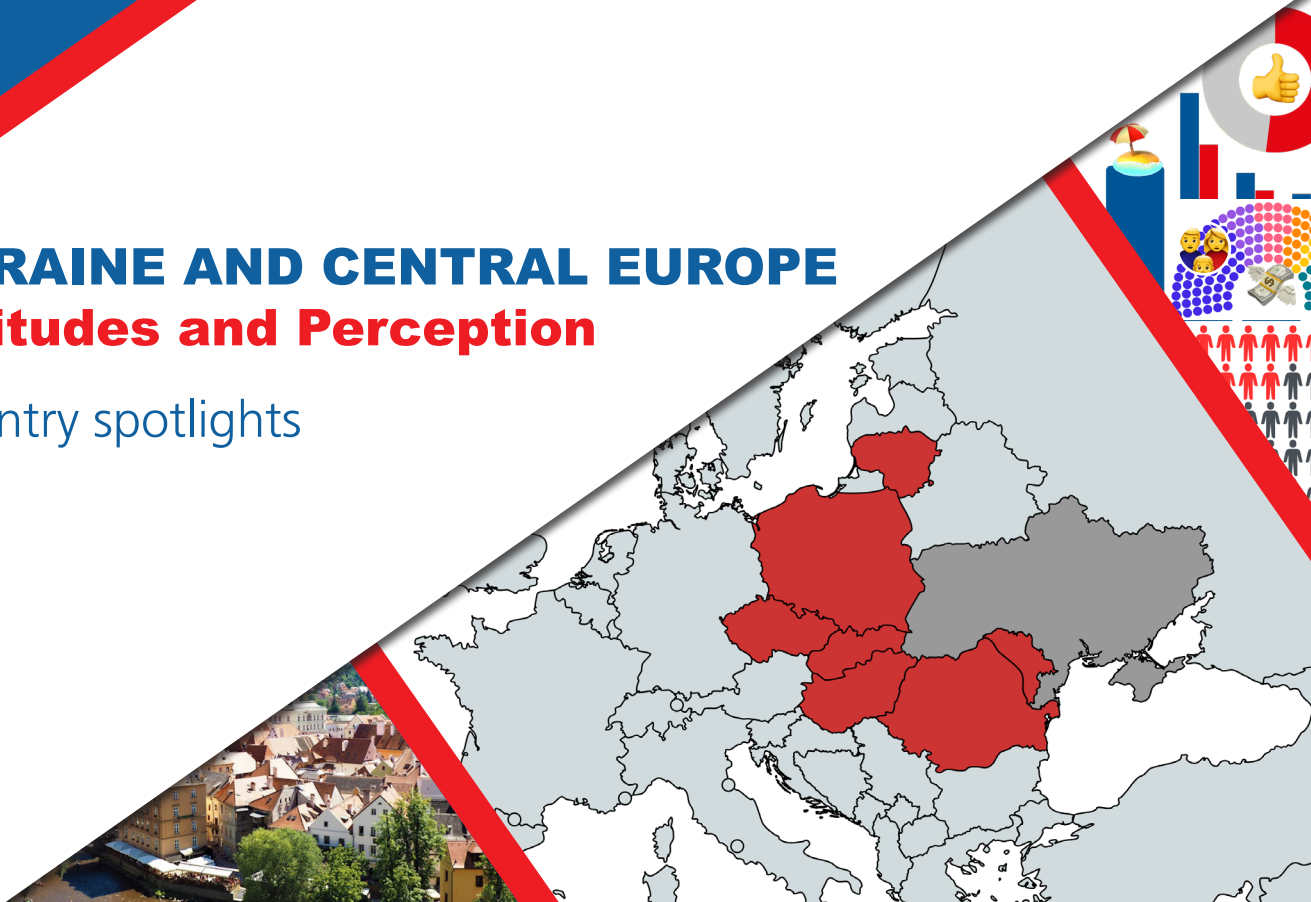


UKRAINE AND CENTRAL EUROPE

Attitudes and Perception

Country spotlights



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Introduction and methodology

This report sums up the results of a representative public opinion poll, conducted in Ukraine and 7 countries of Central Europe in October 2022. The report takes stock of mutual perception and attitudes to regional initiatives, foreign policy priorities, leadership roles. It also presents the key associations that the population of the polled countries have. The report also touches upon military and economic support of Ukraine in Central Europe. It highlights one of the core issues for European security, namely Russian aggression in Ukraine and its consequences for the polled countries.

Target audience: Population of Ukraine, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Lithuania, Romania, Moldova 18+ y.o.

Method: CAWI – computer-assisted web interviews

Fieldwork: The field part was conducted by LLC Info SapiensInt. during October 13-31, 2022

Sample size:

1213 CAWI in Ukraine (max sample error is 2,8%);

1105 CAWI in Poland (max sample error is 2,9%);

1101 CAWI in Czech Republic (max sample error is 3,0%);

1116 CAWI in Hungary (max sample error is 2,9%);

1105 CAWI in Slovakia (max sample error is 2,9%);

1100 CAWI in Lithuania (max sample error is 3,0%);

1105 CAWI in Romania (max sample error is 2,9%);

436 CAWI in Moldova (max sample error is 4,7%).

The data was weighted to represent the population of each country by sex, age, and region. Maximum sample error per different samples is larger than the general one, but allows to draw conclusions.

The researched was initiated and organized by the Representation of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Ukraine and the Foreign Policy Council Ukrainian Prism.

CZECHIA

Czechia is a landlocked country in Central Europe. It shares borders with Germany, Poland, Slovakia, and Austria. The length of Czechia's borders is approximately 2,315 km.



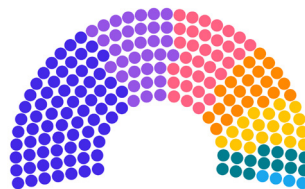
The President of Czechia is Petr Pavel



Czech Parliament is bicameral and consists of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate



The next Presidential election in Czechia is scheduled for January 2028

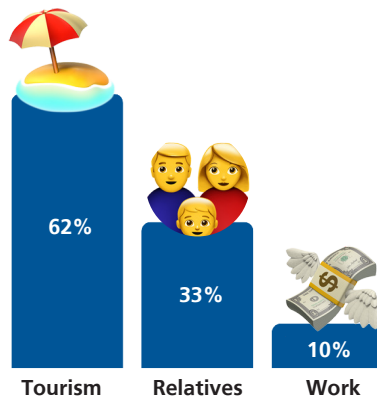


The Chamber of Deputies

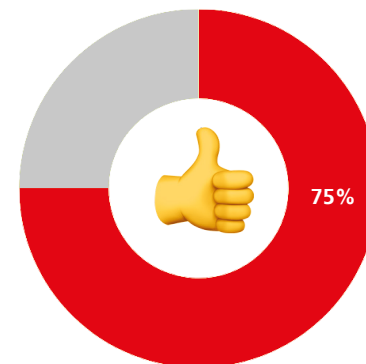
Party	Chamber of Deputies
● Action of Dissatisfied Citizens (ANO)	72
● Civic Democratic Party (ODS)	34
● Mayors and Independents (STAN)	33
● Christian and Democratic Union	23
● Freedom and Direct Democracy	20
● TOP 09	14
● Czech Pirate Party	4



Before the full-scale aggression 16% of Ukrainians visited Czechia



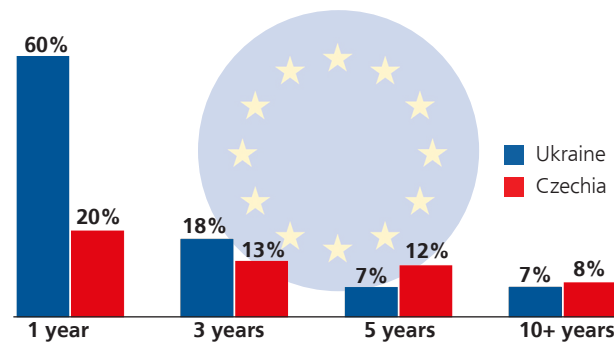
The reasons for the longest stay in Czechia



Share of Ukrainians with positive attitudes to Czechia after February 24, 2022

architecture
earning beer

The most recalled associations with Czechia among Ukrainians



Possible timeline for Ukraine to join the European Union

Introduction

Czechia (also known as the Czech Republic) is a landlocked country in Central Europe. It shares borders with Germany, Poland, Slovakia, and Austria. The length of Czechia's borders is approximately 2,315 km.

The President of Czechia is Petr Pavel. Czech Parliament is bicameral and consists of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. The Chamber of Deputies is currently composed of seven parties, with the largest being the Action of Dissatisfied Citizens (ANO) with 72 seats, followed by the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) with 34 seats, the Mayors and Independents (STAN) with 33 seats, the Christian and Democratic Union - Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-ČSL) with 23 seats, Freedom and Direct Democracy (20 seats), TOP 09 (14 seats) and the smallest party - Czech Pirate Party, with only 4 seats. The Senate is composed of 81 members and currently has 23 members aligned with the Civic Democratic Party.

The next Presidential election in Czechia is scheduled for January 2028, and the next Czech legislative election will be held in or before October 2025. The current government has been in power since October 2021, with the ruling coalition being the Pirates and Mayors alliance and Spolu (English: Together) - a centre-right political alliance composed of the Civic Democratic Party, KDU-ČSL, and TOP 09.

Mutual societal interconnections and perceptions

Prior to 24 February, a significant portion of Ukrainians travelled to Czechia for tourism purposes. In fact, 62% of Ukrainian respondents visited Czechia for tourism, which indicates that Czechia is a popular destination for Ukrainian travellers. Additionally, 33% of Ukrainians paid visits to relatives, and 10% travelled to the Czech Republic for business or work-related matters. The same tendency holds for Czechs visiting Ukraine: 63% visited Ukraine for tourism, while 19% went to see relatives, and 15% travelled for business or work-related reasons.

When it comes to associations, Ukrainians most commonly associate Czechia with beer (14%). Additionally, 9% of Ukrainians associated Czechia with earning, most likely due to the country's popularity among seasonal workers. Finally, 7% of Ukrainians associated Czechia with architecture. These culture-related associations might be a result of the national branding strategy of the Czech Republic: Prague has long prioritized building a positive national image as a key factor in the competitiveness of Czech products and services. This trend was crucial for Czech businesses and those of other former Eastern Bloc countries. It is important to mention that there has been a shift in the nation-branding strategy, a shift away from the tourism orientation promoted mostly by the cultural community of Czechia. Therefore, there is a need for a change in the Ukrainian somewhat stereotypical perception to the one that will reflect the current national idea of Czechia.

According to prior knowledge and personal experience, most Czech citizens currently associate Ukraine with the Russian war against Ukraine. 38% of surveyed Czechs reported this as their primary association. Corruption (4%) and fear (3%) have also made it to the top three. This signifies a lack of knowledge about Ukraine and highlights the need to address the perception gap, as also seen in the case of Ukraine. It is necessary to address the limited awareness and enhance understanding between the two nations.

Attitudes towards each other

The attitudes of Czechs and Ukrainians towards each other have undergone significant changes over the years, particularly in the light of the ongoing Russian war in Ukraine. Prior to the invasion, the majority of Ukrainians held an overwhelmingly positive view of Czechia. Specifically, 39% of Ukrainians expressed very positive views of the country, 33% rather positive views, and 23% found it hard to say. However, the majority of Czechs had mixed feelings towards Ukraine, with only 10% expressing very positive views, 23% rather positive views, 38% finding it hard to say, and 27% holding negative or very negative views.

The up-to-date data reflects a shift in perception for the better in both countries. Presently, 50% of Ukrainians hold very positive views of Czechia, 25% hold rather positive views, and 22% find it hard to say. Ukrainians have become more aware of the Czech Republic in recent years. With Ukraine's increasing integration into the European Union and the Czech Republic being a relatively new member state with a similar past, there has been a growing interest in the country and its history. Further-

more, the Ukrainian diaspora in the Czech Republic has been growing steadily, leading to more significant cultural exchange and greater awareness of Czechia among Ukrainians and vice versa.

When it comes to the Czech Republic, 14% of Czechs hold very positive views of Ukraine, 26% rather positive views, and 30% find it hard to say. Unfortunately, there has been a slight increase in the percentage of those who hold a negative view: from 27% to 31%. This can be attributed to several factors, in particular, the pro-Russian sentiment of certain Czech political forces. Since the start of the invasion and to a large extent due to high levels of inflation and economic instability, there has been a growth in the popularity of the opposition SPD movement, which is pro-Russian and opposes sending weapons to Ukraine, as well as ANO political movement, whose leader Andrej Babiš expressed scepticism about providing military equipment to Ukraine. The Czech political landscape, moreover, remains highly influenced by Russian disinformation. Unlike other countries in the region where disinformation may spread through traditional media, in the Czech Republic, it has found new avenues such as social media, blogs, and alternative news sites and specifically chain emails received, according to local data, by nearly 50% of all Czech seniors.

Assessments of Ukrainian foreign policy directions

EU integration

Ukrainian respondents overwhelmingly support Ukraine's EU membership, with a total share of 92%. The majority of Ukrainians, with a share

of 60%, believe that Ukraine should become an EU member within one year, followed by 18% who think it should happen within three years. Additionally, 7% believe it should happen within five years, 4% within ten years, and only 3% consider accession to be a more distant possibility.

In contrast, only 20% of Czechs support Ukraine's EU membership within one year, and the percentage drops to 13% for three years, 12% for five years, and 8% for ten years. A significant portion of Czechs, 23%, reject the idea of Ukraine's EU membership altogether, and 13% are unsure.

Regardless of the relatively low levels of support for Ukraine's EU accession among the population, the Czech government has been actively pushing for further and faster integration. Prior to the commencement of the Czech Republic's EU presidency, the government led by Petr Fiala placed significant emphasis on a "five-point-plan" for Ukraine. The aim was to demonstrate the government's willingness to take action by granting Ukraine candidacy status, hosting a high-level summit with Ukraine, and organizing a donor conference to raise funds for both immediate and long-term recovery needs. As a result, the Czech government made Ukraine its top priority and a central theme for its EU presidency. As a part of the process, the Czech government aimed to persuade other members of the European Union to support concrete actions towards the integration of Ukraine and Moldova, such as strengthening their resilience and contributing to post-war reconstruction efforts in the case of Ukraine.

NATO integration

A total of 90% of Ukrainian respondents support Ukraine's accession to NATO, with 63% supporting membership within one year, 15% within three years, 6% within five years, 3% within 10 years, and 3% supporting membership over 10 years. It is important to observe that only 4% of Ukrainians in the poll expressed a negative view of Ukraine joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

At the same time, when it comes to Ukraine's potential NATO membership, only 21% of Czechs support the idea of joining within one year, with 12% supporting membership within three years, 11% within five years, and 6% within ten years. However, a significant proportion of Czechs, 26%, do not support Ukraine's NATO membership at all, and 15% are unsure. These figures demonstrate that there is a significant level of uncertainty and opposition among Czechs when it comes to Ukraine's integration into European institutions.

It is worth observing that Czech government officials, in particular the current president Petr Pavel, repeatedly spoke in favour of Ukraine joining NATO immediately after the end of the war, referring to the high standards of the army and the valuable experience of the current war. Moreover, the actions that the Czech government has taken in response to the war suggest that the Czech Republic is interested in playing a more prominent role in the eastern flank of NATO, with Ukraine playing a very important role in this process.

International organizations in solving hard security problems

The majority of Ukrainian respondents, amounting to 60%, believe that the most effective way to tackle the military threat posed by Russia is through NATO. Only 17% of the polled Ukrainians have confidence in the UN's effectiveness in dealing with the military threat from Russia. The European Union is not seen as a viable option for addressing hard security issues, with only 3% expressing this view. Ukrainians are also doubtful about the capability of Central Europe and the Baltic States to address Russia's military posture.

Meanwhile, in Czechia, 34% of respondents believe in NATO as the most efficient body to tackle the military threat from Russia. Similarly to Ukraine, only 18% think that the UN might be effective in resolving a military conflict, and 6% believe that the countries of Central Europe and the Baltic region are capable of effectively facing Russia's military threat. These figures suggest that both Ukrainians and Czechs may be hesitant about the ability of the region to provide regional security.

Degree of awareness about regional cooperation with Ukraine

Ukrainians and Czechs show different levels of awareness when it comes to regional cooperation formats in which Ukraine participates. According to a poll, among the options proposed to Ukrainian re-

spondents, the trilateral Poland-Great Britain-Ukraine initiative was the most recognized, with a rating of 25%. Lublin Triangle received a 14% awareness rating, Visegrad Four received 13%, Three Seas Initiative received 11%, and Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv Initiative received 7%.

On the other hand, the awareness results for Czech respondents were quite different. Visegrad Four was the most recognized format, with a rating of 30%, followed by the Poland-Great Britain-Ukraine initiative with 4%. Three Seas Initiative, the Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative and Lublin Triangle all received a low 3% awareness rating among Czech respondents. These results suggest that Czechs and Ukrainians have different levels of familiarity with the regional cooperation formats in which Ukraine participates.

Despite the fact that the Czech respondents have low awareness levels of regional initiatives, Czech elites actively participate in the development of these initiatives, specifically, Visegrad Four, where Czechia and Slovakia are playing an increasingly important role due to the democratic backsliding in Poland and Hungary, and, more recently, the Three Seas Initiative, after the SPOLU coalition declared in its 2021 election program that the Czech Republic will increase its involvement in the Three Seas Initiative. In this regard, the Czech Republic is still looking for "the right project" to join. However, the impulse to devote more resources to the Three Seas Initiative initiative is clearly present and has received more attention than ever since the beginning of the full-scale invasion due to the growing geopolitical importance of the region. It is perceived as part of the evolving security architecture of the region.

Regional leadership perception

The perception of regional leadership varies among Ukrainians and Czechs. According to the survey, Ukrainians consider Poland as a potential regional leader in Central Europe and the Baltic states, with 50% of the respondents sharing this view. However, many Ukrainians also aspire for Ukraine to eventually demonstrate its interest in leading the region, with 39% of the population supporting this option.

In contrast, Czechs have a different perspective on regional leadership. Only 6% of Czech respondents believe that Poland has regional influence and leadership, while 12% hope for Czech leadership. The majority of Czechs believe that Germany holds the position of a regional leader. Interestingly, Ukrainians are perceived as a possible regional leader by only 1% of Czech respondents, who don't seem inclined to see Ukraine in that role.

Scores for a bilateral Ukraine-Czechia agenda

Ukrainian respondents gave relatively positive ratings to various areas of Ukraine-Czechia bilateral relations on a 7-point scale (1 "very problematic", 7 "very successful"). Compared to other states in the poll, Ukraine's relations with Czechia scored relatively high in areas, such as European integration (5.62 out of 7), interethnic relations (5.64), economic cooperation (5.48) and historical memory (5.54).

On the other hand, Czech respondents were more neutral in their assessment of bilateral relations. They gave the highest score of 4.67 to matters of military aid to Ukraine, followed by interethnic relations (4.25), and European integration, and economic cooperation (4.04 each). The issue of historical memory was the lowest rated, with a score of 4.02, which suggests a lack of cooperation in this area.

Personal resilience vs state defence development

The results of the opinion poll clearly depict that Ukrainians are used to the difficulties brought by the war - 78% (48% "Definitely yes" and 30% "Rather yes") claimed that they are willing to endure personal and economic difficulties to strengthen the Ukrainian army. In contrast, only 28% of Czechs expressed similar readiness (5% "Definitely yes" and 23% "Rather yes"), while 44% (22% "Definitely no" and 22% "Rather no") would not trade personal economic stability for helping their country's military.

Perception of safety in Czechia considering the hostilities in Ukraine

In light of the Russian aggression in Ukraine, Czech respondents were surveyed to assess the safety level of their country, and the results showed a relative lack of concern for their security. On an 11-point scale, with 0 being "in great danger" and 10 being "absolutely safe",

Czech participants gave their country a high score of 6.41, second only to Lithuania. This partly explains the low willingness to sacrifice economic welfare for the sake of the army.

This number is surprising due to the fact that only 30% of Czechs believe that Central European and Baltic States should provide even more military support to Ukraine, while 43% oppose this view. The lower results are observed only in Slovakia and Hungary, where 24% and 21%, respectively, would support further military aid. This might indicate that Czechs simply do not see Ukraine's security concerns as directly affecting their own national security. Such a high percentage in Czechia might as well be explained by the growing fear of economic instability, which has also become instrumentalized by Russian propaganda in the country. According to an analysis conducted by PAQ Research and published by Czech Radio in December 2022, it is estimated that as a result of the increasing costs of energy and housing, up to 30% of households in the Czech Republic could face poverty in the current year.

HUNGARY

Hungary is a neighbouring state of Ukraine. The Hungary – Ukraine border length is 128 kilometres, which exclusively lies in Zakarpatska Oblast on Ukraine's side.



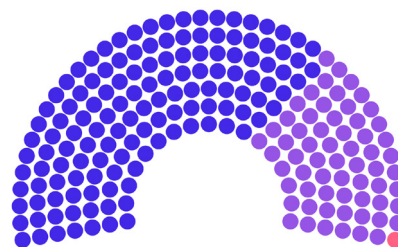
The President of Hungary is Katalin Novák



Hungary is a parliamentary republic, therefore, the National Assembly elects the President



The forthcoming voting of the head of the state will be held in 2027, parliamentary election will be organised in 2026.

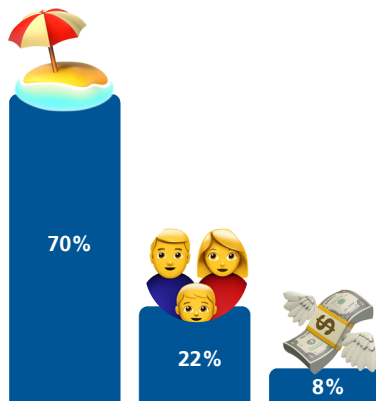


Hungarian parliament

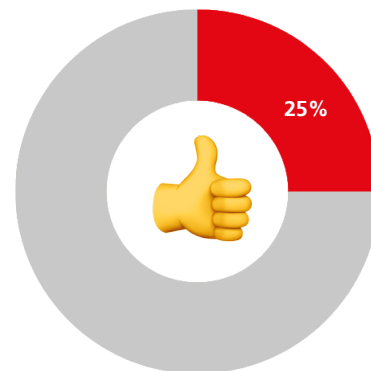
Party	Seats
● Government	135
● Opposition	63
● German minority	1



Before the full-scale aggression 15% of Ukrainians visited Hungary



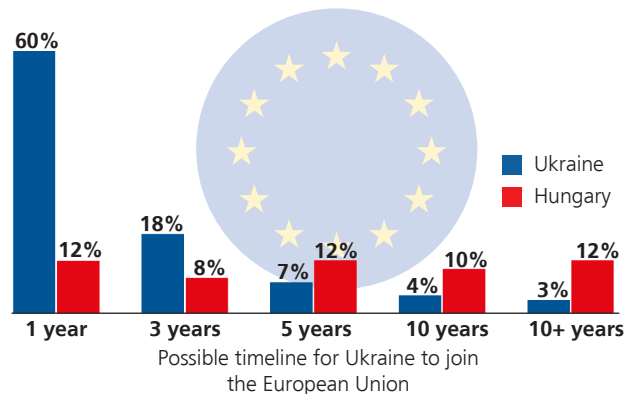
The reasons for the longest stay in Hungary



Share of Ukrainians with positive attitudes to Hungary after February 24, 2022



The most recalled associations with Hungary among Ukrainians



Introduction

Hungary is a neighbouring state of Ukraine. The Hungary – Ukraine border length is 128 kilometres, which exclusively lies in Zakarpatska Oblast on Ukraine's side.

The President of the country (the head of the state) is Katalin Novák, nominated by the major parliament party Fidesz. The current convocation of the unicameral parliament – National Assembly – includes a conservative alliance of Fidesz and the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) with 135 seats, an opposition bloc composite by the liberal Democratic Coalition, the centrist Momentum Movement, the Hungarian Socialist Party, the conservative Jobbik party, green Dialogue party, Hungary's Green Party, and independent candidates with 57 seats. In addition, the right Our Homeland Movement possesses 6 seats and declares its opposition to all the parliamentary forces, and the National Self-Government of Germans in Hungary is held by 1 MP, who represents the national minorities of the country and generally backs pro-government bloc. As the Fidesz-KDNP alliance possesses more than two-thirds of the parliament mandates (the constitutional majority), it does not need to form a coalition with other political forces.

Hungary is a parliamentary republic, therefore, the National Assembly elects the President, as well as heads of other major executive and judicial institutions. The forthcoming voting of the head of the state will be held in 2027. The next parliamentary election will be organised in 2026. Due to the exclusive domination of the Fidesz-KDNP bloc

since 2010 in the National Assembly (the alliance invariably maintains a constitutional majority), in local governments (the union holds the majority of the seats in all the county councils, except for the Budapest city council) and in the media domain (the pro-government KESMA Foundation manages more than 500 media in the country, including the most popular ones¹), no major shifts in internal and foreign policy are expected in the few coming years.

Mutual societal interconnections and perceptions

Before the full-scale Russian invasion, 15 % of Ukrainians visited Hungary, and 12 % of Hungarians visited Ukraine. The majority – 70 % – of the polled Ukrainian citizens who had travelled to this country declared that tourism was the main purpose for the longest stay, 22 % – visiting relatives and 8 % – business/work. The Hungarian respondents who visited Ukraine named tourism as a major reason for the longest stay – 67 % of the interviewees, 21 % – visiting relatives, and 15 % – business/work.

The most common associations that Ukrainians have with Hungary are "anti-Ukrainian" (15 %), "cuisine" (6 %), and "beauty" (5 %). Almost half (45 %) of the polled Hungarian citizens primarily associate Ukraine with war (any other response option did not gain more than 3 %). This mutual perception is connected to the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, the position of the Hungarian government not to supply Ukraine with weapons, to insist on the unconditional peace negotiations

¹ https://ipi.media/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/HU_PressFreedomMission_Report_IPI_2022.pdf

between Kyiv and Moscow (without mentioning the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Ukraine) and to keep economic ties with the Kremlin. Also, the ongoing crises between the two countries connected to the reforms of the education norms for the national minorities in Ukraine (which has been criticized by the Hungarian side since 2017) are one of the most influential factors in shaping the attitudes of Ukrainians and Hungarians toward each other for the last years.

Overcoming the negative associations in the mutual perception of the Ukrainian and Hungarian societies may be problematic in the short and mid-term perspective. The toxic narratives about each other have been shaped and circulating in both countries since 2017 and have significantly increased their intensity and power in 2022. Comprehensive and persistent information campaigns in Hungary about Ukraine and vice-versa may tackle the issue. Still, without mutual understanding on the highest political level, they would most likely have a limited and impermanent effect.

Attitudes towards each other

Until February 2022, only 14 % of Ukrainians had a very positive attitude and only 17 % had a rather positive attitude towards Hungary. On the other hand, 14 % had a very negative and 16 % had a rather negative stance regarding this neighbouring state. After a few months of the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion, 12 % of respondents declared a very positive and 13 % a rather positive attitude toward Hungary. At the same time, 26 % of the polled Ukrainian citizens have a very negative and 17 % a rather negative view regarding the country.

Before the invasion, the most positive opinions on Hungary were in the West of Ukraine, which may be connected to previous travelling and working experience in Hungary, and also to family ties. The highest level of negative attitude at that time was in Kyiv and East of the country, which may be explained by a low level of actual connections with the Hungarians. After the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion, more residents of West of Ukraine expressed a positive attitude towards Hungary than in any other region, however, the level of sympathies significantly decreased. At that time, more than half of Kyiv residents (highest figure within Ukraine) disclosed a negative stance regarding Hungary, which was most likely connected to the growing political tensions between the states and generally higher level of interest in political news among the population of the Ukrainian capital.

On the opposite, before Russia launched its full-fledged war, 6 % of Hungarians had a very positive attitude and 16 % a rather positive attitude towards Ukraine, 16 % had a negative attitude and 16 % had a rather negative attitude. In autumn 2022, 8 % of the Hungarian respondents had positive feelings and 16 % rather positive feelings about Ukraine, 23 % expressed a very negative attitude and 17 % a rather negative attitude. Therefore, the two groups showed less growth, but the percentage with a negative attitude increased.

This negative mutual perception of the Ukrainian and Hungarian societies is an alarming trend and can turn into mutual distrust and hostility between the people of the two countries (the question in the poll was connected to the attitude towards the state). Bearing in mind that the source of the issue mainly lies in the political tensions

between Ukraine and Hungary, only constructive political steps towards each other and well-communicated to the societies may prevent further negative shifts. Also, it is worth mentioning in this context that Budapest is one of the few European capitals that has not significantly reduced its economic cooperation with Russia, particularly in oil, gas, nuclear and transport sectors.

Assessments of Ukrainian foreign policy directions

EU Integration

The vast majority – 91 % – of the polled Ukrainian citizens said that Ukraine should become a full member of the EU. At the same time, the majority – 55 % – of the Hungarian respondents support the same idea. Regarding the possible timing of joining the bloc, 60 % of Ukrainians said it should happen within a year, 18 % – within three years, 7 % – within five years, 4 % – within ten years, and 3 % – considered a longer period. In the case of Hungarians, different forecast options on the time of Ukraine's accession had comparatively the same support: 12 % said within a year, 8 % – within three years, 12 % – within five years, 10 % – within ten years, and 12 % – more than ten years.

Despite the high level of denying Ukraine's EU perspective (29 % of the Hungarian respondents said "No, never"; it is the highest respective figure within all the countries researched), the Hungarian society is rather optimistic and supportive regarding the process. It

may be connected to personal and political perceptions, which overlap. Bearing in mind the first, Hungarian citizens may see Ukraine as a country which persistently expresses its desire to join EU and is even fighting for this. Regarding the second, Hungarians may expect that European integration would resolve the problematic issue of national minorities' rights in Ukraine and bring the Hungarian community of Ukraine into the political space where their kin-state is (the obligation of the Hungarian state to care for the Hungarians abroad despite their citizenship is entitled in the Constitution of Hungary). Most likely, this logic was the reason why the Hungarian officials were lobbying that the national minorities law should be included in the first requirements of the European Commission for Ukraine as a candidate state. It may be the reason why after the respective legal act was adopted in Ukraine in December 2022, the Hungarian officials expressed their disgrace with its contents and declared that they would further block Ukraine's movement to the EU until the issue is resolved.

NATO integration

When it comes to Euro-Atlantic integration, 90 % of the Ukrainian respondents said that Ukraine should be a NATO member. Meanwhile, 47 % of the polled Hungarian citizens uphold this aspiration. The majority of Ukrainians – 63 % – expect that their state will join the Alliance in no more than one year, 15 % – in three years, 6 % – in five years, 3 % – in ten years, and 3 % – in more than ten years. On the other hand, among all the Hungarian respondents, 13 % see Ukraine as a NATO member in one year, 9 % – in three years, 8 % – in five years, 8 % – in ten years, 9 % – in more than ten years.

Although among Hungarians, the share of supporters of Ukraine joining the Euro-Atlantic Alliance outweighs the share of antagonists, the difference between the numbers of the two groups is not so high – 47 % vs 35 % (while 18 % choose “Hard to say”). In addition, this is the highest figure on the objection among all the countries within the research. There may be at least two hypotheses on the sources of this phenomenon. First, for five years, the Hungarian government has been blocking Ukraine’s integration into NATO, using it as an instrument of encouraging the Ukrainian authorities to return to the previous system of ensuring minorities’ rights. Second, Budapest, while making statements on the potential peace negotiations between Ukraine and Russia, is insisting that the Russian war has been provoked by the West, particularly by its deepen military cooperation with Kyiv (generally, it is a refrain of the Kremlin’s narrative for justifying its aggression). Both trends could create a negative attitude towards Ukraine’s Euro-Atlantic aspirations within Hungarian society. Each of them shows that Hungary may not be the main supporter, but one of the main opposers of Ukraine’s accession to NATO.

International organisations in solving hard security problems

The majority of the Ukrainian respondents – 60 % – thought that Russian military threats might be most effectively sorted on NATO level, 17 % believed that the UN structures could be the best instrument for this, 8 % saw the resolution on Ukraine national level. EU and Central European and Baltic states are generally not considered as

an appropriate space for this – just 4 % and 3 % were in favour of these options, respectfully. At the same time, 35 % of the Hungarian respondents said that the best platform for tackling Russian military threats was NATO, 14 % – saw the best response mechanisms on Ukraine national level, 12 % – on EU level, 11 % – on UN structures, 8 % – on the level of Central European and Baltic states.

These figures first demonstrate the strong aspirations of Ukrainian citizens of their country to join NATO. The majority perceive the Alliance as the natural mechanism for protecting their independence and freedom from Russian malign actions in the future. At the same time, in the Ukrainian case, the rates of other response may be a consequence of the people’s disappointment in the capacity of other international organisations in crisis solving and bold reactions. When it comes to Hungarian respondents, their answers showed that NATO is still perceived as a main security power in the region. At the same time, comparatively close dispersion of popularity of other responses, along with the high rate of “Hard to say” option (19 %), indicated general sense of dismay in choosing the most efficient ways of reacting to Russian threats.

Degree of awareness about regional cooperation with Ukraine

Regarding regional cooperation formats, Ukrainian respondents demonstrated their awareness as follow: the Kyiv-Warsaw-London triangle – 25 % said they knew about the format, the Lublin

Triangle – 14 %, the Visegrad Four – 13 %, the Three Seas Initiative – 11 %, the Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv triangle – 7 %. At the same time, the polled Ukrainian citizens expressed their desire to know more about the Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv triangle (47 %), the Three Seas Initiative (43 %), the Lublin Triangle (43 %), the Visegrad Four (42 %), and the Kyiv-Warsaw-London triangle (34 %).

On the opposite, Hungarian respondents were mostly aware of the Visegrad Four format – 41 % said they knew about it. Other formats in which Ukraine participated were generally not known for them: the Kyiv-Warsaw-London triangle – 5 %, the Lublin Triangle – 4 %, the Three Seas Initiative – 4 %, and the Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv triangle – 3 %. This correlation in the answers may be the effect of the lack of cooperation between Kyiv and Budapest within the regional formats, as well as the political tensions between the two countries mentioned before. At the same time, the Hungarians showed a generally high desire to know more about the referred formats: the Three Seas Initiative – 43 %, the Lublin Triangle – 43 %, the Kyiv-Warsaw-London triangle – 42 %, and the Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv triangle – 41 %.

Regional leadership perception

When it comes to perceiving the Central European and Baltic states as regional leaders, most of the Ukrainian respondents – 50 % – saw Poland in this role, 39 % – Ukraine, 15 % – Lithuania, 12 % – Latvia, Czech Republic – 9 %, 8 % – none of the countries, Estonia – 7 % (other options received 3 % and less). In the meantime, Poland was also in the first

position among all the countries to be considered as a regional leader by the Hungarian respondents, but in that case, the response “None of the above” had the highest share (37 %). Also, 20 % of the polled Hungarians saw their country as a leading political force in the region, 13 % – named the Czech Republic (other options received 3 % and less). These figures may be a result of the previous level of mutual cooperation between Central European countries (better cooperation results lead to better perception), as well as the decisions of the states after the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion (bolder decisions generated higher assessment).

Scores for a bilateral Ukraine-Hungary agenda

Comparing all the countries from the research, Ukrainians saw the relation of their state with Hungary as the most problematic. Still, in absolute figures, the assessment of the bilateral affairs was rather neutral than negative: on a scale between “1” (very problematic) and “7” (very successful), the average score for interethnic relations was 3.44, for historical memory – 3.65, for economic cooperation – 3.54, for European integration – 3.19. The assessment of the Hungarian-Ukrainian relation by the Hungarian respondents was also the most pessimistic among all the polled people from the considered countries and was more pessimistic than Ukrainian assessment: 2.88 – for interethnic relations, 2.93 – for historical memory, 3.41 – for economic cooperation, 3.07 – for European integration (however, any of the answers have not reached the halfway point of 3.5). These figures particularly demonstrate that Ukrainian society foremost analyses

the bilateral relations with Hungary through the prism of Budapest's support for the European integration of Ukraine, while Hungarian society shapes its vision through ethno-politics issues.

Personal resilience vs state defence development

The majority of Ukrainians were prepared to endure a personal inconvenience or economic difficulties in order to strengthen the national army: 48 % – said they were definitely ready, 30 % – said they were rather ready for this (just 6 % were definitely or rather not ready). In contrast, for 39 % of the polled Hungarian citizens, it was hard to answer this question. The share of the people who were definitely not ready or rather not ready for the personal inconvenience for the benefit of the Hungarian army (23 % and 16 % respectively) was higher than that of those who were definitely or rather prepared for this (7 % and 16 % respectively). These figures foremost may be the result of the actual challenges for Ukrainian society, which require more determined reactions, as well as an indicator of some sort of unpreparedness of Hungarian society for radical changes in the foreign agenda and direct malign actions against their country.

Perception of safety in Hungary considering the hostilities in Ukraine

Among all the national respondents within the study, the polled Hungarians demonstrated a mid-level of anxiety due to the Russian

war against Ukraine. When asked about feeling safe due to Ukrainian hostilities ("0" was "in great danger" and "10" was "absolutely safe"), the average assessment of Hungarian interviewees was 6.07. At the same time, among all the countries within the research, the polled Hungarian citizens were most reluctant to the idea of the Central European and Baltic states providing further military support for Ukraine: 21 % of them said "Definitely yes" or "Rather yes" for these intentions, while 46 % – said "Definitely no" or "Rather no". These figures may be explained by the low level of Hungarian citizens' readiness to sacrifice personal welfare in favour of common security, as well as the position of the Hungarian government not to provide military support to Ukraine at all.

LITHUANIA

Lithuania is a partner country of Ukraine with no directly shared land or sea border.



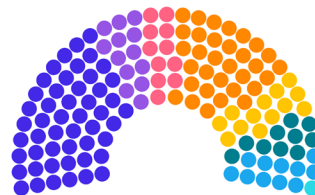
The President of the country is Gitanas Nausėda



The Seimas (parliament) of the Republic of Lithuania is unicameral



The presidential elections are expected to take place in May 2024



The Seimas

Party

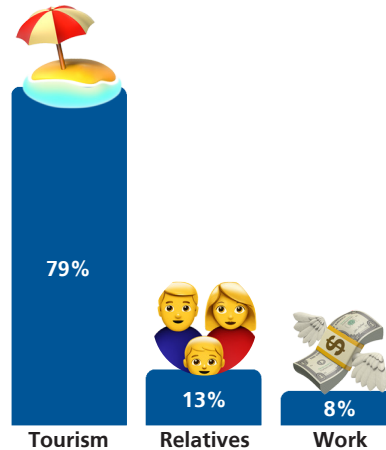
- Homeland Union-Lithuanian Christian Democrats
- Liberal Movement (LS)
- Freedom Party
- Farmers and Greens Union
- Social Democratic Party of Lithuania
- Labour Party
- Non-affiliated lawmakers
- Vacant

The Seimas

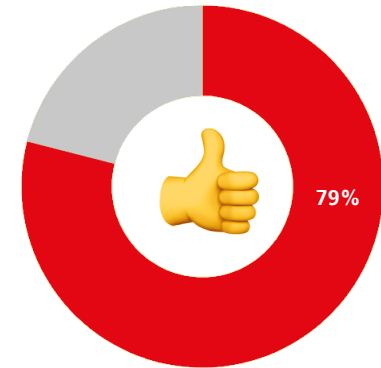
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Before the full-scale aggression only 14% of Ukrainians visited Lithuania



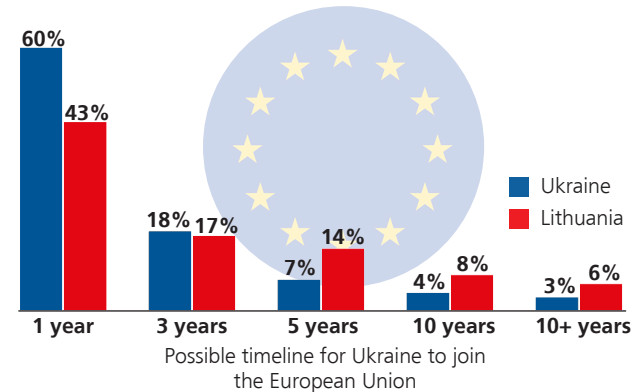
The reasons for the longest stay in Lithuania



Share of Ukrainians with positive attitudes to Lithuania after February 24, 2022



The most recalled associations with Lithuania among Ukrainians



Introduction

Lithuania is a partner country of Ukraine with no directly shared land or sea border.

The President of the country is Gitanas Nausėda, and the unicameral Seimas (parliament) of the Republic of Lithuania consists of 141 members, of which 73 belong to governmental factions, 65 to the opposition and the remaining 11 are non-affiliated lawmakers. The government faction consists of the Homeland Union-Lithuanian Christian Democrats with 49 seats, Liberal Movement (LS) with 13 seats, and Freedom Party with 11 seats. The opposition block is formed by the Farmers and Greens Union with 20 seats, the Union of Democrats "For Lithuania" with 16 seats, the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania with 12 seats, and the Labour Party with 9 seats. The non-affiliated block is represented by 5 independent MPs, 2 MPs from Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania – Christian Families Alliance (EAPL–CFA), 2 MPs from Lithuanian Regions Party and 1 MP from both Freedom and Justice Party (LT) and Union of Nations and Justice.

Lithuania has scheduled parliamentary elections to take place by 6 October 2024, with a second round to follow two weeks later. The presidential elections are expected to take place in May 2024. The elections of Lithuanian representatives to the European Parliament will take place in June 2024.

Mutual societal interconnections and perceptions

Before the full-scale aggression only 14% of Ukrainians visited Lithuania (whereas almost twice as many Lithuanians – 25% – visited Ukraine). The reasons for the longest stay in Lithuania were connected to tourism (79% of all those polled), paying visits to relatives (13%) and business or work-related trips (8%).

Among Ukrainians, the most frequently recalled associations with Lithuania related to friends (10%), help (7%), Baltic region (5%) and beauty (5%). Such associations reflect the high level of support Lithuania has provided to Ukraine and the awareness of Lithuania's belonging to a wider region.

Based on previous knowledge and personal experience at present for Lithuanian citizens, Ukraine is currently predominantly associated with friends. 18% of Lithuanians interviewed mentioned this association. This makes Lithuania the only country in the region where the war is not the primary association.

None of the spontaneous associations contain negative connotations, therefore there is no need for investment in improving the image of Ukraine in Lithuania.

Attitudes towards each other

Until February 2022, with regard to Lithuanians, Ukrainians expressed rather positive attitudes, with 49% having stated a very positive stance and 24% rather positive. Bearing in mind the high level of support provided by the Lithuanian state and civil society nowadays, the share of Ukrainians with very positive attitudes is up to 63% and positive is 16%. Altogether, positive references account for 79%. At the same time the number of those for whom it's hard to say reaches only 17%, whereas the number of those with the negative attitude is low and hardly reaches 5%.

Such positive attitudes among Ukrainians may be rooted in several key areas. Firstly, Lithuania was one of the countries that provided Ukraine with much needed weapons and munitions even before the full-scale invasion that took place on 24 February 2022. Lithuania shipped all the stockpiles of USSR-era munitions and weapons to Ukraine to contribute to Ukrainian defence capabilities. The first instance of such cooperation was seen in 2019. Consequently, even before the full-scale invasion of Russian forces, Lithuania was perceived by Ukrainians generally as a trustworthy and reliable partner that would be able to provide the necessary support in times of need. Additionally, the nation has already welcomed close to 45,000 refugees from the war in Ukraine and is taking every measure to ensure that they feel welcomed and settled.

The Lithuanian projections do not significantly differ from the Ukrainian. For the period before February 2022, the aggregated rating of positive attitudes towards Ukrainians was at the level of 62% (34% very positive

and 28% rather positive). Interestingly, about 22% of the respondents from Lithuania interviewed found it difficult to answer this question. The situation has changed a bit, in current assessments of the Lithuanian attitude. For now, the combined positive share has reached 74%, with a notable increase in the very positive rates from 34% to 41%. 18% of respondents still remain uncertain regarding the answer. In the current period, the combined negative projection accounts for 8% only and is the lowest in the region, which is arguably a reflection of Lithuanian empathic reaction to the Russian war against Ukraine.

Assessments of Ukrainian foreign policy directions

Integration with the EU

Among Ukrainian respondents, the total share of supporters for Ukraine's membership in the EU is equal to 92%, while among Lithuanian respondents it reaches 88%.

Regarding the possible timeline for Ukraine to join the European Union, 60% of Ukrainians consider it should be done during a one-year period, 18% - within a three-year period, 7% - within five years, 4% - within 10 years, while 3% are considering a horizon beyond 10 years.

To compare, 43% of Lithuanians, higher than the 32% of Poles, and 32% of Romanians, see a prospective one-year membership for Ukraine, 17% are in favour of a three-year possible timeline, with 14%

opting for 5 years, and 8% for 10 years, whilst another 6% see a distant chance, not earlier than 10 years.

Such high figures (which outperform the respective results in Poland and Romania) represent relatively good opportunity for further engaging Lithuanians as the EU membership advocates for Ukraine. There are major obstacles.

Integration with NATO

Combined support for Ukraine joining NATO has reached 90% among Ukrainian respondents with the following proportions in terms of the possible timelines: 63% - within 1 year, 15% - 3 years, 6% - 5 years, 3% - 10 years, 3% - over 10 years. It is worth mentioning that only 4% of Ukrainians in this poll indicated a negative stance toward Ukraine joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which is the lowest result since Ukraine gained independence.

At the same time, 87% of Lithuanian respondents advocate NATO membership for Ukraine, including 46% backing membership within a one-year timeline, 18% - three years, 12% - five years, 6% - 10 years and 6% - over 10 years period to gain membership. Only 5% opposed the prospect of membership for Ukraine.

Within NATO, it is noteworthy that Lithuania assists Ukraine by contributing to the Trust Fund on Command, Control, Communications and Computers (C4), which aims to modernise Ukraine's C4 structures and capabilities by enhancing Ukraine's ability to provide for its own

security, and to the Trust Fund on Medical Rehabilitation, which aims to provide support to patients, i.e. active and discharged Ukrainian servicemen and women and civilian personnel from the defence and security sector, and provide support to the medical rehabilitation system in Ukraine to ensure that the system has the means to provide long-term sustainable services to active and discharged Ukrainian servicemen and women and civilian personnel from the defence and security sector.

Also, Lithuania has approved a project to recover around 2.9 million euros from the Trust Fund of the Afghan National Security Forces (FNSA) not used by Kabul before the Taliban came to power, and to allocate them now to Ukraine.

International organizations in solutions for hard security problems

A majority of Ukrainian respondents believe that Russia's military threat might be most effectively tackled at the level of NATO (60%). 17% of Ukrainians polled are confident in the effectiveness of the UN level to deal with the military threat from Russia. The European Union is not considered a viable venue to deal with these hard security issues, with only a 3% share of opinions. Ukrainians are also sceptical about the relevant potential of the Central Europe and Baltic States to deal with the military posture of Russia.

48% of Lithuanian respondents believe in the efficacy of NATO in facing the military threats posed by Russia (the same figure applies for

Polish respondents) and 19% are supporters of the UN in terms of resolving this military dimension of escalation. Only 7% believe that Central Europe and the Baltic region is capable of effectively facing Russia's military threat.

The figures above arguably imply that both Ukrainians and Lithuanians remain rather uncertain regarding the regional security potential of the region and rather invest their hopes into enhanced Trans-Atlantic ties.

Degree of awareness about regional cooperation with Ukraine

In the context of regional cooperation formats, in which Ukraine participates, among the proposed options, Ukrainians demonstrated the following levels of awareness: trilateral Poland-Great Britain-Ukraine initiative (25%), Lublin Triangle (14%), the Visegrad Four (13%), Three Seas Initiative (11%), Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative (7%).

At the same time, Lithuanian respondents demonstrated these awareness levels: Poland-Great Britain-Ukraine initiative (11%), Lublin Triangle (9%), the Visegrad Four (8%), Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative (7%), the Three Seas Initiative (7%). Such low levels of awareness may, arguably, be explained by a reliance on different established formats of regional cooperation such as: Nordic-Baltic Eight (NB8) which is a regional co-operation format including Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, and Sweden; the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, which assembles the parliaments of Denmark, Estonia,

Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, and Sweden (Russia withdrew from the Conference in 2022); the Baltic Assembly, which unites the Parliaments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, or the Bucharest Nine (an assembly of the countries of NATO's Eastern flank).

Regional leadership perception

Ukrainians tend to perceive Poland as a potential regional leader in Central Europe and the Baltic states. Half of the respondents from Ukraine (50%) share this vision. But at the same time there is an ambition cherished among Ukrainians that Ukraine eventually may also demonstrate its interest in leading the region. This option attracted 39% of Ukrainian votes.

Meanwhile, Lithuanians believe Poland has a regional influence and lead (43%) but also invest their hopes in possible Lithuanian leadership (26%). Interestingly, Ukraine takes third leading position in the perception of Lithuanians (15%).

Scores for a Ukraine-Lithuania bilateral agenda

When asked to assess some areas of the Ukraine-Lithuania bilateral pathway on a 7-point scale (1 "very problematic", 7 "very successful"), Ukrainians offered a relatively positive outlook in almost every proposed domain of interstate relations. Ukraine's relations with Lithuania ob-

tained positive scores in comparison to the other states in the poll (with higher scores only for Poland and Latvia) in areas of European integration (6.03 out of 7), interethnic relations (5.85), economic cooperation (5.74) and a score of 5.73 in matters of historical memory.

Lithuanian respondents are also somewhat positive in their assessment of bilateral relations. The highest score of 5.74 goes to military aid to Ukraine, the next are matters of historical memory (5.51), interethnic relations (5.50), economic cooperation, (5.43), and European integration (5.35).

Personal resilience vs state defence development

Ukrainians are accustomed to the hardships of the war, which is embodied in this opinion poll result. 78% of respondents (48% of answers were “Definitely yes” and 30% “Somewhat yes”) declared that they are prepared to endure some difficulties of a personal and economic nature in order to strengthen the Ukrainian army.

In Lithuania, such readiness is demonstrated by 50% of respondents (combination of 13% of answers being “Definitely yes” and 37% “Somewhat yes”), while the opposing camp rests on a share of 23% (combination of 12% of answers being “Definitely no” and 11% “Somewhat no”). However, there is a rather high number of those for whom it’s hard to say (27%).

Perception of safety in Lithuania considering the hostilities in Ukraine

Trying to assess the level of safety for Lithuania, against the backdrop of the Russian full-scale aggression in Ukraine, Lithuanian respondents flagged their real concern about a negative security environment. On the 11-point scale (0 “in great danger”, 10 “absolutely safe”), the participants, interviewed in Lithuania, have mapped their country quite high with the score of 6.46 which is the highest security score among the countries of the region.

Arguably, such perception is caused by the fact that among other Baltic states, Lithuania has the smallest Russian population with 6% (Estonia has 24% and Latvia 25%). Additionally, Lithuania undertook a lot of precautionary security measures after 24 February 2022, to ensure the safeguarding of its land borders and airspace. The latest NATO decisions within the Madrid summit declaration have ensured that the presence of NATO forces’ is enhanced on the Eastern flank of the alliance. All of these factors have contributed to the enhanced sense of security among the population of Lithuania.

Also, it is very important to acknowledge that 60% of Lithuanian respondents are confident that the Central European and Baltic States should provide even more military support to Ukraine. In this regard Lithuania has the highest result (60%) with Poland coming in second (54%).

MOLDOVA

Moldova is a neighbouring country of Ukraine, sharing a 1,222 kilometre-border, including 454 kilometres with the Transnistrian region of Moldova (where Russian troops are illegally stationed).



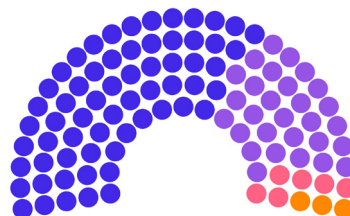
The President of the country is
Maia Sandu



The Parliament is the unicameral
legislative body of Moldova



The next Presidential elections in
Moldova will be held in autumn
2024



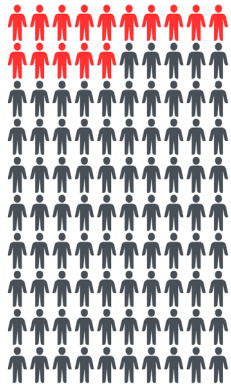
The Parliament

Party

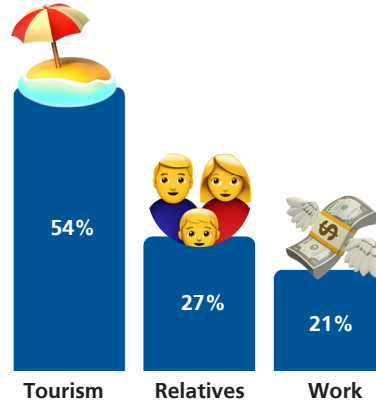
- Party of Action and Solidarity
- Bloc of Communists and Socialists
- Şor Party
- Independents

Chamber of Deputies

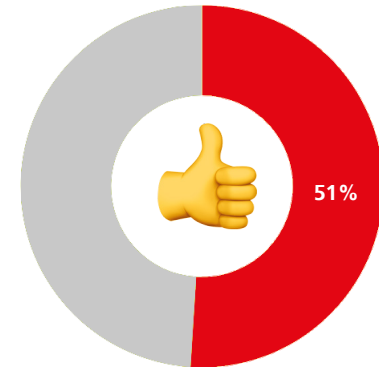
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Before the full-scale aggression 16% of Ukrainians visited Moldova



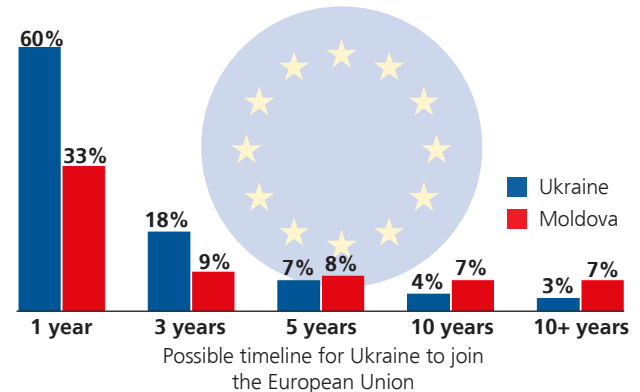
The reasons for the longest stay in Moldova



Share of Ukrainians with positive attitudes to Moldova after February 24, 2022

neighbours
grapes wine
friends

The most recalled associations with Moldova among Ukrainians



Introduction

Moldova is a neighbouring country of Ukraine, sharing a 1,222 kilometre-border, including 454 kilometres with the Transnistrian region of Moldova (where Russian troops are illegally stationed).

The President of the country is Maia Sandu, founder of the Party of Action and Solidarity. The Parliament is the unicameral legislative body of Moldova, with 101 elected MPs. The Parliament is currently composed of the Party of Action and Solidarity (63 seats), the Bloc of Communists and Socialists (29 seats), and the Şor Party (6 seats). The Party of Action and Solidarity has formed the Government of the Republic of Moldova unilaterally, whilst the pro-Russian Bloc of Communists and Socialists and populist Şor Party (headed by Ilan Şor, who has been convicted of fraud and money laundering and sanctioned by the United States Department of Treasury over his association with the Russian government) are in opposition.

The next Presidential elections in Moldova will be held in autumn 2024, whilst the next Moldovan legislative elections must take place before 11 July 2025. Recent polls show that if the elections were held in the near future, the Party of Action and Solidarity would get 24% of the votes, the Party of Socialists 15%, the Şor Party 10%, and the Party of Communists 5%. If there are no major changes in electoral preference between now and the elections, this could lead to the revanche of pro-Russian forces in the Parliament and, bearing in mind that Moldova is a parliamentary republic, the President elected in 2024 will be dependent on the support of the pro-Russian majority in the Parliament.

Mutual societal interconnections and perceptions

Before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, only 15% of Ukrainians had visited Moldova (whereas 50% of Moldovans had visited Ukraine). The longest stays in Moldova were for the purposes of tourism (54%), visiting relatives (27%), and business or work-related trips (21%). Also, one third of people from Moldova (32%) had visited relatives in Ukraine. These figures point to the strong family ties between Ukrainians and Moldovans, which could eventually be harnessed for public diplomacy purposes.

Among Ukrainians, Moldova is most commonly associated with wine (20%), grapes (7%), neighbours (4%), and friends (4%).

Based on previous knowledge and the personal experience of Moldovans today, Ukraine is predominantly associated with the war (14%) and sea (14%). It is noteworthy that the negative association still does not prevail over the neutral or positive neutral association with the sea (whilst 9% of Moldovans associate Ukraine with neighbours and 6% with vacations).

None of these associations (except for the war) contains a negative connotation.

Attitudes towards each other

Before February 2022, the attitude of Ukrainians towards Moldovans was predominantly positive, with 20% expressing a very positive stance and 28% fairly positive. Notwithstanding the high level of support cur-

rently provided by the Moldovan state and civil society, the number of Ukrainians with a very positive stance has not changed much (22%), with fairly positive at 29%. In all, 51% of Ukrainians have a positive attitude towards Moldova. At the same time, 41% of Ukrainians now say it is hard to say, which is the highest figure of all neighbouring countries, and, arguably, reflects a low level of knowledge about the Republic of Moldova. The attitude towards Moldova is best in the south of Ukraine (56% very positive or positive), where hypothetically the number of contacts and family ties with Moldovans is the highest, whereas residents of Kyiv are most likely to express a negative opinion (12%).

Moldovan attitudes differ significantly from those of Ukrainians. Before February 2022, 71% of Moldovans expressed a positive attitude towards Ukraine (47% very positive and 24% fairly positive), the highest figure of all neighbouring countries. Interestingly, only 19% of interviewed respondents from Moldova found it difficult to answer this question. The situation has changed a bit since the onset of the war. 63% now have a positive attitude, with a notable increase in the number of Moldovans for whom it's hard to say (from 19% to 26%). There are few hypotheses regarding the reasons for these changes. First, it may be the result of Russian propaganda, which has caused a conflict of perceptions based on personal experience and the mental picture of Ukraine shaped in Moldova by Russian propagandists, but it also may be the result of the socio-economic burden caused by the influx of Ukrainian refugees, or a combination of both factors. Nevertheless, Moldova remains one of the countries with the most positive view of Ukraine (second after Lithuania, where 74% of the population express a positive attitude). Only 8% of Moldovans currently express a negative attitude, the lowest in the region (equal with Lithuania).

Assessments of Ukrainian foreign policy

Integration with the EU

92% of Ukrainian respondents support Ukraine's membership in the EU, whilst 63% of Moldovans support the former's membership.

Regarding the possible timeline for Ukraine to join the European Union, 60% of Ukrainians believe the country should gain NATO membership within one year, 18% within three years, 7% within five years, 4% within 10 years, and 3% more than 10 years.

To compare, 33% of Moldovans (compared to 32% of Poles and 32% of Romanians) believe Ukraine can join the EU within one year, 9% within 3 years, 8% within 5 years, 7% within 10 years, and 7% more than 10 years. At the same time, 20% of Moldovans do not believe that Ukraine's future lies in Europe.

Integration with NATO

90% of Ukrainian respondents now support joining NATO, with 63% within 1 year, 15% within 3 years, 6% within 5 years, 3% within 10 years, and 3% more than 10 years. Only 4% of Ukrainians in this poll were negatively disposed towards Ukraine joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

At the same time, only 50% of Moldovan respondents advocate NATO membership for Ukraine, including 30% backing membership within 1 year, 6% within three years, 5% within five years, 2% within 10 years, and 5% more than 10 years to gain membership. 33% are opposed to the prospect

of Ukraine becoming a member of NATO. The older generation (45-54 years old – 43%, 55+ years old – 39%) are the least supportive of Ukraine’s potential NATO membership, whilst the younger generation is the most supportive (36% believe that Ukraine should gain NATO membership within 1 year).

Presumably, the reason for this is rooted in the fact that constitutionally neutral Moldova has a very poor record of cooperation with NATO, and for 30 years the country’s elites have promoted the benefits of neutrality. Even in the light of the direct military threat caused by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, Moldova is not aiming to become a member of NATO, although according to Foreign Minister Nicu Popescu, Moldova’s neutrality does not entail self-isolation, demilitarization, or an indifference towards global affairs. At the 2022 NATO Summit in Madrid, allied countries agreed a package of tailored support measures to help Moldova strengthen its resilience and civil preparedness.

International organizations for resolving challenging security problems

A majority of Ukrainian respondents believe that Russia’s military threat can be most effectively tackled at the level of NATO (60%). 17% of Ukrainian respondents are confident in the effectiveness of the UN to deal with the military threat from Russia. Only 3% believe the European Union to be a viable platform for dealing with the challenging security problems. Ukrainians are also sceptical about the potential of central European countries and the Baltic States to deal with Russia’s military posturing.

Only 23% of Moldovan respondents believe that NATO can counteract the military threat posed by Russia (the lowest figure of all neighbouring countries) and 15% believe the UN can be an effective platform for resolving this military crisis. Only 4% believe that central European countries and the Baltic States are capable of effectively counteracting Russia’s military threat.

The above figures suggest that Moldovans remain fairly unsure about the potential for regional security.

Degree of awareness about regional cooperation with Ukraine

Ukrainians demonstrated the following levels of awareness about regional cooperation initiatives Ukraine is party to: the trilateral Poland-Great Britain-Ukraine initiative (25%), the Lublin Triangle (14%), the Visegrad Four (13%), the Three Seas Initiative (11%), the Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative (7%).

At the same time, Moldovan respondents demonstrated a fairly high awareness of the Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative (20%). This is arguably due to the fact that it includes Moldova and its two neighbours.

Perception of regional leadership

Ukrainians tend to perceive Poland as a potential leader of the region encompassing central Europe and the Baltic States. Half of Ukrainian respondents (50%) share this vision, whilst 39% of Ukrainians believe Ukraine can lead the region.

22% of Moldovans believe Romania is a regional leader, whilst only 9% invest much hope in the Moldovan leadership (9%).

Scores for a bilateral Ukraine-Moldova agenda

When asked to assess some areas of the Ukraine-Moldova bilateral pathway on a 7-point scale (1 “very problematic”, 7 “very successful”), Ukrainians expressed a relatively neutral outlook in almost every aspect of interstate relations. Ukraine’s relations with Moldova were assessed as more neutral than other countries in the poll in terms of interethnic relations (5.18 out of 7), historical memory (5.06), European integration (5.03), and economic cooperation (4.76).

Moldovan respondents were also fairly neutral in their assessment of bilateral relations between the two countries. Interethnic relations received the highest score (4.76), followed by economic cooperation (4.80) and European integration (4.78), with military aid receiving the lowest score (3.74), which is expected bearing in mind the limited military capacities of the Republic of Moldova.

Personal resilience vs state defence development

The results of the poll show that Ukrainians are accustomed to the hardships of war. 78% of respondents (48% “Definitely yes” and 30% “Somewhat yes”) claimed that they are prepared to endure some difficulties of a

personal and economic nature in order to strengthen the Ukrainian army.

In Moldova, only 26% of respondents demonstrate such readiness (12% “Definitely yes” and 14% “Somewhat yes”), whilst 56% take an opposing view (36% “Definitely no” and 20% “Somewhat no”).

The older generation of Moldova is not ready to endure difficulties (58% of respondents aged 45+ are not ready). That may arguably be explained by social vulnerability among the older generation (the average pension in Moldova is the lowest after Ukraine at only 170 USD).

Perception of safety and security in Moldova on the backdrop of the hostilities in Ukraine

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Moldovan respondents demonstrated that they are concerned about the negative security environment. On an 11-point scale (0 “in great danger”, 10 “absolutely safe”), Moldovan respondents gave a fairly low score of 4.33, the lowest of the neighbouring countries. This could be due to the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in socio-economic terms (the burden caused by the influx of refugees), Russian economic pressure, as well as the cases in which Russian missiles aimed at Ukraine crossed the airspace of the Republic of Moldova.

In this regard, it is not surprising that 37% of Moldovan respondents believe that central European countries and the Baltic States should provide even more military support to Ukraine.

POLAND

The Republic of Poland is a neighboring Central European state to Ukraine, sharing a common land border of 535 km. It directly connects two Polish regions with three Ukrainian regions.



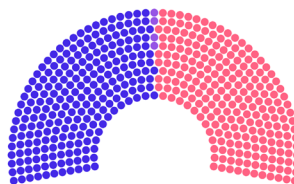
The President of Poland is Andrzej Duda



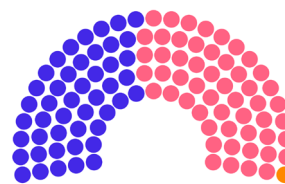
The Polish Parliament benefits from bicameral composition



The next parliamentary election is set for autumn 2023 and the presidential election is scheduled to be held in 2025



Sejm



Senate

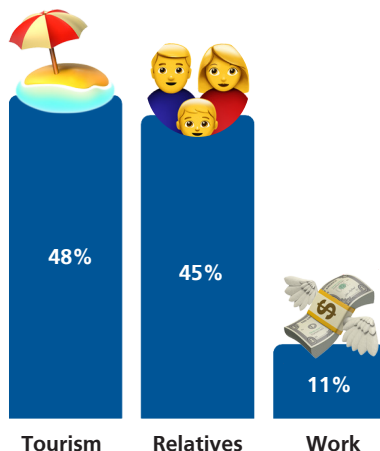
Party

- Government
- Confidence and supply
- Opposition
- Vacant

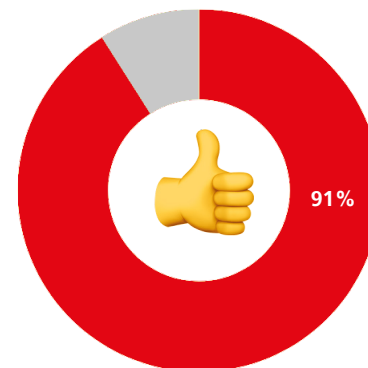
	Sejm	Senate
Government	229	46
Confidence and supply	4	0
Opposition	227	53
Vacant	0	1



Before the full-scale aggression 38% of Ukrainians visited Poland



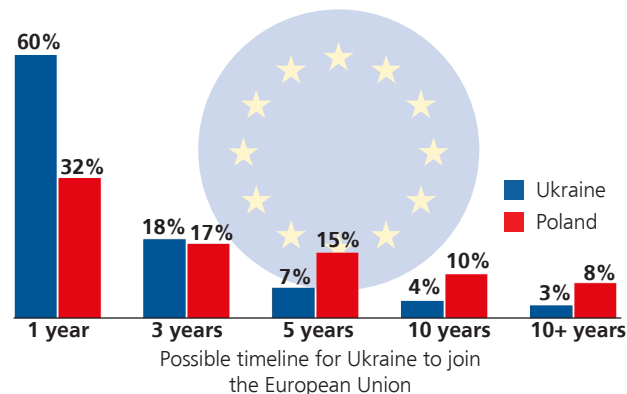
The reasons for the longest stay in Poland



Share of Ukrainians with positive attitudes to Poland after February 24, 2022



The most recalled associations with Poland among Ukrainians



Introduction

The Republic of Poland is a neighboring Central European state to Ukraine, sharing a common land border of 535 km. It directly connects two Polish regions with three Ukrainian regions. The Polish-Ukrainian border is also a span of the Eastern external border of the European Union and NATO with Ukraine.

2015 census states that there are over 38,5 million people in Poland, which makes it the fifth most populous state in the European Union.

Under the 1977 Constitution, Poland is a parliamentary republic. The Polish Parliament benefits from bicameral composition. The lower chamber is the Sejm with 460 seats and the upper chamber is the Senate with 100 seats. Under current electoral system, members of the Sejm are elected in multi-mandate constituencies by proportional representation every 4 years. At the same time, members of the Senate are elected in single-mandate districts by simple majority for the same 4-years convocation period.

Previous election took place in 2019. In that run, Sejm, United Right, a coalition with the Law and Justice party's leadership received 235 seats, while the main opposition party Civic Coalition (KO) received 134 seats. The Left Coalition (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej, Wiosna and Razem) obtained 49 mandates, the Polish Coalition (PSL) jointly with Kukiz'15 took 30 seats. And right-wing Konfederacja entered the Sejm with 11 seats. The current number of seats in the Sejm/Senate is the following: The United Right (PiS) has 228 in the Sejm/46 in the senate, Agreement

party (till 2021 was part of the United Right) - 5/1, Civic Coalition - 126/41, the Left (Lewica) - 44/1, Democratic Left - 3/1, Polish Coalition (PSL) -24/4, Kukiz'15 -4/0, Good Movement -1/0, Konfederacja - 9/0, Freedomites (Wolnościowcy) - 3/0, Poland 2050 (Polska 2050) - 8/1, German Minority Electoral Committee (Mniejszość Niemiecka) -1/0.

The executive branch is represented by the President as the head of the state, the Prime Minister as the head of the Council of Ministers, the Polish government. Ministers are appointed by the president on the Prime Minister's proposal and approved by the Sejm. President Andrzej Duda has been in office since 2015 (reelected in 2020). Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki took the post of head of the government in 2017. Both are representatives of the ruling Law and Justice party (PiS).

The next parliamentary election is set for autumn 2023 and the presidential election is scheduled to be held on 2025.

Mutual societal interconnections and perceptions

Before full-scale aggression 38% of Ukrainians visited Poland, and the reasons for the longest stay in this neighboring country were connected to tourism (48%), visiting relatives (45%) and business or work-related trips (11%). The picture differs from other countries of the poll, since for all others tourism presents over half of answers about the reason to stay in other neighboring countries. This large share of family Ukrainian connec-

tions may be explained by a large number of Ukrainians who study and work in Poland. This picture presents both promising and disturbing pictures. On the one hand, it indicates that Poland has created a conducive environment for Ukrainian citizens to join the Polish labor market, and also open secondary and higher education systems to foreigners. On the other hand, it may indicate that a large number of Ukrainians decided to leave Ukraine in search of a better life. The full scale war has definitely changed the attitude towards migration from Ukraine, but it is important to bear in mind that these aspects of work and education will appear once again in the perception of Ukrainians after the end of the war.

Among Ukrainians the most recalled associations with Poland relate to friendly and brotherly relations with Polish people (22% accounted together for "friends" and "brothers"), to possibilities to earn money in Poland (15%), assistance granted to Ukrainians (12%). Other associations cover the beauty of Poland (7%) and nice character traits of Polish people (6%). Also, Poland appeals to Ukrainians for its welfare (4%) and as a neighboring state (4%).

Reversely, only 15% of Poles said that they already visited Ukraine, with 80% of them as tourists, visits to relatives and work travels representing 15% and 11%, accordingly. Based on previous knowledge and personal experience for Polish citizens, Ukraine is predominantly associated with the Russian war against Ukraine - 52% of interviewed Poles declared this association. Poverty was named as the second most frequent association about Ukraine, but in numbers it is far below (7%) to war-related associations. It might be connected to previous dynamic labor migration to Poland from Ukraine. All other associations do not crouch the 3% mar-

gin. From the figures above, we may witness the traditional connotations of Ukrainians with war-related issues. Forced labor migration provokes negative associations with Ukraine as a poor state, underdeveloped economically and socially. This trend might be strengthened during full-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine, as Poland faced the biggest number of Ukrainian refugees. The total number of Ukrainians staying in Poland, according to different assessments, ranges between 1,5 to more than 2 million people. It is important in further communication with Poles to focus attention on the necessity to assist Ukrainians in overcoming economic and social consequences of the Russian war. Additionally, the communication frame might be changed, showing positive numbers for the Polish economy as a result of Ukrainian workers' contribution.

Attitudes towards each other

Until February 2022, in relation to the Poles, Ukrainians expressed predominant positive attitudes, with 65% having a very positive attitude and 23% rather positive. Not surprising, at present, provided the level of Polish support to Ukraine, the share of Ukrainians with very positive attitudes is up 17% totalling to 82%. Altogether, positive references account for 91%, the highest among studied countries. Negative feelings in the aggregated form account only for 4% in both periods. It is evident that Ukrainians notice and value the level of support that Poland delivers to Ukraine, not only militarily, but also in terms of humanitarian support.

Polish attitude projections are different. For the period before February 2022, the aggregated rating of positive attitudes towards Ukrainians stayed

at the level of 53% (23% very positive and 30% rather positive). Interestingly, one third of the interviewed Polish respondents found it difficult to answer this question. This situation has slightly changed, while assessing the Polish attitude in the present time. For now, combined positive share levels to 61% with a notable increase in part of very positive rates from 23% to 30%. One fourth of respondents are still uncertain regarding the answer. In both periods, the combined negative projection accounts for 15% (6% very negative and 9% rather negative). Positive feelings towards Ukrainians stem from sympathy and compassion which arose during full scale aggression. It is important to continue information awareness campaigns oriented on more conservative social groups in Poland in order to sway in positive direction the attitudes and resolve uncertainty.

Assessments of Ukrainian foreign policy directions

EU integration

Poland has been a staunch advocate for Ukrainian integration track towards EU and NATO. Both on the level of Polish elites and citizens, membership of Ukraine in both organizations presents a vital national interest. Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that among Polish respondents the total share of supporters for Ukraine's membership in the EU is equal to 82%.

Regarding the possible timeline for Ukraine to join the European Union, 60% Ukrainians see it should be done during a one-year period, 18% -

in a three year period, 7% - within five years, 4% - within ten years, while 3% ponder about the accession horizon above ten years.

For comparison, 32% of Poles see a one-year membership perspective for Ukraine, 17% in favor of a three-year possible timeline, 15% stand for five years, 10% - for ten years, 8% see a remote chance, no earlier than ten years.

Warsaw played a significant role in promoting the idea of granting candidate status for Ukraine on political elites level, and now it advocates the start of the negotiation process in 2023. Although there were political tension in relations between Ukraine and Poland in historical memory, this issue is now out of the agenda. But special attention should be paid by both sides not to allow political speculation on this issue during upcoming Polish parliamentary elections in 2023.

NATO Integration

Combined support for Ukraine joining NATO reaches 90% among Ukrainian respondents with following shares in terms of possible timelines: 63% - within one year, 15% - three years, 6% - 5%, 3% - ten years, 3% - over ten years. It is worth mentioning that only 4% of Ukrainians in this poll indicated a negative attitude toward Ukraine affiliating the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

At the same time, 81% of Polish respondents advocate Ukraine NATO membership, including 31% backing membership within one year timeline, 17% - three years, 12% - five years, 8% - ten years and 7% -

over ten years period to gain accession. Only 9% opposed the Ukraine membership.

International organizations in solving hard security problems

The majority of Ukrainian respondents believes that Russia's military threat might be most effectively tackled on NATO level (60%). 17% of the polled Ukrainians are confident about the effectiveness on dealing with military threats at UN level. The European Union is not considered a viable venue to deal with hard security issues with only 3% of the share of opinions. Ukrainians are also skeptical about the relevant potential of Central Europe and Baltic States to deal with Russian military threats.

48% of Polish participants in the poll believe in NATO efficacy in facing Russian military threats and 12% supports the UN in solving this military escalation. Only 7% believe that Central Europe and Baltic region are capable of effectively facing Russia's military threat.

Degree of awareness about regional cooperation with Ukraine

In the context of regional cooperation formats in which Ukraine participates, among proposed options Ukrainians demonstrated the following awareness rating: trilateral Poland-Great Britain-Ukraine initiative

(25%), Lublin Triangle (14%), Visegrad Four (13%), Three Seas Initiative (11%), Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative (7%).

At the same time, Polish respondents demonstrated these awareness results: Visegrad Four (34%), Three Seas Initiative (24%), Poland-Great Britain-Ukraine initiative (16%), Lublin Triangle (10%), Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative (9%).

Ukraine is genuinely interested in developing regional cooperations formats as an integral part of Ukrainian wartime diplomacy and Poland appears here as a natural partner in filling some formats with practical essence. It might be of interest to Ukraine and Poland to use some of the regional cooperation initiatives in order to bring results on difficult thematic issues. It is possible to mention defense cooperation, initiatives connected to responsibility for war crimes committed by the Russian army in Ukraine, and also recovery and reconstruction projects. At the same time, this activity should be complementary with major efforts on multilateral international coalitions levels supporting Ukraine.

Regional leadership perception

Ukrainians tend to perceive Poland as a potential regional leader in Central Europe and the Baltics. Half of the respondents from Ukraine (50%) share this vision. However, at the same time there is an ambition cherished among Ukrainians that Ukraine eventually may also demonstrate its interest in leading the region. For this option 39% of Ukrainians cast their vote.

Clearly, Poland itself is confident in its regional influence and lead, with 47% of Polish respondents supporting this idea. Interestingly, Polish people are not inclined to see Ukraine as a competitor. Only 5% of those interviewed voiced this possibility for Ukraine to grow as a regional leader. This asymmetry may stem from the perception of NATO and EU membership as strong preconditions for regional ambition and coalitions. Supposedly, in Polish lenses, being out of these two clubs means less chances to appear as a strong leader for others.

Scores for Ukraine-Poland bilateral agenda

Ukrainians, when asked to assess some areas of the Ukraine-Poland bilateral track in a 7-points scale (1 “very problematic”, 7 “very successful”), proposed a positive outlook in almost every domain of interstate relations. Ukraine’s relations with Poland obtained the highest scores in comparison to other states in the poll in areas of European integration (6.49 out of 7), economic cooperation (6.41) and interethnic relations (6.17). Score of 5.62 in historical memory, although smaller compared to Ukrainian relations with each of the Baltic States, still does not present an issue for Ukrainians. The latter may witness that issues of historical memory have never been deeply rooted in common Ukrainian mindset. We may presume here that sparks of tensions related to Ukrainian-Polish track, we witnessed prior to wartime period, were rather the result of political speculations in order to flirt with some conservative constituencies both in Poland and Ukraine against the backdrop of electoral process.

Polish respondents tend to see the bilateral track less optimistically. The highest score of 4.98 goes to military aid to Ukraine, the next are economic cooperation (4.74), European integration (4.65) and interethnic relations (4.52). Issue of historical memory stands out with a 3.56 score.

From this data, one may see that Poles and Ukrainian see very differently the issues of historical memory and its role in the development of bilateral agenda. Ukrainians are not inclined to place historical memory before the real cooperation dimensions, including integration track. It is important to keep the current level of strategic communications oriented on tangible results of Polish assistance to Ukraine, especially during Polish electoral campaigns.

Personal resilience versus state defense development

Ukrainians are used to war hardships, which is embodied in this opinion poll results. 78% of respondents (combined 48% of answers “Definitely yes” and 30% of “Rather yes”) claimed that they are prepared to endure some difficulties of personal and economic nature to strengthen the Ukrainian army.

In Poland, this readiness demonstrates 40% of respondents (combined 14% of answers “Definitely yes” and 26% of “Rather yes”), while the camp of opposition rests on the share of 27% (combined 10% of answers “Definitely no” and 17% of “Rather no”).

Perception of safety in Poland regarding hostilities in Ukraine

Trying to assess the safety level for Poland against the backdrop of the Russian full-scale aggression in Ukraine, Polish respondents flagged their real concern about a negative security environment. On the 11-point scale (0 “in great danger”, 10 “absolutely safe”), the participants, interviewed in Poland, have mapped their country quite low with a score of 5.66. Poland is ranked second in terms of high safety risks, with Moldova leading it (score 4.33).

But under these circumstances, it is very important to admit that 54% of Polish respondents are confident that Central European and Baltic States should provide more military support to Ukraine to fight the war against Russia, despite the economic difficulties for responders and for Poland at large. This attitude corresponds to the general approach of central European and Baltic States, whose leadership is well aware of the challenges Russia has cast recently. Being in direct proximity to the Russian border, Poland and Baltic partners feel the danger emanating from Russia to the whole region. Ukraine should engage the ring of Ukrainian friends in the European Union and NATO to push further its integration agenda, including increasing defense cooperation.

ROMANIA

Romania is a neighbouring country of Ukraine. The Romania–Ukraine border is 613.8 km long, including 292.2 km along rivers and 33 km by the Black Sea.



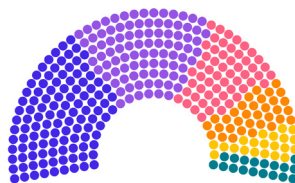
The President of the country is Klaus Iohannis



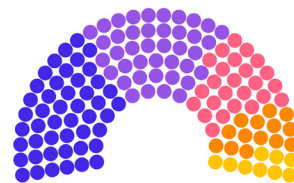
Bicameral Parliament includes the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate



The next Presidential elections in Romania are going to be held in November 2024



The Chamber of Deputies



The Senate

Party

- Social-Democratic Party (PSD)
- National-Liberal Party (PNL)
- USR PLUS (alliance of the parties Save Romania Union (USR) and the Freedom, Unity and Solidarity Party (PLUS))
- Alianța pentru Unirea Românilor (AUR)
- Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR)
- National minorities by quota

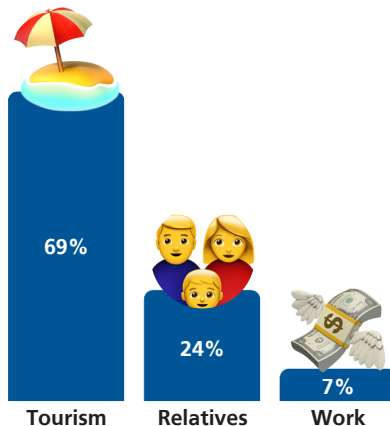
Chamber of Deputies

Senate

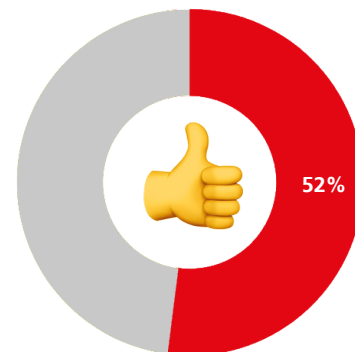
110	47
93	41
55	25
33	14
21	9
18	



Before the full-scale aggression only 11% of Ukrainians visited Romania



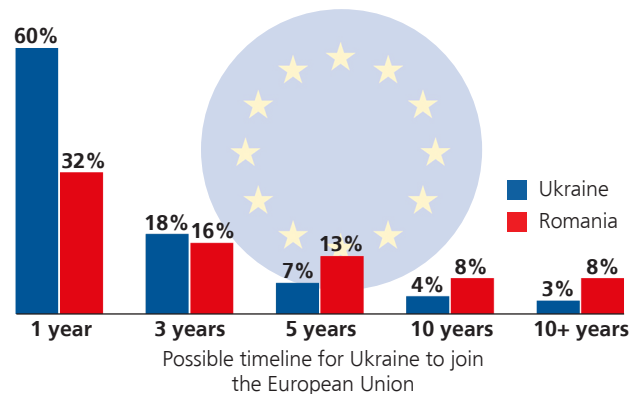
The reasons for the longest stay in Romania



Share of Ukrainians with positive attitudes to Romania after February 24, 2022

Roma Beauty
Dracula
Neighbours

The most recalled associations with Romania among Ukrainians



Introduction

Romania is a neighbouring country of Ukraine. The Romania–Ukraine border is 613.8 km long, including 292.2 km along rivers and 33 km by the Black Sea.

The President of the country is Klaus Iohannis, and the bicameral Parliament includes the Chamber of Deputies, currently made up of the Social-Democratic Party (PSD) - 110 seats, National-Liberal Party (PNL) - 93 seats, USR PLUS (alliance of the parties Save Romania Union (USR) and the Freedom, Unity and Solidarity Party (PLUS)) - 55 seats, Alianța pentru Unirea Românilor (AUR) - 33 seats, and Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR) - 21 seats. 18 more seats belong to the representatives of national minorities by quota (one each). The Ukrainian minority is represented by the Chairman of the Union of the Ukrainians of Romania Nicolae Miroslov Petrețchi. The other house, the Senate, is composed of PSD – 47 seats, PNL – 41 seats, USR PLUS – 25 seats, AUR – 14 seats and UDMR – 9 seats.

The National coalition for Romania (Romanian: Coaliția Națională pentru România, CNR) includes PSD, PNL, UDMR.

The next Presidential elections in Romania are going to be held in November 2024. The next Romanian legislative elections must be held, at the latest, before 21 March 2025. Although there is a planned government rotation in 2023 (the representative of the PSD will take the place of the representative of the PNL in accordance with the Coalition Agreement), there are no major shifts in internal and foreign policy expected in the next few years.

Mutual societal interconnections and perceptions

Before full-scale aggression only 11% of Ukrainians visited Romania (and even fewer Romanians - 8% - visited Ukraine). The reasons for the longest stay in this neighbouring country were connected to tourism (69%), paying visits to relatives (24%) and business or work-related trips (7%).

Among Ukrainians, the most recalled associations with Romania relate to Roma (7%), Dracula (7%), neighbours (4%) and beauty (4%). Such associations reflect the high level of stereotypical thinking and relatively low factual knowledge of the neighbouring country.

Based on previous knowledge and personal experience at present for Romanian citizens, Ukraine is predominantly being associated with the Russian war against Ukraine. 28% of Romanians interviewed mentioned this association. As in the case of Ukraine it reflects a low level of awareness regarding the neighbouring country and indicates the mutual perception gap which has to be fixed.

Fortunately, fixing this problem is feasible since the mutual negative stereotypes do not dominate the agenda and are occasionally fueled by politicians. If properly designed and managed, information campaigns presenting both countries to each other may eventually result in improved images and contribute to closer political and economic ties, which may eventually have a significant impact on Romania's engagement in the process of Ukraine's recovery.

Attitudes towards each other

Until February 2022, with regard to Romanians, Ukrainians expressed rather positive attitudes, with 15% having stated a very positive stance and 27% rather positive. Bearing in mind the high level of support provided by the Romanian state and civil society nowadays, the share of Ukrainians with very positive attitudes is up to 23% and positive is up to 29%. Altogether, positive references account for 52%. At the same time the number of those for whom it's hard to say reaches 49%, which again reflects the low level of awareness and insufficient experience to enable fair judging.

Importantly, 53% of residents from the West had a positive attitude towards Romania before the full-scale invasion, which is the biggest percentage for Ukraine. Presumably, such an attitude might have been grounded in proximity increasing awareness. Also family ties could have played a role (out of those who visited Romania before 24 February 2022, 24% were visiting relatives). Also the West of Ukraine is a place where the Romanian minority live and that could have had an impact on the assessment.

Romanian attitude projections are different. For the period before February 2022, the aggregated rating of positive attitudes towards Ukrainians was at the level of 43% (17% very positive and 26% rather positive). Interestingly, more than one third of the respondents from Romania interviewed (38%) found it difficult to answer this question. The situation has changed a bit, in current assessments of the Romanian attitude. For now, the combined positive share has reached 52%, with a notable increase in the very positive rates from 17% to 24%. 30% of respondents still remain uncertain regarding the answer. In both peri-

ods, the combined negative projection accounts for 18%, which indirectly indicates that the core of those with the negative attitude remains unchanged, whereas there is space for growing positive attitude and Romanian empathic reaction to Russian war against Ukraine can be a first step in that direction.

Assessments of Ukrainian foreign policy directions

Integration with the EU

Among Ukrainian respondents, the total share of supporters for Ukraine's membership in the EU is equal to 92%, while among Romanian respondents it reaches 78%.

Regarding the possible timeline for Ukraine to join the European Union, 60% of Ukrainians consider it should be done during a one-year period, 18% - in a three-year period, 7% - within five years, 4% - within 10 years, while 3% are considering a horizon beyond 10 years.

To compare, 32% of Romanians (just like 32% of Poles) see a prospective one-year membership for Ukraine, 16% are in favour of a three-year possible timeline, with 13% opting for 5 years, and 8% for 10 years, whilst another 8% see a distant chance, not earlier than 10 years.

Such relatively high figures (comparable with the respective results in Poland) give high chances for engaging Romanians as the EU member-

ship advocates for Ukraine. The key obstacle is the issue of the national minority. There is a consensus among the political elites that by passing the Law on education in 2017 Ukraine deprived the Romanian minority of their right to education in native language. Both states are in the process of consultations to resolve this issue. Although the Ukrainian Law on Ethnic Minorities promulgated on 29 December 2023 dissatisfied Romania, President Zelenskyy and President Iohannis had agreed to try to resolve the plight of the Romanian minority and to identify solutions so that the Romanian community in Ukraine benefits from the same rights enjoyed by the Ukrainian community in Romania. A less meaningful, but still important, problem is the issue of Moldovan language. Recently the Republic of Moldova recognized the Romanian language as a state language, whereas Ukraine keeps making a distinction between the Romanian and Moldovan languages. However, this problem can be fixed if Ukraine follows the official approach of the Moldovans' kin-state - the Republic of Moldova.

Integration with NATO

Combined support for Ukraine joining NATO has reached 90% among Ukrainian respondents with the following proportions in terms of the possible timelines: 63% - within 1 year, 15% - 3 years, 6% - 5 years, 3% - 10 years, 3% - over 10 years. It is worth mentioning that only 4% of Ukrainians in this poll indicated a negative stance toward Ukraine joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

At the same time, 73% of Romanian respondents advocate NATO membership for Ukraine, including 31% backing membership within a

one-year timeline, 14% - three years, 11% - five years, 9% - 10 years and 7% - over 10 years period to gain membership. 27% opposed the prospect of membership for Ukraine.

Within NATO, it is noteworthy that Romania assists Ukraine by leading the Trust Fund on Cyber Defence for Ukraine, which aims to provide Ukraine with the necessary support to develop its strictly defensive, Cyber Security Incident Response Team-type technical capabilities, including laboratories to investigate cyber security incidents. The project also has a training and advisory dimension with an adaptive approach that is based on the interests of both Allies and Ukraine and derived from the requirements of Ukraine's security and defence sector institutions. As the Lead Nation, Romania is acting through the Romanian Intelligence Service.

International organizations in solving hard security problems

A majority of Ukrainian respondents believe that Russia's military threat might be most effectively tackled at the level of NATO (60%). 17% of Ukrainians polled are confident in the effectiveness of the UN level to deal with the military threat from Russia. The European Union is not considered a viable venue to deal with the hard security issues, with only a 3% share of opinions. Ukrainians are also skeptical about the relevant potential of the Central Europe and Baltic States to deal with the military posture of Russia.

38% of Romanian respondents believe in the efficacy of NATO in facing the military threats posed by Russia and 15% are supporters of the UN in terms of resolving this military dimension of escalation. Only 6% believe that Central Europe and the Baltic region is capable of effectively facing Russia's military threat.

The figures above arguably hint that both Ukrainians and Romanians remain rather uncertain regarding the regional security potential of the region.

Degree of awareness about regional cooperation with Ukraine

In the context of regional cooperation formats, in which Ukraine participates, among the proposed options Ukrainians demonstrated the following levels of awareness: trilateral Poland-Great Britain-Ukraine initiative (25%), Lublin Triangle (14%), the Visegrad Four (13%), Three Seas Initiative (11%), Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative (7%).

At the same time, Romanian respondents demonstrated these awareness levels: Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative (12%), the Visegrad Four (8%), the Three Seas Initiative (7%), Poland-Great Britain-Ukraine initiative (6%), Lublin Triangle (4%). However, notwithstanding the low level of awareness, the Romanian elites contribute to the development of regional initiatives, in particular, the Three Seas Initiative and the Bucharest Nine (which assembles the countries of NATO's Eastern flank).

Importantly, in 2023 Romania is hosting the summit of the Three Seas Initiative, and the Ministerial of the Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative is expected.

Regional leadership perception

Ukrainians tend to perceive Poland as a potential regional leader in Central Europe and the Baltic states. Half of the respondents from Ukraine (50%) share this vision. But at the same time there is an ambition cherished among Ukrainians that Ukraine eventually may also demonstrate its interest in leading the region. For such an option, 39% of Ukrainians cast their vote.

Meanwhile, Romanians believe Poland has a regional influence and lead (31%) but also invest their hopes into Romanian leadership (24%). Interestingly, Romanians are not inclined to see Ukraine as a competitor to Romania. However, 7% of those interviewed voiced the possibility of Ukraine growing into a regional leader.

Scores for a bilateral agenda Ukraine-Romania

Ukrainians, when asked to assess some areas of the Ukraine-Romania bilateral pathway on a 7-point scale (1 "very problematic", 7 "very successful"), proposed a relatively neutral outlook in almost every proposed domain of interstate relations. Ukraine's relations with Romania obtained neutral scores in comparison to the other states in the poll in areas of European integration (4.92 out of 7), interethnic relations

(4.89), economic cooperation (4.79) and a score of 4.74 in matters of historical memory.

Romanian respondents are also rather neutral in their assessment of bilateral relations. The highest score of 4.56 goes to economic cooperation, the next are matters of military aid to Ukraine (4.46), European integration (4.40), interethnic relations (4.05). The issue of historical memory stands out with a 3.76 score which reflects Romanian sensitivity in this regard.

Personal resilience vs state defence development

Ukrainians are accustomed to the hardships of the war, which is embodied in this opinion poll result. 78% of respondents (48% of answers were "Definitely yes" and 30% "Somewhat yes") claimed that they are prepared to endure some difficulties of a personal and economic nature in order to strengthen the Ukrainian army.

In Romania, such readiness is demonstrated by 28% of respondents (combination of 8% of answers being "Definitely yes" and 20% "Somewhat yes"), while the opposing camp rests on a share of 35% (combination of 16% of answers being "Definitely no" and 22% "Somewhat no").

Interestingly, the highest number of those who are uncertain about their readiness is among young people (for people aged 18-24 years old, the share is 49%).

Perception of safety in Romania considering the hostilities in Ukraine

Trying to assess the level of safety for Romania, against the backdrop of the Russian full-scale aggression in Ukraine, Romanian respondents flagged their real concern about a negative security environment. On the 11-point scale (0 "in great danger", 10 "absolutely safe"), the participants, interviewed in Romania, have mapped their country quite high with the score of 6.07 which can partly explain low readiness to sacrifice economic welfare for the sake of the army.

But under these circumstances, it is very important to acknowledge that 40% of Romanian respondents are confident that the Central European and Baltic States should provide even more military support to Ukraine. The only places with higher results are Lithuania (60%) and Poland (54%).

SLOVAKIA

Slovakia is a landlocked country located in Central Europe, bordered by Poland, Ukraine, Hungary, Austria, and the Czech Republic. The length of Slovakia's borders is approximately 1,611 km.



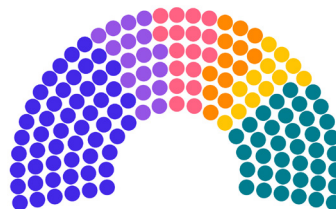
The President of Slovakia is
Zuzana Čaputová



Slovak Parliament is unicameral



The next Slovak Presidential
election is scheduled for 2024

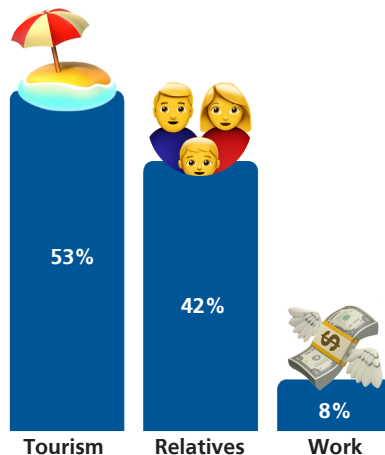


Slovak Parliament

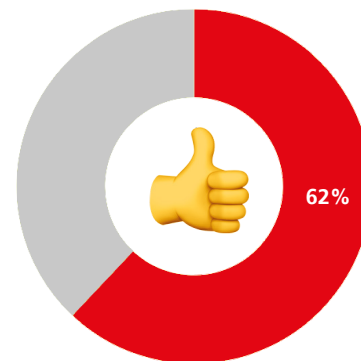
Party	Seats
● Ordinary People Party	53
● We Are Family	17
● People's Party Our Slovakia	17
● Freedom and Solidarity	13
● For the People party	12
● Smer-SD party	38



Before the full-scale aggression only 10% of Ukrainians visited Slovakia



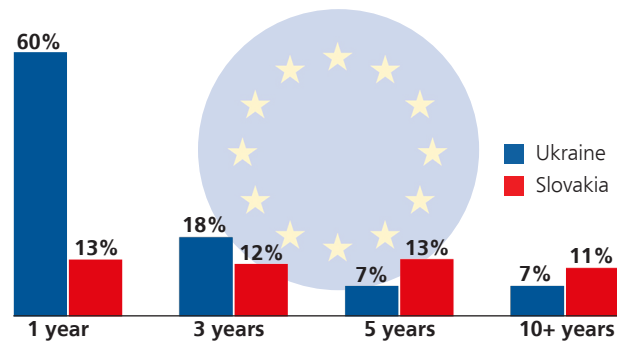
The reasons for the longest stay in Slovakia



Share of Ukrainians with positive attitudes to Slovakia after February 24, 2022

help
Europe
beauty friends

The most recalled associations with Slovakia among Ukrainians



Possible timeline for Ukraine to join the European Union

Introduction

Slovakia is a landlocked country located in Central Europe, bordered by Poland, Ukraine, Hungary, Austria, and the Czech Republic. The length of Slovakia's borders is approximately 1,611 km.

The President of Slovakia is Zuzana Čaputová. The Slovak Parliament is unicameral and is composed of 150 members. Currently, the ruling party is the center-right Ordinary People (OLaNO) with 53 seats, followed by the right-wing party We Are Family with 17 seats, the far-right party People's Party Our Slovakia (LSNS) with 17 seats, the center-right Freedom and Solidarity party with 13 seats, the For the People party (of undefinable orientation) with 12 seats and the centre-left Smer-SD party with 38 seats. Other parties hold fewer seats or none at all.

The next Slovak Presidential election is scheduled for 2024. The next legislative election will be held before the scheduled date (2024) in September 2023 due to Slovakia's minority centre-right government losing a no-confidence vote in December. The current government has been in power since March 2020 and the ruling coalition was composed of OLaNO, We Are Family, Freedom and Solidarity, and the For the People parties. It, however, lost the majority in September 2022 after SAS quit. According to the most recent polls (March 2022), Smer-SD and HLAS-SD are currently leading the polls with 17% each. They are followed by Progressive Slovakia with 12% and Republica with 9%.

Mutual societal interconnections and perceptions

The period prior to 24 February saw a significant number of Ukrainians travelling to Slovakia, largely for tourism purposes. According to a survey, 53% of Ukrainians visited Slovakia for tourism, indicating that Slovakia is a popular destination for Ukrainian travellers. In addition to tourism, 42% of Ukrainians travelled to Slovakia to visit relatives, while 8% visited for business or work-related matters.

Interestingly, a similar trend can be observed among Slovak travellers visiting Ukraine. The survey revealed that 56% of Slovaks respondents visited Ukraine for tourism purposes, with 16% visiting to see relatives and 29% travelling for business or work-related reasons. It's worth observing that the 29% figure is the highest among all Central and Eastern European countries.

When asked about their associations with Slovakia, Ukrainians most commonly associated it with "friends" with 6% of respondents indicating this as their primary association. Other positive associations with Slovakia included "beauty" (5%), "help" (5%) and "Europe" (4%). In general, the associations named by Ukrainian respondents were overwhelmingly positive.

In contrast, most Slovak citizens currently associate Ukraine with the ongoing Russian war against Ukraine. Of those surveyed, 23% reported this as their primary association with Ukraine, with other associations

including “sadness” (2%) and “neighbours” (2%). This signifies a lack of knowledge about Ukraine among the Slovak population and highlights the need to address the perception gap between the two nations.

To improve awareness and understanding between Slovakia and Ukraine, efforts should be made to increase cultural exchanges and promote greater people-to-people contact. Educational programs and exchanges, as well as business partnerships, could help bridge the gap and foster closer ties between the two countries. Additionally, initiatives aimed at increasing tourism flows in both directions could help promote greater mutual understanding and cooperation.

Attitudes towards each other

The relationship between Slovaks and Ukrainians has been dynamic and has evolved over time, especially in the context of the ongoing Russian war in Ukraine. Prior to the Russian invasion, most Ukrainians had a positive view of Slovakia with 29% expressing very positive views, 29% having rather positive views and 38% being unsure. On the other hand, most Slovaks had mixed feelings about Ukraine with only 10% having very positive views, 29% rather positive views, 42% unsure and 18% holding negative or very negative views.

However, most recent data suggests that there has been a shift in perception in both countries. Currently, 38% of Ukrainians have very positive views of Slovakia, 24% hold rather positive views, and 33% are unsure. This is indicative of increased awareness among Ukrainians of

Slovakia, which can be attributed to Slovakia’s response to the refugee crisis and extensive military support of the Ukrainian army.

When it comes to Slovakia, at the present time, 14% of Slovaks hold very positive views of Ukraine, 22% have rather positive views and 36% are unsure. Unfortunately, the percentage of Slovaks with a negative view of Ukraine has increased significantly, from 18% to 28%. The Slovak population differs from others in the region as a majority believe that refugees fleeing Ukraine should not be granted access to free healthcare and that the assistance provided to Ukrainian refugees should be reduced. The primary reason for these negative perceptions is the fear among the host population that providing refugee aid may have a detrimental impact on their own economic situation. This fear is constantly being fuelled by the influence of Russian disinformation and pro-Russian political parties (Social Democrats Smer-SD, led by former longtime prime minister Robert Fico, far-right L’SNS, right-wing SNS). Moreover, social media accounts belonging to the Russian embassy in Slovakia can be described as a hub for conspiracy theories and disinformation. Over the course of one year (2022), the account has accumulated approximately 5,000 posts featuring a broad range of content. Another reason for the shift towards a more negative view of Ukrainians is the prevailing opinion on who is responsible for the war. In Slovakia, only 39% of those surveyed by the Globsec think tank blames Russia, while 46% blame Ukraine, the US or NATO.

These negative attitudes towards Ukraine are a cause for concern, as they undermine the efforts to build a strong relationship between the two countries.

Assessments of Ukrainian foreign policy directions

EU integration

According to recent data, Ukrainian respondents overwhelmingly support their country's membership in the European Union with a total share of 92%. Furthermore, 60% of Ukrainians believe that Ukraine should become a member of the EU within one year, 18% within three years and only 3% think it is a distant possibility. The remaining respondents think it should happen within five or ten years.

On the other hand, Slovaks appear to have a significantly different perspective on Ukraine's EU membership. Only 13% of Slovaks support Ukraine's accession to the EU within one year, and the percentage drops to 12% for three years, 13% for five years and 11% for ten years. In fact, a large portion of Slovaks, 26%, reject the idea of Ukraine's EU membership altogether. This number is second only to Hungary in Central and Eastern Europe.

It is important to observe that the Slovak government's stance on the issue is more favourable than that of the general population. Slovakia's Prime Minister Eduard Heger, for example, has been advocating for a "special track" toward integration since the very start of the full-scale invasion. Slovakia also stated full support for the Ukrainian peace formula and readiness to participate in its implementation.

NATO integration

According to a recent poll, 90% of Ukrainians are in favour of Ukraine's accession to NATO. Specifically, 63% of the Ukrainian respondents support membership within one year, while 15% believe it should happen within three years, 6% within five years and 3% within ten years. Remarkably, only 4% of Ukrainians expressed a negative view of Ukraine joining NATO, indicating widespread support for the country's integration into European defence institutions.

On the other hand, Slovaks are not as supportive of Ukraine's potential NATO membership. Only 14% of Slovak respondents support Ukraine's NATO membership within the next year, and the percentages drop to 10% for three years, 11% for five years and 8% for ten years. A significant number of Slovaks, 33%, do not support Ukraine's NATO membership at all and 15% are unsure.

These findings suggest that there is a considerable level of uncertainty and opposition among Slovaks regarding Ukraine's integration into European defence institutions. However, it is essential to note that the Slovak government, including Slovak President Zuzana Čaputová, has been actively pushing for Ukraine's accession to NATO, indicating that there may be a divide between public opinion and government policy on the matter.

International organizations in solving hard security problems

The majority of Ukrainians, comprising 60% of the respondents, believe that NATO is the most effective entity to address the military threat

posed by Russia. In contrast, only 17% of Ukrainians have confidence in the United Nations' capability to address the military threat from Russia and just 3% see the European Union as a viable option. The effectiveness of Central Europe and the Baltic States in addressing Russia's military posture is also questioned by Ukrainians.

In Slovakia, only 27% of respondents consider NATO as the most efficient body to tackle military threat from Russia. Similar to Ukrainians, only 17% believe that the UN is effective in resolving a military conflict, while 12% view the EU as effective. Interestingly, only 6% of Slovaks believe that the countries of Central Europe and the Baltic region are capable of effectively facing Russia's military threat. A noteworthy observation is that 15% of Slovaks believe that the issue of military threat from Russia is best handled on the national level of Ukraine.

The data shows that both Ukrainians and Slovaks have little faith in the ability of non-military entities, such as the United Nations and the European Union, to address the military threat posed by Russia. It also highlights NATO's significance as a primary security provider in the region.

Degree of awareness about regional cooperation with Ukraine

Results of a recent poll show that Ukrainian and Slovak respondents have varying levels of awareness when it comes to regional cooperation initiatives involving Ukraine. Among the options presented to Ukrainian

respondents, 25% of respondents were aware of the trilateral Poland-Great Britain-Ukraine, which was followed by the Lublin Triangle with 14%, the Visegrad Four with 13%, the Three Seas Initiative with 11%, and the Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative with 7%. In contrast, Slovak respondents were more familiar with the Visegrad Four, which received the highest rating of 49%. Poland-Great Britain-Ukraine initiative had a rating of 7%, while the Three Seas Initiative, the Bucharest-Chisinau-Kyiv initiative and the Lublin Triangle all had a low 3% rating among Slovak respondents.

Despite the fact that the Slovak respondents have low awareness levels of regional initiatives, Slovak elites actively participate in the development of these initiatives, specifically the Visegrad Four, where Czechia and Slovakia are playing an increasingly important role due to democratic backsliding in Poland and Hungary. Moreover, Slovaks are investing a lot of resources into the Slavkov Triangle (Austria, Czechia and Slovakia), a regional platform established in 2015 to enhance the cooperation of these States in several areas ranging from energy security, transport infrastructure, youth employment, cross-border relations, to social dimension of European integration. The platform, however, faced a lot of criticism for possibly weakening Visegrad 4.

Regional leadership perception

The survey results show that Ukrainians and Slovaks have different perceptions of potential regional leadership in Central Europe and the Baltic states. According to the survey, Ukrainians consider Poland as

the most likely candidate for regional leadership with 50% of the respondents sharing this view. This is not surprising given the historical, cultural and political ties between the two countries and also the active role of Poland in helping Ukraine since the beginning of the full-scale invasion. However, many Ukrainians also aspire for their country to demonstrate its leadership in the region. 39% of Ukrainian respondents expressed their support for Ukraine to eventually become a regional leader. This suggests that there is growing confidence among Ukrainians in their country's capabilities, especially in light of the ongoing war with Russia.

On the other hand, Slovaks have a different perspective on regional leadership. While 25% of Slovak respondents believe that Poland has regional influence and leadership, 24% have hope for Czech leadership. This is likely due to the geographical and historical ties between Slovakia and the Czech Republic and also the proactive role of the Czech Republic in regional initiatives like the Visegrad Four and the Three Seas Initiative. Czechia has also been an active proponent of integrating the Western Balkans (and now also Ukraine and Moldova) with the EU, the Western Balkans being one of the main pillars of Czech foreign policy since the dissolution of former Yugoslavia.

Interestingly, Hungary also scores quite high in the Slovak respondents' perception of potential regional leadership, with 15% of the respondents believing in its potential leadership. It is worth observing that Slovak respondents do not seem inclined to see Ukraine as a potential regional leader, with only 4% expressing this view.

Scores for a bilateral Ukraine-Slovakia agenda

Ukrainian respondents gave relatively positive ratings to several areas of Ukraine-Slovakia bilateral relations on a 7-point scale (1 "very problematic", 7 "very successful"). Compared to other states in the poll, Ukraine's relations with Slovakia scored relatively high in areas such as interethnic relations (5.49 out of 7), European integration (5.39), economic cooperation (5.26) and historical memory (5.36).

On the other hand, Slovak respondents appeared to be more neutral in their assessment of the state of bilateral relations. While they also gave relatively high scores, the ratings were not as positive as those of the Ukrainian respondents. Slovak respondents rated matters of military aid to Ukraine as the highest, with a score of 4.28. Interethnic relations and historical memory followed closely behind with scores of 4.26 and 4.15, respectively. However, economic cooperation received a score of 4.01, which suggests that there is room for improvement in this area. Interestingly, the issue of European integration was rated the lowest by Slovak respondents, with a score of 3.94.

Personal resilience vs state defence development

The results of the opinion poll reveal a stark contrast between the attitudes of Ukrainians and Slovaks towards the hardships brought on by the ongoing war. While a significant majority of Ukrainians, 78% (48%

“Definitely yes” and 30% “Rather yes”), are willing to face personal and economic difficulties to support the Ukrainian army, the same feeling is not shared by Slovaks. The survey indicates that only 20% of Slovaks are willing to endure similar hardships (5% “Definitely yes” and 15% “Rather yes”), which is the lowest rate recorded in Eastern and Central Europe. Moreover, the poll also highlights that a majority of Slovaks, 54% (25% “Definitely no” and 29% “Rather no”), would not prioritize supporting their country’s military over maintaining their personal economic stability.

compared to other states in the poll, a significant proportion of respondents, 48%, opposed this view. This stance was even more pronounced in Hungary, where only 21% of respondents expressed support for additional military aid to Ukraine. These findings indicate a certain level of wariness or reluctance among Slovaks to become further involved in the war in Ukraine, which could be due to several factors, including the influence of the above-mentioned pro-Russian political forces and the continuously strong presence of Russian propaganda, which resulted in Slovakia becoming one of the most pro-Russian countries in Europe.

Perception of safety in Slovakia considering the hostilities in Ukraine

Another part of the opinion poll conducted among Slovak respondents aimed to assess their perception of the safety level in their country amidst the Russian aggression in Ukraine. The findings revealed an interesting trend with Slovaks expressing a relatively low level of concern for their security. On an 11-point scale, where 0 represents “in great danger” and 10 means “absolutely safe”, the participants gave their country a relatively high score of 5.91. This result is notable given the ongoing conflict in neighbouring Ukraine and the potential consequences it could have on the wider region.

Despite this seemingly positive outlook, the poll also shed light on the Slovaks’ views on providing military aid to Ukraine. While only 24% of Slovaks believed that Central European and Baltic States should offer further military support to Ukraine, a relatively low percentage when

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