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THE RAZUMKOV CENTRE NEWSLETTER

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UPSHOT OF CHANGES IN UKRAINE: STRATEGIC COURSE TOWARD EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Ukraine has experienced fundamental changes in the two years after the Euromaidan revolution. The accomplishments outweigh everything that had been done over the two decades prior.

You would be in your rights to accuse the government of having done little in the way of reforms or acted in the wrong way on occasion. While acknowledging the miscalculations and the lasting baggage of corruption, you have to understand the conditions under which Ukraine is implementing reforms.

First, there is the ongoing war with Russia, the loss of 7% of the territory and 20% of the economic potential, thousands of lives lost and 1.7 million internally displaced persons.

Second, Ukraine is grappling with a system that took 25 years to form and is now resisting reforms. This is especially evidenced by the slow-moving judicial and prosecution reforms.

Another challenge is that the people have yet to see an improvement in their day-to-day lives. On the contrary, economic decline and rising utility prices (the latter also being part of the reforms) have caused a drop in the living standards for the majority

of Ukrainians and undermined their trust in the government.

And yet changes have taken place, on a greater or lesser scale, in all spheres of society's life over the past two years. For the first time since independence, Ukraine made it through winter without buying any natural gas from Russia. The new police are patrolling the streets and enjoy a high level of trust from the public. The government is switching entirely to electronic government procurement processes and implementing transparent management practices at state-owned companies, thereby eradicating the major sources of corruption that plagued the country in the past.

The upshot of the changes is that Ukraine is breaking away from the orbit of Russia's influence, leaving the post-Soviet period of its past, and following an unswerving course toward European integration.

[Full text](#)

Yuriy YAKYMENKO,
Deputy Director General,
Director of Political and Legal
Programmes, Razumkov Centre



POLITICAL PLAYERS TO FOCUS ON POSSIBLE EARLY PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION

The ongoing political crisis has been unfolding for quite some time now. It involves several lines of conflict.

Firstly, there is a conflict among the parties making up the coalition and the government and, indirectly, between the president and the prime minister.

Another line of conflict is centred on the ambitions of certain political forces to run in an early election in the hopes that the current situation will touch off a parliamentary crisis and the coalition will break up one way or another, giving rise to constitutional grounds for disbanding the parliament and scheduling an early election. The concerned forces – both coalition partners and other parties – have manifested a shared interest in this process.

As a result, we are now facing a situation where the process can go in any number of directions. Possible scenarios include further stabilisation as well as continued destabilisation of the coalition and parliament, which would create preconditions for an early election. Perhaps in this situation the main players deciding the fate of the coalition – Petro Poroshenko Bloc and People's Front – will be able to agree on a government reshuffle that would make the distribution of portfolios more aligned with their interests. There is also a scenario that involves Oleh Lyashko and his Radical Party re-joining the coalition.

[Full text](#)

Yuriy YAKYMENKO, Deputy Director General,
Director of Political and Legal Programmes, Razumkov Centre

PETRO POROSHENKO BLOC AND PEOPLE'S FRONT TO SEARCH FOR MIDDLE GROUND TO AVOID AN EARLY ELECTION

Two scenarios are possible following the withdrawal of the Samopomich Party from the coalition. One of them involves an early parliamentary election.

To make a scenario without an early election possible, the coalition has to formally survive in any configuration. This is all the more possible now that Oleh Lyashko's Radical Party has announced its possible return to the coalition.

And yet it is quite obvious that the situation depends on the position of the two biggest parties. They are the core around which a coalition can form in any number of configurations. As long as they stay together in the coalition, there will be an ongoing process of negotiating, bargaining, distributing and redistributing

portfolios in the new Cabinet of Ministers. This applies to all portfolios, including that of prime minister.

If either one of them decides to withdraw from the parliamentary coalition, this will set Scenario No. 2 in motion. This is because any other format of the coalition will be disadvantageous to those political players that are eying an early election, particularly Batkivshchyna and Samopomich, and the Radical Party to a lesser degree. After all, any coalition with the Opposition Bloc or the other two parties that include former Party of the Regions members would be damaging to the political image.

As long as Petro Poroshenko Bloc and People's Front stick together, there is a chance that the process will be

channelled into a constructive vein and the government will gradually regain stability.

Both scenarios are quite probable now. However, in light of all the factors involved (particularly the position of Ukraine's international partners and financial institutions, the issue of the Minsk Protocol and the president's personal commitments) the scenario that rules out an early election will continue to play out for at least some more time. Attempts will be made to avoid an early election. Moreover, the president's political force

(to say nothing of the People's Front with its current low ratings) will lose many seats in such an early election if it does take place eventually in light of the growing competition and somewhat weaker position of the president himself. The main players are therefore more likely to gravitate toward the scenario without an early election and look for middle ground.

[Full text](#)

*Yuriy YAKYMENKO, Deputy Director General,
Director of Political and Legal Programmes, Razumkov Centre*

National Security and Defence

DANGERS OF THE MINSK PROTOCOL FOR UKRAINE

There is a firm belief in Western Europe, particularly in Germany, that the best tactic against the Kremlin's aggressive policy is to stall for time in the hopes that by year's end Russia will exhaust its resources needed to maintain active combat on several fronts, mainly in Syria and Ukraine.

I get the impression that Europe is clearly aware of the hopelessness of the Minsk Protocol as a tool for resolving this conflict but continues to maintain the appearance of a lack of any alternative in the hopes that the situation will somehow resolve itself.

After listening to arguments supporting the futility of the Minsk Protocol, European experts, politicians and diplomats have repeatedly asked the question I am unable to answer: 'Why did Ukraine sign it?' They believe that since President Poroshenko made these commitments, Ukraine should be so kind as to make good on them.

The position of European partners is this: if Ukraine fails to uphold its end of the Minsk Protocol, this will mean that Ukraine and Russia will be equally responsible for sabotaging it.

Meanwhile, everybody understands the different weight of the protocol clause calling for a ceasefire, withdrawal of foreign troops, pull-back of heavy armaments, all-for-all prisoner swap, transfer of control over the border and disarmament of all illegal military groups. In other words, the commitments made by Russia are disproportionate to what Ukraine must



*Oleksiy MELNYK,
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do (amend the Constitution and stage an election). Everybody is perfectly aware of what really matters and what is merely a clause in the protocol.

Another equally important question is: 'What happens once Ukraine meets all of its commitments?'

Let's start with the good things. If this is accomplished, Ukraine will have fulfilled its obligations. But there will be a price to pay. At the very least, this will mean legitimising the people who have usurped the power in the self-proclaimed DNR and LNR republics, or those who will replace them. They will be *de jure* representatives of the Ukrainian government but *de facto* appointees of Moscow.

The next step will involve transforming two army corps into the people's militia (a sort of police force) of the so-called DNR and LNR, which will in fact be a 40,000-strong law enforcement structure funded out of the Ukrainian budget while remaining outside the control of the authorities in Kyiv. Note that this 'people's militia' is larger than the armies of many European nations in terms of personnel and weapons. It is not to be ruled out that the same 'people's militiamen' will be used as human resources for the 'people's border guard' that will establish control over the putatively Ukrainian border.

In this way we will help Russia to comply with the Minsk Protocol clause dealing with control over the border with Ukraine, which will be controlled – as it is now – by Russia on one side and by militants on the other.

As part of the next step of this scenario, Ukraine will be required, quite logically, to stop the anti-terrorist operation because the conflict has been resolved. This involves pulling all troops from the line of demarcation and allowing the complete freedom of movement for militants and contraband. This will remove the final defence line keeping all this from inundating the rest of Ukrainian territory.

[Full text](#)

RUSSIA MUST PARTICIPATE IN THE MINSK NEGOTIATIONS AS A PARTY TO THE CONFLICT

It has been a year since the presidents of Ukraine and Russia, Petro Poroshenko and Vladimir Putin, together with French President Francois Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel met on 12 February 2015 in the capital city of Belarus in the so-called Normandy format to agree on a set of measures to resolve the conflict and institute a ceasefire in Ukraine's east. These accords, dubbed 'Minsk-2', called for a ceasefire along the line of conflict in the Donbas, a pull-back of large-calibre weapons and a swap of prisoners.

By all accounts, there was nothing peaceful about the Minsk Protocol because Ukraine lost Debaltsevo as soon as it was signed. Effectively, a ceasefire was not instituted until 1 September 2015. It became possible following Putin's decision occasioned by his visit to the UN General Assembly and the Russian invasion of Syria.

First things first, the Ukrainian President should give an answer to our Western partners as to why he signed this protocol. He should explain why he overstepped

his presidential authority in doing so. He signed a commitment to the effect that the Ukrainian parliament would approve constitutional amendments by a certain date, even though the president has no authority under law to influence decisions of the parliament. For when we begin a discussion with our Western partners, they put forward an ironclad argument: you signed the protocol, so please be so kind as to implement it.

There is another major problem that will hardly have a speedy resolution: the fact that Russia has to be brought to the negotiating table as a party to the conflict. We are facing an absurd situation where everybody understands who is behind the separatists in the Donbas and who is supplying them with weapons, but still continues to keep up the appearances and conduct a public dialogue with Russia as if it were a bona-fide arbitrator.

[Full text](#)

*Oleksiy MELNYK,
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RUSSIA CONTINUES TO EMPLOY POLITICAL TACTICS IN THE DONBAS CONFLICT

The political path toward a resolution of the Donbas conflict is just as dangerous as the military one, since it can cost Ukraine its sovereignty.

At this point it is extremely difficult to predict the scenario of the Donbas conflict as there are countless factors capable of changing the situation at any time: the situation in Russia, the position of the West and how quickly a solution for Ukraine's political crisis can be found.

For the time being Putin is keeping this conflict in the political plane in an attempt to force Ukraine to agree to his terms. A military escalation is being prepared in case Ukraine is not cooperative enough. To stage it at minimum cost to Russia, they invented an election

that is currently being prepared by Surkov in the self-proclaimed LNR and DNR. All of this is being done to legitimize the so-called local government, which may then officially request military assistance from Russia – a scenario that cannot be ruled out. This political scenario is fatally dangerous for Ukraine, much like the military one.

Full [text](#)

Mykola SUNHUROVSKYI,
Director of Military Programmes,
Razumkov Centre



Economy

ECONOMIC MODEL OF UNCONDITIONAL BASIC INCOME: A NEW SOCIAL ALTERNATIVE

The developed nations have now reached the limit of potential reserves for social development. Finding a way out of the systemic social crisis calls for a drastic restructuring of economic, social and political institutions of society. In this context, finding a new economic and social model, new approaches and possible alternatives to the existing social security system is becoming increasingly more relevant. In this article, Olha Pyshchulina, Lead Expert on Social and Gender Programmes with the Razumkov Centre, examines one of such social alternatives – unconditional basic income.

Fighting poverty is not necessarily the main goal in introducing unconditional basic income. Its goal is reducing the red tape and incentivising people to be

more active in finding employment. New alternative approaches to social security could create a new type of society in which a person could freely choose between employment and *pro bono* social work. However, the question about the mechanisms that can be employed to accomplish this still remains open.

[Read the entire article](#)

Olha PYSHCHULINA,
Lead Expert on Social and Gender
Programmes, Razumkov Centre



BANKS DISTRUST THE PEOPLE, THE PEOPLE DISTRUST THE BANKS, AND ALL OF THEM DISTRUST THE GOVERNMENT

Trust of the government is a topical issue these days. You often hear people discussing how 'tired' they are. Ukrainians are tired of hearing the word 'reforms'. Too much has been said about reforms, but the public has yet to witness any palpable changes. This creates a kind of negative immunity against the term itself and even the authorities that keep using it – all those people on whom certain hopes were pinned and now shattered as the living standards have failed to grow.

We are dealing with a big wicked triangle: banks distrust the people, the people distrust the banks, and

all of them distrust the authorities, which distrust them in return. The key thing we need to achieve here is break this chain of distrust.

Full [text](#)

Vasyl YURCHYSHYN,
Economic Programmes Director,
Razumkov Centre



IMPORTS FALL AS OVERALL DEMAND SHRINKS IN UKRAINE

The political and economic crisis of 2014-2015 has had a detrimental impact on all business operations of Ukrainian companies. Imports have suffered more than any other operation. The first half of the year saw a 36% decline in imports down to \$18.1 billion.

The main cause of this drop has been a shrinking demand across all sectors. Industrial output fell sharply in the face of the current economic crisis, bringing down demand for consumer and investment goods. This affected both foreign-made and domestic goods.

Also, a threefold devaluation of the Ukrainian hryvnia over the past two years has made foreign-made

goods much less appealing compared to their Ukrainian equivalents in terms of pricing. To keep their sales prices from rising along with the hryvnia's foreign exchange rate, importers were forced to work with a smaller profit margin, resulting in a shrinking turnover. A restrictive policy of the National Bank also made foreign currency much harder to come by for all market operators.

Full [text](#)

Vasyl YURCHYSHYN,
Economic Programmes Director,
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UKRAINE MAKES GOOD-FAITH ATTEMPTS TO RESOLVE THE 'YANUKOVYCH DEBT' DISPUTE WITH RUSSIA

As Russia and Ukraine have failed to agree on the so-called 'Yanukovych debt', Moscow has decided to take the matter up with the British justice system.

This is evidence of the fact that Russia will continue trying to push through its conditions and its own vision on the matter. This is standard practice: if the parties are unable to reach a swift resolution, the dispute is always referred to a court as the next step.

If it is a private debt or a debt equivalent to a private loan (which is exactly the position assumed by Kyiv in this matter), it is understandable that debt restructuring should take place on general terms because the majority of creditors accepted them. Also keep in mind that Russia is an aggressor, and few would understand and approve of Ukraine's offering better terms to an aggressor than to other creditors.

At the same time, Ukraine is complying with a vital requirement in this situation by continuing

good-faith attempts to resolve the dispute, as a result of which cooperation with the IMF will also continue. In this case Ukraine enjoys a certain moral advantage because the debt restructuring took place with the involvement of the IMF and international financial institutions.

The fate of future loans to Ukraine currently depends on the IMF in many ways. Even though one can have mixed feelings about the IMF, there is no other alternative to the IMF at the present time. By extending a loan, even a small one in the amount of a single tranche, the IMF would demonstrate its willingness to cooperate and send a signal to other international financial institutions to begin lending money to Ukraine.

Full [text](#)

*Vasyl YURCHYSHYN,
Economic Programmes Director, Razumkov Centre*

UKRAINIAN EXPORTS TO EU NATIONS DOWN 26% IN 2015

2015 was a challenging year for the Ukrainian economy in general and for regular citizens in particular. The continuing escalation of the military conflict in Ukraine's east has been fuelling the downward trend in industrial output (-13.4% in 2015 compared to -10.1% in 2014). Preliminary statistics of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade show that GDP shrunk by 10.4% in 2015 compared to 6.8% in 2014. Inflation rose by 43.3% versus 24.9% in 2014. Most affected by price hikes were foodstuffs such as sugar, eggs, bread, sunflower seed oil, fruit, vegetables, pasta, dairy products and meat.

Ukraine lost important sales markets for its goods (mainly the Russian market), sending business people into a scramble to find other sales channels and refocus on other markets. The EU market was hoped to become a cure-it-all. Official statistics show, however, that exports to the EU member states declined by 26% in the 11 months of 2015. There are several factors at play here: export quotas, the low value for money, the inability of Ukrainian industrial goods to compete due to a high level of energy intensity, and the lack of hi-tech products with high added value.

The year 2015 proved quite challenging for the public as well. A threefold devaluation of the hryvnia since early 2014 (peaking in February-March 2015) caused a sharp decline in personal incomes. Official statistics show that the average nominal wage of full-time employees of companies, institutions and organisations was 5,230 hryvnias in December 2015. This is 1.5 times the level as of 1 January 2015 (3,455 hryvnias). However, the inflation cancelled out these positive changes. Add to this the rising expenses for transportation (27%) due to growing fuel prices, and the higher cost of pharmaceuticals, medical goods and devices. All of this is attributable to the fact that Ukraine is forced to import much of the goods and pay for them in foreign currency. To make matters worse, natural gas prices were raised by 285% for all categories of consumers, in addition to a rise in central heating prices (by 67%) and hot water prices (by 60%) beginning on 1 April 2015. Electricity rates also increased and will continue to rise until 1 March 2017.

Full [text](#)

*Kateryna MARKEVYCH,
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Energy Sector

ANALYTICAL REPORT TITLED *NUCLEAR ENERGY IN THE WORLD AND IN UKRAINE: CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE OUTLOOK*

The analytical report titled *Nuclear Energy in the World and in Ukraine: Current Status and Future Outlook* was prepared under the auspices of the Ukrainian Parliament Committee on the Fuel and Energy Sector, Nuclear Policy and Nuclear Safety.

This report is particularly relevant in the context of the extreme importance attached to ensuring Ukraine's energy security, the more so that the nuclear energy sector has become a decisive factor in Ukraine's uncompromising struggle for energy independence. The analytical report uses processed statistical data to analyse the nuclear industry development trends in the world in general and in Ukraine in particular.

The confidence in atomic energy has been significantly undermined in recent years following the Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan. Even though a number of countries have decided against operating existing and building new nuclear power plants, certain positive trends have taken shape in the development of nuclear energy on a global scale. Looking to attain sustainable economic growth, energy security and CO2 emission reductions, some countries in Asia and Central Europe will revive growth in the global nuclear energy industry in the near future.

Nuclear power plants are currently the core component of Ukraine's energy supply, generating

more than 50% of all electricity. The share of nuclear energy in the nation's energy balance has been growing substantially over a relatively short period, and the national nuclear laws have been updated actively to reflect international best practices. This became a vital factor of reliable energy supply to Ukrainian consumers in the face of a coal shortage brought about the de



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facto occupation of a part of the Donbas by Russia. Still, Ukraine is facing numerous problems that should be addressed by attracting substantial investments, improving technologies and raising personnel qualifications.

[Read the complete analytical report](#)



*Kateryna MARKEVYCH,
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RUSSIAN ENERGY BRIDGES WILL NOT MEET CRIMEA'S DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY FULLY

The current demand for electricity in Crimea is close to 1,200 megawatt, of which 800-900 megawatt is what Crimea can be supplied with in a variety of ways, while 300 megawatt is the inherent shortage. Of the 1,200 megawatt, close to 500 megawatt is needed to supply Crimean households. However, the Kremlin is building new military bases and effectively turning Crimea into a fortified area, which requires an additional supply of electricity. Russia automatically puts all of its strategic military facilities on the priority supply list. The local population suffers as a result of being supplied on a leftover principle.

The energy shortage on the peninsula cannot be covered using the Russian 'energy bridges' alone: any electricity they supply will suffice just for a number of facilities in Simferopol, Kerch and some other parts of Crimea.

Rerouting a sufficient quantity of electricity from Russia to Crimea requires performing major reconstructions of the energy system and installing new equipment such as new transformers. This involves a

large amount of costly work that might eventually fail to deliver any appreciable benefits for Crimea in the next two years. That is why running the cables from Stavropol Krai and Kuban is merely a temporary solution that enables Russia to make up for at least some of the energy shortage plaguing the peninsula.

The only possible and most realistic way to solve the Crimean energy supply problem is to build gas-turbine power plants fired with natural gas. The peninsula is currently capable of supplying all of its natural gas needs using deposits on the Ukrainian shelf. Ukraine had mobilised substantial investments in the development of these offshore fields. If Moscow opts for this scenario, it will be able to provide a reliable supply of energy to Crimea and ensure its total energy independence over the course of three years.

Full [text](#)

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Foreign Policy

UKRAINE AND RUSSIA: MATRIX OF ESTRANGEMENT

The Russian aggression has added a new political and ideological dimension to relations between Kyiv and Moscow. Long-term tectonic-scale changes have taken place: a body of treaties and agreements has been annihilated (over 350 documents); international institutions have been destroyed; trade mechanisms have been uprooted; Ukraine has received an unprecedented traumatic experience, and a profound estrangement between the people of Ukraine and Russia has been entrenched, likely to last for generations. Apparently, this very 'mental aspect' of the conflict will define the nature, specifics and atmosphere of relations between Kyiv and Moscow well into the future.

There is an obvious need for a comprehensive revision of the nature, philosophy and entire system of relations with Russia in the key spheres, bearing in mind the fact that the ruling Russian regime is the primary external threat to Ukrainian statehood.

Just as obvious is the need to create a conceptually new model of coexistence with modern-day Russia, which would reflect the contemporary reality, outline the future prospects of the Russo-Ukrainian relations and factor in the positions of Western partners. In this article, Mykhaylo Pashkov, Co-Director of Foreign Policy and International Security Programmes at the Razumkov Centre, is looking at the mid-term strategy for Ukraine's policy on relations with Russia.

[Read the entire article \(in Russian\)](#)



*Mykhailo PASHKOV,
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ABOUT THE 'NEW GENEVA' AND 'MINSK WITHOUT ALTERNATIVES'

In early February, the European Parliament approved a resolution supporting the establishment of the Geneva Plus format of international negotiations aimed at restoring Ukraine's sovereignty in Crimea.

In one way or another, the opening of the 'second line of negotiations' on the Russo-Ukrainian conflict calls into question the effectiveness of the Minsk process.

The past year has demonstrated that the signing of the Minsk Protocol has failed to either resolve or freeze the Donbas conflict. Russia keeps ignoring the 'peacekeeping' clauses of the protocol while insisting on its 'political' aspect. Meanwhile, the entire international practice of conflict resolution shows that only one algorithm is possible: a ceasefire, swap of prisoners, demilitarisation and de-occupation must precede a political dialogue.

What is more, the situation is becoming critical as new challenges appear (expansion of international terrorism, the EU migrant crisis, the war in Syria, the conflict between Moscow and Ankara) and the West is experiencing a growing political and economic fatigue. The conflict in Ukraine's east is being relegated to the background as pressure is growing on Kyiv to quickly 'freeze' the Donbas conflict and do so at the expense of Ukraine.

All of this is happening to the invariable mantra about the lack of alternatives to the Minsk Protocol. And yet the absence of a realistic alternative to this protocol 'here

and now' does not mean that alternatives will not appear in the future. The dynamics of events in the Donbas, in the region and the world inevitably call for adjustments and new approaches both to the letter and spirit of the agreement and to the format of negotiations.

This involves: (a) a possible expansion of the negotiation format to include the countries signatories of the Budapest Memorandum; (b) developing a roadmap with clear time frames, which is exactly what President Poroshenko proposed; (c) agreeing on an unambiguous algorithm for implementing the clauses of the protocol; (d) maximum internationalisation of the conflict resolution process, i.e. expansion of the presence of UN missions, Red Cross, international human rights and humanitarian organisations in the Donbas. Add to this the promotion of Ukraine's initiative to bring in a peacekeeping mission using its status as a non-permanent UN Security Council member.

In general, speaking about the prospects of Russo-Ukrainian relations, we need to do away with any illusions, since we are in for a long period of confrontational coexistence (hostile, restricted, cold, etc.). At the same time, there are no reasons to expect any forthcoming positive changes in the Kremlin's policy on Ukraine.

Full [text](#)

Mykhailo PASHKOV, Co-Director of Foreign Relations and International Security Programmes, Razumkov Centre

RUSSIA ATTEMPTS TO THWART EUROPEAN INTEGRATION OF UKRAINE, MOLDOVA AND GEORGIA

Russia's chief priority in the post-Soviet space is to put the brakes on the European integration of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova.

The Kremlin will attempt to pressure these countries to prevent the implementation of their EU association agreements. After all, an obvious foreign policy priority of Russia in the post-Soviet space is blocking the European integration of this trio.

Moscow will use hybrid expansion methods to this end. Russia will use its full arsenal: financial and

economic levers, the gas issue, trade and economic blockade and influence through the information space.

Russia has made its foreign policy in the region crystal clear. It involves reintegration of the post-Soviet nations. The Kremlin is attempting to accomplish this in the format of two associations: the Eurasian Economic Union and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation.

Full [text](#)

Mykhailo PASHKOV, Co-Director of Foreign Relations and International Security Programmes, Razumkov Centre

WITH WESTERN SUPPORT, GUAM COULD EFFECTIVELY RESIST RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

If the GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development receives sufficient backing from the USA and EU, this organisation could transform into a major association of countries seeking to defend themselves against the Russian aggression.

GUAM may be reanimated in the future. However, this can happen only in the format of contacts with the EU and US. This would provide a collective resistance of sorts against the Russian aggression.

Uniting Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and Azerbaijan, the GUAM organisation was established as an alternative to the Russian policy in the post-Soviet space.

Russia has always disliked the idea of GUAM. Just like back then, Moscow still aims to integrate the post-Soviet space under the aegis of Russia. GUAM does not fit this concept and has therefore earned a lot of bad press from the Kremlin. The fact that GUAM unites countries that have suffered from the Russian aggression makes this organisation all the more unique.

Full [text](#)

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Sociology

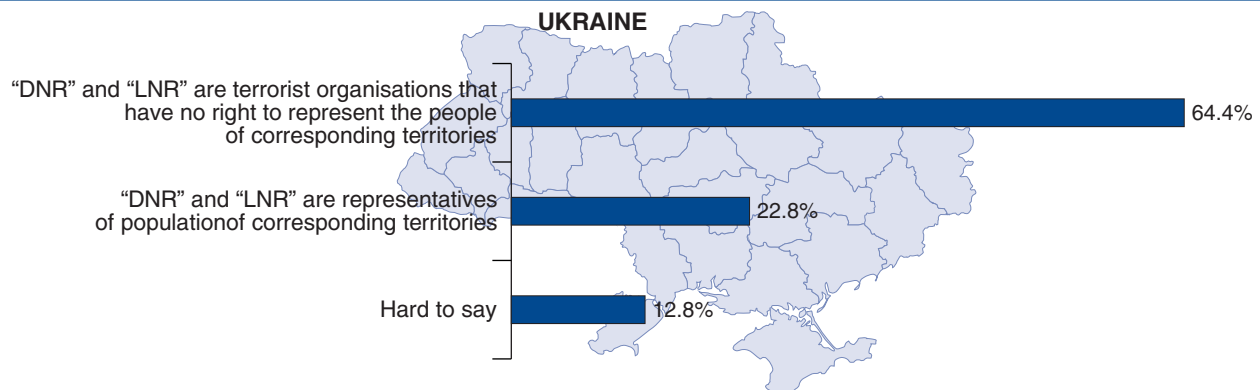
The most recent opinion poll focusing on the situation in Ukraine's east was conducted the Razumkov Centre sociology service on 6-12 November 2015. A total of 2,008 respondents aged 18 or older were polled in all regions of Ukraine, excluding Crimea and the occupied territories of Donbas and Luhansk oblasts, with a sample

that is representative of the adult population in terms of the key social and demographic metrics.

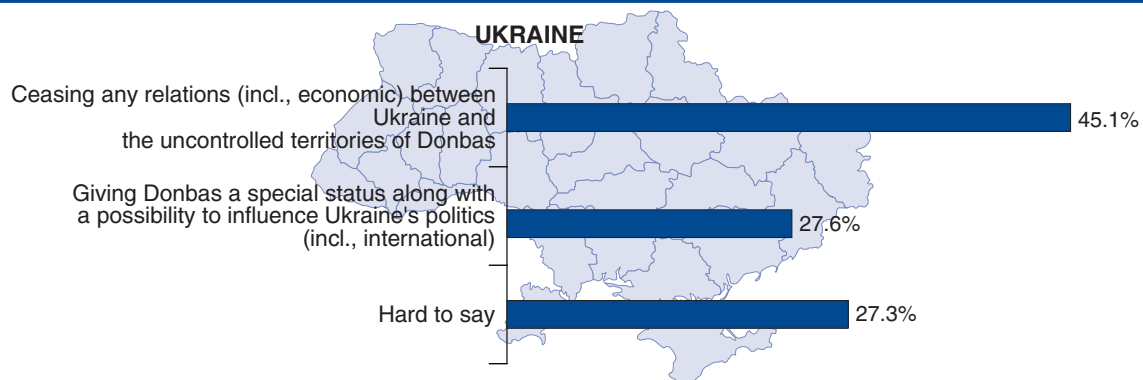
The theoretical sample error does not exceed 2.3% with a confidence level of 95%. For more details on the results of opinion polls conducted by the Razumkov Centre, go to our website at <http://www.razumkov.org.ua>.

With what opinions and assessments regarding the situation in the East of Ukraine do you agree most? % of respondents

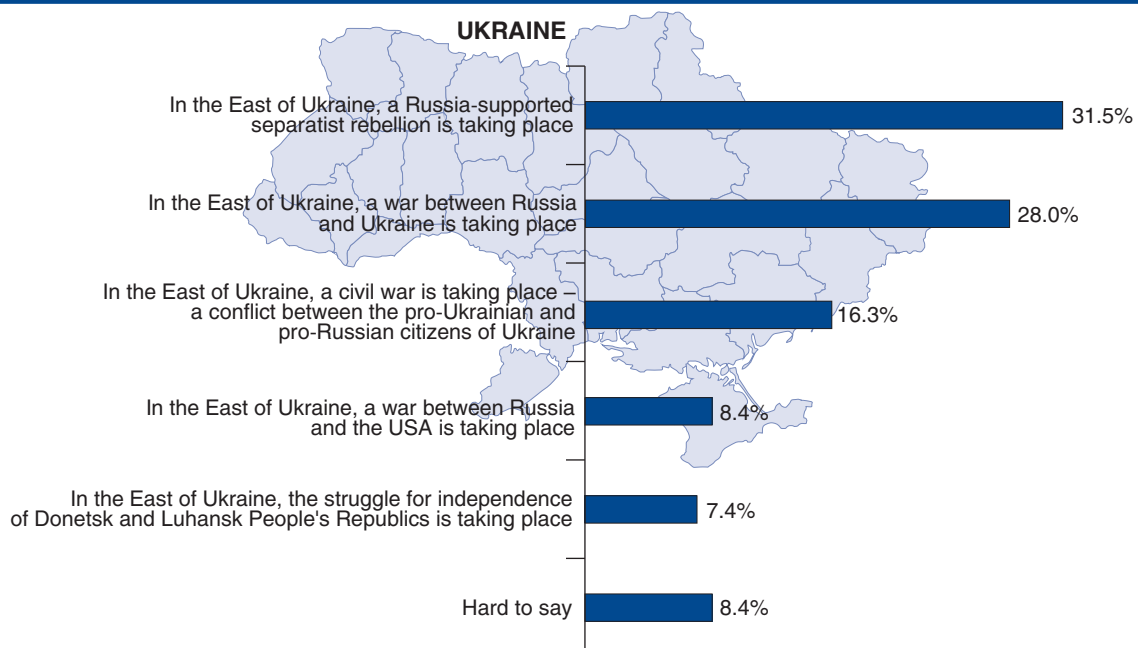
Assessment of "DNR" and "LNR"



Coexistence of Ukraine and the uncontrolled part of Donbas



General assessment of the situation in the East of Ukraine



Razumkov Centre Events

MEETING WITH A DELEGATION OF THE JARL HJALMARSON FOUNDATION

On February 23, the Razumkov Centre hosted a meeting with a delegation of the Jarl Hjalmarson Foundation (Sweden). The delegation included Jarl Hjalmarson Foundation Chairman of the Board Gran Lennmarker, Foundation Deputy Director Jens Ahl, Ambassador Diana Janse, who serves as Senior Foreign Policy Advisor to the president of Moderaterna, the main opposition party in Sweden, Ambassador Jonas Hafstrom, who chairs the Board of Lund University, and Uppsala Governor Peter Egardt.

The Razumkov Centre was represented by General Manager Anatoliy Rachok, Deputy General Manager of Analytics and Director of Political and Legal Programs Yuriy Yakymenko, legal research consultant Viktor Musiyaka, economic research consultant Volodymyr Sidenko, Energy Programmes Director Volodymyr Omelchenko, and Co-Director of Foreign Policy and International Security Programmes Mykhaylo Pashkov.

Razumkov Centre experts shared their vision of the current situation in Ukraine in various spheres, particularly in the economy and the fuel and energy sector. The meeting also addressed Russo-Ukrainian relations at different levels and discussed the possibility of cooperation between the Razumkov Centre and leading think tanks of Sweden.



PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THINK TANKS OF NEW SILK ROAD MEMBER STATES

On 22-24 February 2016, Shenzhen (China) hosted an international conference on collaboration of think tanks of the countries participating in China's New Silk Road initiative (*The First Silk Road Dialogue and 2016 Annual Conference of Silk Road Think Tank Association 'Building the Belt and Road: Connection, Innovation and Sustainable Development'*). Vasyl Yurchyshyn, Director of Economic Programmes at Razumkov Centre, participated in Conference events and discussions ([view presentation materials](#)).

Some 80 representatives of 70 think tanks from over 50 countries got together to discuss a wide range of topics concerned with global socio-political and socioeconomic issues, shared the success stories of how they have been addressed in different countries, and agreed on the aspects in which they should pursue more active cooperation and strengthen the resources of think tanks in different countries.

The conference participants approved the Shenzhen Declaration that proclaims the positive outlines for developing the dialogue and collaboration among think tanks in all countries, the opportunities for joint development projects based on the principles of mutual respect with a view to promoting a productive and effective policy of the participating countries.

The conference participants expressed their interest in Ukraine, its social and economic evolution, and the prospects of active involvement in global and transcontinental projects.

PARTICIPATION IN THE CONFERENCE TITLED *CREATING A SPACE OF SOCIAL TRUST* IN 21ST CENTURY UKRAINE

Razumkov Centre's economic research consultant Volodymyr Sidenko participated in the international workshop titled *Creating a Space of Social Trust in 21st Century Ukraine* hosted by Lviv (Lviv Institute of the University of Banking) on 16-19 February 2016 and organised by: the Association of Ukrainian Banks, the Public Council at the National Bank of Ukraine, the University of Banking, the Institute of the Economy and Forecasting of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Vadym Hetman Kyiv National Economic University, Ivan Franko Lviv National University, Lviv Polytechnic National University, and Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts. At the conference, Mr Sidenko presented a report titled *Modern Global Crises and Degradation of the Climate of Trust in International Relations*.

MEETING OF EXPERTS IN GERMANY

On 15-16 February 2016, Berlin hosted a trilateral expert meeting (Ukraine - Germany - Russia) titled *Resolution of the Russo-Ukrainian Conflict, Post-Conflict Period Scenarios, and Impact of Russia's Involvement in the Armed Conflict in Syria*. The meeting was organised by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

The experts discussed the current progress and prospects of implementation of the Minsk Protocol, the effects of Russia's military involvement in Syria, and the prospects of Russo-Ukrainian relations.

Co-Director of Foreign Policy and International Security Programmes Mykhaylo Pashkov participated in the meeting, presenting a report titled *Current Status and Prospects of Russo-Ukrainian Relations*.

LECTURE FOR STUDENTS OF THE ROYAL DEFENCE COLLEGE OF NORWAY

On February 29, Co-Director of Foreign Policy and International Security Programmes Oleksiy Melnyk gave a lecture to students of the Royal Defence College of Norway on an educational and fact-finding visit to Ukraine. Lecture topic: *Hybrid War: Mantras, Caveats, Key Words*.

[View a brief summary of the lecture](#)

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