

**PUBLIC COUNCIL AT
THE MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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Razumkov
centre



UKRAINE'S PATH TO THE EU: CURRENT STATE, CHALLENGES, PROSPECTS

Expert opinions and positions

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(Expert opinions and positions)

The expert survey conducted in March 2026 by the Razumkov Centre and the Public Council at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, with the support of the Hanns Seidel Stiftung (HSS), examines the key trends, challenges and priorities of Ukraine's European integration.¹ It builds on previous joint projects implemented in 2024–2025 with the HSS, which explored Ukraine's progress towards EU membership.²

The survey asked experts to assess the government's European integration policy, identify obstacles on the path to the EU, and evaluate European countries' support in countering the aggressor state. It also captures views on the EU's role in negotiations to end the war, as well as the complexity of implementing individual negotiating chapters. In addition, the study presents expert forecasts regarding Ukraine's prospects for EU accession and highlights shifts in expert positions over 2025–2026.

Overall, the findings support the following generalisations and conclusions.

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AMID EXTERNAL CHALLENGES AND THREATS

Ukraine's integration into the EU is unfolding against a backdrop of mounting geopolitical tensions, driven primarily by Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine and the escalation of conflict in the Middle East. These regional and global developments directly affect both Ukraine's geopolitical position and its progress towards EU membership.

As part of the survey, experts ranked the key external factors negatively affecting Ukraine's foreign policy environment.

According to the results, the most significant threat (4.3 points on a five-point scale) is the **protracted Russian aggression and uncertainty surrounding peace negotiations**. The large-scale war unleashed by the Putin

regime has taken on the characteristics of a genocidal campaign against Ukraine's civilian population. It has resulted in massive human and material losses, while diplomatic efforts have failed to halt hostilities or provide a clear path to a settlement.

Other major external risks include the **unpredictability of Washington's policy and shifts in US geopolitical priorities** (4.2 points). With Donald Trump returning to power, US positions have changed markedly, both in relation to Ukraine and in foreign policy more broadly. An increasingly America-centric, unilateral and personalised approach has contributed to global instability, heightened military and political tensions, and reinforced the logic of power politics.

Experts also identify **increased risk of conflict and declining trust between the**

¹ The study was prepared by members of the Public Council under the MFA Ukraine: **Mykhailo Pashkov**, co-director of foreign relations and international security programmes of Razumkov Centre; **Ihor Zhdanov**, head of the Open Politics Foundation, former minister of youth and sports of Ukraine (2014–2019); **Serhii Dzherdz**, head of the Public Council, head of All-Ukrainian NATO-Ukraine Civic League.

The expert survey was conducted by the Razumkov Centre from 16 to 25 March 2026 as part of the project «Strengthening sustainable dialogue between the state and society through expert and analytical cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in the context of European integration», implemented with the support of the Hanns Seidel Stiftung Office in Ukraine. A total of 85 experts were surveyed, including university faculty, representatives of state and non-governmental research institutions, public authorities, and independent experts.

² Previous surveys were conducted in October 2024 and April 2025 within projects supported by the Hanns Seidel Stiftung. The surveys were carried out among a standing group of up to 90 foreign policy experts from across Ukraine, including both Kyiv and regions. The analysis primarily compares the results of the 2025 and 2026 surveys.

United States and Europe as a negative factor (4.0 points). This reflects a visible deterioration in transatlantic relations. In particular, amid the Middle East conflict, the US president has publicly criticised European partners for their stance on the American military operation against Iran. The resurgence of anti-NATO rhetoric from Washington is an additional source of concern.

Respondents also identify the **inability of global and regional security structures to prevent conflict escalation, including to stop russian aggression** (3.9 points), as a significant negative factor. The war launched by Russia against Ukraine has undermined the foundations of the international order and exposed the limited capacity of international institutions – particularly global and regional security organisations – to respond effectively to the aggression of the Putin regime. The effectiveness of leading international organisations is further constrained by consensus-based decision-making mechanisms, including the veto power.

Experts also highlight developments within the European dimension, notably the **deterioration of the political and socio-economic situation in the EU** (3.8 points) and **intensification of Russian hybrid influence across the EU** (3.7 points). These negative trends reflect a combination of internal and external factors.³ Challenges facing the EU include economic difficulties, social stratification, complex demographic dynamics, and migration pressures, including the large-scale inflow of refugees, particularly from Ukraine.

Destabilisation in Europe is further exacerbated by Russia's hybrid intervention, which has entered a new phase in September 2025. This broad campaign includes sabotage activities, the orchestration of provocations at EU borders, interference in domestic political processes, large-scale cyberattacks and information operations, and support for far-right and nationalist movements.

Experts also point to the **«obstruction of European integration by individual EU**

member states» (3.6 points). The survey was conducted ahead of the April elections in Hungary, when the issue of Hungary's obstruction of Ukraine's European integration was particularly acute. The regime of Viktor Orbán has long pursued an openly hostile and anti-Ukrainian policy.

A similar level of negative impact is attributed to the **war in the Middle East** (3.6 points). This includes the temporary shift of global attention away from Russia's aggression, the risk of reduced arms supplies to Ukraine, and the potential for further escalation of Russian aggression, as well as expanded opportunities for Russia to finance the war amid volatility in energy markets.

Experts assess the broader geopolitical factor – namely, **the polarisation of the international community and deepening confrontation between democratic states and authoritarian regimes** – more cautiously (3.3 points).

Overall, the current global environment underscores the need for Ukraine, together with its partners, to develop effective responses to existing and emerging global and regional challenges and threats.

EUROPEAN SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE TO UKRAINE IN COUNTERING RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

Against the backdrop of Washington's increasingly transactional, business-oriented diplomacy, EU support has become critical for Kyiv. The European Union provides large-scale military, political, financial and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine.⁴ Since the start of the full-scale war, the EU and its member states have allocated €193 billion in support.

When assessing **assistance from international organisations**, experts assign the highest rating to the EU (4.0 points on a five-point scale).

Assistance from NATO is rated at 3.4 points. This score reflects a combination of factors.

³ Ukraine's Foreign Policy in the Context of Geopolitical Processes. November 2025, Razumkov Centre – <https://razumkov.org.ua/images/2025/11/21/2025-ZP.pdf>

⁴ Ukraine's Foreign Policy in the Context of Geopolitical Processes. November 2025, Razumkov Centre. p. 7-9. – <https://razumkov.org.ua/images/2025/11/21/2025-ZP.pdf>

The Alliance has introduced substantial support packages, including the launch in 2025 of PURL (Priority Ukraine Requirements List), which has helped ensure a more regular flow of military assistance and integrate it into NATO's budgetary commitments.

However, the Alliance continues to avoid Ukraine's deeper integration and maintains a cautious stance on the war. Internal divergences have become more visible, alongside increased tensions and declining trust between Washington and European member states.

Experts assign a similar score (3.4 points) to **assistance from the International Monetary Fund**. IMF financing remains a key factor in ensuring the stability of public finances and maintaining macroeconomic stability.

Experts take a more moderate view of assistance from other international institutions. These include the **Council of Europe** (2.9 points), **the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** (2.3), **the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** (2.1), **the United Nations (UN)** (2.1), and **the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)** (1.8). Institutions operating primarily in the legal domain tend to receive lower ratings than those with economic or security instruments. For example, the ICRC has limited access to occupied territories, and its ability to ensure the protection of prisoners of war is questioned. The IAEA has only a limited influence on the situation around the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. The UN is unable to affect the course of the war, including due to Russia's veto power in the Security Council. The OSCE is widely perceived as having failed to prevent Russian aggression.

Expert views on the **effectiveness of EU support across specific areas** are also noteworthy. Overall, respondents are positive about the EU's role in Ukraine, although the effectiveness of assistance varies by sector.

The highest ratings (4.1 points each)⁵ were given to:

✓ **political solidarity and support on international platforms**. This includes the EU's

diplomatic backing of Ukraine, promotion of pro-Ukrainian resolutions and statements in the UN General Assembly, OSCE, PACE, the G7, and other international fora.

✓ **assistance to Ukrainian refugees**. Since the start of the full-scale aggression, the EU has introduced a temporary protection mechanism covering more than 4 million Ukrainian refugees. EU member states have implemented social programmes, ensured systemic protection, and provided integration measures and financial support.

✓ **EU financial assistance**. European financial support instruments remain essential for Ukraine's economy, including funding under the multi-year Ukraine Facility plan. The EU's contribution to financing Ukraine's budget, support to the energy sector, humanitarian assistance, and targeted tranches from member states are particularly significant.

As in the 2025 survey, experts again rank these three areas as the most important forms of EU support. Their scores, however, are now slightly lower. This decline may reflect growing internal challenges within the EU, which increasingly affect the Ukrainian track.

Assessments of other areas of EU support broadly align with last year's results. Military assistance is rated at 3.7 points (3.5 in 2025), support for reforms in Ukraine at 3.5 (3.8 in 2025), and assistance in restoring destroyed facilities at 3.3 (unchanged from 2025). The EU's sanctions policy towards the aggressor continues to receive comparatively low ratings (3.1 and 3.2 points respectively).

These more moderate assessments suggest that respondents consider the pace and volume of arms supplies insufficient, while the impact of recovery support remains limited. The EU's sanctions policy is also seen as requiring further strengthening.

Experts' responses to the question **«Which European countries are helping Ukraine the most in countering Russian aggression?»** are particularly noteworthy. These results should be treated as largely illustrative and do not fully reflect the scale or specific nature of assistance. The level of support depends on

⁵ Assessed on a five-point scale from 1 to 5, where «1» means that the assistance is totally ineffective, and «5» – very effective.

countries' economic capacity, domestic political context, and national legal frameworks. In addition, some forms of external assistance are not publicly disclosed.

According to the survey, the countries most frequently identified as providing the greatest support are the **United Kingdom** (94.1%), **Germany** (85.9%), and **Lithuania** (75.3%). Experts emphasise the significance of their military, political, financial, and humanitarian assistance.

Respondents also note Estonia (70.6%), Denmark (63.5%), France (61.2%), Latvia (60.0%), and Norway (60.0%). Substantial support is also attributed to Poland (58.8%), Sweden (56.5%), the Netherlands (51.8%), and Finland (35.3%). Experts further note the importance of assistance from Czechia, Romania, Italy, Spain, and Ireland.

A comparison of the 2025 and 2026 surveys reveals several shifts in expert assessments. **First**, the top three contributors – the United Kingdom, Germany, and Lithuania – remain unchanged. The United Kingdom continues to rank highest, reflecting strong expert confidence in its strategic partnership with Ukraine. **Second**, Northern European partners show sustained prominence in the rankings, with Baltic and Nordic countries maintaining leading positions. **Third**, a worrying trend is the decline in assessments of Eastern European partners, with experts taking a more sceptical view of Czechia as a security partner and giving lower ratings to Poland's support. **Fourth**, negative assessments of Hungary, Slovakia, and Serbia are consistent with expectations.

The overall picture of EU support is complemented by expert views on the **EU's role in negotiations to end the war in Ukraine**. Responses indicate near-unanimous support for EU participation in the peace process. In total, 95.3% of experts favour such involvement (71.8% «yes», 23.5% «rather yes»), while only 2.4% express scepticism. This level of support reflects the perception of the EU as a key international actor in bringing the war to an end. The findings also point to broad backing for the EU's active involvement across all negotiation formats.

A comparison of the 2025 and 2026 surveys shows that support for EU participation

remains high, although it has become less categorical. In 2026, the share of «yes» responses decreased by 10.8 percentage points, while «rather yes» increased by a similar margin.

Responses to the question «**Does Ukraine's European integration contribute to countering Russian aggression?**» are also noteworthy. An overwhelming majority of experts (95.3%) believe that European integration contributes either significantly (40%) or to some extent (55.3%) to countering the aggressor. This view can be explained by several factors. **First**, deeper partnership and cooperation with the EU expands opportunities for political, military, financial, and humanitarian support, including Ukraine's participation in EU defence programmes and initiatives.

Second, the war has reinforced pro-European consolidation within Ukrainian society, strengthening alignment between the government and the public. European integration has become a central public idea and an important driver of resistance.

Third, European integration accelerates the implementation of key reforms, including improvements in public administration, judicial reform, the strengthening of the rule of law, and anti-corruption efforts. These reforms help mitigate the negative effects of wartime conditions.

EUROPEAN UNION: INTERNAL PROBLEMS AND EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

Amid major shifts in the geopolitical landscape in Europe and globally, the EU faces a range of internal and external challenges. Internal pressures stem from resource fatigue and economic difficulties. More recently, additional shocks have resulted from the war in the Middle East. Political dynamics within the EU are also shaped by a broader rightward shift across European societies. The EU's legal and institutional framework is increasingly seen as misaligned with current realities.

In the survey, experts identified several factors negatively affecting the EU's internal situation and its global position.

The most significant factor is the **lack of political will and determination to counter**

russian aggression and external hybrid threats (4.1 points). These assessments likely reflect Europe's prolonged reliance on a relatively stable security environment, as well as a degree of reluctance to face the risk of direct conflict with an increasingly assertive russia. This is illustrated by the cautious response of the EU and its member states to the expansion of russian hybrid activities across Europe. Overall, the EU continues to rely primarily on defensive approaches in countering external influence.

These assessments are consistent with another key factor: the **slow pace of achieving Europe's strategic autonomy and defence self-sufficiency** (4.0 points). Washington's increasingly transactional approach has prompted renewed debate within Europe on reducing dependence on the United States in critical defence areas. Over the past year, the EU has launched a number of initiatives aimed at strengthening its defence capabilities.

However, efforts to position the EU as a geopolitical heavyweight remain constrained by a range of internal and external factors. These include an unfavourable geopolitical and economic environment, as well as the slow development of the foundations of European sovereignty – military, political, economic, technological, and scientific.

Another factor identified by experts is the **consensus principle («veto power») in EU decision-making on key issues** (4.0 points). The consensus-based system is seen as a persistent constraint that slows the development of a common foreign policy and increases the EU's vulnerability in confronting authoritarian regimes. The shift from unanimity to qualified majority voting remains on the EU agenda, but without tangible progress.

Respondents also point to the **lack of determination in addressing internal «sabotage» and disintegration tendencies within the EU** (3.9 points). This factor poses a serious challenge to the Union's cohesion. The EU's foundational rules and procedures make it difficult to counter centrifugal and destabilising actions by individual member states. In practice, Brussels has been compelled to

accommodate the regime of Viktor Orbán, which has pursued openly disruptive and provocative policies aligned with the aggressor and at odds with the EU's common position. The EU's tools to address such internal obstruction remain limited.

Experts also highlight **excessive bu-reaucratisation and regulation of EU institutional processes, including enlargement procedures** (3.7 points). This significantly slows the accession process. Current discussions focus on streamlining enlargement procedures and finding a balance between pressing security considerations and highly formalised integration requirements.

Overall, the EU's current challenges are rooted less in economic factors and more in political, procedural, and legal constraints. The combination of veto power and insufficient political resolve leaves the Union vulnerable to external hybrid pressures.

UKRAINE'S EUROPEAN INTEGRATION: ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES, PROSPECTS

Amid continued russian aggression and unpredictable US policy, European integration remains the central strategic priority of Ukraine's foreign policy. In this context, the quality of Kyiv's policy on the European track, the effectiveness of progress towards the EU, and the ability to address existing obstacles are of particular importance.

Achievements on the path to European integration. According to the survey, most experts take a positive view of the government's European integration policy (21.2% «positive», 50.6% «rather positive»). These results broadly align with the 2025 survey, indicating sustained expert support for the country's European course and a favourable assessment of progress. When assessing the government's European integration policy, several key areas should be highlighted.

First. *Alignment and adaptation of national legislation to EU standards.* Under the Action Plan for implementing the European Commission's recommendations within the EU

Enlargement Package, Ukraine has adopted a number of pro-European legislative acts. The 2025 Enlargement Report (4 November 2025) provides an overall positive assessment of Ukraine's progress across most negotiating chapters.⁶

On 1 April 2026, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the National Programme for the Adaptation of Ukrainian Legislation to European Union Law, which provides for the implementation of around 1,850 measures aimed at approximating more than 1,600 EU legal acts.⁷

Subsequently, the Verkhovna Rada adopted a range of pro-European laws on: integrating Ukraine's and the EU's energy markets; digitalising enforcement procedures; distributing competences across levels of public administration; taxing digital platforms; and improving state market surveillance.⁸

Second. Launch of technical accession negotiations. In 2025, Ukraine completed the screening of its legislation for compliance with EU law in record time. On 11 December 2025, at an informal meeting of the EU General Affairs Council in Lviv, a decision was taken to launch technical negotiations on Ukraine's EU accession. The EU provided Ukraine with negotiating positions for three clusters (1, 2 and 6). On 17 March, Ukraine received benchmarks for closing clusters 3, 4 and 5. This marked the beginning of the final stage of Ukraine's European integration – accession negotiations, albeit at a technical and informal level.

Third. Expansion of security cooperation. Within the EU-Ukraine security dialogue, European partners support Ukraine's defence sector, primarily through arms supplies to

the Armed Forces of Ukraine. In practice, the EU finances the largest share of military assistance to Ukraine in countering Russian aggression.

Fourth. Intensive political and diplomatic dialogue at various levels. Regular consultations, mutual visits and joint activities with the EU have become established practice. In March 2026 alone, a series of consultations took place with European leaders and EU institutions. Contacts at various levels, including interagency dialogue, have continued.

Challenges and obstacles on the European integration path. As part of the survey, respondents identified factors that hinder Ukraine's progress towards the EU. A comparison with the 2025 survey shows that experts consistently highlight the same key challenges. The most significant among them are **internal problems in Ukraine (insufficient pace of reforms, unsatisfactory fight against corruption, etc.)**, cited by 84.7% of respondents (80.2% in 2025).

Improving governance, reforming the judiciary, and fighting corruption remain key priorities on Ukraine's agenda. They gained additional urgency in wartime conditions, requiring a more concentrated effort by both the state and society. Experts also point to insufficient implementation of the ten reform priorities outlined in the joint statement by European Commissioner for Enlargement Marta Kos and Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration Taras Kachka of 11 December 2025.⁹ A further concern is the low level of public trust in state institutions, including the public administration, prosecution authorities, courts, and anti-corruption bodies, as reflected in Razumkov Centre surveys.¹⁰

⁶ European Commission presents Ukraine Progress Report under the 2025 Enlargement Package – best assessment in three years, website of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 4 November 2025 – <https://eu-ua.kmu.gov.ua/news/yevrokomisiya-predstavyla-zvit-shhodo-progresu-ukrayiny-v-mezhah-paketa-rozshyrennya-2025-najkrashha-otsinka-za-try-roky/>

⁷ National Programme for the Adaptation of Ukrainian Legislation to European Union Law (EU acquis) – <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/npas/pro-zatverdzhennia-natsionalnoi-prohramy-adaptatsii-zakonodavstva-ukrainy-do-prava-t10426>

⁸ European Commissioner Kos welcomed the adoption of a series of important laws by the Verkhovna Rada. European Pravda, 8 April 2026 – <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/news/2026/04/8/7235023/>

⁹ EU trust at 9%: reform delays threaten Ukraine's path to EU membership. European Pravda, 6 April 2026 – <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/eng/articles/2026/04/6/7234803/>

¹⁰ Assessment of the situation in the country, trust in social institutes, assessment of problems faced by the Ukrainian society (November, 2025), Razumkov Centre – <https://razumkov.org.ua/en/research-areas/surveys/assessment-of-the-situation-in-the-country-trust-in-social-institutes-assessment-of-problems-faced-by-the-ukrainian-society-november-2025>

Among external factors, 56.5% of respondents identify **russia's large-scale aggression against Ukraine** as a major obstacle (67.4% in 2025). Ukraine is forced to concentrate substantial political, diplomatic, financial, economic, and human resources on countering the invasion. A significant share of the national budget is allocated to defence needs, limiting the scale of European integration efforts.

Third, 55.3% of experts identify the **obstruction of Ukraine's European integration by individual EU member states**¹¹ as a negative factor. This primarily refers to Hungary. In 2025, this factor was cited by 34.9% of respondents. Notably, the 2026 survey was conducted ahead of the elections in Hungary, at the height of an anti-Ukrainian campaign. This position was also supported by Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico, who threatened to block Ukraine's European integration. The Czech government led by Andrej Babiš distanced itself from military and financial support for Ukraine. In light of developments following the survey, a change of government in Hungary does not resolve the EU's long-standing problem of abuse of the veto.

Among other adverse factors, 28.2% of respondents point to the **complications in the internal socio-economic situation in the EU** (29.1% in 2025). As noted above, these trends directly affect both the nature of Ukraine's European integration and the scale of EU financial and economic assistance.

Respondents assign a somewhat lower negative impact to factors such as the **weakness of the government's European integration policy** (20%) and the **lack of experienced professionals** in this field (16.5%). Yet the lack of qualified personnel remains a significant problem, both in public administration more broadly and within institutions directly involved in the European integration process. **Negative geopolitical and geo-economic trends** rank last (16.5%), although in 2025 experts attached greater importance to this factor (33.7%).

Cluster «Fundamentals»: challenges and complexity. With the start of accession negotiations at a technical level, the fulfilment of European Commission conditions for closing all clusters has become a practical task. The question is how difficult it will be for Ukraine to meet the requirements of the first cluster, «Fundamentals». Expert assessments in 2025 were more cautious. At that stage, the complexity of the cluster was assessed largely in theoretical terms, whereas by March 2026 experts were judging it based on initial practical experience. Overall, the difficulty of each chapter depends on the situation in the respective sector and the scope of the reforms required.

It is no coincidence that experts identify **«Judiciary and Fundamental Rights» as the most challenging chapter** (4.4 points; 4.0 in 2025).¹² This is a comprehensive area covering judicial reform and the incorporation of EU conventions, protocols, charters, and declarations related to democracy and human rights into Ukrainian legislation.

Respondents also consider **«Justice, freedom and security»** to be demanding (3.9 points; 3.6 in 2025), as it involves a wide range of reforms, including ensuring freedom of movement, combating organised crime, shaping visa policy, providing asylum, and managing external borders.

The chapter on **«Financial control»** is rated at 3.8 points (3.4 in 2025). **«Public administration reform»** and **«Economic criteria»** both receive 3.7 points (3.5 and 3.4 in 2025, respectively). These assessments reflect the importance of effective governance, without which other reforms are unlikely to succeed.

The complexity of **«Functioning of democratic institutions»** is rated at 3.6 points (3.3 in 2025). Broadly, this area concerns the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, with the development of civil society serving as a key indicator of democratic maturity. More moderate assessments are given to **«Public**

¹¹ In 2025 survey, this response was formulated as «Inhibition of Ukraine's European integration by the Hungarian leadership».

¹² Assessed on a five-point scale from 1 to 5, where «1» means that the chapter will cause no difficulties at all, and «5» indicates that it will be very difficult.

procurement» (3.5 points) and **«Statistics»** (2.7).

The implementation of EU standards under the «Fundamentals» cluster remains particularly important in wartime conditions. The prolonged state of martial law necessitates temporary derogations from certain international commitments in the field of democracy. Strengthening democratic principles in public life is therefore essential to prevent the entrenchment of restrictions and the normalisation of wartime practices.

Timeframe for EU accession. Amid highly unpredictable global developments, any forecasts remain inherently conditional. The Ukrainian leadership has set 2027 as the target date for EU accession – a goal the President has actively promoted in recent months across international forums, public statements, and interviews.¹³

This position has its own rationale. In a full-scale war, a prolonged and slow negotiation process along the lines of the Balkan scenario is not acceptable for Ukraine. On the other hand, a fixed accession timeline would be an important component of Ukraine's security guarantees and a strong incentive for both the government and society.

However, experts take a rather sceptical view of the prospect of Ukraine joining the EU in 2027. Only 16.5% of respondents consider these plans «fully realistic» or «rather realistic», while 80% assess them as «rather unrealistic» or «unrealistic». This scepticism reflects both internal challenges discussed above and the cautious stance of some EU member states towards an accelerated accession process. At present, there is no consensus within the EU on a specific accession date for Ukraine.

What, then, do experts see as the **likely timeframe for Ukraine's accession to the EU?** According to the survey, 8.2% of respondents expect accession within 1–3 years.

A further 36.5% estimate a timeframe of 3–5 years, while 32.9% point to a more distant horizon of 5–10 years. Almost one in ten (9.4%) consider accession possible within 10–20 years. Overall, these expectations are broadly consistent with the results of the 2025 survey, where a majority of respondents (80.3%) also identified likely timeframes of 3–5 or 5–10 years.

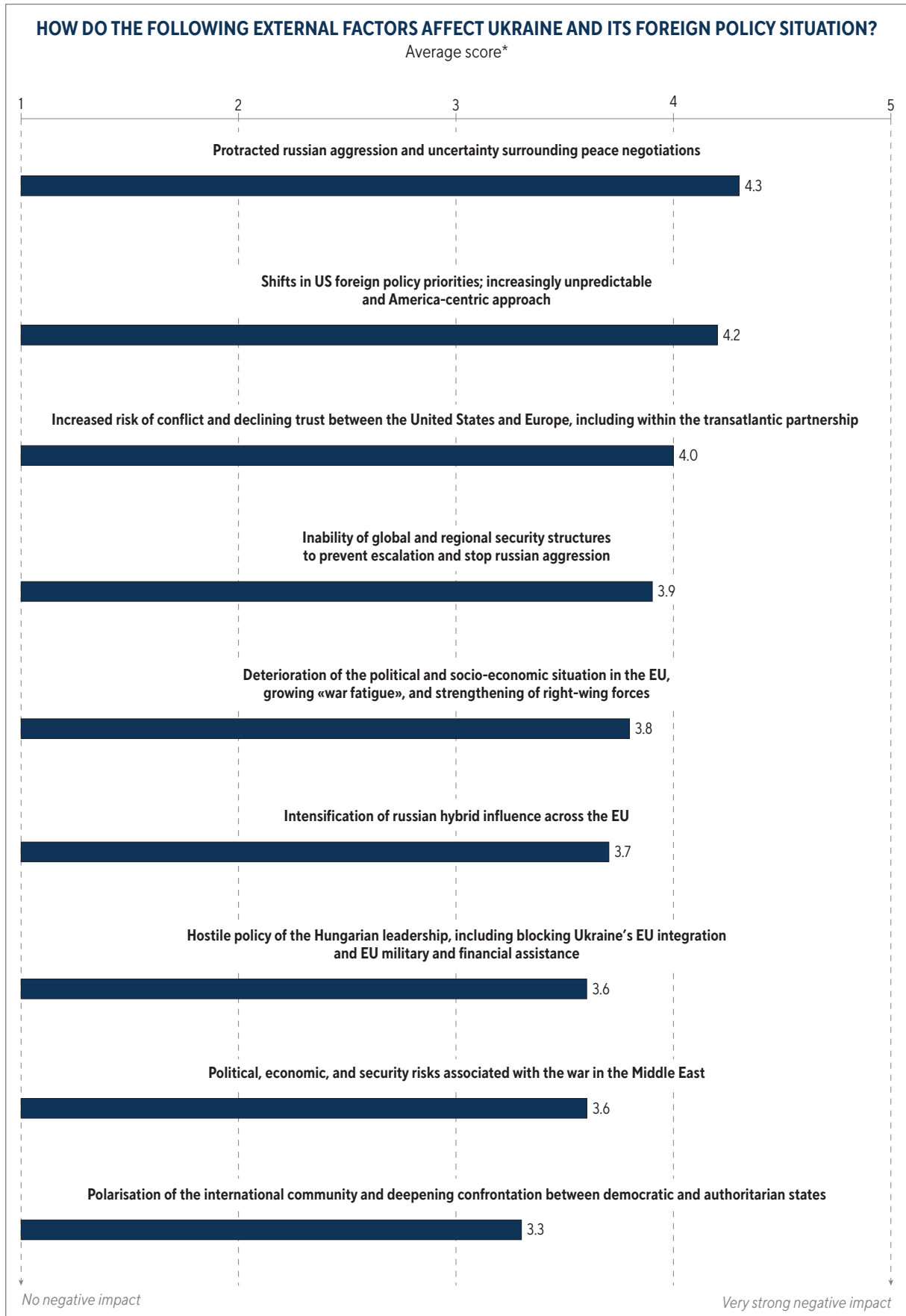
SUMMARY

Ukraine's progress towards the EU is unfolding amid a full-scale war and is shaped by global and regional factors affecting relations between Kyiv and Brussels, as well as the overall course of European integration. Ukraine's expert community emphasises the importance of EU support and solidarity, consistently backs the European integration course, and assesses government policy in this area positively. At the same time, progress is constrained by both internal and external challenges.

Amid a prolonged war and unfavourable geopolitical trends, including shifts in US policy, EU political solidarity and military and financial assistance are becoming increasingly important for Ukraine. This underscores the need to accelerate EU integration and deliver substantive, results-oriented domestic reforms across all six negotiation clusters, with particular focus on the «Fundamentals» cluster. Strengthening internal unity and resilience, alongside coordinated efforts with European partners to address internal weaknesses and external threats, remains essential for further progress.

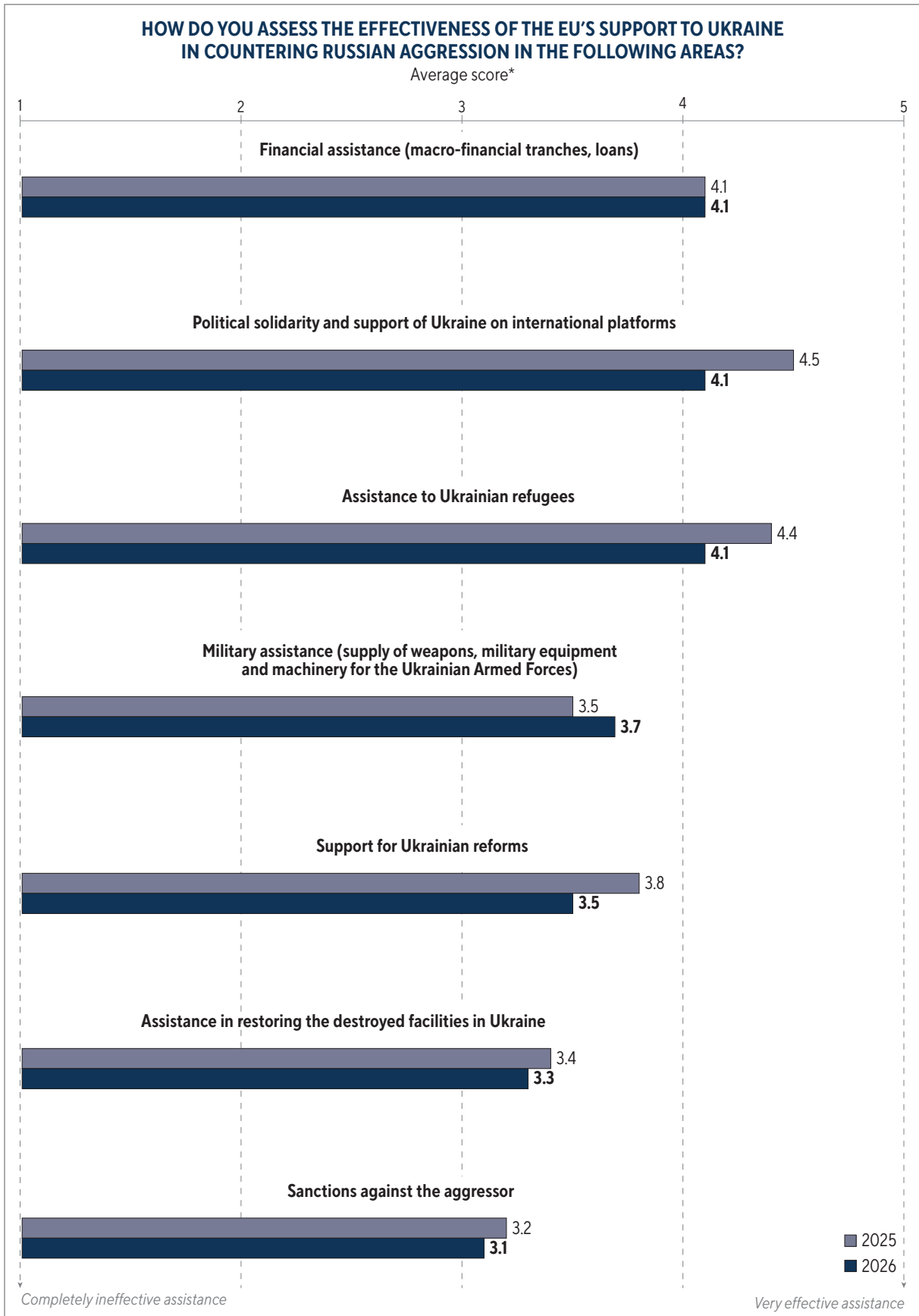
Another priority is strengthening Ukraine's defence industrial base and accelerating integration into EU defence industries, including broader participation in EU defence projects and programmes. More broadly, this points to the need to reduce Europe's military and economic dependence on the United States and to advance the EU as a more self-reliant and influential global actor.

¹³ Address by the President to Participants of the European Council Meeting. – 19 March 2026 <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/rosiya-maye-chitko-usvidomiti-j-realno-vidchuti-sho-ukrayina-103445>

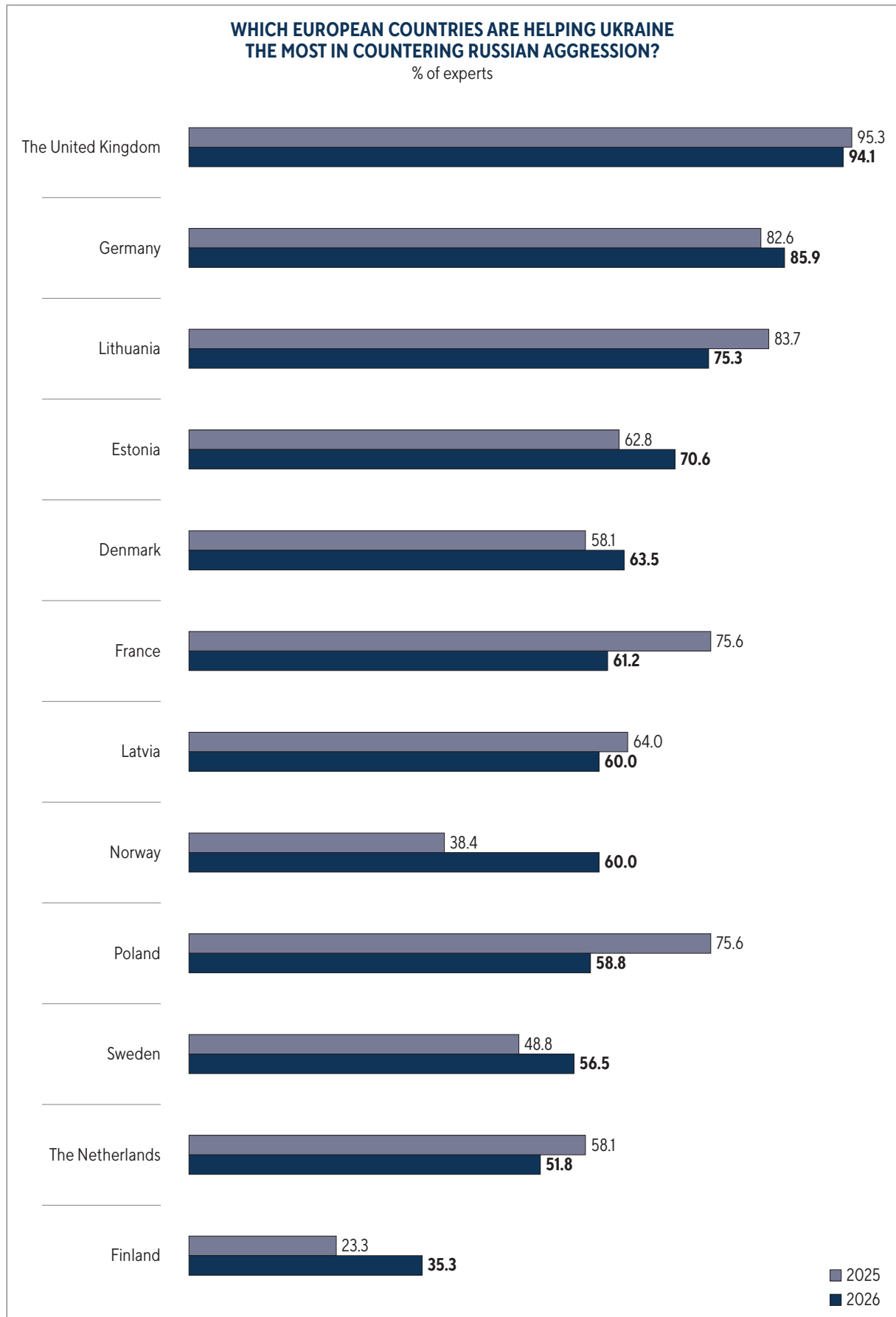


* Assessed on a five-point scale from 1 to 5, where «1» indicates no negative impact and «5» indicates a very strong negative impact.

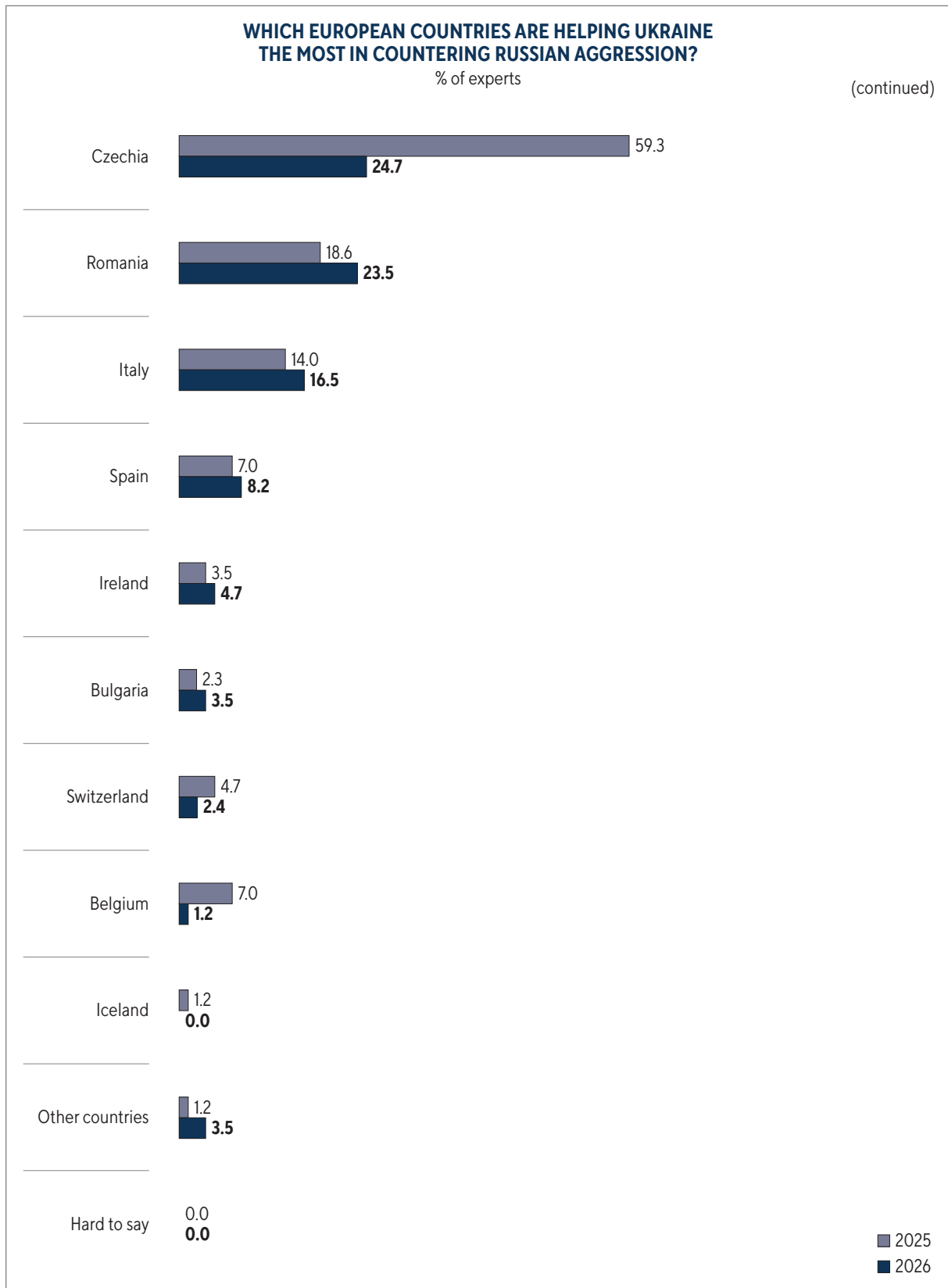
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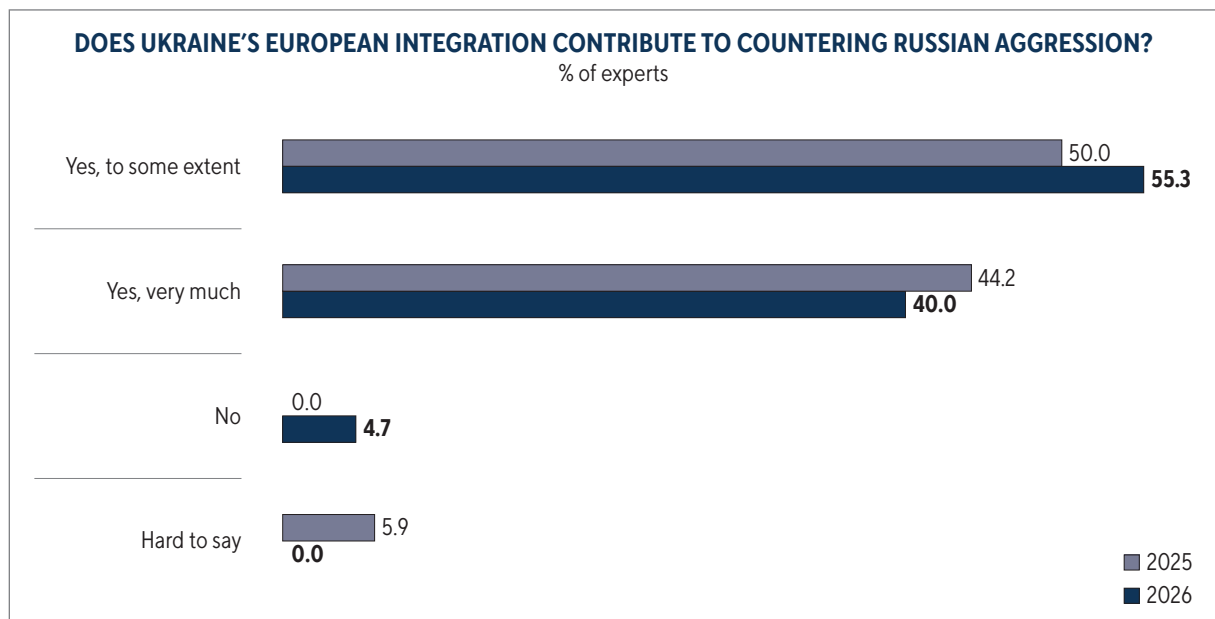
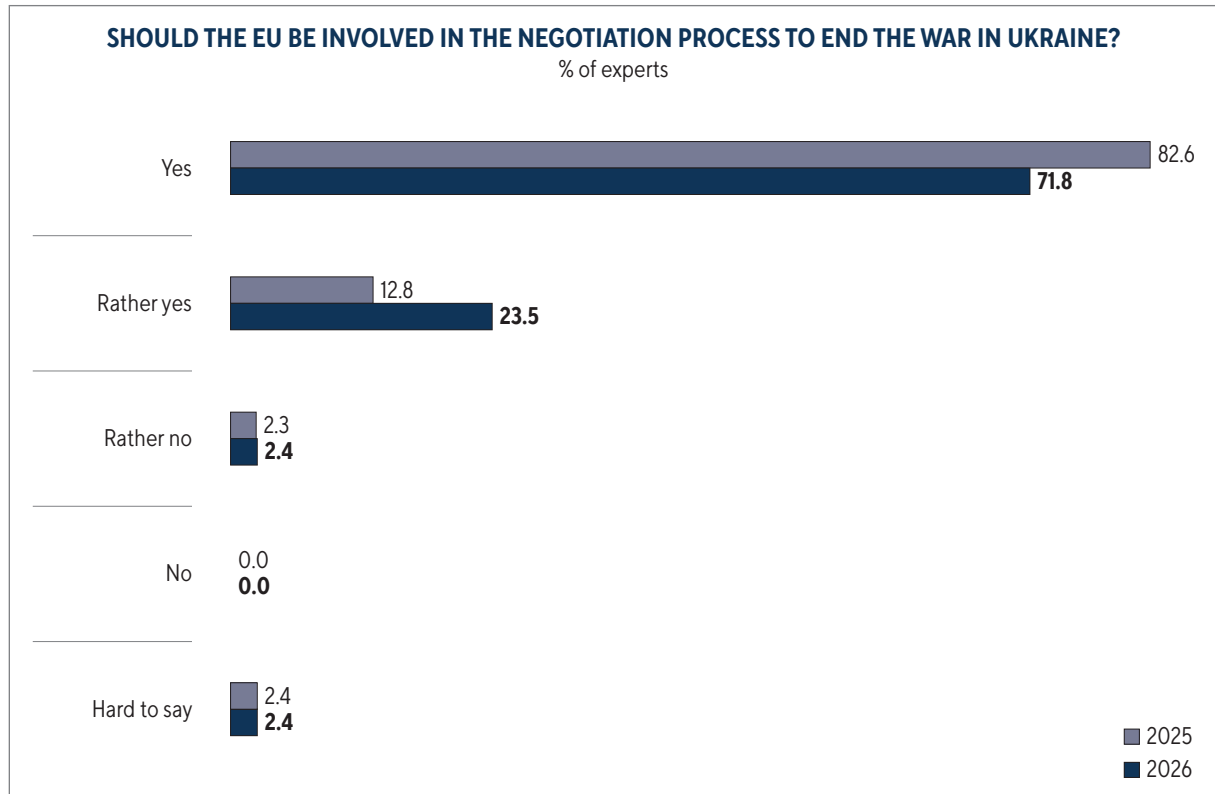
* Assessed on a five-point scale from 1 to 5, where «1» indicates completely ineffective assistance and «5» indicates very effective assistance.

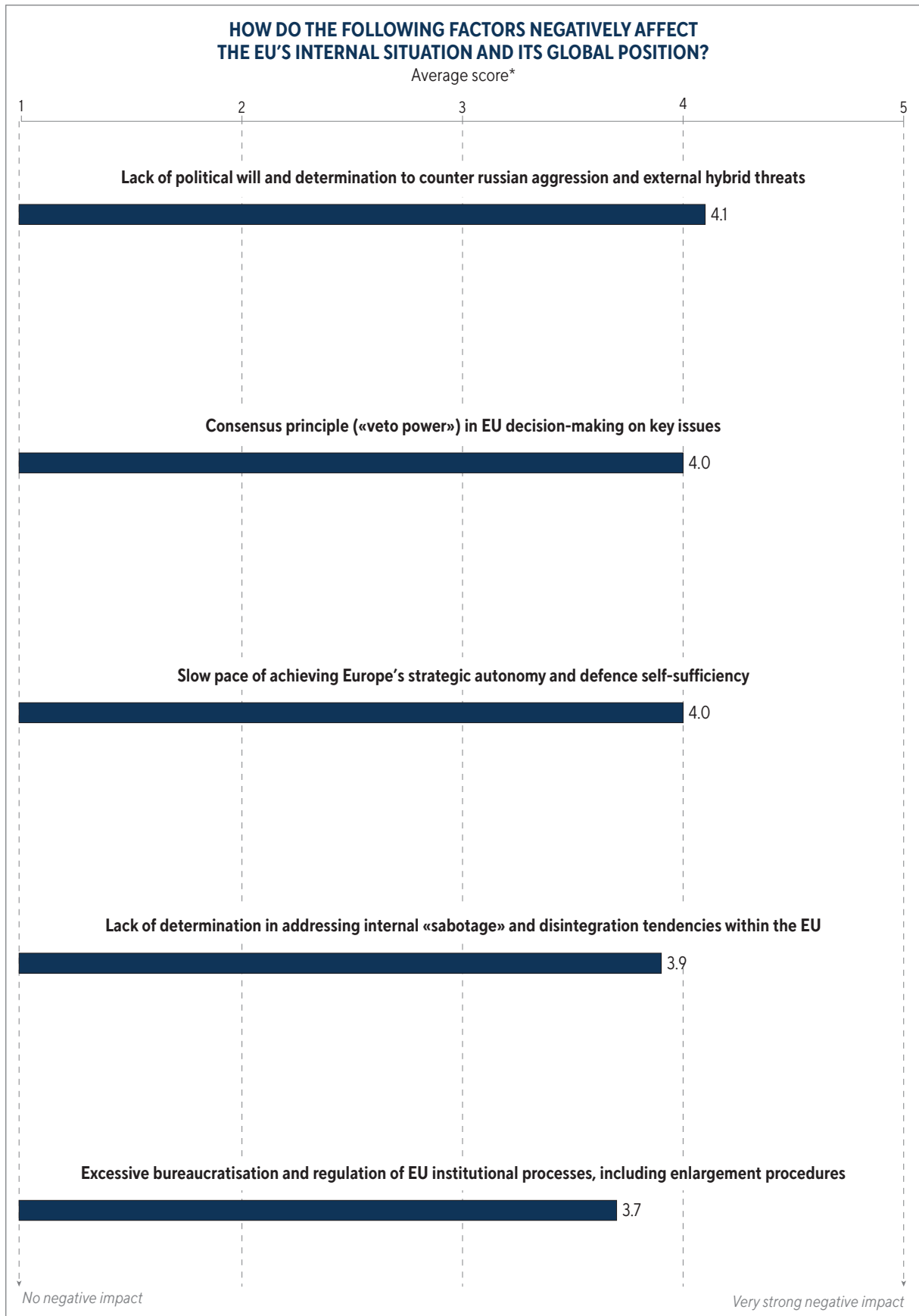


**Respondents could select up to ten countries from the list.
Countries that were not named by any expert are not listed.



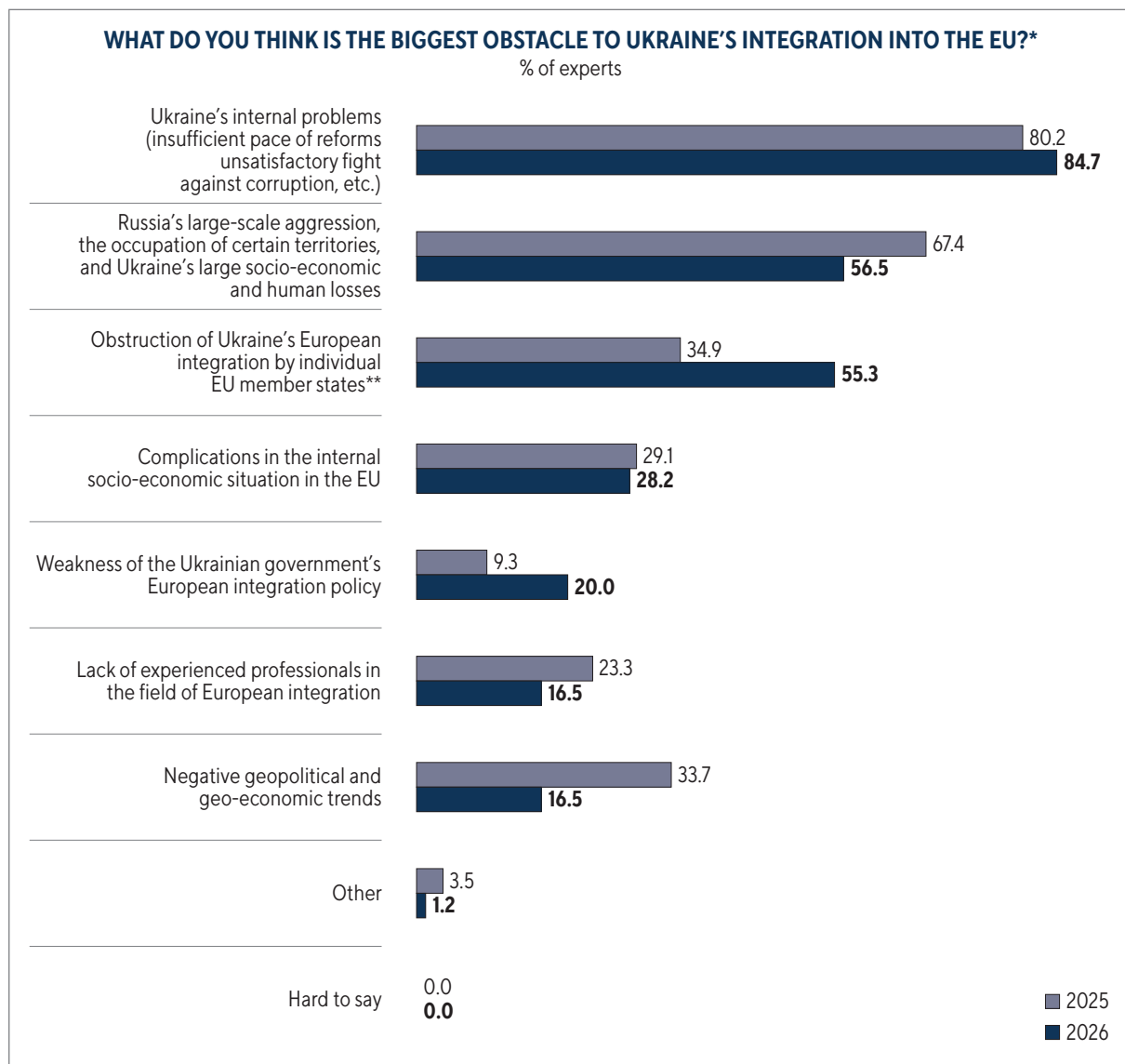
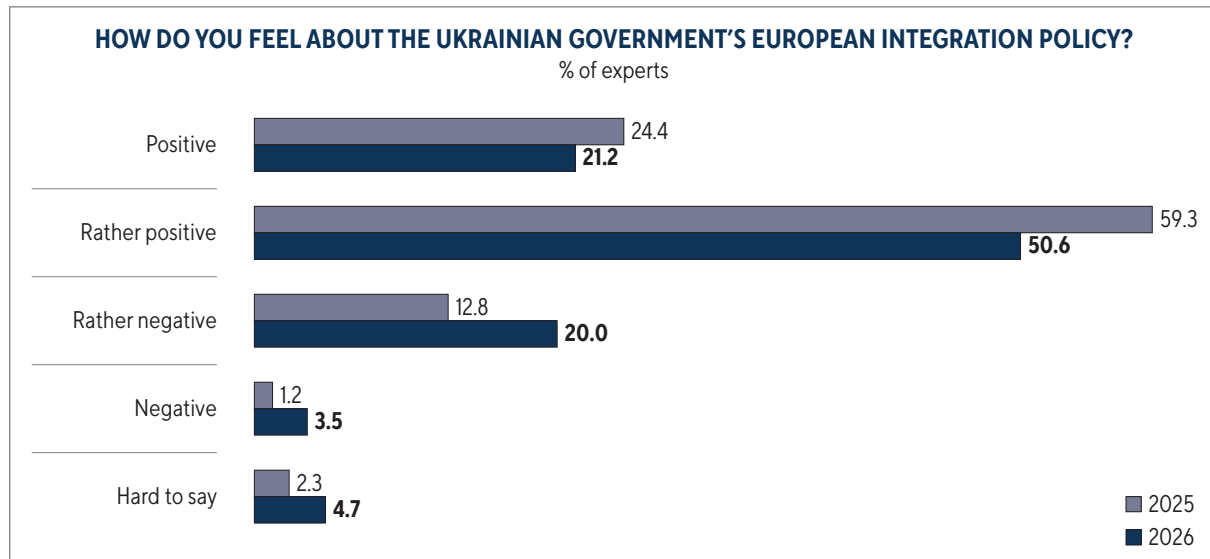
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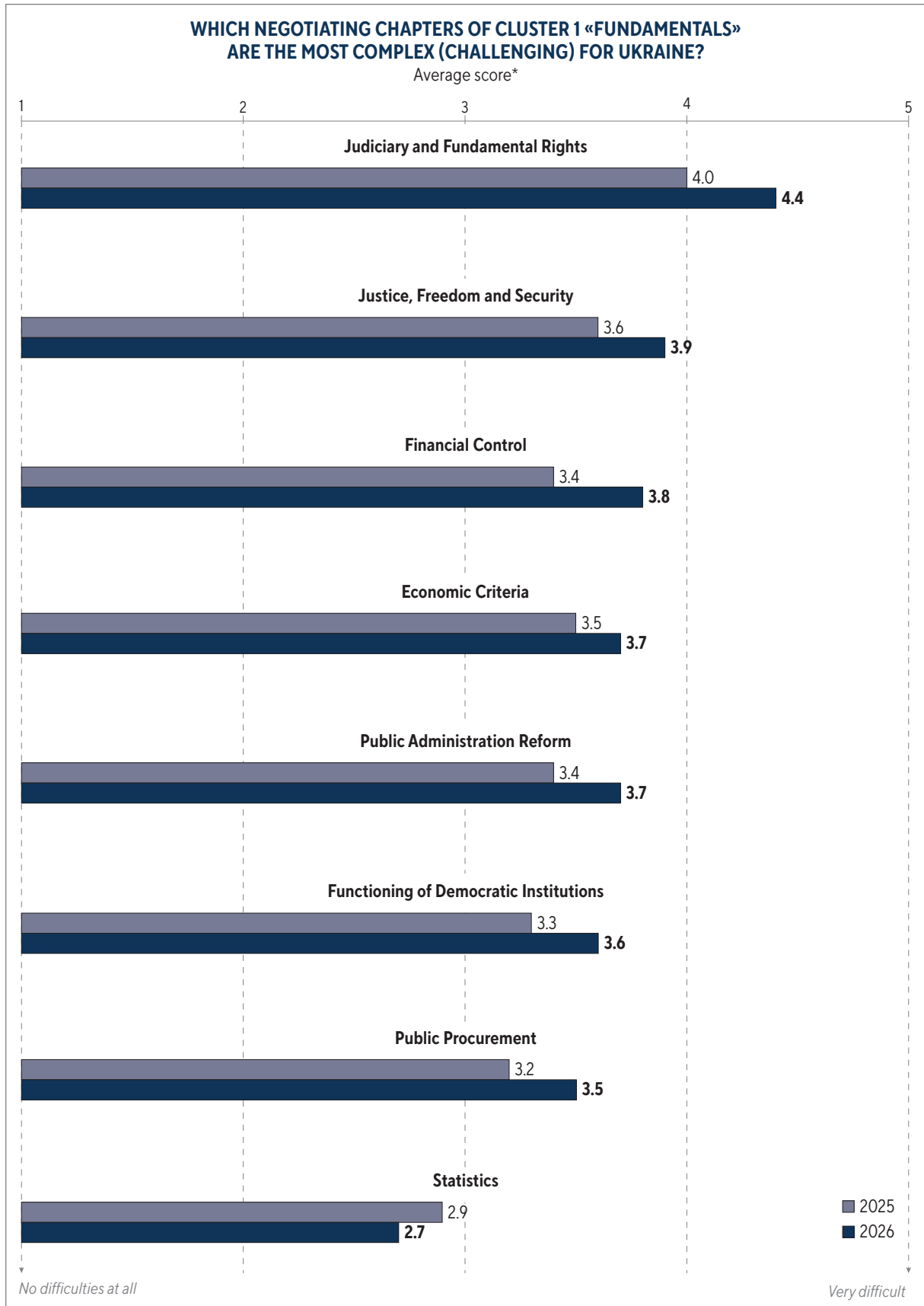
* Assessed on a five-point scale from 1 to 5, where «1» indicates no negative impact and «5» indicates a very strong negative impact.

2026



* Respondents could select up to three options.

** In 2025 survey, this option was formulated as «Inhibition of Ukraine's European integration by the Hungarian leadership».



* Assessed on a five-point scale from 1 to 5, where «1» means that the chapter will cause no difficulties at all, and «5» indicates that it will be very difficult.

