regulate the issues of dual (multiple) citizenship and labour migration.
100. Actualise the issues of social care and protection of the Ukrainian community abroad, in particular in Italy and neighbouring states.

AA	Association Agreement
AFU	Armed Forces of Ukraine
ANP	Annual National Program “Ukraine-NATO”
APU	Presidential Administration of Ukraine
JFO	Joint Forces Operation
BSEC	Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation
CMU	Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine
CoE	Council of Europe
CSF EaP	Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum
CSP	Civil Society Platform
DCFTA	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EaP	Eastern Partnership
ECFR	European Council on Foreign Relations
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
G-7	Group of Seven
GUAM	Organization for Democracy and Economic Development “Georgia-Ukraine-Azerbaijan-Moldova”
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally displaced persons
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MEDT	Ministry of Economic Development and Trade
MENA	the Middle East and North Africa
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MinTOT	Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs

MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MPs	Members of Parliament
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
OIC	Organization Islamic Cooperation
OPU	Office of the President of Ukraine
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
RES	Renewable energy sources
SSU	Security Services of Ukraine
TCG	Trilateral Contact Group
UN GA	General Assembly of the United Nations
UN SC	United Nations Security Council
V4	Visegrad Group (Visegrad Four)
VRU	Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
UNDP	the United Nations Development Program
UN HRC	UN Human Rights Council
UWC	the Ukrainian World Congress
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMD	Weapons of mass destruction

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Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”



The Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism” is a network-based nongovernmental analytical centre, 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 nongovernmental 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, as well as associated experts from different analytical and academic institutions in Ukraine and abroad.

Friedrich Ebert Foundation

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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 endeavours 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 favour 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 centres 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 labour movement.

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