

**ARTICULATION OF THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION TRAJECTORY BY THE  
INSTITUTION OF THE PRESIDENCY DURING THE FULL-SCALE RUSSIAN  
INVASION OF UKRAINE**

**АРТИКУЛЯЦІЯ ЄВРОІНТЕГРАЦІЙНОГО КУРСУ ІНСТИТУТОМ  
ПРЕЗИДЕНТСТВА У ПЕРІОД ПОВНОМАСШТАБНОГО ВТОРГНЕННЯ РФ ПРОТИ  
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***Abstract.** This article examines the role of the institution of the presidency in the intensification of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic movement, encompassing European and Euro-Atlantic integration. The study establishes that the period of martial law has particularly exacerbated national security issues and created favorable conditions for an effective European integration movement. In this context, it is argued that the institution of the presidency has gained political independence and significantly influences Ukraine's foreign policy.*

*The study of this issue employs general scientific and specialized methods, including analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, and comparison. The author demonstrates that Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has not only intensified foreign policy orientations but also created Ukraine's image as a geopolitically significant state. Consequently, Ukraine's interests must be considered in the current global context.*

***Keywords:** European integration, NATO, EU, Euro-Atlantic trajectory, institution of the presidency, foreign policy, Ukraine.*

***Анотація.** В даній статті досліджено роль інституту президентства в питаннях активізації євроатлантичного руху України (тобто європейської й євроатлантичної інтеграції). Нами встановлено, що період воєнного стану особливо загострив проблему національної безпеки та створив «ідеальні умови» для ефективного євроінтеграційного руху. У цьому контексті, аргументовано, що інститут президентства і його роль в Україні та значення для її зовнішньої політики набув політично незалежного характеру з можливістю впливати на неї.*

*Окреслення даної проблематики стало можливим за використанням загальнонаукових та спеціальних методів, зокрема – аналізу, синтезу, індукції, дедукції, порівняння. Автором доведено, що період повномасштабного вторгнення РФ проти України сприяв не просто активізації зовнішньополітичних орієнтирів, а створив певний образ України, як геополітично значимої держави для глобального світу інтереси якої необхідно враховувати на сучасному етапі.*

***Ключові слова:** євроінтеграція, НАТО, ЄС, євроатлантичний курс, інститут президентства, зовнішня політика, Україна.*

**Introduction.** Ukraine's integration into the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has deep historical experience, with a key point being its dependence on the domestic political environment. Recent events indicate that, at this stage, it is essential to consider external circumstances that shape a unique agenda, alongside domestic politics.

Thus, various crises in domestic politics (which have been numerous throughout Ukraine's independence) have often been cited by European skeptics arguing that it is premature for Ukraine to attain full membership in the European community. However, the events of 2022 in Ukraine have reshaped the future vision of the EU and the concept of security across Europe. Presently, scholars suggest that candidate status could afford Ukraine a rapid start and facilitate effective decision-making regarding its EU membership. Military threats, which directly impact European security, also play a crucial role in accelerating Ukraine's integration into the EU. Therefore, the Ukrainian government, represented comprehensively by the institution of the presidency, aims to demonstrate that Ukraine has right for a full partnership and should seize this historic opportunity to implement its European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

**The purpose of this article** is to demonstrate how the institution of the presidency in Ukraine is expressing the path towards European integration amid Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Achieving this objective entails several tasks, including outlining the evolution of European integration in Ukrainian politics, analyzing current challenges, describing the factors influencing Ukraine's integration into the EU, and emphasizing the role of the institution of the presidency in shaping the foreign policy agenda.

**Literature review.** In preparing this material, the scholarly contributions of domestic researchers who have delineated crucial aspects of Ukraine's European integration across various historical periods, with particular emphasis on the period of martial law, were pivotal.

The article authored by V. Burdyak and I. Moroz (*Burdiak V., Moroz I., 2008*), which delineates the foundational principles of independent Ukraine's foreign policy towards collaboration with the EU and NATO, is significant for fully comprehending the evolution of Ukraine's European integration trajectory. The research framework distinguishes the role of Ukrainian presidents in fostering relations with the European and Euro-Atlantic community.

An important contribution is found in the article by O. Tymoshchuk (*Tymoshchuk O., 2022*), which focuses specifically on the European integration processes amidst the Russian-Ukrainian war. The author provides analysis of the political and strategic frameworks underlying EU policy, emphasizing factors pivotal to Ukraine's obtaining of EU candidate status. Thus, the study outlines exceptions to European norms that member states can employ to foster regional peace and security.

The findings from sociological surveys conducted by institutions such as the Sociological Group «Rating» (*Dynamika zovnishno-politychnykh, 2022*) and the Razumkov Center's Sociological Service (*Zovnishnopolitychni oriientsii, 2023*) have been instrumental for scientific analysis. These surveys provided indicators that depicted Ukrainian society's actual perception of Ukraine's European integration trajectory following the imposition of martial law. The results highlighted Ukrainian societal attitudes towards the institution of the presidency, which plays a pivotal role in shaping foreign policy priorities in response to Russian aggression.

It is worth emphasizing that S. Bilychenko, A. Beteiko, A. Hetmanchuk, D. Korbut, S. Onufriv and others also dealt with the issues of European integration.

Thus, employing a diverse array of sources has enabled the author to comprehensively address the issue from a contemporary perspective, as it has its current significance and necessitates thorough scientific scrutiny.

#### **Main results of the research.**

The context of this study begins with a review of the initial steps taken by independent Ukraine towards European integration. It is pertinent to note the perspective of V. Burdyak and I. Moroz, who highlight that the first stage in Ukraine's formation of a state European integration policy was marked by the adoption of the Declaration of State Sovereignty on July 16, 1990 (*Burdiak V., Moroz I., 2008, pp. 167*). The researchers emphasize that during this period, decision-making regarding European integration was predominantly within the purview of the Ukrainian parliament. Subsequently, from 1993 to 2001, there was a shift in political dynamics favoring initiatives of the institution of the presidency. This shift led to the emergence of presidential normative acts that delineated priority areas for European integration. Presidential decrees approved the Strategy (*Pro zatverdzhennia, 1998*) and Program of Ukraine's Integration into the EU

(*Prohrama intehratsii, 2000*), as well as the State Program of Ukraine-NATO Cooperation (*Pro Derzhavnu, 1998*), marking significant milestones on the political landscape.

Later, Presidents L. Kravchuk and L. Kuchma demonstrated their Euro-Atlantic loyalty by visiting NATO headquarters in 1992 and 1995.

It is noteworthy that Ukraine's aspirations for European integration with the EU have a substantial history dating back to 1993. During this period, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the Resolution «On the Main Directions of Ukraine's Foreign Policy» (*Pro Osnovni, 1993*), which emphasized our country's increased engagement in European regional cooperation. The following year, in 1994, Ukraine signed the Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation with the European Union and its Member States (*Uhoda pro, 1994*). This agreement facilitated the establishment of regular political dialogue and economic understanding between the parties.

In the course of scientific analysis, the Resolution «On the General Directions of the Foreign Policy of Ukraine», which delineated Ukraine's primary European integration priorities, emerged as a notable subject of inquiry. This resolution was directly influenced by the institution of the presidency in 1993 and subsequently in 2010, when the original 1993 Verkhovna Rada Resolution was superseded by the Law of Ukraine «On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy», (*Pro zasady, 2010*) signed by the President. The document that outlined Ukraine's European integration trajectory, was transformed. Notably, the current version of the Law mentions the EU and NATO only once, in Article 11, underscoring the volatility of European integration rhetoric, which often fluctuated depending on Ukraine's internal political dynamics and was susceptible to subjective influences.

Notwithstanding these intricacies, it is compelling that Ukraine's orientations towards European and Euro-Atlantic integration have consistently hinged on the institution of the presidency throughout the entirety of our country's independence.

Comparing the perception of the EU and NATO by the institution of the presidency in 2010 with the present landscape in 2024, it is evident that the role of the President of Ukraine in shaping the European integration agenda remains crucial. This assertion is substantiated by Ukraine's political experiences, including revolutionary upheavals and combat experience in ongoing confrontation with Russian aggression.

It is worth to align with the perspective of A. Kruglashov, articulated in 2023. Assessing Ukraine's ongoing European integration efforts, the scholar suggests that Ukraine's determination and persistence in pursuing its foreign policy objectives within the European integration framework could serve as pivotal in restoring European unity (*Kruhlov A, 2023, pp. 23*). This contribution could significantly aid Europe in addressing internal challenges. Such arguments are increasingly significant today, given the direct threat to European stability and security.

A compelling argument asserts that the institution of the presidency exercises its constitutional powers as stipulated in Article 102 of the Constitution through steps towards European integration (*Konstytutsiia Ukrainy, 1996*). It is crucial to highlight that the Constitution forms an integral part guiding the President's implementation of Ukraine's European integration agenda.

This provision demonstrates the genuine opportunity for the President to shape Ukraine's civilizational path and define the European identity of its people. Article 102 also delineates the state's strategic direction towards full membership in the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The Constitution of Ukraine explicitly affirms that governmental actions are aimed at affirming the irreversibility of our country's European and Euro-Atlantic trajectory.

In examining current European integration issues, particular focus should be given to a pivotal stage that commenced in 2022. This year marked the onset of new opportunities for the institution of the presidency, especially in influencing foreign policy. This assertion is supported by analyzing the head of state's actions during the first year of martial law and the extensive scope of strategic engagements with international partners. Russia's military aggression has fostered a pressing need to establish a secure environment both within Ukraine and beyond.

During the year, the President delivered 35 speeches in the parliaments of Europe, Asia, North America, Australia, Israel, and New Zealand (*Pershyi rik*, 2023). These addresses provided opportunities for the President to articulate Ukraine's national interests at international political and expert forums, thereby shaping the country's image as a committed partner in advancing values of security, stability, and democracy.

The practice of inviting foreign politicians to Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities affected by Russian aggression has proven to be well-founded. These visits serve to demonstrate the pressing need for international support for Ukraine. Such meetings with international dignitaries highlight the Ukrainian side's commitment to cooperation and its determination to ensure the country's security.

There is a prevailing viewpoint within the academic and expert community that February 28, 2022, marked the beginning of a new and highly progressive phase in Ukraine's history of European integration (*Makarenko N.*, 2022, pp. 367). On the fifth day after the commencement of full-scale invasion and amidst martial law, Ukraine formally applied for membership in the European Union. The application was jointly signed by the President of Ukraine, the Prime Minister of Ukraine, and the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Subsequently, during a morning briefing, the President of Ukraine urged the EU to consider the application through a special procedure, signaling the immediate initiation of the process towards granting Ukraine candidate status.

In response to this decisive and unequivocal action by Ukrainian authorities, the European community demonstrated readiness to reciprocate (*Shliakh Ukrainy*, 2024) and granted «green light» to commence accession negotiations. On June 17, 2022, the European Commission published its conclusions on Ukraine's application for EU membership, and on June 23, acknowledged Ukraine's European aspirations by conferring candidate status.

The candidate status has provided an added impetus for national policy to reform domestic legislation aimed at combating corruption and ensuring equality and human rights protection. Adherence to European standards is crucial, as it promises numerous economic benefits in the long term and establishes enduring support within the security sector.

It is significant that until 2022, widespread support for joining the EU and NATO among the Ukrainian population was lacking, characterized by an amorphous stance. It was with the onset of Russia's large-scale invasion that a distinct phase of foreign policy shifts towards a «Western orientation» commenced. The European direction has historically posed a challenge for both the Ukrainian nation and political decision-makers.

The imperative of advancing European integration and presidential initiatives during the period of martial law was underscored by unprecedented support from the Ukrainian nation. The swift dynamics of European integration brought about several positive changes in national policy, as evidenced by Ukrainian sociological institutions in 2022 and 2023. For instance, a survey conducted by the Sociological Group «Rating» at the close of 2022 indicated advancements in the Euro-Atlantic trajectory. According to the survey, 86% of Ukrainians expressed support for Ukraine's accession to the European Union (*Dynamika zovnishno-politychnykh*, 2022), marking a notable increase. Moreover, support for joining NATO reached its highest level in the history of observations, with 83% of respondents endorsing proactive membership in the Alliance.

A fundamental point persists in defining foreign policy preferences among Ukrainians in 2023. The findings from surveys conducted by the Razumkov Center's Sociological service in early 2023 paint a favorable picture. Membership in the EU enjoys support from 92% of Ukrainians, while 79% express backing for NATO accession (*Zovnishnopolitychni orientatsii*, 2023). These outcomes clearly reflect the impact of the current government's Western-oriented policies, which are predominantly steered by the institution of the presidency.

Therefore, the courageous resistance to Russian aggression and the defense of Europe's eastern flank against ruscism hastened the progress of European and Euro-Atlantic integration, facilitating Ukraine's integration into the global democratic community. The steadfastness of Ukrainian authorities, guided by the institution of the presidency, played a crucial role in advancing

the pace of forging strategic partnerships with global leaders such as Great Britain, Canada, and the United States.

**Conclusions.** Thus, in our analysis of the activities of the institution of the presidency and its articulation of the European integration agenda in the current context, we have observed that events linked to Russian aggression have served as a catalyst in political decision-making, with the institution of the presidency playing a pivotal role. Traditionally, it was held that NATO accession decisions were purely political while EU accession decisions were primarily economic, contingent upon fulfilling certain obligations by Ukraine. However, the current stage of international relations and global security has fostered a revised perspective, suggesting that both EU and NATO accession now carry significant geopolitical implications. This shift implies a streamlined political approach, potentially eliminating unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles in the accession processes.

The achievement of foreign policy objectives holds crucial strategic significance for Ukraine today, fostering effective diplomacy despite the special legal regime. The two-year experience of confronting the aggressor has prompted novel approaches to fostering intergovernmental dialogues, including robust engagement with the international community through visits to Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities. These visits provide firsthand insights into Ukraine's heroic defense efforts, safeguarding not only its sovereignty but also the eastern borders of the European Union. Collectively, these circumstances bolster Ukraine's image as an equal partner committed to safeguarding and ensuring global security.

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