EU-Ukraine: Responding to Challenges Together

Media Digest, October 2024

The latest issue of the Media Digest features publications on the key events of October reflecting the condition and prospects of EU-Ukraine relations.

TOP 3

Ukraine remains a priority

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen addresses to the European Parliament during the presentation of Hungary's presidency priorities. The President of the European Union, outlined the top priorities for the European Union during Budapest's presidency, including the importance of continued support for Ukraine, as well as focus on competitiveness and migration. The emphasized that Russia is attempting to make the third winter of the war in Ukraine "as difficult as possible", shelf energy infrastructure and targeting civilians. President Von der Leyen called for continued support for financial and military support for Ukraine.

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EU enlargement report: Ukraine continues reforms. EU support remains unwavering

At a joint press conference with EU Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Oliver Varhelyi on the occasion of the visit of EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell said: "Ukraine continues to make tangible progress in the brutal war of aggression. Ukrainians are fighting two battles simultaneously: one against the aggressor, and the other trying to achieve the reforms necessary to become a member of the European Union. We stand with Ukraine on both fronts, at all times and in line with our security commitment signed in June."

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"The burden of rebuilding Ukraine will fall on the shoulders of those responsible for its destruction, namely Russia"

The European Parliament supported the European Commission's proposal to provide Ukraine with an exceptional loan of up to EUR 35 billion. This loan will contribute to the Group of Seven (G7) initiative to support Ukraine's reconstruction. It will be repaid using extraordinary revenues from immobilized Russian assets. The "need for financial support is enormous and urgent," said Ukraine's Prime Minister. "Much must pay for the attack on Ukrainians and the brutal destruction of the country's infrastructure. The burden of rebuilding Ukraine will fall on the shoulders of those responsible for its destruction, namely Russia."

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VOX POPULI

Support for European integration is growing

If a referendum on Ukraine's accession to the EU was held today, 65% respondents said they would vote "definitely yes" and 18% would vote in favour of joining, 7% would vote against, 5% would vote with a significant increase in support from November-December 2021, when only 68% of respondents would vote "definitely yes" and the ratio of "for" and against was 78% and 18%.

Support for EU accession is strongest in western Ukraine (96%), followed by the central regions (88%), the south (84%) and the north (81%). The in-person survey was conducted in government-controlled areas of Ukraine, with a sample of 2 056 respondents aged 18 years old. The theoretical sampling error does not exceed 2.3%.

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UKRAINE EU ACCESSION ALGORITHM

Katarina Mathernova: The EU now recognises the impact of Russian disinformation

EU countries are making significant efforts to counter Russian propaganda, and the recognition of the disinformation exploited the foundations of European democracy (freedom of speech), free elections and the protection of the human rights of citizens to promote their Kremlin narratives in the West. However, the 2024 European Parliament elections showed that Russian disinformation became a factor in both Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the growing threat of military conflict with the West using nuclear weapons.

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ECONOMY, BUSINESS, FINANCE

A powerful signal for investors

The EBRD and IFC are jointly providing a total of USD 435 million in long-term debt to Ukraine's first private telecommunications company. The funding will support Ukraine's two leading Ukrainian telecom groups, Kyivstar and lifecell, which have recently merged to form a new group, Datagroup Volia lifecell. The investment will support the company's efforts in enhancing the resilience of the phone network and improving digital connectivity across Ukraine. The funding, which is a syndication, the merger group will deliver improved mobile connectivity to 10 million people and provide access to more reliable fixed broadband access to around 4 million homes.

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Ukraine started exchange of information about citizens' bank accounts

As part of the Common Reporting Standard (CRS) agreement, Ukraine will start exchanging information about its citizens' bank accounts with 120 countries worldwide. Starting this year, the Ukrainian tax authorities will receive information from the financial accounts of the tax residents held by financial institutions (banks, insurance companies, investment funds) from abroad. In return, Ukraine will provide such information to partner countries about their residents.

The first data exchange between tax authorities will take place next September. The Ukrainian tax authorities received information about new accounts opened in the partner countries between 1 July and 31 December 2023.

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SECURITY SUPPORT

Josep Borrell: EU strongly condemns Russian killings of Ukrainian prisoners of war

The European Union strongly condemns the increasing executions of Ukrainian prisoners of war by Russia, said High Representative Josep Borrell said He said that these killings are another "abhorrent violation of the rights and dignity of the Ukrainian people". According to Borrell, these cases are appalling and represent "unacceptable and unjustifiable violations." They demonstrate Russia's continued and systematic disregard for international law, the laws of armed conflict and humanitarian law. Russia has obligations under the United Nations Charter and international law, he said. Borrell said:

The Prosecutor General of Ukraine said that up to 90% of Ukrainian soldiers were subjected to torture, sexual violence, or other forms of inhuman treatment in Russian captivity.

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ENERGY AND EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

New EU decisions to increase Ukrainian energy sector resilience

EIB President Nadia Calviño presented the Ukraine Energy Rescue Plan, which provides up to EUR 600 million in financing for emergency energy projects across the public and private sectors. The plan includes the rehabilitation of gas that generate electricity and heat using equipment which can be quickly set up in the aftermath of attacks on critical infrastructure and businesses. The plan also focuses on projects to protect key electricity substations with shelters.

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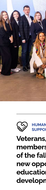

The European Commission strengthens support for green transition

On 21 October, the European Commission granted more than EUR 380 million to 50 new projects across Europe under the LIFE programme for environment and climate action.

The allocated amount represents more than half of the EU budget for the investment needed for these projects, the remainder comes from national, regional and local governments, private partnerships, businesses, and civil society organisations.

LIFE projects contribute to achieving the European Green Deal's broad range of goals, including the EU's climate objectives (including the EU's aim to become climate neutral by 2050 and to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030).

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LAW AND RULE OF LAW

Systematically and consistently: The EU supports the fight against corruption in Ukraine

In 2023, Ukraine ranked 104 out of 180 countries in the Corruption Perception Index, a significant improvement from the international ranking. Over the last 10 years, Ukraine has improved its score by 14 points. This is a significant improvement. EU candidate countries, with significant progress made during the war with Russia, are Moldova and Ukraine. Ukraine's progress but remains quite low. Recognizing the importance of overcoming this problem, the EU has been actively supporting anti-corruption efforts in Ukraine through implementing various initiatives and programmes. Some of them have been in place for years, and why is the fight against corruption critically important for Ukraine's integration into the European Union?

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HUMANITARIAN AID AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

Veterans, their family members and families of the fallen will receive new opportunities for education and business development from the EU

"The EU is proud to provide relevant assistance for employment, launching business activities, and educational support and awareness raising," says Peter M. Wagner, Director of the European Commission's Directorate-General for DG NEAR's Instruments. "True recovery and reconstruction is only possible together with the people who have sacrificed most to deeply for the war, and we want to contribute to making this happen". The EU's Peace and Stability Partnership provides training opportunities for about 190 veterans, their family members, and the families of the fallen. Veterans and their families will receive grants and technical assistance.

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GOOD GOVERNANCE

EU-funded project to modernise city water infrastructure in Chernivtsi

Chernivtsi will receive EU grant funds to modernise the city's water infrastructure. MP, the Chernivtsi City Council and the Chernivtsi Water Supply and Sewerage enterprise signed a grant and project implementing agreement for the EU-supported "Modernisation of Chernivtsi's water supply, the water supply and sewerage systems in Chernivtsi closer to EU standards, reducing technical and non-technical water losses, modernising the pumping water, while supporting the monitoring of pollution of the Dunaborundukiv valley.

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Communities in southern Ukraine will have access to drinking water

The destruction of the Kakhovka HPP and the flooding of the Kakhovka reservoir have made it harder or impossible for residents of southern Ukraine to access safe drinking water. The EU-funded UNDP programme, five communities in the Kherson Oblast and three in the Mykolaiv Oblast will receive water trucks and water treatment facilities, which will have a decisive impact on the lives of over 100 000 people. The EU has 10 water trucks and 50 mobile water treatment facilities to 14 communities in the Dnipropetrovska Oblast.

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EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE

EU Ambassador to Ukraine Katarina Mathernova: EU investments in Ukrainian education are investments in our common future

The first regional event of the All-Ukrainian communication campaign, Together We Are Ukraine, dedicated to the 30th anniversary of Ukrainian education and youth, and took place in Chernivtsi on 24 October.

During the event, EU Ambassador to Ukraine Katarina Mathernova met with students of the Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University (CNU), Ruslan Bilokurskyi. She also held discussions with students and university staff and spoke to journalists from national and local media.

Ambassador Mathernova then visited Zastavna, where she presented students with new laboratory equipment, including modern agricultural equipment. She also met with the participants of the Zastavna Agro Forum, the largest agro-regional media-filled EU. Simply about complicated in Bukovyna.

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STRONG TOGETHER

The media digest was prepared by the EU project "Communicating for Ukrainians (Stage)"

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