POLICY PAPER

Why NATO May Want Ukraine

The Western Case in Favor of Ukrainian NATO Membership

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Key Conclusions

This discussion note consists of two parts. The first part presents the (underarticulated) Western case in favor of Ukrainian NATO membership. The second part argues that a more rigorous and dispassionate juxtaposition of arguments *pro* and *con* would put publics and decision-makers (on all sides) in a better position to converge on a considered decision. The case 'in favor', distilled from various sources augmented by authors' assessments, is presented here in 5 categories:

- ***Defense and security***: Ukraine's exceptional commitment to/experience in resisting and combatting Russian cross-domain coercion, its first-hand knowledge of Russian military thinking and acting, and (the 'healthy' parts of) its vibrant defense and security ecosystem would add unique value to the Alliance's efforts to deal with today's Russia in both deterrent and compellent modes; Ukraine's military reform matters to NATO and is unlikely to succeed outside of the NATO command and force (and overall incentive) structure;
- ***Geopolitics***: offering Ukraine a NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) would send Russia a clear and unambiguous deterrent signal**;** this may be the West's best chance to reduce current first-strike instabilities through arms control ('escalate to de-escalate'); Ukraine's return into the post-Soviet fold would present a major setback for the West's decades-long effort to make Europe whole and free; only Ukraine's return to Europe shows Russia there is another way;
- ***Politics***: two Maidans prove that Ukrainians' aspirations for more decency and normalcy stand few chances of success without deeper Western 'anchoring' - only NATO accession may enable genuine political (and legal) reform; public support for NATO membership in Ukraine is at an all-time high; a NATO MAP with a strict timeline and draconian conditionality would boost the position of the few remaining true reformers in the Ukrainian government and give the West decisive leverage;
- ***Economy***: better security will stabilize Ukraine's economy and turn it into a more attractive economic partner for NATO countries; NATO would obtain unfettered access to Ukraine's (also military-industrial) physical, technological and human capital;
- ***Identity/Culture***: Ukraine represents a unique blend of 'Western' and 'Eastern' values, demonstrating - also to Russians - that convergence of these value systems is feasible.

The note concludes by exploring coupling Ukrainian (and Belarusian, Georgian and Moldovan) MAPs to a Russian MAP based on the usual NATO membership criteria as well as on the condition that Russia guarantee NATO member states' territorial integrity based on the status-

quo ante at the time of the NATO-Russia Founding Act (1997). (Various arguments pro and con Ukrainian NATO membership are also listed in Annex 1)

Introduction

Ukraine's possible membership of NATO remains a highly contentious topic – in Ukraine itself, within NATO, and especially in Russia. Reactions to a recent update of an official NATO webpage on enlargement[1] provided yet another vivid reminder of this. This update for the first time listed Ukraine as an 'aspirant country'. This new verbal qualification did not represent any substantive change in Ukraine's status, since Ukraine and Georgia have been officially acknowledged by NATO as future Alliance members since the 2008 Bucharest Summit[2] . The website change therefore went mostly unnoticed in the Western media. It did, however, end up being front page news on many Ukrainian - and then also Russian - print, electronic, and social media.

This recent episode nicely illustrates that the debate on Ukrainian NATO membership remains highly emotional. In this, it does not differ from most previous enlargement debates. Unlike these past debates, however, the arguments *pro* and *con* this new potential round of enlargement from a Western point of view have been far less clearly articulated and/or weighed. Given the important role that these arguments played in previous rounds of NATO enlargement, this brief discussion note presents an effort to start mapping the different arguments on how Ukraine's membership in NATO might affect the West. Our special attention goes out to the reasons why the West might welcome Ukrainian NATO membership because our broader analysis (see Appendix 1) has shown these arguments to be poorly represented in the media debates, and also because they could serve as an impulse for more in-depth discussions at the 2018 Kyiv Security Forum.

This discussion note is based on a scan of about 70 Ukrainian, 70 Russian and 80 Western media articles from the past 25 years dealing with Ukraine's NATO membership aspirations in search of various arguments *pro* and *con* from the point of view of Ukraine, Russia and the West. We developed a simple taxonomy to categorize these arguments - 'defense and security', 'geopolitics', 'politics', 'economy, and 'identity/culture'. The overall resulting matrix, which is illustrative rather than exhaustive[3], can be found back in Annex 1.

This discussion note consists of two parts. The first part presents the - generally underarticulated - case in favor of Ukrainian membership in NATO. The second part argues that a more rigorous, dispassionate dissection of the various arguments might put our publics and decision-makers (on all sides) in a better position to arrive at a considered decision.

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[1]NATO. "Enlargement." NATO, March 9, 2018. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49212.htm. This episode also clearly demonstrated that, despite that fact that Ukrainian foreign policy is mostly focused on European Union integration, the matter of NATO membership remains high on the leadership agenda.

[2] NATO. "Bucharest Summit Declaration - Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008." NATO, April 3, 2008. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_8443.htm. "NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO."

[3] The authors want to emphasize that this discussion paper represents a modest research effort, whose main intention it is to illustrate the more comprehensive, rigorous and dispassionate juxtaposition of arguments *pro* and *con* they feel this policy issue deserves.

The Western Case in Favor of Ukraine's NATO Membership

Among all arguments we identified in our literature scan, the arguments why the West might be interested in Ukrainian NATO membership were amongst the least developed ones. We therefore decided to present the main Western 'pro'-arguments we identified and to augment them with some of our own arguments. They are presented here in bullet-form in the aforementioned functional categories. We want to emphasize that all of them are premised on the assumption that Russia will remain in an adversarial relationship with NATO (and will not become a member of NATO) in the short- to medium-term (an assumption we will relax in the final section).

Defense and security

- Ukraine's military and political leadership has unparalleled recent experience in resisting and combatting Russia's cross-domain assertiveness and even aggression that all NATO member-states would benefit from[4]. This applies to both the kinetic and - arguably even more so - non-kinetic realms.
- The Ukrainian military's first-hand knowledge of Russian military thinking and action is probably second to only Belarus'. Most members of Ukraine's current top military leadership were educated and trained alongside Russia's current top military leadership. This deep knowledge of the Russian military has furthermore been significantly enriched - including in an intelligence sense - during four years of both 'hot' and 'cold' battles.
- Ukraine currently spends about 5 percent of its GDP on defense, more than all NATO members except the United States. Its membership would contribute far more to NATO capabilities than Montenegro's recent accession – a country with a small army, no public consent on NATO and a strong pro-Russian lobby[5].
- Kyiv would be able to provide means of transportation to quickly redeploy NATO troops and equipment from Central and Western Europe to Poland or the Baltic states. Not only would it improve the overall operational mobility of NATO forces, but it would also send a clear message to Russia that NATO is well-prepared[6].
- Ukrainian military reform, while still decidedly suboptimal, has nevertheless rendered its armed forces more performant than ever before[7] - a development that has not been lost on Russian military leaders.
- Full integration into the NATO Military Command and Force Structure may prove to be the only reliable way to truly eradicate persistent symptoms of corruption and Soviet

[4] Kuzio, Taras. "NATO's Double Standards: Why Montenegro but Not Ukraine?" *Atlantic Council*, May 31, 2017. http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/nato-s-double-standards-why-montenegro-but-not-ukraine.
[5] Kuzio, Taras. "Poroshenko Could Be the President to Take Ukraine into NATO." *The Hill*, March 18, 2018. http://thehill.com/opinion/international/378579-poroshenko-could-be-the-president-to-take-ukraine-into-nato.
[6] Blank, Stephen. "The Future Agenda of US-Ukrainian Military Relations." Second Line of Defense, February 13, 2018. http://sldinfo.com/2018/02/the-future-agenda-of-us-ukrainian-military-relations/.
[7] Wilk, Andrzej. "The Best Army Ukraine Has Ever Had. Changes in Ukraine's Armed Forces Since the Russian Aggression." *OSW Studies*, no. 66 (July 2017). https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-studies/2017-07-07/best-army-ukraine-has-ever-had-changes-ukraines-armed-forces

thinking in its armed forces, which would have a great multiplier effect on their potential combat effectiveness - in both compellent and deterrent modes.

- Ukrainian civil society has played and continues to play a uniquely important role in resisting Russian forms of cross-domain coercion, in boosting Ukraine's societal resilience and in helping to reform the Ukrainian defense sector (witness the efforts of the Reforms Office within the Ministry of Defense). The West could learn much from these unique experiences.

Geopolitics

- The West's cautious attitude towards Ukrainian membership thus far may have only emboldened Russian assertiveness. Russia has made it increasingly clear over the past few years that it only respects 'force'. Offering Ukraine a Membership Action Plan would send Russia a uniquely bold and unambiguous deterrent signal[8].
- Ukraine's current buffer status is - given Ukraine unstable politics (see our next category) - unsustainable. Like nature, international security abhors a vacuum. If Ukraine were once again to fall in Russia's hand, this would have significant geopolitical consequences - first and foremost in Russia's own perception of its role (and weight) in the world and of the overall 'correlation of forces'. Russian troops would furthermore directly confront NATO forces along a new 1400 km zone of direct geopolitical contiguity (with Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania), leading to various conventional first-strike instabilities.
- Ukraine in NATO, and the deterrent effect that would bring, might be one of the West's best chances to reduce various (conventional) first-strike instabilities ('escalate to de-escalate') - e.g. through a new round of arms control agreements in which both an expanded NATO and Russia would agree to new formalized CFE-style restraints.
- Any move by NATO towards Ukraine will - no matter what - always be seen by Russia as a move towards Russia. Only Ukraine's return to Europe will show Russia that there is another way forward than the 'lonely' one it is currently pursuing (see also our thoughts in the conclusion of this discussion paper on Russian NATO membership).
- As any NATO member, Russia is also forced to deal with "asymmetric threats, international organized crime, environmental problems"[9] etc. Ukraine's and Georgia's accession to NATO would decrease the security vacuum between Russia and Europe, opening a possibility for Russia-West cooperation on them.
- Ukraine has been a trustworthy NATO partner for almost 30 years, making rather humble, but still important contributions to the collective security. Since 1990's, Ukraine has been providing its troops, equipment and intelligence to assist numerous NATO-led peace-support operations in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Mediterranean Sea. Ukraine has also been participating in numerous joint programs with NATO[10].

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[8] Motyl, Alexander J. "The Myth of the West's Threat to Russia." *Atlantic Council*, March 5, 2015. http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/the-myth-of-the-west-s-threat-to-russia; Blank, Stephen. "Here's What the West Can Do to Stop Russia." *Defense One*, March 3, 2014. http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2014/03/heres-what-west-can-do-stop-russia/80581/.

[9] Elling, Indrek, and Merle Maigre. "NATO Membership Action Plan: A Chance for Ukraine and Georgia." Estonia: International Centre for Defense and Security, March 25, 2008. https://www.icds.ee/fileadmin/media/icds.ee/failid/Indrek_Elling_MAP_Policy_Paper_Eng250308.pdf.

[10] NATO. "Relations with Ukraine." NATO, March 9, 2018. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_37750.htm.

Politics

- Ukraine has demonstrated that post-Soviet transformation processes in the absence of any real Western 'anchoring' stand few chances of success. Ukraine's civil society has twice overcome overwhelming odds to forcefully express its desire for more normalcy and dignity and for rejoining the West through genuine political (and legal) reform. The Ukrainian political class, however, has so far proved unable to break the back of the kleptocratic oligarchy. It needs a more powerful 'anchor'.
- Ukrainian public support for NATO membership is now at an all-time high (47% according to the most recent poll by Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Razumkov Center[11]).
- Only a Ukrainian Membership Action Plan with a real time-line and with transparent reform (output) metrics and draconian conditionality provisions would boost the position of the few remaining true reformers in the Ukrainian government and provide the West with the decisive leverage it currently does not possess. This would also offer the arguably best chance to quell resurfacing populist temptations and tip the public debate within Ukraine towards genuine Western-style political (and legal) reform.

Economy

- Better security would have a stabilizing effect on Ukraine's economy, which would enable it to become a better economic partner for NATO countries.
- NATO membership would give NATO unfettered access to Ukraine's physical, technological and human capital at uniquely attractive price points. This applies to Ukraine's military-industrial economic potential, but arguably even more so to its outsized broader agricultural and IT resources.

Identity/Culture

- Europe (including Ukraine) will never be fully safe and secure without a transformed Russia. Under current circumstances, such a transformation in Russia is highly improbable - first and foremost in identity and cultural terms - in the short- to medium-term. Many Russians expect Ukrainian reforms to fail, thereby 'proving' that there is no 'other way' for them. (Re-)Integrating Ukraine into the European and transatlantic family of nations is therefore an indispensable first step towards not only Ukraine's, but also Russia's return.
- Ukraine embodies a unique combination of 'Western' and 'Eastern' values that is different, but not entirely dissimilar to Russia's. Acceptance in NATO would demonstrate that convergence of these value systems is feasible.

Conclusion

Previous debates on post-Cold-War NATO enlargements have always tended to be stronger on pathos, politics and perception, than on dispassionate, rigorous and evidence-based policy

[11] Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, and The Razumkov Center. "Public Opinion of the Population of Ukraine on NATO," June 2017. http://dif.org.ua/uploads/pdf/1444455070595c9ce1eade60.36619672.pdf.

analysis. The current ((in the West) almost non-)debate on Ukrainian NATO enlargement is no exception to this rule. The current broader security context, in which the relationship between Russia and the West has arguably never been more 'poisoned' in the past 70 years than it is right now, clearly does not help.

The point of this brief discussion paper is ***not*** to argue that the case in favor of Ukrainian membership of NATO is an 'open-and-shut' case. It decidedly is not - as our more comprehensive overview of the various arguments *pro* and cons from the different perspectives (see Annex 1) clearly illustrates. The points we did try to highlight, however, are threefold.

First of all, we wonder whether the debate on Ukraine's NATO membership is receiving the attention in the West that it arguably deserves. The first post-Cold War waves of NATO enlargement[12] triggered broad and significant policy discussions across NATO and beyond. The subsequent (admittedly smaller) ones took place under more propitious and significantly less acrimonious circumstances. Present-day dynamics are once again closer to – and arguably even worse than - those in the 1990s. This suggests that more 'homework' may once again be of the essence. This is all the more the case because Western dynamics have also changed so dramatically with the US Trump administration's bewildering policy vacillations; the more inward-looking European policy focus with Brexit but also with Poland's and Hungary's changing roles in Europe, and with overall 'populist sovereignism'[13]; the new European Union push on foreign, security and defense policy; etc. Of all current officially recognized aspiring NATO members (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Macedonia and Ukraine), Ukraine is undoubtedly the most controversial. It is also - we would submit - by far the most consequential. Western policy communities therefore have to find smarter ways to galvanize more policy focus on this issue.

Secondly, within the surprisingly sparse Western debate on Ukraine's NATO membership, the 'Western' case in favor of Ukrainian membership is almost as scant as the Russian 'pro'-case. Without wanting to prejudge the outcome of a more dispassionate, comprehensive and balanced cost/benefit analysis of this important defense and security decision, we want to at least highlight that the first two truly geopolitically consequential post-Cold War enlargements in 1999 and 2004 benefitted from a far more cogent and forceful Western articulation of the case in favor of enlargement. We leave it to our readers to determine whether this current relative omission is warranted or not.

Thirdly - and in our opinion most importantly - we submit that an issue of this (potential) importance deserves the more systematic policy analysis we just referred to, and not just from NATO's point of view, but also from Ukraine's point of view. We harbor few illusions that the different sides would be able to converge on a similar conclusion on the optimal course of action. We do suspect, however, that a group of analysts from these different stakeholders would be able to provide a far better and more dispassionate differential analysis of the various arguments *pro* and *con* than we currently have.

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[12] In 1999, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic joined NATO, the largest expansion came in 2004 with the accession of seven Central and Eastern European countries: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania (the first three former Soviet republics - even if their membership in the Soviet Union was never acknowledged by the West) , Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia

[13] De Spiegeleire, Stephan, Clarissa Skinner, and Tim Sweijs. *The Rise of Populist Sovereignism: What It Is, Where Is Comes from, and What It Means for International Security and Defense*. The Hague, The Netherlands: The Hague Centre For Strategic Studies, 2017.

We want to conclude this discussion paper with some final food for thought. In the main section of this policy paper, we pointed out that the Western arguments we formulated in favor of Ukrainian NATO membership were predicated on the assumption that the NATO-Russia relationship would remain adversarial and that Russia would not become a member of NATO in the short- to medium-term. But what if we were to relax that assumption? Russian president Putin has repeatedly complained that, in his first term in office, he expressed his supposedly earnest willingness to become a member of NATO, only to be rebuffed by the leadership of the Alliance[14]. After that, in his own narrative, he still repeatedly 'warned' the West to listen to him when he pointed to the various mistakes that he felt it was making with respect NATO enlargement (presumably excluding Russia). He was, in his words, ignored: "No one was listening. Now you will listen"[15].

What if the West were to call Putin's bluff? What if NATO, in an attempt to turn the diplomatic tables, were to propose Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine *and* Russia notional NATO Membership Action Plans, based on the usual NATO membership criteria[16] as well as on the condition of returning these nations' territorial integrity to the *status-quo ante* at the time of the signing of the NATO-Russia Founding Act (1997)[17]? If Russian President Putin wants to remain true to his own previous statements on this, he would have a hard time dismissing such a proposal out of hand. US President Trump might see this as a bold 'art of the deal' gambit to realize his oft-repeated desire to establish more positive relations with Russia and its leader. Relatively more 'pro-Russian' leaders in Europe could interpret this as an attempt to 'turn the tide' and to bring Russia back in from the cold. Relatively more 'anti-Russian' leaders in Europe could emphasize the fact that this would irrevocably reverse Russia 'revisionist' non-status-quo actions since the more accommodationist 90s. And as to the Belarusian, Georgian, Moldovan and Ukrainian leaders - such a move would force them to show their true colors.

The main goal of this brief discussion paper is to trigger discussions at the 2018 Kyiv Security Forum. The authors intend to rework the paper for publication and welcome any and all suggestions.

[14] Scheer, Robert. The Putin Interviews. Hot Books, 2017.

[15] Путин, Владимир. "Послание Президента Федеральному Собранию." Президент России, March 1, 2018. http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/56957. We also want to remind our readers that almost every single important Soviet *and* post-Soviet leader (Stalin, Khrushchev, Gorbachev, Yeltsin and Putin himself) is on public record as having either proposed or entertained the notion of Russian NATO membership.

[16] Tomiuc, Eugen. "NATO: What Does It Take to Join?" *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty,* March 7, 2002. https://www.rferl.org/a/1099020.html.

[17] NATO. "Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation Signed in Paris, France." NATO, May 27, 1997. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_25468.htm.This would include South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia; Transdniester in Moldova; and Crimea and Donbass in Ukraine

Annex 1 - Overview of arguments *pro* and con

Analyzing the arguments in favor or against Ukrainian NATO membership for Ukraine, we categorized them into several groups. First of all, they were divided on the basis of the actor that is regarded by the argument as receiving benefit or detriment - the West, Russia and Ukraine. Secondly, all arguments were evaluated as supporting (pro) or opposing (con) Ukrainian NATO membership. In order to make the comparison more structured, they were further divided into 'defense and security', 'geopolitics', 'politics', 'economy', and 'identity/society'.

	WEST		**RUSSIA**		**UKRAINE**	
	PRO	**CON**	**PRO**	**CON**	**PRO**	**CON**
Defense & Security	Ukraine has unparalleled recent experience in resisting Russia's assertiveness and even aggression that all NATO member-states would benefit from[18].	NATO already has major difficulties in defending the Baltic states against a possible Art. 5-contingency today; defending Ukraine would be nigh-impossible.	Ukraine's NATO membership may show the way to Russia's (ultimate) NATO membership.	Russia considers NATO expansion a direct threat to its national security[19].	Non-aligned policy of Ukraine clearly proved its ineffectiveness, so Ukraine should seek membership in a collective security organization[20].	Ukrainian troops will be forced to participate in conflicts all over the world and in case of full-scale NATO-Russian war Ukrainians will be the first to die[21].
	Ukrainian military leadership has deep first-hand	NATO already bit off more than it can chew in previous		NATO will place its bases and missile defense systems	Ukraine will increase its capacity in	Ukraine's accession to NATO could mean a start

[18] Kuzio, Taras. "NATO's Double Standards: Why Montenegro but Not Ukraine?" *Atlantic Council,* May 31, 2017. http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/nato-s-double-standards-why-montenegro-but-not-ukraine.

[19] РИА Новости. "В Кремле прокомментировали стремление Украины вступить в НАТО," *РИА Новости* June 8, 2017. https://ria.ru/world/20170608/1496104135.html.

[20] Остапенко, Сергей. "Украина восстановила курс на вступление в НАТО." *Сегодня*, June 8, 2017. https://www.segodnya.ua/politics/ukraina-vosstanovila-kurs-na-vstuplenie-v-nato-1028140.html.

[21] Карабанов, И.Ф. "'Новый Порядок' гитлеровцев для Украины." *Советская Россия*. June 22, 2017. http://www.sovross.ru/articles/1564/33447.

	knowledge and understanding of the Russian military and experience of 'hot' and 'cold' battles that can be significantly enriching for the Allies.	enlargements; Ukraine is 'one bridge too far'.		(aimed at Russia) in Ukraine[22].	handling natural and man-made disasters, environmental threats, terrorism etc.[23].	of full-scale war with Russia[24].
	Kyiv will be able to provide means of transportation to redeploy troops from Central and Western Europe to Poland/Baltic states[25].	Ukraine's para-military units may become rogue elements within NATO.			NATO membership will help Ukrainian army innovate by gaining access to the most cutting edge standards and equipment[26].	Ukraine would lose its military sovereignty.
	Ukraine spends about 5 percent of its GDP on defense, more than all NATO members except the United States[27].	The corrupt elements within Ukraine's military may prove extremely hard to suppress and may start affecting				Ukrainian authorities wouldn't be able to tolerate the (now illegal) activity of volunteer battalions in

[22] Кисличенко, Анна. "Пол Робертс Крейг, экс-помощник Министра Финансов США: если русские не проснутся, они станут историей!" *Комсомольская Правда*. February 22, 2014, №20. https://www.crimea.kp.ru/daily/26198.7/3084667/.
[23] Кучерів, І., ed. *Місце України в НАТО: опитування експертів*. Київ: Демократичні ініціативи, 2006.
[24] Правда.ру. "Принятие Украины в НАТО Будет Означать Войну с Россией — Михаил Александров." *Правда.Ру* , July 7, 2017. https://www.pravda.ru/news/world/07-07-2017/1340875-nato-0/.
[25] Blank, Stephen. "The Future Agenda of US-Ukrainian Military Relations." Second Line of Defense, February 13, 2018. http://sldinfo.com/2018/02/the-future-agenda-of-us-ukrainian-military-relations/.
[26] Пухальська Я. "Інтеграція України в НАТО: переваги та недоліки." *Вісник Хмельницького Національного Університету,* Економічні науки, 5, no. 1 (2014): 219–22.

		other Eastern and Central European member states.				Donbas, but inability to handle them might cause an internal conflict[28].
	Ukrainian membership in NATO would enhance the organization's security to a far greater extent than accession of Montenegro from political, geopolitical and military perspectives[29].					
	Ukrainian military reform rendered its armed forces more performant than ever[30].					
	Full integration into the NATO					

[27] Kuzio, Taras. "Poroshenko Could Be the President to Take Ukraine into NATO." *The Hill*, March 18, 2018. http://thehill.com/opinion/international/378579-poroshenko-could-be-the-president-to-take-ukraine-into-nato

[28] Losh, Jack. "Ukraine Turns a Blind Eye to Ultrarightist Militia." *Washington Post*, February 13, 2017, sec. Europe. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/ukraine-turns-a-blind-eye-to-ultrarightist-militia/2017/02/12/dbf9ea3c-ecab-11e6-b4ff-ac2cf509efe5_story.html.

[29] Kuzio, Taras. "Poroshenko Could Be the President to Take Ukraine into NATO." *The Hill*, March 18, 2018. http://thehill.com/opinion/international/378579-poroshenko-could-be-the-president-to-take-ukraine-into-nato

[30] Wilk, Andrzej. "The Best Army Ukraine Has Ever Had. Changes in Ukraine's Armed Forces since the Russian Aggression." *OSW Studies*, no. 66 (July 2017). https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-studies/2017-07-07/best-army-ukraine-has-ever-had-changes-ukraines-armed-forces.

	Military Command Structure may be the only way to eradicate corruption in Ukraine's armed forces, multiplying their potential combat effectiveness.					
	Ukrainian civil society plays an important role in resisting Russian forms of cross-domain coercion and promoting reforms.					
Geopolitics	The West's cautious attitude towards Ukrainian membership has not prevented Russian assertiveness. So with Russia respecting only force, only bold military support to Ukraine will send Russia the right message[31].	Ukraine's acceptance will make NATO members rethink their policy towards Russia, which may destabilize the Alliance.		Accession of Ukraine violates the agreement between James Baker and Mikhail Gorbachev that NATO would not move eastward[32].	Membership in NATO, the most effective collective security system in the world, will help Ukraine resist perpetual Russian aggression[33].	Course on EU and NATO integration entails giving up part of Ukrainian sovereignty into hands of supranational institutions[34].

[31] Straus, Ira Louis. "The Myth That Ukraine Cannot Join NATO While Russia Occupies Some of Its Territory." *Atlantic Community*, September 3, 2014. http://www.atlantic-community.org/-/the-myth-that-ukraine-cannot-join-nato-while-russia-occupies-some-of-its-territo-1.

	Ukraine's current buffer status is unsustainable. If Ukraine were to fall, Russian troops would directly confront NATO forces along a new 1400 km zone of direct contiguity.	Ukraine's accession may create a large-scale security threat[35].		Ukrainian accession to NATO will mean the final and irrevocable escape from Moscow's influence[36].	Ukraine would gain force geopolitically and have a say in NATO policies[37].	
	Ukraine in NATO, and the deterrent effect that could bring, might reduce various (conventional) first-strike	Ukraine's quarrels with Poland, Hungary and other neighboring countries may cost NATO stability[38].		Ukraine's accession will make Russia introduce visa regime with Ukraine[39]	A conflict on Ukrainian territory is not a factor against membership as no formal rules state that, and Germany	

[32] Itzkowitz, Joshua R. "Russia's Got a Point: The U.S. Broke a NATO Promise." *Los Angeles Times*, May 30, 2016. http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-shifrinson-russia-us-nato-deal--20160530-snap-story.html.
[33] Укрінформ. "Рада ухвалила закон про курс України на вступ до НАТО." *Укрінформ*, June 8, 2017. https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-polytics/2243502-rada-uhvalila-zakon-pro-kurs-ukraini-na-vstup-do-nato.html.
[34] Gazeta.ua. "Вступ України в НАТО та ЄС: експерт пояснив наслідки такого кроку." *Gazeta.ua*, March 7, 2018. https://gazeta.ua/articles/life/_ukrayina-poplatitsya-suverenitetom-za-vstup-u-nato-ta-es-ekspert/824718.
[35]Berezow, Alex. "How Should US And NATO Respond to Russia over Ukraine?" *Forbes*, March 3, 2014. https://www.forbes.com/sites/alexberezow/2014/03/03/how-should-u-s-and-nato-respond-to-russia-over-ukraine/
[36] Аргумент. "Украина в НАТО: зачем это нужно простым украинцам." *Аргумент*, July 15, 2014. http://argumentua.com/stati/ukraina-v-nato-zachem-eto-nuzhno-prostym-ukraintsam.
[37]Пухальська Я. "Інтеграція України в НАТО: переваги та недоліки." *Вісник Хмельницького Національного Університету*, Економічні науки, 5, no. 1 (2014): 219–22.
[38] UNIAN. "Blade-Running: Ukraine's Envoy to CoE on Ukraine's Tensions with Poland, Hungary" *UNIAN*, November 16, 2017. https://www.unian.info/politics/2246231-blade-running-ukraines-envoy-to-coe-on-ukraines-tensions-with-poland-hungary.html.
[39] Баранов, Андрей. "Чего нам ждать от вступления Украины в НАТО." *KP.RU - сайт «Комсомольской правды»*, April 2, 2008. https://www.kp.ru/daily/24074/310856/.

	instabilities ('escalate to de-escalate').				was accepted when it was split[40].	
	Any move NATO does towards Ukraine will always be seen by Russia as move towards Russia itself. Only Ukrainian return to Europe will show Russia there is another way for it.					
	Russia also faces "asymmetric threats, international organised crime, environmental problems" etc. Ukraine's and Georgia's NATO accession would make it possible for Russia and the West to cooperate on them[41].					
	Ukrainian accession will					

[40]Straus, Ira Louis. "The Myth That Ukraine Cannot Join NATO While Russia Occupies Some of Its Territory." *Atlantic Community*, September 3, 2014. http://www.atlantic-community.org/-/the-myth-that-ukraine-cannot-join-nato-while-russia-occupies-some-of-its-territo-1

[41] Elling, Indrek, and Merle Maigre. "NATO Membership Action Plan: A Chance for Ukraine and Georgia." Estonia: International Centre for Defense and Security, March 25, 2008. https://www.icds.ee/fileadmin/media/icds.ee/failid/Indrek_Elling_MAP_Policy_Paper_Eng250308.pdf.

	increase the predictability within the Eastern European region[42]					
	Ukraine has been a trustworthy NATO partner, contributing to the collective security for decades[43]					
Politics	Post-Soviet transformation processes in the absence of any real Western 'anchoring' stand few chances of success.	NATO is striving to accept only democratic states, while Ukraine has a history of going astray which makes it an unpredictable partner.	Russia would have to accept Ukraine as an equal partner. It will help Russia develop as a democratic country	Russians will treat Ukrainian accession as their leaders' weakness, which may destabilize the country from inside.	NATO membership is a powerful incentive for democratic development and a path for European integration for Ukraine[44]	NATO membership will make the reintegration of so-called 'LPR'/'DPR' less probable[45].
	Ukrainian public support for NATO membership is now at an all-time high[46].					

[42] McDonagh, Ken. "Ukraine, EU, and NATO: Prospects for Defence Cooperation," May 14, 2014. https://www.globsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/globsec_2014_policy_briefs_1.pdf.
[43] NATO, "Relations with Ukraine." NATO, March 9, 2018. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_37750.htm.
[44] Кучерів, І., ed. *Місце України в НАТО: опитування експертів*. Київ: Демократичні ініціативи, 2006.
[45] Ивженко, Татьяна. "Порошенко стремится закончить дело Ющенко," *Независимая Газета*, July 11, 2017. http://www.ng.ru/cis/2017-07-10/1_7026_ukraina.html.
[46] Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, and The Razumkov Center. "Public Opinion of the Population of Ukraine on NATO," June 2017. http://dif.org.ua/uploads/pdf/1444455070595c9ce1eade60.36619672.pdf

	A MAP with a real time-line and metrics could boost the position of the few remaining true reformers in the Ukrainian government and would give the West the decisive leverage it currently does not possess.					
Economy	Better security will have a stabilizing effect on Ukraine's economy, which would enable it to a become a better economic partner for NATO countries.	European and (especially) American taxpayers wouldn't like to finance Ukraine's conflict with Russia[47].		Russia will have to concentrate its military forces on the borders with Ukraine and be at permanent readiness for the start of conflict, which will be extremely costly[48]	NATO membership will open new opportunities for defense enterprises, encouraging them to increase their competitiveness[49]	NATO membership will force some obsolete defense enterprises to close[50]
	NATO membership would give NATO access to Ukraine's physical, technological and				Accession would encourage greater investments into Ukraine, being a guarantee of its	Ukraine will lose economic independence while economic pressure from

[47] "Tillerson Asks Why U.S. Taxpayers Should Care About Ukraine." *Bloomberg.Com*, April 11, 2017. https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-04-11/tillerson-asks-why-u-s-taxpayers-should-care-about-ukraine.
[48] Баранов, Андрей. "Чего нам ждать от вступления Украины в НАТО." *KP.RU - сайт «Комсомольской правды»,* April 2, 2008. https://www.kp.ru/daily/24074/310856/.
[49] Кучерів, І., ed. *Місце України в НАТО: опитування експертів*. Київ: Демократичні ініціативи, 2006.
[50] Кучерів, І., ed. *Місце України в НАТО: опитування експертів*. Київ: Демократичні ініціативи, 2006.

	human capital, allowing also to start manufacturing innovative military equipment at uniquely attractive price points.				economic stability[51]. Western investments are much better for the country as opposed to Russian that are tied to corruption, organized crime etc.	Russia (especially in energy sector) will increase[52].
					Ukraine already exceeds NATO requirements on defense spending (5% of GDP with 2% as NATO requirement) thus it will not bring any additional costs[53].	
Identity / culture	Europe will never be fully secure without a transformed Russia. (Re)Integrating Ukraine into the European family of	With existing ambivalence towards accepting countries with ongoing conflicts, the Allies might be forced to deal with public dissent with		Accession to NATO will destroy the notion of "brotherhood relations with Ukraine", broadly spread in Russia[55]	Membership will politically elevate Ukraine, contributing to elimination of so called 'inferiority complex' and magnifying the	

[51] Baker, Mark. "NATO: Investment Data Show Economic Benefits For New Members." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, May 10, 2002. https://www.rferl.org/a/1099664.html.
[52] Young, Derek W. "Analyzing Ukraine's Prospects for NATO Membership." Naval Postgraduate School, December 2008. http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a493845.pdf.
[53] Kuzio, Taras. "Poroshenko Could Be the President to Take Ukraine into NATO." *The Hill*, March 18, 2018. http://thehill.com/opinion/international/378579-poroshenko-could-be-the-president-to-take-ukraine-into-nato.

	nations is therefore an indispensable first step towards not only Ukraine's, but also Russia's return to Europe.	Ukraine's membership[54].			sense of national pride and belonging.	
	Ukraine represents a combination of 'Western' and 'Eastern' values. Acceptance in NATO would demonstrate that convergence of these value systems is possible, contributing to European and world stability.				Recent opinion polls demonstrate significant increase in support of NATO membership and decrease in the numbers of opponents[56]. The experience of newly accepted member countries shows that, after accession, the support mostly increases.	

[55] Карабанов, И.Ф. "'Новый Порядок' гитлеровцев для Украины." *Советская Россия*. June 22, 2017. http://www.sovross.ru/articles/1564/33447.

[54] This can be presumably traced back to Angela Merkel's statements in 2008 ahead of the NATO summit that Georgia would not be suitable for membership as long as it has two unsolved territorial disputes (see: Champion, Marc. "Merkel Slows NATO Bids by Georgia and Ukraine." *Wall Street Journal*, October 3, 2008, sec. US. http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB122297151270999027. The similar argument is now broadly articulated in Russian media regarding Ukraine (e.g. see: РИА Новости. "В Кремле прокомментировали стремление Украины вступить в НАТО," *РИА Новости*, June 8, 2017. https://ria.ru/world/20170608/1496104135.html.; Ларинина, Екатерина. "Девушка на выданье. Возьмут ли ЕС и НАТО Украину к себе." *Аргументы и Факты*, November 21, 2014. http://www.aif.ru/politics/world/1387724.etc

[56] Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, and The Razumkov Center. "Public Opinion of the Population of Ukraine on NATO," June 2017. http://dif.org.ua/uploads/pdf/1444455070595c9ce1eade60.36619672.pdf.

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