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## **PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF COOPERATION OF UKRAINE AND THE EU**

**Introduction.** Ukraine has begun the path of an associate member of the EU in one of the most difficult periods of its history, namely in 2014 after the Revolution of Dignity. The study of this issue is acutely relevant, primarily because of the nature of Ukrainian-Russian relations. As a result, Ukraine is a victim of Russian aggression in the Crimea and the Donbas. In this context, the key goal of Russia's foreign and security policy is to prevent the promotion of European integration into the zone of Russian influence, the like post-Soviet space, as it may lead to the loss of control over it. Therefore, it is understandable that the Kremlin is negatively perceiving the processes of European integration of the post-Soviet republics, and the European Union itself considers the source of such a threat – both in geopolitical and ideological components. Ukraine continues to fight for partnership and accession to the European Union, despite the problems with territories.

**Review of recent publications.** Problems and prospects of Ukraine's accession to the EU were developed by such scientists as I. V. Artyomov [1], L. I. Danilenko [2], A. Yermolayev [3]. A significant contribution to the study of the issues of Ukraine – EU relations, developmental issues, including the peculiarities of the development of political modernization, was made by foreign and domestic scientists such as O. V. Kozyrev [5], A. V. Krivonogova [6], N. G. Meheda [7], I. B. Yurchik [9]. Practical recommendations and experience of joining the European family can be found in such researches as: “Problems and prospects of Ukraine's entry into the European Union” [1], “Prospects and challenges of European integration processes for Ukraine” [2], “Ukraine – EU: the next twenty-five years” [3]; “The European Union's Neighborhood Policy in Eastern Europe: Integration Model without Membership” [6].

**Objectives of the paper.** The aim of the work is to highlight the main issues and consider perspective vectors for further development of cooperation between Ukraine and the European Union.

**Results of the research.** Integration is not just a partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation, it is not limited to foreign policy aspects, because it involves significant internal transformations in accordance with accepted standards of the integration community. On June 27, 2014, the Association Agreement was signed, after which on September 16, 2014, the European Parliament ratified the agreement, which came into force on September 1, 2017. The conclusion and entry into force of the Agreement provided a new impetus to cooperation in areas such as foreign policy and security, justice, freedom and security (including migration), taxation, public finance management, science and technology, education and the information society” [4].

Today the main factors that complicate and hinder Ukraine's entry into the EU are: a huge gap in the levels of economic development of Ukraine and countries of the European Union; still unsatisfactory absolute volumes of mutual trade; a significant difference in living standards; mismatch of legal systems. It is also necessary to mention the problems that hinder the process of European integration, namely: the war on the Donbas, the annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, reforms that are not ready for Ukrainian society.

Prospects for cooperation between Ukraine and the EU: 1) political perspectives are provided for the stability of the political system, the perception of Ukraine as an important subject of political relations; 2) economic prospects are provided for the development of small and medium-sized businesses, as well as the introduction of EU standards in production; 3) social perspectives are aimed at the formation of the middle class and the reform of education, medical reform (the reform is ongoing) [8].

In order to realize the complex of tasks of European integration of our state and to accelerate this process, it is necessary to have a clear and consistent strategy for the development of Ukraine – EU relations in the near and medium-term perspective, which should bring the country to a level when getting membership in the EU becomes almost automatic. The long-term strategy for the development of Ukraine's relations with the EU should be aimed at maximizing the mobilization of the efforts of Ukrainian authorities and society as a whole to realize the goals of European integration. The mechanism of strategy development requires the coordination of government, parliamentary and public structures working in the field of relations with the EU.

**Conclusion.** One of the main vectors of Ukraine's foreign policy is the course on European integration. And the strategic goal of the next few years is to apply for membership in the European Union and get a NATO Membership Action Plan. To achieve a such goal, besides the fruitful work of our parliament, that should be the task of every responsible citizen, because the European future depends on each of us. The European choice of Ukraine opens new prospects of cooperation with developed countries of the continent, provides opportunities for economic development, strengthening of positions in the world system of international relations. After all, European integration for Ukraine is the best way to realize national interests.

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## **MULTI-VECTORAL CHARACTER OF THE BELARUSIAN FOREIGN POLICY**

**Introduction.** The research analyses the main directions of the foreign policy of the Republic of Belarus in the context of the multi-vectoral diplomacy concept. It examines the unique case of the country whose experience is extremely valuable in the regional foreign policy context and Ukraine in particular. Transformation of the foreign policy aims and directions during 1991-2019 is demonstrated. Belarusian foreign policy doctrine changes during the recent Eastern European crisis and analysis of key geopolitical factors, that influence these changes after the Russian aggression in Ukraine, are shown. The strong and weak sides of the Belarusian foreign policy, crisis phenomena in the implementation of multi-vector foreign policy are identified with the help of comprehensive analysis of the Belarusian diplomacy multiply priorities.

**Review of recent publications.** Important contribution to the study of Belarusian foreign policy concept as well as the history of the Belarusian diplomacy in modern times was made by V. Snapkovsky, author of the monograph “Foreign Policy of the Republic of Belarus”, and hundreds other publications devoted to the Belarusian-Russian and Belarussian-Polish relations. The research of the Belarusian foreign policy experience is also subject of two monographs of A. Tikhomirov “Foreign Policy of the Republic of Belarus in 1991-2011” and “Foreign Policy of the Republic of Belarus (1991-2015)”. The author explores in detail the history of the