

European Integration of Ukraine
As Viewed by Top Ukrainian Politicians,
Businessmen and Society Leaders

Stefan Batory Foundation, Warsaw
International Renaissance Foundation, Kyiv
Center for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine, Kyiv





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According to standard interviews

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Foreword

The perception of Europe, European Union, and “European choice” in Ukraine is not just a demonstration of the attitude to some political or social-cultural sphere, but also an evidence of comprehension level of modernization tasks, which present-day Ukraine faces. Comprehension quality and the depth of European idea’s rooting affect society’s ability to carry out system transformations based upon fundamental European values.

European theme is not new in the Ukrainian discourse: political, social, and even everyday. Sometimes there even creates an impression that notion space is overloaded with terms and definitions descending from the word “Europe”. Often these terms become the object of verbal manipulations and suffer becoming a myth. Sometimes “European choice” is tried to fill up targeted vacuum that had been created after the USSR’s collapse, owing to which European-hood turns from a set of day-to-day social values into a “bright purpose” that must substitute communism. There is a great deal of stereotypes around the ideas of European integration in Ukraine, the main of which is consumerism, that is bringing of European idea to the level of basket of goods and attractive shop window.

Ukrainian elite has an essential problem with a lack during a long while of direct communicational channels with the European world: in the USSR almost all the contacts were accomplished through Moscow. As a result, Ukrainians not only got false idea about Europe, but also lost ability to independently articulate their interests and positions outwards. Ukraine, as a subject, hasn’t determined yet to a

full extent its place in Europe, and “Ukrainian myth” hasn’t become yet an organic and integral part of “European myth”. The lack of knowledge in Europe about Ukraine has its reverse side, which is deficit or distorted information about Europe in Ukraine. As a consequence, mistaken political decisions are often being made, and false stereotypes are being formed.

Nevertheless, quantity and quality of knowledge about Europe in Ukraine increase. It takes place first of all due to establishing contacts between Ukraine and Europe at the governmental, social and private life levels. The representatives of political and business elites, public organizations, intellectual and public leaders more and more comprehend Europe due to direct access to the system of international communications. Discussions around European problems in Ukraine become gradually more systematic and professional.

This issue presents current ideas about Ukraine’s place in European processes, as the most authoritative, active and successful Ukrainians see it. The object of this issue is relying on opinions of representatives of political, social, and business elites of Ukraine show, what contextual format has European idea in Ukraine.

We render our sincere thanks to those thirty Ukrainian politicians, businessmen, scientists, public figures, and intellectuals who agreed to an interview for this issue.

We hope that on its pages you will find interesting information about the variety of notions, with which Ukraine fills its “European choice”.

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1. What does 'Ukraine's European choice' mean to you?

Mykola Barabash

To my way of thinking, 'Ukraine's European choice' is our consistent integration into the European Union with all the necessary transformational processes concerning changes in the very principles of public life organization. These are, first of all, democratization of political life, development of a truly market economy (not a criminal-corporative one), realization of a socially oriented policy. Ukraine has to accept European rules. To do this, the country needs to pass through the period of adaptation, transformation of the legislative sphere, and to modify the pattern of relations between the state and its citizens cardinally. Public relations in EU countries are based on a ramified system of social institutions independent from the state, which are able to realize both individual and collective needs of all members of the society. As for me, there is a very important element in Europe: civil society forming social order for settlement of urgent social problems. I would define the purpose of transformations necessary to follow our way to Europe – the way of realization of 'Ukraine's European choice' – as a practically working system of mutual responsibility, with the authorities' responsibility before the society first.

Rayisa Bogatyriova

For me, 'the European choice' is, first of all, Ukraine's orientation toward socio-political and socio-economic values of the European Community. Secondly, it is a gradual approach of Ukraine to a group of European states, leaders in quality of citizens' life,

level of economy's development; and, at least, it is Ukraine's participation, active and adequate to time requirements, in cooperation and integral processes occurring in the European region in various spheres, above all, in economy, legal relationship and international security.

Volodymyr Barabash

As the things have come round historically, the countries belonging to our region remain behind European states in such fields as science and engineering, but inasmuch as the interchange in this sphere did not stop, the retardation is not so striking now. However, the most important and rather considerable lag can be observed in the authorities' organization, in the ratio between the power and the society, as well as in comprehension of the authorities' role by both the society and the powers themselves. For me, the 'European choice' is joining a body, a community that holds an opinion rather different from our own, possesses a progressive view of the organization of power. And, as for me, this is an opportunity to bridge our gap successfully. To understand what I mean we can appeal to figures: if, in science, we are even with Europe, in some fields we are 10-15 years (or more) behind it. In the sphere of public life organization, our gap amounts to a hundred years or so. Nevertheless, precisely the gap, the filling of which is now being the most urgent need in Ukraine at the present stage, in the process of its overtaking can serve, at the same time, as the stimulus to Ukraine's development towards approach to structures of the European Union.

Andriy Derkach

Globalization of the world's economy, challenges of the present, be it man-caused threats or international terrorism, impartially need consolidation of efforts and carrying out of a coordinated international policy. For Ukraine as a European state, European integration is of utmost importance. EU effectively implements continental coordination, and Ukraine's participation in all its institutions meets national interests. This is a real 'Ukraine's European choice', without empty declarations and political demagoguery. While conducting the Euro-integration policy, Ukraine remains sovereign. The EU is not an analogue of a 'melting pot': each member delegates only

authorities obligatory for conducting a coordinated policy, adapting inner legislation to worked-out European standards. For Ukraine as a neutral state and non-EU member, this way is the most optimal. At the same time, I'd like to mention the problem of strategic partnership between Ukraine and European countries. It is impossible and unreal to have almost all states of the continent as strategic partners. If you are in one city and need to get to another city, there is no sense to take 40 men to be your guides. It is enough to take two or three people who really can help you. If Russia more and more actively and purposefully builds geopolitical ties with Germany, we should join this geo-strategic alliance that more and more clearly becomes a core of the continent. Our relations with France, Germany and, for instance, with Portugal can not be equal. It is unreal, and nobody needs it. Ukraine should choose providers on the way to Euro-integration, denote them clearly and tell about them aloud. And, recently there has been essential positive progress in this direction. International policy is a rather strict thing, where rhetoric can not substitute real actions, especially of economic character.

Stepan Gavrysh

It is my natural choice, the choice of a genuine European. 'European choice' is self-determination of many Ukrainians. Today, the main task of the government is to make it a joint, consensual position for the whole Ukrainian nation. For me, European choice means that standards of living, standards of human rights, which are democracy standards, are to become the highest values for all citizens of Ukraine. I am deeply convinced that, to provide normal development of the state, Ukraine extremely needs compromises worked out through centuries, which became general standards of development and progress. Ukraine needs them to change the sense of relations between the state and individual, when the individual will become the highest value not only in the Constitution, but also in everyday life.

Vitaliy Kononov

For many in Ukraine, 'the European choice' means to get out of the 'orbit of Russia', peppered with the passionate desire to join NATO. It reminds me of that 'glorious future' of communism that was set as the target in the USSR. As we join Europe, we

should ask ourselves, which Europe we would like to be. Our very recent experience with the Iraq war and the issue of sending out chemical and bacteriological weapons mitigation troops should be enough to derive lessons. 'The European choice' for Ukraine is not 'to be with Russia or to be with America' as is the case with most East European states. We, all states in the East of Europe, still suffer from the historic inertia of being afraid of Russia. For us as the largest state in Eastern Europe, 'the European choice' means more than to be away from Russia. 'The European choice' for Ukraine is to assert the principles of democracy, equal opportunity, rule of law and sustainable development. For Ukrainians, 'the European choice' is to choose their own independent foreign policy, based on the European framework of transparency and public participation. EU states may have differences, and that is allowed. Ukraine may have its national interest even being in the European framework. It is not a bloc or satellite diplomacy that we should enter into, to be used as tools by other powers. As a representative of a serious political group (the Green Party of Ukraine is the second largest green party in Europe after the Green Party of Germany) and member of the European Federation of the Greens, my vision of European integration for Ukraine is to have constructive dialogue between the East and the West of Europe on all global issues. Through this process, we consolidate not only our ideology but also send the message of sustainable development across the continent. The East-West dialogue of the Greens is perhaps the only example of forces of realpolitik coming together at the grassroots level and discussing issues of the continent.

Leonid Kravchuk

As regards Social Democrats and me personally, both in forming of plans for the future and in estimation of the present political and economic transformations, we orient themselves to time-tested European principles and ideas, and this orientation is decisive.

The thesis about 'the European choice' has the meaning which is both wider and more fundamental than those terms that are very often used by our well-known politicians. Forms of state organization, as well as understanding of democracy, moral and ethic standards have been already formed in the world. And, they were being developed in the course of centuries, not during a year or a decade.

Fundamentals of life and state organization in Europe were being formed in parallel with evolution of its nations and cultures.

Ukraine has always been a part of Europe, both in geographical and cultural sense. Therefore, we are able to understand and appreciate the society built by the Europeans, better than that of any other model.

But, all this does not uncover the sense of 'the European choice' completely. The main thing in this is the direction of development, strategic reference points for state construction and for the forming of a new society. Ways may differ; means and instruments may be different, too, but there must be a goal and a waymark. First, authoritative institutions need them, that is those who form the public opinion, set tasks and organize their realization and introduction. If every link of state mechanism moves in its own direction most convenient to it, then no common steps toward the determined goal will be taken. Better to say, nobody could forecast the results of such a chaotic movement.

Thus, 'the European choice' implies the choice of a strategic goal, a model of upbuilding of a state and a society, direction of movement toward a civilized social and moral community of free citizens.

Ivan Kuras

The idea of 'Ukraine's European choice' has several dimensions:

- The political one. During the first post-Soviet decade, Ukraine's foreign policy was following the direction of 'multi-vectorness'. It was a period when we determined our priorities and searched for our own place in the system of international relations. Today we have found our position, and the course toward European integration has been declared on the state level.
- The legal one. One of Europe's most significant achievements is the system of social relations based on the priority of Law. By stating its wish to integrate into Europe, Ukraine pledged to bring its legislative base to conformity with the European one. That is, with such a system that has proved its effectiveness, the system appreciated by the Ukrainian society as one corresponding to its interests and aspirations.
- The economic one. A stable and powerful economy is new Europe's key feature.

Therefore, increasing of power of our own economy, manufacturing of competitive products, creation of favourable conditions for the inflow of European investments is one of the pre-conditions of Ukraine's European integration. Today, we are following the right way, Ukraine's economic indices are being improved, and our task is to make this process irreversible as we wish to become a full-fledged partner of the united Europe, not a donor of rich countries.

- The social one. Democracy, human rights and freedom of speech – these values common for European society are to be shared by Ukraine in full. Precisely, progress in approaching these characteristics must become an indicator of seriousness of Ukraine's intentions to fill its 'European choice' with real content.

Ella Libanova

I think that 'Ukraine's European choice' means first of all the introduction of European standards in state policy, in social life and social psychology. To achieve this aim, it is necessary to implement a number of reforms: economic reforms, reform of governance (administrative reform and reform of corporate management). It is necessary to change social psychology gradually, to form a state policy taking into consideration social psychology, because we do not draw attention to it today, and this is an important moment that can guarantee success of those or other measures which our authority tries to introduce. We always talk about public opinion, but we do not consider it as a serious, impellent factor. On national television, the President of the US Bill Clinton explains to the people all the details of insignificant, in our opinion, problems. There is no such practice in Ukraine; we consider such things to be minor. Recently, Kyiv Institute of Sociology published the results of a survey. The task of the survey was to define how the rural population saw its role in the society. The question was: 'who assigns the situation in the village?', to which almost everyone answered 'The head of the village soviet'. The question 'Who should assign the situation in the village?' was answered again 'The head of the village soviet'. So, the population is powerless, it can do nothing and agrees to it! In any EU country such situation is absolutely impossible. Of course, it is not easy to change the psychology of people who got used to slavery and patriarchal-paternalistic relations in the society. But, nobody expects Ukraine in Europe tomorrow. The matter is not whether

we will be admitted to NATO or not, whether we will be appointed as an associated member of EU or not. It is necessary to have more than status in order to become a really European country, worthy to be EU member. Turkey has this status, but how European is this country? On the other hand, Switzerland is not an EU member, but it is a European state according to all the characteristics. So, 'Ukraine's European choice' means whether the changes in Ukraine are by the European example irrespective of political declaration of some of Ukraine's political forces.

Oleksandr Moroz

First of all, 'the European choice' is attainment in Ukraine of European standards of living typical for developed, civilized countries with democratic principals of public administration, social guarantees and protection of human rights and freedoms, and maturity of structures of civil society.

'The European choice' is not a direction of foreign-policy orientation, but essence of state's internal policy.

Yulia Mostova

As for me, 'Ukraine's European choice' is, first, the country and its society's joining values existing in Europe, those things that have become stable achievements of the Western European societies. Juridical standards, as well as moral and political norms – all these can serve as models and aims for Ukraine's self-development, for improvement of its corresponding components: power, society, business, legislation. I see the main priority of our European advancement precisely in this. Of course, there are also economic grounds, certain economic 'baits', rewards etc. I think that Ukraine is being hindered in its development and has come up to a kind of freezing point (or, probably, even the decomposition one) owing to the fact that the country had rejected the Soviet carcass but failed to obtain any new value, legal frame, like the one that the united Europe possesses. This is the main problem hampering our evolution. The power which declares Ukraine's movement toward Europe, realizes these aims to the least extent. This is no more than mere rhetoric as, at a certain stage (at the turn of 1990s), the Ukrainian authorities learnt to formulate those things they were expected to pronounce and, for quite a long period of time, they were deluding

their counterparty in negotiations with the Western world exactly in this way: they gave correct formulations with great ease, but failed to fill these formulations with real actions. There exists a large gap between the authorities' declarations and their real intentions in Ukraine. To my opinion, it is for the first time that some steps taken by MFA and Ukraine's Ministry of Economy could be characterized by their complete realization of the need of Ukraine's integration into the civilized world; they are trying to uphold our own ways of integration which are lying in the plane of Ukraine's joining the WTO. As regards other ministries, of course, there are a lot of reports. The European rhetoric can be often heard in speeches. Nevertheless, there are no real deliberate systematic steps that could contribute to Ukraine's approach to the EU, in Ukraine. The reason for this lies in the absence of head of the state's clear perception of need for this movement. From his very coming to power, president Leonid Kuchma realized that flirting — now with Russia then with the West — would provide him with the opportunity to rule over his own country using those methods he himself considered necessary, irrespective of either partners. From the very beginning, he also stood for those priorities which he determined for his own hand. Therefore, in my opinion, the most urgent problem is the need for our present authorities' clear perception of the necessity of development in the European direction, and its systematic realization.

I think the dependence of Ukraine's foreign policy course from personal preferences of the head of our state will remain extremely high if the present system of power is kept unchanged, taking into consideration the concentration of authorities in the president's hands. In fact, they have been almost monarchical all the time. However, there are many different people among our opposition; they have different opinions as regards the country's foreign policy goals. For example, Viktor Yushchenko would actually stand for serious integration and cooperation with the West. If Yulia Tymoshenko became president, she would follow a rather isolationist policy for some period of time, as she thinks that we must become owners of property on our own land, first and then, having settled our own problems and proceeding with our own discretion, we will be able to take a decision to let or not to let other investors and commodities etc. enter our market. Thus, I think that real integration will depend on a future leader of our state's conscious aspiration for European democratic standards.

We should admit that Ukraine's citizens, as far as I know, have not the slightest idea of what has to be done and what the EU can give us from the perspective of ordinary life. In this regard, there is a little of propaganda and information work able to clarify all the advantages our inhabitants will have in case of integration.

When I was in Egypt, I drank Coca-Cola with the Oriental flavour: any product must be adapted to the needs and requirements of the market. As for me, starting of the Euronews news channel with simultaneous interpreting is not a solution of the question. There are many directions that can form a basis for covering integration: cultural, legal, economic, social, and psychological ones. This could be a presentation of either documentaries or standing programmes covering different aspects of life in the EU countries and the problems they overcame, and others.

Both NATO and the EU made similar attempts, but the thing I cannot understand is – when there are a lot of talented journalists and these subjects are not censored per se – still, these projects were realized by those journalists who lacked talent and were unable to propose any other decision instead of the old Soviet one, in their presentation of the material. I think, today we have enough professionals who can tell about Europe as about our home; about Europe as an instrument helping to solve our problems, and about Ukraine as a part of this very Europe.

Volodymyr Palij

For my colleagues and me, 'Ukraine's European choice' means change of the mode of thought, transformation of standards and moral values, first of all. During almost a century, our parents had to exist in the environment that implied neither freedom of speech nor liberty of conscience for a human being. Unfortunately, after 1991 the process of replacement of tendencies has slowed down in Ukraine. No statements declaring reforming of the economy, unfortunately, are being supported by real steps in the society. As in regions, so in centre, the authorities rather often live apart from the people, and they take decisions which are advantageous for not the whole society but for certain part of the financial-political elite. We are trying to get over this mode of thought that implies priority of an official's interests over interests of the state, but the process will last for a long time. Of course, it could have been accelerated if people in Ukraine had lived a degree better. I mean Ukrainian families' incomings, their capacity

to pay for their children's education, and the opportunity to acquire all the information necessary for their own education. If one has an income that allows him to use these opportunities, he feels free, he starts to decide between the variants suggested by the authorities and his own wishes. Precisely then real social values spring up, in contrast to those values that can with certainty be called 'an ideology of poverty'. I think that 'Ukraine's European choice' should be realized in aspiration to bring real changes to better in ordinary people's lives; attainment of not only freedom of thought, but freedom of actions; the Constitution should stop its being a mere declaration, and double standards in policy, economy and social life should disappear completely.

Mykola Plavyuk

As to my opinion, it is an adoption of those juridical, cultural, ethical-moral and economic norms of organization of social life that showed their vitality and ability from the standpoint of development of civilized societies in the 20th century, having passed the trials in Western Europe. And, to my mind, they are going to be the same in the 21st century. 'The European choice' is Ukraine's gradual movement to these norms and standards in different spheres of living.

Myroslav Popovych

As to me, realization of 'Ukraine's European choice' depends on fruitful professional work in my field; I can say the same about the perspective of the scientific milieu, where I've been working for all my life, the Institute of Philosophy of the National Academy of Science. Rejection of 'the European choice' means the state of ideological isolation, which we'd been overcoming with great efforts during communist dictatorship.

For Ukraine as a state and society, 'the European choice' is an alternative to spiritual provincialism, insufficient production and foreign policy isolation. Possibilities for modernization within the framework of the great Russian super-state are exhausted because of many reasons. And, in any circumstances, Ukraine's failure to join the cultural-political and financial-economic Europe, but a competitive Eurasian centre with Russia in its heart will inevitably turn Ukraine into a half-European province of an eastern neighbour.

Volodymyr Pyekhota

'Ukraine's European choice' is our nation's way to a civilized democratic society through achievement of stable economic development and creation of an effective market economy, improvement of our people's living standard, construction of a civil society and democratic state institutions.

For me, it is not a formal declaration. This makes up the sense of my present activities as a Parliamentary deputy, a politician and a leader of the European Choice deputy group.

'The European choice' does not imply that we have suddenly begun to see clearly and realized that we must become Europeans, at the beginning of the 21st century. Yet ages ago, in Kyiv Rus times, as well as during hetmanship and times of the Cossacks, Ukrainians played a noticeable role in political, cultural and economic processes taking place on the territory of Europe.

Certain historical events now brought Ukraine nearer, then alienated it from the Western European world. But, the fact that Ukraine did not keep out of the European geopolitical processes is indisputable. Today, when Ukraine has already begun to count out the second decade of its independence, the course toward European integration acquired strategic significance for the country. Parliamentary deputies who united in our group proceeded precisely from that consideration. We see our main task in unification of all progressive parliamentary forces for legislative guaranteeing of all the reformatory processes and transformations necessary for our country's accession to the EU.

Oleh Samchyshyn

This means evidently a better life in the first place. All politics and any elections start with the question, 'How do we live? What do we think about? What do we worry about?' If we think of our daily bread only, then all other values will seem unimportant. If our people are poor, hungry, dissatisfied at their salary that is not enough to provide a necessary minimum for a person, then all other things, such as questions and problems of rights and liberties, justice, morality, establishing of European values in our daily life, will not be appreciated properly, in such a way the authorities see this. We do take certain steps to approach Europe. We apprehend and realize many values produced by the European civilization. We try to widen our cooperation with

governmental and – what is more important – with non-governmental organizations. Studying abroad and task programmes of exchange of scientists and students can give us a lot. ‘Ukraine’s European choice’ is a market, market economy, democracy, principles of equal rights and equal starting opportunities for every person in Ukraine.

Larysa Skoryk

For those Ukrainians who have genetic memory about Ukraine’s eternal European character in historical connection, which keeps at least the Greek (that are much more ancient than Byzantine) and Varangian retrospections, connection of the throne of Kyiv Rus with western crowns, the need of integration of present-day Ukraine with the European community is both organic and necessary. First of all, as real rescue from the consequences of involvement of Ukraine for several centuries into the world of foreign culture, mentality, political and economic life of Russian empire (after the calamity of Pereyaslav Rada in 1654). Just at the end of the 17th century, Peter I tried with forced actions ‘to cut through the window into Europe’ but, nevertheless, the Russian empire remained on ‘on a border of the worlds’ in the specific space of surreal ‘Eurasian’ categories.

Hanna Skrypnyk

‘The European choice’ is a multi-faceted notion. This is a steady holding of rights and freedoms of individual citizens, ratification of norms of Christian morals, control of society over power, formation of national elite, development of economy on market basis that provides for game rules clear and equal for everybody. ‘The European choice’ in the Ukrainian dimension means the overcoming of corruption and domination of oligarchs, aspirations to liquidate artificial barriers between Ukraine and the European Community; these are active and gradual actions in direction of European integration; this is rejection of so-called multi-polarity and searches of strategic partners among totalitarian Asian regimes.

Volodymyr Stretovych

For me, it means a return to the bosom of the family of European nations, where it was a thousand years ago. Recently, I spoke at the international conference in Vilnius

in which Hungarians, Swedes, Frenchmen and Germans took part. In my speech I recalled that daughters of prince Yaroslav Mudryi were wives of these countries' kings, and then there wasn't a question whether Ukraine — then Kyiv Rus', of course — was a European state or not. The problem is how to restore historical justice and return our state to the European context, but at the same time take into account present-day requirements and development of civilization according to requirements and principles of social life's organization that operate in 'old Europe'. We, the Eastern European and Baltic states form the so-called 'new Europe', which joins the 'old' one after 50 years of enslavement. For me, therefore, this is the restoration of historical justice, taking into consideration those realities that exist in Europe today and their spreading upon all the processes which take place in Ukraine (political, economic etc.). But, at the same time, we shouldn't forget that we have our own mentality, characteristic features and traditions. As Shevchenko said: 'Study the other's things and do not avoid your own ones'. In 150 years after these words, we return to our cradle.

Besides, for me, this question is also a question of day-to-day activity directed to bringing Ukrainian political standards to conformity which are a prerequisite for return to Europe.

Natalia Sumska

A question about understanding 'Ukraine's European choice' is rather difficult and polysemantic. Talking about 'the European choice', political scientists mean one thing, politicians may mean other things, and citizens probably think about a better, easier and wealthier life for themselves and their families. I am personally anxious about the questions connected with positive changes in culture. The European civilization and European culture have an ancient and rich history, an enormous store that attracts very much. And, for me, 'Ukraine's European choice' first of all means study and mastering of useful experience that is already gained by the European civilization. Of course, I do not mean simple aping of others' experience. It is very important to arrange bilateral contacts between Ukrainian and European partners, especially in the field of culture. Unfortunately, there are few such contacts in the cultural sphere. Probably, on personal level they exist and develop, but, for instance, the Ivan Franko National Theatre feels lack of these contacts, concert tours and common creative

projects during the last years. But, in this cooperation there is exchange of valuable information the bearers of which are the people of art, culture, and whose language is intelligible to artists without interpretation.

In order that we feel ourselves as a part of European civilization, it is necessary to learn an elementary thing – culture. Of course, Ukrainian culture is very ancient, unique and rich, but there is another aspect of culture. By this I mean everyday, political and legal – as you like. But in general, I am conscious that this scenario is counted on long-term outlook, and we are to make many steps in order to integrally perceive and introduce European values as an integral component in our day-to-day life, because knowing and having a clear idea of how Europeans behave is not enough. One should make this behaviour an inner need of a person and this is not an action of one week or even year.

Petro Symonenko

This term is often used in Ukrainian politics and mass media; but, one has to establish that its meaning, as a rule, is brought to dubious populist slogans of supreme officials of Ukraine, with the indispensable use of the 'Europe' brand by them. The President of Ukraine, for instance, and his adherents contradictorily, ambitiously and tactically ingratiated themselves on several occasions with leaders of Russia, European countries, the US as well as with Ukrainian political circles, every time declaring new strategic foreign-political priorities of Ukraine.

Unfortunately, this 'political populism' with its contradictory character has been used in Ukrainian legislation at the suggestion of the President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma. It also caused that professional foreign-political relations between Ukraine and the EU today are being formed on inadequate appraisals of each other by Ukraine and European partners: Ukraine suffers from the tendency of making pronouncements for the sake of effect and populism of its domestic and foreign political decisions concerning Europe and Euro-Atlantic region; and Europe, in its turn, does not understand what policy the Ukrainian authorities implement. It is impossible to build strong and mutually beneficial relations on this basis.

To my mind, for purposes of Ukraine's internal policy today, it makes sense to consider the term 'Ukraine's European choice' as aspiration of the Ukrainian people

to achieve living standards of leading EU countries. This position, in my opinion, is a reality of the Ukrainian policy, and all political forces in Ukraine can support it. It is a component of Ukraine's national interest. To make first steps in realization of this component of national interests I, as a head of the communist caucus in Ukraine's parliament, have been trying for long to speed up the process of ratification of the 1996 (revised) European Social Charter by Ukraine, but unfortunately, having signed this agreement in 1999, the Ukrainian government disregards this important document of social protection of Ukrainian and European citizens.

In foreign policy, the term 'Ukraine's European choice' means a situation in which Ukraine has to position itself vis-a-vis present-day world configuration that has been getting new features more and more since 2001. Against the background of the present war in Iraq and aggression of the US, these features become more significant: Europe as the only player on the world scene and resistance to it on the part of the USA; US infringement upon world leadership under the guise of the doctrine of 'struggle against terror' with violation by the US of principles of collective diplomacy at the same time; competition between the dollar and the EURO; severe struggle between states and transnational corporations for energy resources; formation of the Russian Federation as a regional state; transformation of NATO as a rudiment of the Cold War; intensive economic development of China – all this is just a broad scheme of present-day world dynamics that solves the main problem of whether the world will be unipolar or multipolar.

In his global context, Ukraine should first of all form and strengthen new axes of world multipolarity: Paris-Berlin-Moscow and Washington-London. What place will Ukraine take in this alignment of forces? Up to date, a strategic answer to this question has not been found; however, it depends much on real transformation of our state into a European parliamentary republic.

Thus, 'Ukraine's European choice' is a complicated and important foreign policy task that Ukraine should perform under the above-mentioned conditions of multipolarity with the assumption of national and pan-European interests. And, we should perform it with dignity: Ukraine should enter Europe as a strong and self-sufficient state; it should not to be pulled into it by Uncle Sam or offerings of gracious Europeans. One should perform this task in the way that Ukraine was a subject, not object of European integration.

Kostiantyn Sytnyk

First of all, I consider 'Ukraine's European choice' in the light of my family, as I have two sons, two daughters-in-law, and four granddaughters. That is why I see 'Ukraine's European choice' as one which is able to make my descendants' lives prosperous, peaceful and full of good. I had lived a long life together with Russia and within Russia (it does not matter what the country's name was: the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union as an imperial formation). We realize that Europe faster than the rest of the Slavic world Europe mastered the ways to live better: they built a better economy, better culture, more perfect public life architecture that gives more freedom to people, both in their relations with the state and in their personal contacts as well as in the situation with mass media. As the saying goes, 'A fish is seeking where it is the deepest, and a man – where it is the best'. Undoubtedly, life is better in Europe. I have been to almost all European countries, except for Spain and Portugal, and people live better there than in Russia, Ukraine or Uzbekistan. And, 'Ukraine's European choice' means for me the choice of a better, more intellectual, more cultural life; a life that would be more prosperous economically, a lawful life, when my rights are being protected by law and the state's legal system. I always ask myself, 'Why do we live worse than citizens of Italy, Spain or Poland?' I am surprised at some of my colleagues' position: they point out USA's certain loopedness at Ukraine in a negative sense. There are few of those who think of that the US are forced to treat Ukraine negatively, and they are forced by our executive power's actions and incompetence. And, the conflict between the legislative and executive branches of power in Ukraine has once again testified the executive power's irrelevance of action, its incapacity to convince the parliament of the necessity for taking certain decisions which are of great importance for our country's future. Afterwards, this impropriety develops into undesirable sanctions against Ukraine on the part of foreign financial structures.

Borys Tarasyuk

I cannot distinguish my personal perception of the European choice from the perspective of a citizen, the view of the politician and the professional sense. Well, 'the European choice' for Ukraine means the civilization return of Ukraine to a united European space. It means the assertion of European and Ukrainian identity together.

It means adhering to the family of all European nations. It means that my children and my grandchildren will enjoy the preferences of the citizens of united Europe including its level of prosperity, social protection, level of human rights protection, level and possibility of realizing creative potential. So, 'the European choice' for me means that this is the choice of a target which means construction of democratic rule of law, a socially oriented state based on a European model, the model which has proven its success on the example of the EU as such and EU member states in particular. And, this model has proven its higher effectiveness in comparison with other models and its obvious preference over so-called 'wage duration model', which is the one we used to try in the Soviet Union. In my understanding, 'the European choice' means also the final cutting of ties with the communist past of Ukraine and cutting of ties with current negative trends in the political system, functioning of the branches of powers in Ukraine and authoritarian trends in Ukraine.

Ivan Tomych

Of course, when talking about 'Ukraine's European choice' and European integration, as a rule, we mean standards and values that function in European countries. Therefore, when the question is about 'Ukraine's European choice', I associate it with those standards of living according to which the European community lives. If we consider this question in the context of activities of the Supreme Rada Committee on Agricultural Policy and Land Relations and my work in this organization, then first of all it can be taken up through transformations in legislation, adoption of a number of laws and norms in this field that must be intelligible, integrated, and must meet legal standards which regulate the activity of the agricultural sector in European countries and the EU. For ten years already, agrarian Ukraine has been carrying out the reform of former socialistic system's agricultural sector. But, our system differs even from similar systems of neighboring countries (Romania, Poland, Hungary), not to mention the developed states of Europe. That's why the main thing for us is to put in practice alterations made in the Constitution of Ukraine: first of all, the 'holy of holies', i.e. right of land possession (the Land Code has endorsed the right of land possession). Besides, approximately 20 drafts are being considered in parliament today; some of them are in the committees, some in the first reading. Thus, we have a

clear system for a legislative guarantee of realization of Land Code regulations which we plan to form during this and next parliament's sessions. The other aspect of this problem is connected with Ukraine joining the World Trade Organization: the matter is about adoption of norms and principles that the world community is guided by in the field of trade relations, because our disparity with these norms essentially retards Ukraine's possible advancement to world and European markets in particular. The third fundamental aspect is the development of agrarian market environment, because today those countries that implement a successful agrarian policy, have also a well developed environment which promotes effective pricing policy, increase of workers' professionalism, competitive ability of agrarian output. Unfortunately, our environment is extremely badly developed, and a number of laws must be adopted, as well as a number of measures from the side of the executive power must be taken. First of all, this is development of service agricultural cooperation, financial-credit cooperation, trade, as well as future trade and technological measures regarding increased modernization of agriculture. These are the main problems that the Supreme Rada and, in particular, our committee work on.

Yulia Tymoshenko

Firstly, in my life, I have already made my own political, moral, if you like 'geographical' choice – a 'Ukrainian' one. That is why I consider the rest of 'choices' (be they European, Russian, American, Eskimo or the like) from precisely this point of view: how much one or other geopolitical orientation, economic strategy can be conducive to development of my mother country.

Secondly, the word combination of 'European choice' which you have just used, in political practice of today's Ukraine represents an ideological trick of Kuchma's government, serving not more than one purpose: i.e. to lessen the pressure exerted by the West (EU and US) upon the repressive and kleptocratic regime created by this government, and thereby to postpone the unavoidable break-up. All this re-naming pursued in the governmental structures ('Ministry of the Economy and European Integration', and other indicative arrangements), L.Kuchma's pro-European rhetoric, European integration programs which in reality conflict with Ukrainian authorities' practical steps, – all these are mere formal gestures, a duplicitous diplomatic game.

From this standpoint, I thoroughly disapprove of the 'European choice' in the manner of L.Kuchma and his surroundings. Moreover, I think that those European leaders who are swallowing this bait of the official Kyiv's rhetoric today are making a blunder, including as regards Ukraine's further 'Europeanization'.

Thirdly, 'Europe' for me is associated, first of all, with certain humanitarian and value achievements in the field of democracy, freedom and human rights, culture and science. Paraphrasing a well-known statement by K.Stanislavsky, I would say that we, Ukrainians, should love not ourselves in Europe but Europe in ourselves. The more life in Ukraine approaches the European level (by its quality, prosperity, democracy, humaneness), the more evident is the country's orientation to the West. And, if Europeans help us on this way, we will appreciate their interest.

Taras Voznyak

'The European choice' means for me those standards of society's and individual's life, those opportunities of individual realization that are in European Union in the widest aspect, starting with personal and economic freedom, and finishing with possibility of associating with a great deal of European cultures.

Natalia Yakovenko

I am sure that this is the only real chance to be saved from that ineradicable inheritance of 'Sovietness' hanging over us like fate, manifesting itself not only in the society's organizational structures, but also in the very approaches to potential innovations which are still being engraved onto the trunk of the post-Soviet world-outlook and are merging with it imperceptibly. Therefore, all these innovations inevitably undergo a mimesis and reduction to quasi-reforms, instead of real reforming.

Yuri Yekhanurov

Strictly speaking, the phrase 'Ukraine's European choice' is not a proper term. It confuses rather than explains something. Ukraine is a European country according to the fact of its existence; therefore, it can not and mustn't choose anything.

Another matter is that during the whole second half of the 20th century Europe was factitiously divided. A group of the most developed European countries headed

the movement towards overcoming this tragic and unnatural split. In the course of this process, in our presence, a new model of European integration is being created, as executed by the EU. From cultural, economic and civilization side of things, this model is attractive. And, everyone in Ukraine agrees to it. In fact, the following two problems are discussed:

- a) if this model is the most attractive for Ukraine;
- b) how much is it accessible for our country in a historically realistic perspective, taking into consideration the present state of the Ukrainian society.

All in all, European integration is a purpose and means of realization of Ukraine's interests, as well as a method of its stable development in the new century.

Volodymyr Yevtukh

'The European choice' for me is more close economic, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation between Ukraine and countries of Central and Western Europe; it is the possibility of free interchange of people and information; this is participation of Ukraine (and its citizens) in programs of social development in common with European countries; it is cultural dialogue between nations and enrichment with cultural properties of countries of the Western world. 'The European choice' is a way for nations' co-existence without conflict. It, of course, is also the strengthening of positions in further common overcoming of such negative phenomena of present-day social development as terror, epidemics and eco-catastrophes.

Viktor Yushchenko

The character of the discussion that takes place in Ukraine concerning the direction of European integration surprises me much. Because, to my mind, there were made many mistakes which brought about a perverted vision of the discussion's subject in social and even political dialogue. Often, it is impossible to understand about what, what criteria and what choice this discussion is. That is, what we choose, and what the subject of our discussion is? The policy of last years did not make us understand what choice is the best for Ukrainian future. I am convinced that Ukraine's choice lies not in the geographical dimension of where to move – either to the East, or to the West — but in the other main criterion of what is the best for a person and society.

When we talk about the European way, we mean standards of democracy, open civil society, and market rules that we want to get. The choice of both the state and a person lies in a simple formula: it is necessary to choose the best. Everyone understands that one should head for best standards and best achievements. I am sure that the system of values, which Europe demonstrates today in realization of the economy, open and clear competition, and high social standards is a right way. But, speaking integrally, we shouldn't idealize the European path and perceive it only as positive; we should realize cautions that appear on this uneasy way. The main thing is what 'the European choice' proposes in the field of organization of society, economy. Ukraine needs these things very much.

2. Causes of and obstacles to Ukraine's participation in processes of European integration

Mykola Barabash

After disintegration of the Soviet Union, Ukraine, like other former Soviet republics, choose its own way. Forms in which the Ukrainian state organization manifested itself were mostly European ones, and the fundamentals of building a new state were based on European democratic principles from the very start. However, our legislative base differs from the European one considerably, what is conditioned by Ukraine's painful past. And, precisely this difference (of a civilization pattern, in many respects) forms an obstacle on Ukraine's way to European structures. For example, we have a crisis with protection of soils and the environment. We need to take as much as we can from the experience accumulated by countries of the European Union. We possess a great potential of fertile land, its cultivation is more than 60%. None of the countries in the whole world can show such a figure, but the yield is gradually lowering: it went down by several percent during the last 3–4 years. And, the problem should be solved at the legislative level first of all. There are programmes determining limits of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium etc. in soil, and exceeding these limits can cause an ecological catastrophe: pollution of water, waterlogging, humus soil loss, and other harmful consequences that will take place. However, these parameters are not fixed in our legislation, the agro-chemical certification has not been carried out yet. Therefore, we are ignorant of the cost of a hectare of some concrete land. In Soviet times, such soil testings were carried out every 5–6 years, and at the expense of the state. Now, the process stopped, and it is impossible to determine the scope

of responsibility for humus soil deterioration or for its improper use. EU countries have accumulated certain experience in certification and standardization, and this information should be thoroughly examined and adapted to our conditions.

Our authorities' activities should be counted in hindrances impeding Ukraine on its way to European institutions. This concerns the parliament, the government and the president. Absence of contradictions between, first, the branches of power and, second, the power and the society, can constitute a great incentive for changes for the better. As regards the agrarian sector which I am representing now, its so-called private sector (farmers and private farming companies) produces 70 percent of agricultural products (10% and 60% correspondingly). Then, we need to review the principles of financing, as individual rural establishments have no benefits in the field of crediting. And, they need these benefits, as enhancement of their economies' efficiency depends on technical support directly. But, the equipment is rather expensive while our farmers are rather poor. Thus, we need to change the approaches in finance and credit sphere and give the farmers an opportunity to obtain credits for 3-15 years. This will permit to raise the level of the whole agrarian sector, as well as the level of the farmers' living standards, in particular; and this will improve the situation in our agricultural sector.

Volodymyr Barabash

Two sides, two aspects within any process can be found. I would like to remember our president's address made on the 10th Anniversary of Ukraine's Independence, indicative, in my opinion. If I am not mistaken, he spoke at the opening of a new Kyiv railway station. This was taking place precisely during the celebrations of the Independence anniversary: the World Congress of the Ukrainians was being held, where he (the president) got a good telling-off. This also contemporised with reproaches from certain international organizations, cast upon certain countries' leaders, concerning the absence of progress on the way of both economic and political reformation in these countries. And, the president exploded, what is indicative, because this characterises the causes of our country's obstructed and difficult advance towards Europe, its structures and standards. He said, 'What do they want from us? We were freed from that Soviet Zoo only 10 years ago!' There arises a question of who precisely came out of the Zoo. Because

in Ukraine, even in Soviet times, there existed dissidents, a Helsinki group, as well as people who progressively thought of both construction and perspectives of development of social relations, and of world problems. Moreover, there were also the Baltic countries, where the process of final consciousness-breaking aimed at transformation of a citizen into a homo sovieticus had not been completed. And, on the other hand, we had the Soviet elite who have kept their positions of power. That is why, speaking about the Soviet Zoo, the President probably meant himself. However, it is known that humans run away from Zoos, not lions and tigers who live there. What does the matter concern? There is a need to give a chance to be at the head of the state to those people who realize the society's current problems and see the directions in which we have to evolve. Now, let us come back to the question. When the Baltic countries became fed up with ruling of that Soviet elite (taking into consideration the fact that positive social-political processes were much more successful in those countries), they took chances to invite their future presidents from diasporas; I mean Latvia and Lithuania, in particular. We have a large and representative diaspora abroad, and it possesses so great achievements in both political and humanitarian field that there would not have been any problems with that. The question is whether we can make any progress and dynamics in our country, or there is only somebody's who needs to hold his own leading positions. This is the main obstacle.

However, there is also another aspect. I do not think that the elite existing in the Baltic countries at the beginning of their independence was satisfied with representatives of the diaspora coming to power. But, such was the opinion dominating in the society, and the elite had no other way out than to submit to it. The question is, whether Ukraine possesses any forces able to convince, or compel our old Soviet elite to give up their own positions, or not. Only the community, only the civil society's activity is able to urge our power on such a conclusion. But here, in Ukraine, we have a lot of complicated problems with this sector. That is why we can single out two reasons: the authorities, who take no care of their country, and the society's lag in its development. By the way, in addition we can say that Ukraine has no experience of its own state organization and, correspondingly, of the criteria according to which claims to the ruling authorities should be raised. Therefore, today we can establish a fact that we have no Ukrainian authorities, but a temporary administration, managing its

protectorate and searching for variants of a more profitable sale of this protectorate. As a businessman and a Ukrainian, I have exactly such an impression: that a genuine patriot would have never tried to preserve the negative processes taking place in our country. Now, Ukraine reminds me of a large continuous *Guliaypole*¹, where anybody can roam wherever he likes. Moreover, now one can observe how the figure of Shcherbytsky has been extracted from historical 'naphthalene'. Do not we have any persons that would be better, worthier of notice than Shcherbytsky? This is because our elite are so insignificant on an international scale that it positioning oneself next to Shcherbytsky is like declaring, 'We are not worse than he was'.

Rayisa Bogatyriova

The question is not put precisely. One should mention that Ukraine does not take part in the processes of European integration, yet (in the exact meaning of this term). Ukrainian authorities declared on behalf of the state their wish to join the EU and meet corresponding conditions of entry. But, in response, nobody ever — officially, or half-officially — invited or invites us to EU 'closed club'. Nobody in Europe speaks about the possibility of Ukraine getting a status of 'an associated member' of the Community in this decade. On the contrary, official representatives from Brussels, especially recently, declared many times that there is no question about Ukraine's integration with EU, and it won't be on the agenda for a long time. We are not Poland, Hungary, Lithuania or Estonia. Now, we are proposed to take the 'status of neighborhood' with EU that can not be considered 'integration'.

This problem hinders EU even to start negotiations with Ukraine about integration, at least, say, 'for growth', and we should question about it Europeans, not our politicians. Of course, it is clear what the matter is. Ukraine is still very far behind not only member states, but also states-candidates of joining EU in crucial indicators of economic, scientific and technological development, level of democracy, quality of living of the majority of citizens etc. Today, a united Europe does not need us as a full subject of the Community; we are still non-competitive in it.

I am sure that it won't be so always and, in the course of time, Ukraine will become

¹ 'A roaming field' – a literal translation of the name of a Ukrainian village, Nestor Makhno's birth place.

a real 'European' country in all crucial indicators of development. And, by the way, the faster Ukraine will be in progress, the more reasons of Euro-integration in the manner of a 'poor relative', which are noticeable now both in politics and the society, will recede into the background along with numerous obstacles in relations between Ukraine and its western neighbors.

Andriy Derkach

Among many political scientists, there is firm conviction that, in a united Europe, regularities of traditional geopolitics stop working, in geopolitics considered by them to be a rudiment of the era of block opposition. In their opinion, with use of a functioning scheme of Euro-integration, independent foreign policy of individual states with their national interests becomes a thing of the past. This concept regards European integration as a process of negation of national sovereignties and further existence of the real national state system. In my opinion, it is the same as failed ideology of worldwide communist revolution, but it is painted in other colours. Euro-scepticism is gaining strength in European countries, which utmost flow denies integration, generates this approach. In fact, Euro-integration in no way contradicts reservation of national sovereignty and does not cancel a historically developed understanding of national sovereignties. These processes are not alternative, but complementary. While solving those problems where pan-European institutions can not act effectively, the main role passes on to continental inter-state unions of possessing the greatest potential. The only possible variant of such a continental alliance is the Berlin-Kyiv-Moscow axis. A number of European countries, first of all Poland and France, as well as the 'orthodox zone' in the Balkans where Greece has got leading positions, will closely adjoin this axis. This scheme issues not from the theory, but from economic, political and mental realities of the continent. A state's selection of allies and partners is not accidental, is it? As a rule, they are defined by the geographic position and historical development of a state. But, in the foreground is frequently the human factor connected with the position of a definite part of the authoritative elite trying to assume its individual interests as a basis of national interests — which are not necessarily conterminous with national ones — or alien ideological thoughts. Ukraine is a continental state in the middle of Europe, and its economic and political interests are closely connected with Europe.

And, first of all with Russia and Germany, relations between which, as was mentioned above, acquire the character of strategic partnership. The task of domestic politicians is to put this axiom in practice because, without practical actions, formation of Ukraine as a developed European country is impossible.

Stepan Gavrysh

The main reason is that principles of development of Ukraine and Ukrainian political nation are just being formed now. Unlike its western neighbors that have already received the invitation and become members of EU, we can not rely on our own state-forming and genetic-national evolution. Our western neighbors had a rather heavy historical experience and understood that this is the main choice for them, having determined it as far back as in the early 1990s. As to us, Ukrainians, we unexpectedly started creating our own history in the CIS area, and did not manage to unite our actions concerning this choice in the first years of Ukrainian independence. Reforms taking place in Ukraine do not have quite clear strategic and politically responsible guarantees. Ukraine's uncertainty in advancement to future confirms the concept of its multi-vectoral foreign policy. And, just in recent years, owing to the development of a civil society, the idea of 'the European choice' got more adherents. Nevertheless, we haven't created a program yet, which would allow us to include this idea in the national program of development. Our country is still between two geopolitical magnets – Russia and Asia, and Europe. And, this inclination to one side or the other weakens 'Ukraine's European choice' that remains to be a selection of mottos, but not a real strategic course of advancement to European environment. Today, we do not make any efforts, first of all in harmonization of the Ukrainian legal sphere with the European one, which will give a powerful incentive to the development of economy and institutional aspects of the society, power etc. Secondly, in practice, we do not democratize the bureaucratic model of development, which has a tendency towards shadow forms of existence, with high level of corruptibility. And, thirdly, we do not provide the civil society with the philosophy of European choice. Thus, this weakens Ukraine's positions in advancement towards the European Community and does not give possibilities to realize that by working on the national program on development, raising national standards of living in all aspects, starting

with democracy and finishing with problems in the economy and social standards of Ukrainians' existence, we do not advance to Europe.

Vitaliy Kononov

I believe the major obstacle to full-fledged participation of Ukraine in European integration is the absence of change of elite. Most of the elite are from the old Soviet and Communist bodies, party or Komsomol bosses and technocratic leaders that amassed capital as they had better access to resources. That part of intelligentsia which was essentially European, listened to Radio Svoboda, read samizdat (banned literature) and longed for a change. Unfortunately, they did not have access to resources. This led to gross misuse of power. The face of the market economy for a common Ukrainian neither had a human face or human heart. We have to return the faith of the people in these changes, restore the faith they had in the bodies of power for us to be the real representatives of people. Otherwise, we will be a European nation in name and geographic sense only.

Leonid Kravchuk

It is time for Ukraine to stop its vacillation between the West and the East as, while holding to such a position, we push ourselves out of the road. If we wish to be treated with respect, we have to determine our position, and this determination must be done in favor of 'the European choice'. We have to declare our wish to become a member of all European structures, put in all the necessary applications and accept the plan of work on accomplishment of this historic task.

The political aim of Ukraine's development is to become a full member of the commonwealth of European states. I think nobody would object this. Differences exist in approaches and terms offered by Ukrainian elite and EU officials.

The EU interprets Ukraine's accession to the European Union as 'admission' to democracy, economic situation etc, given to the country. That is a kind of a permit: to let or not to let Ukraine go into Europe. At the same time, EU officials do not consider Ukraine as part of Europe a priori. They are doubtful about whose 'responsibility zone' the country belongs to: Russian, American or European.

As for the Ukrainians, as well as for me personally, there is no need to prove an indisputable fact that Ukraine has always been, is and will be a European country. And, European

integration is essential for us in the sense that it is a straight way to European values and models of development of a society. And, we will follow this way irrespectively of whether certain politicians wish to see us among the European family or not.

The processes of joining certain European institutions like the European Union are quite another matter. Of course, every institution of the kind has its own rules, statutes, administrative bodies etc. We cannot ignore this. The process of European integration is going rather slowly so far, but with confidence. We are often reproached: you do this wrong, you do that wrong. But, nobody compares the present situation with the one we had ten years ago. In those times we 'did wrong' much more often. During the years of independence, Ukraine has achieved a number of positive changes. And, ten years later the conversation will go easier, when there will be left only artificial reproaches to our country.

Ivan Kuras

Factors impeding Ukraine's participation in processes of European integration can be observed as on Ukraine's so on Europe's parts.

Ukraine is still being captured by inertia; certain parts of the society and the elites have still been taking the Western world in the spirit of the Soviet propaganda. Besides, transitional processes have lingered: real changes in our economic, political, public life go with much more difficulties than it seemed when Ukraine had obtained its independence. On the other hand, our European partners not always understand Ukraine's specific character. They possess their own vision of Ukraine as a partner. Sometimes, this vision coincides with the Ukrainian one, but differences arise when Ukraine will achieve correspondence with this vision. Europe often fails to take account of the fact that, at present, our country has to attain those things Europe itself has been developing during thousands of years, in an increased tempo.

There is also a number of lesser impediments caused by slowness of bureaucratic machines, as well as certain political moments (not proven accusations of Ukraine and its president of approval of 'Kolchugas' supply to Iraq were an illustrative example of this). But, I would characterize these as secondary.

The main point is that Ukraine stated its Euro-integration course unambiguously, though the country has not understood the whole technology of the process yet,

while Europe does not hasten to start up the integration mechanism, not having determined Ukraine's perspectives.

Ella Libanova

Ukraine has a serious reason for taking part in European processes, namely the geographical position. If our state were situated in Central Asia, the question would be understandable. But, since there is a geographical centre of Europe in Ukraine, the interest in EU processes is absolutely justified. The main problem and misfortune is in our Asian or, more exactly, Byzantine mentality, in our inactivity and, at the same time, in our rally. Our people like attending meetings, but at the same time they do not want to do anything. Hitherto Slavs', and in particular Ukrainians' favorite story is a fairy tale about Illya Muromets, who had lain on the stove for 33 years, and then got up and coped with everything. It is a nice story, but everything is different in real life. Do you remember what is the difference between Buratino and Pinocchio? Pinocchio led children to school, and Buratino – to the fairy Fools Country. In fairy tales, especially author's ones, people's psychology is well depicted. How long had we been looking for Polubotok's gold? And how livened up is social attention to clairvoyants and magic specialists? This is a shame for a developed nation and a state. The main thing we must do now is to form the middle class, and for that it is necessary to revise the taxation policy. One thousand and twenty hryvnas is a sum over which profit requires payment of 30% of the profit to the state. And, who earns in Ukraine 1020 hryvnas? And, one shouldn't forget that 1020 hryvnas some years ago and 1020 hryvnas now, are absolutely different sums. Why does the state need to take away earned money (as a rule by hard work)? State policy is evidently directed to secure the interests of poor sections of the population, the rebellion of which is unfavorable for power, and of rich citizens who mainly do not pay attention to such trifles as tax payment. A normal state should stake on the middle class, on those people whom it fleeces through taxation system. A benefits policy, for instance, a program of housing grants, is a good idea, but it is directed to protection of the poor people who are notable to pay for habitation and public utilities, and hits the middle class that, according to its profits, must pay the full amount.

Oleksandr Moroz

The totalitarian system of power, which has formed in our country, is both a reason and obstacle.

European Union is not only about common currency and open borders. It is, first of all, about rich democracy traditions, high level of development and, above all, stability and predictability of economy, social protection, opportunities of harmonious development of a personality, absence of double standards, responsibility of authority before its people, political stability, stability of legislative base, absence of administrative methods of economy's regulation, clear and weighted foreign policy of all EU members and so on. Weak and unpredictable states like Ukraine can not enter this Union. To achieve the level of development of European leaders, Ukraine needs not less than 10 years, on the condition that the power system will change in the nearest one or two years. This is on the one hand.

On the other hand, top management of the state has not still defined a clear direction in Ukraine's foreign policy. Different politicians may express their opinion concerning this vector, but the official is the president's one. Of course, it puts certain obligations on the head of state and involves his conventional responsibility before the world community for observance of the chosen course. But, obligations and responsibility are what our president is afraid most of all. The ambiguity of foreign policy reference points is more favorable for him. For him, they are rather a trump card in negotiations with leaders of other countries: in the West we 'integrate' with the West, in the East – with the East. Therefore, for ten years, the president has been blocking adoption of the foundations for internal and foreign policy of Ukraine, stipulated by the Constitution; and, both membership in the EU and membership in the Eurasian Economic Unity and others represent a chosen course. It conforms again the necessity of changing the power system in Ukraine. Having solved this problem, our country will be able to start developing towards classic democracy.

It is also necessary to operate with categories more clearly. 'A choice' — here, should be absolute clarity: we are for the choice. 'Integration' has its borders, one shouldn't identify it with EU, as it is a deep form. It means new peculiarities of a state system and principally different economic dependences. It is unnecessarily to say that Ukraine is not ready for them. And, it is difficult to say whether the EU is ready, even when the

development of our state is on the EU level. Do both subjects need it? Nobody can give a clear answer. That's why we should speak about (and long for) integration as a search of mechanisms and creation of conditions for broad cooperation.

Yulia Mostova

One can say that Ukraine is a very large market able to interest businessmen, as well as a great potential of high-educated citizens; the country that is able to obtain a good field for investments (on the assumption of certain modernization of the production field) which has to be under the protection of European laws and Euro-Atlantic roof.

One can also say that Ukraine is an ancient cultural space which is immediately connected with Europe. Ukraine as part of Europe is a guarantee of impossibility of the Russian Empire's rebirth.

But, the main thing is that if Ukraine keeps its being in abeyance, its being the country not given any system, programmes incentives to development, if it fails to overcome the spirit of degeneration and corruption as well as 'atypical democracy', then such a Ukraine will constitute a menace to Europe. This menace is multi-pronged, as there are a great number of enterprises the amortization of which has already elapsed in Ukraine; similarly, there are many plants and factories that are extremely harmful potentially; however, those security facilities created in the mid-fifties have also exhausted their operational life. That is, in the case of a man-caused catastrophe in Ukraine, in absence of the above-mentioned conditions they can form a huge problem for Europe the same way as, for example, Poland and Sweden suffered the consequences of Chernobyl catastrophe. All this will be able to recur periodically if the situation in our country remains unchanged; if the authorities do not transform their attitude toward their own functions. If the priority of national interests does not replace the priority of a state official's personal interests eventually, Europe will undoubtedly face a whole bunch of these problems. In the same way, it confronted illegal migration; it will face the fact that Ukraine will become one of the subjects of the Russian Federation possessing the status of a country; nevertheless, it will be a kind of Sicily bordering upon the EU's western members. Making use of this base, certain forces in Russia and CIS countries will put into practice rather dubious

operations like traffic in arms, drugs, illegal migration etc. That is, if we in Ukraine fail to establish order by the European model, if we do not take any practical steps to achieve this now, then we will have all the chances to come down to a dull buffer state, representing a collection of threats to the civilized world.

Volodymyr Palij

Strangely enough, the main obstruction to Ukraine's participation in the processes of European integration is Ukraine itself. At that, our country's citizens are energetically trying to integrate into the European Community on their own. Thousands of the Ukrainians work in countries of the European Community both legally and illegally. I think they are motivated by not only the wish to earn their living: a certain part of the society tries to solve those problems the country has been unable to solve during the years of independence. I am acquainted with some Ukrainians who have been working in Italy and Portugal for several years. They are well-educated professionals, family men, experienced ex-top managers at large enterprises, but they work in a services sector or as maintenance workers abroad. These people are satisfied with their salary they could not earn in Ukraine, but discontent with their social status. If my acquaintances had had chances to earn the same money in Ukraine and, in addition, enjoy all the liberties specified in the Constitution of Ukraine, they would have been full members of the territorial community, and participated in the decision-making concerning their own city and state. If most Ukrainians were of the kind, we would be able to integrate into the European Community without any delay.

However, today the number of the destitute is increasing, and the rich know well how to multiply their wealth without participation of the society. The middle class, composed of the people with the incomes which allow them to feel free, is not growing. I think that the problem cannot be solved by Ukraine on its own. The European Community has to understand that without financial support given by social institutions, without investing substantial amounts of money into Ukraine's economy for the development of small and medium-sized businesses and farming, the European Union will not have a full-fledged partner to work in cooperation with. Because, even if Europe gives micro-credits to the Ukrainians for establishing their own enterprises via Ukrainian banks, they are not insured from the Ukrainian officials' power of dis-

cretion: they are paid ca. 30 Euros and seek every opportunity to fill up their family budget. This is not a theory, my fellow citizens and I face such things every day. We should admit honestly that corruption in Ukraine is common not only in governmental bodies. You will neither receive quality medical treatment without a bribe nor be able to provide quality education for your children. After all, if you have money and you are ready to pay for everything you need, this does not mean that the person who could help you in solving of your problem has it. That is why I distinguish two types of reasons holding us back from rapid integration with the European Community. The first is the Ukrainians' consciousness, contaminated with illnesses of the Soviet times; the second is the absence of incentives on regional levels (in addition to the opportunity of profiteering on bribes) to regional elite's participation in management of macro- and microeconomic development processes in a region.

Mykola Plavyuk

I think they can be divided at least in two groups. The first one is our internal reasons. Each society has to have an elite, a leading section that knows, where it leads and directs the society. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian elite was isolated for a long time from practical relations with Europe and was oriented rather in other direction. And, non-understanding of ponderability and importance of orientation to the other system than before is one of internal obstacles for Ukraine's active steps toward European integration. I am not going to talk here about peculiar complex of conservatism, because these features are inherent in many nations: it is always easier to continue what is known than follow the new ways. Especially, since integration with Europe is not just a pleasant affair. It is severe competition in economy, requirements to change a certain scale of values, and it demands reorientation of each person and a society on the whole.

The second thing: nobody in Europe waits for us. A part of Europe considers us to be a contender; the other part of Europe is so jumped-up that it would like to be an 'elder brother' for Central and Eastern Europe. And, this is also an important negative factor of Ukraine's European integration. Besides, both in Europe and all over the world national interests exist. And, Ukraine's national interests do not always coincide with national interests of other European countries.

In general, NATO and military organizations are more interested in Ukrainians, rather than economic circles that are much less interested in Ukraine's integration with Europe. Besides, one shouldn't forget about the traditional impact of Russia, which does not want Ukraine to integrate with Europe and tries at least to slow down Ukraine's movement in the European direction, or stop it at all. Thus, an active process of Ukraine's integration with Europe is hampered by both internal and external reasons.

Myroslav Popovych

Obstacles to Ukraine's participation in European integration processes partly have objective character: Ukraine has got social-political and economic legacy that moves it away from Europe. In spite of the fact that, recently, there has been economic recovery in Ukraine, the situation continues to be disturbing as this recovery goes along with an outdated technical-economic base. The national economy before reconstruction was rather specialized in some directions, but very ineffective. The leading enterprises of Ukraine belonged to the military-industrial establishment. Today, the matter concerns first of all the revival of these bearers of science-intensive technologies. Ukraine has lost its strong position in computer science and related branches; therefore, today's projects of development along the Indian model do not seem to be quite realistic. There are more and more advocates speaking in favor of agriculture, food and light industries being the only economic outlook for Ukraine. Meanwhile, Ukraine has a great scientific and technological potential, the realization of which remains to be the issue of the day. Briefly speaking, today, integration with Europe's market environment is desirable, though it is very risky for an uncompetitive Ukrainian economy.

One should add to it an administrative system which, in principle, has changed little in comparison with the Soviet times. The President's administration not only uses old methods of party's formation, with their circumlocutory means of communication, but also gravitates towards organization forms of managing economic and social possesses that are characteristic of the old regime. As a result, we have a number of socio-political conflicts, which have gravely compromised the Ukrainian authorities both before its own society and in the eyes of the world community. Ukrainian politicians haven't worked out a clear, at least indisputable, understanding

of national interests, which intensifies destabilization processes and hampers mutual understanding with the West.

Of course, one can not disregard the pressure from the governing circles of Russia interested in keeping more or less the only post-Soviet space in its control (more or less soft), or at least with its decisive political impact.

And, finally, integration processes are slowed down by 'temporary economic difficulties' which have abruptly impoverished parts of the Ukrainian society. It is necessary to take into consideration that, as a result of incompetent economic policy of its government and superficiality of economic consultations of Western advisors of different ranks, Ukraine lost two thirds of its productive potential, which is more than in the result of World War 2 damage. A considerable part of Ukraine's population is in the state of frustration that is reflected in electoral processes. However, one should mention that, in general, Ukraine's population maintains common sense and realistic political feeling.

Volodymyr Pyekhota

These can be divided into two groups: the inner and the outer ones.

As regards the inner causes and obstacles. These are formed by resistance put up by certain part of our people and some political forces. They have still been living in nostalgia of the USSR and build their policy proceeding from our temporary troubles in economic and social spheres. This is also the imperfection and instability of our legislation, existence of shadow economy and some other things.

But, the fact that the EU does not hasten with Ukraine's approach to the Community is also an objective one. This is also the insufficient technical aid in questions of harmonization of laws and procedures, as well as the delay in giving us a status of 'a country with market economy' and in our country's admission to the World Trade Organization.

However, the role of Western structures as regards their influence upon reformation processes in Ukraine should not be overestimated.

Realization of one recipe or another for social-economic development and agreement of the West's requirements as regards the processes of European integration is, first, our own state's concern. The nihilism syndrome peculiar to our people has played a fatal role in selection of the recipes for reformation, that is we tend to cast

off everything concerned with the past, categorically – not only harmful things but rational ones, too. It is characteristic: the belief that our country is doomed to adoption of someone's, mostly Western, experience, has become one of the consequences of this nihilism. Let us remember that we considered the IMF's recipes to be the only right and having no alternative ones. Our mass-media and then the 'advanced' intelligentsia praised the transmitters of these recipes, and those who were inconsistent with them deserved to be pinned as 'reds' or 'conservatives'. In addition, all this took place when these recipes had already been known as ruining ones; when those countries that had previously been backward (South Korea, Thailand, China) reached success precisely owing to involving their domestic, not foreign reformers that is, those who were able to combine the best of their own with someone else's best.

Undoubtedly, some directions of the reforms proposed to us had been obviously adjusted by the West to its strategic interests within the limits of globalization processes. First, we should mention the project of the so-called Washington consensus that is being realized through recipes proposed by the IMF and other international financial and economic organizations. Precisely the recipes of Washington consensus gave an opportunity of re-distribution of the world's resources in favor of trans-national companies and leading countries of the West.

By the way, the West has never applied the recipes of Washington consensus itself. Here we can see a double standard: there are certain approaches to those who are 'their own people' and different treatment of others — those who are regarded as potential objects of global expansion. For example, the IMF set the requirement of openness for Ukraine as an urgent one; they also proposed to make a transition to market economy by an 'explosive', shock method. At the same time, Poland was allowed to deviate from these hard and harmful rules. However, in the post-war period, Western European countries as well as Japan and Turkey were opening very slowly: it took them 15 years and more. As a rule, it was in proportion as they achieved certain competitiveness and high level of technological maturity. In the present global situation, transitive or developing economies are not only being injured by sudden openness but also get into credit dependence. All this caused such destructive after-effects that the IMF itself had to admit the grave consequences of realization of its recommendations.

All these objective and rigid realities of the present times should be taken into consideration. It is clear that Ukraine's chances to influence the global situation are more than poor ones. But, our task is to keep up with positive changes in the future and to derive benefits from them. We can and should cooperate with international financial and economic organizations, but this cooperation must be based on our state and people's interests.

Oleh Samchyshyn

There are subjective and objective causes there. Let us begin with objective ones. Ukraine has come out of a powerful centralised state with a planned economy, the state that possessed its own system of values. Most people who are driving Ukraine at the present stage originated from that system. Machiavelli once said, 'People are easy to be convinced of something. It is much more difficult to keep them in this confidence'. Today, it is hard to keep people in confidence that 'the European choice' of Ukraine is for the better. Our people know that life is better in the EU than in our country; our citizens would like to live the way people in the European Union do; but, it is very difficult to replace an absorbing model of behaviour with a rendering, reproductive one. It is hard to master our own self and take a step towards European values by our own example. However, to tell the truth, not all values deserve to be repeated. The next reason is firstly our non-balanced and, secondly, shadow economy, traditionally not responding to a consumer. And, thirdly: the political life in Ukraine is characterized by multi-vectoriness that in its turn results in instability and uncertainty. And, we must choose a clear-cut direction. Unfortunately, we do not have one. Our realization of foreign policy resembles a fable by Ivan Krylov entitled 'A swan, a Crayfish and a Pike', where every character is pulling a cart in his own direction, and so they cannot get it moving. At that, I do not separate the state authorities and the society, as they most often correlate their actions. In most cases, we act when necessary, and the freedom to move is being a conscious necessity, too. But, in our cultural level, we remain seriously behind an average European, firstly owing to our complex of public – or, in other words, nobody's – property. If we come into a many-storeyed building and try to compare the condition of a flat, the fettle of a lift or a landing, we will become aware of the difference not only in the very attitude

to property but in a cultural level, at once. A European considers an entrance to be a part of his accommodation, too, and the culture of everyday life is higher there. We also lack in consumer education, and the level of consumer culture is low in the country, too. Our buyer's behaviour is mostly ambitious (he or she thinks that he knows about commodities and services a lot), situative and irrational, unreasoned, intended for a close perspective. This often results in that the choice is made not in favor of quality but quick accessibility of a sales outlet, etc. Our people often buy meat and dairy products in dubious places from dubious people, not thinking about possible insalubrity of the given product, and first to members of his or her own family. And, the complex of reasons impeding Ukraine on its way to the EU is being formed from such small points.

Larysa Skoryk

A short period of competitions of Ukraine during 1917-19, at the time of recommencement of the Ukrainian state, an attempt to return to its own organic 'European choice' was brutally destroyed by the Bolshevik aggression. And, for 70 years (for Western Ukraine – 47 years), being part of the Soviet totalitarian empire, Ukraine found itself in pathologically severe isolation from the European culture, principles of individual and social life.

So, 'the European choice' for present Ukraine is like a 'return home' after many years of nation's despondency that caused innumerable victims, national amnesia and loss by a considerable part of nation of the feeling of belonging historically, culturally, ethno-psychologically to the European world close to Ukraine; and gifted mainly the east and south of Ukraine with Siamese inosculation with foreign language, foreign social 'blood circulation' intensified by ideological, political and economic perversions of the former USSR.

Hanna Skrypnyk

The main reason that hampers the processes of Ukraine's European integration is its severe post-totalitarian inheritance. During the last century, the Ukrainian society endured huge losses, the scope of which is still unknown to the world community. I remind that just during forced collectivization, artificial starvation and repressions of

1930s, about seven million citizens of the most conscious and most diligent part of the Ukrainian society died. The national elite was practically completely destroyed: scientists, writers, intelligentsia, members of state structures who had believed deceitful Bolshevik slogans about unanimity and brotherhood of socialistic nations. All this resulted that the Ukrainian society suffered severe physical and mental losses, which were intensified by the years of fascist occupation of Ukraine during World War 2, starvation of the years 1946-47, mass terror of Stalin's regime in Western Ukraine at the end of 1940s. Millions of physical losses and, above all, destruction of the national elite brought about severe deformations in collective the consciousness of the Ukrainian society, the consequences of which one can perceive today. Social apathy and passiveness of Ukrainians became an original reaction to the threat of physical destruction that several times impended over them during the last century. This social apathy, as a unique psychological element, intensified after loss by citizens of the young Ukrainian state of their savings and economic chaos of the first years of independence, when former party nomenklatura completely appropriated the power in Ukraine. Having changed the colours of the Ukrainian flag and having used democratic mottos strange to it, it remained the same as before, balancing between the past and the present. On the one side, there are talks on the highest level about aspirations to integrate with Europe; on the other, there's slackness of concrete actions in this direction, statements about multi-vectorness of Ukraine's foreign policy and attempts to reanimate artificial economic and political ties with Eurasian states. And, by adding to this lack of democratic traditions in the Soviet age (which the Communist regime was diligently extirpating), high level of corruption, dependence of citizens on officials, weakness of juridical power etc. than it becomes aware: the main obstacle of Ukraine's participation in the processes of European integration is the present state of the Ukrainian society.

Of course, there are also outer factors, which do not promote Ukraine's entry into European structures: a comfort and stable Western Europe that organised its life long ago would not like to burden itself with new problems connected with entry into the European Union of new members that, in addition, requires some material costs. Sometimes, because of these warnings, European countries do not see their own benefits and interests.

Volodymyr Stretovych

The reason for non-participation in the processes of European integration is in the absolutely vague and multivectoral foreign policy, without accent on what we should long for, and what we build in our state after it has got independence. Whether it should be 'the eastern variant' (Russia or Central Asia) that reminds us of today's realities very much, or it should be the 'western variant', with our approach to western standards of democracy. Uncertainty induces the supreme political leadership and the Supreme Rada to two positions: to face Europe, but feel that the eastern neighbor is at the back of the pack. But, having returned to the East, we have to hear disapprobatory words of the West: 'what are you doing'?

Russia won't soon become a democratic state and won't reduce its imperial ambitions or attempts to hold Ukraine within the zone of its influence with corresponding consequences of economic and geopolitical character. Therefore, the sooner the parliament determines the principles of foreign policy the sooner this problem would be solved.

One more reason is a low intellectual level of the ruling elite of Ukraine, which is not aware of the importance of European choice's execution, that is Ukraine's entry into pan-European economic and political space. Unfortunately, now there is not felt a great wish of the main representatives of the state to move toward the West. I can be reproached: 'And what about our historical ties with Russia?' But, I will answer that, without a European and democratic Ukraine, a democratic Russia is impossible. We must become an example for it on this path.

Natalia Sumska

I am not a specialist in the field of political science — and this question is to be addressed to the specialists — but I think that the main obstacle of Ukraine's approach to Europe is lack of money for the majority of population that does not give an opportunity to satisfy even elementary material wants, apart from spiritual ones. As a result, the locks are closed for us. On the other hand, the presence of an oligarchy that possesses quite much money, builds palaces worthy to receive those of royal decent is not a secret for us. It is not necessary at all that a wealthy person got money in a criminal way; nevertheless, I doubt that all our millionaires are honest-to-goodness businessmen. And, society that consists of mostly poor and not blind citizens feels disturbance and,

therefore, can not be quiet. It would be necessary to fix the balance, first of all through a consolidation of law, review of the taxation system and calling to account those who bring Ukraine to this miserable state with their actions. Because, our state is not poor. I do not consider it to be poor. It is just deserted. If a blanket has not been mended for a long time, and one can not get the new one, this blanket will eventually start tearing at the seams, especially since it will be pulled in different directions. This image resembles me our Ukraine much. And, it is very painful that the situation like this takes place. As there is a considerable gap between the poor people, who do not have enough food, cannot use rights guaranteed by the state, say, for education (because of remoteness of schools and absence of transportation, in some villages children cannot go to school for years) however, the concerts of Russian stars of various kind with expensive tickets are mainly sold out. Maybe, the system is not perfect somewhere and ought to be corrected. And, when the so-called middle class appears, when it becomes a face of our state, then – probably — the borders will open for us, and Europe will stop being afraid of poverty-stricken Ukrainians.

Petro Symonenko

I think that the answer to this question is adequately expounded above. As to the obstacles, the main obstacle is a great objective considerable economic lag of Ukraine from EU countries. Other obstacles are internal discrepancies in Ukrainian policies, old stereotypes of thinking Cold War times in EU countries and Ukraine, as well as the approach of double standards regarding Ukraine often used by Western countries, when we are not perceived as a partner equal in rights. Ukraine longs to be a subject of European policy, but not its object.

Kostiantyn Sytnyk

Of course, there are a lot of purposes and obstacles. I would like to point out psychology, the mentality that had been being formed during many years of existence of the Soviet system of education. When people had been educated under a slogan of 'NATO is an aggressive bloc, an enemy and invader', even frequent repetition of the fact that today's NATO differs from what it was 10-20 years ago cannot change their attitude towards this alliance in a moment. They will not be able to grasp the

idea that, in case of its enlargement on account of e.g. Ukraine, Russia, etc., the North Atlantic Alliance will become a different, more progressive bloc, reasoning from the very fact of its enlargement. People are intimidated by the enemy image that they had been frightened a long ago, and certain political forces are profiteering on this fear, trying to get political capital and enlarge their electors' number. Correspondingly, the Communists will never support the idea of Ukraine's entering NATO. However, the Communists still constitute quite an influential force in the Parliament, able to impede enactment of a number of important decisions concerning European integration. But, this integration is not only political or military: it concerns scientific, intellectual sphere, as well as economic and legal fields. The second obstacle impeding Ukraine's integration in the European direction is the incoherence of steps taken by both the Ukrainian government and the president. The multi-vectoriness of the foreign policy, declared some time ago, is now seriously hampering Ukraine's progress in this direction. I would not hasten to speak of integration in any other direction and go beyond one or two countries which can be mentioned there. And, I am very surprised at the purposes of his visit when our president goes to China, India or countries of the Middle East, where he does not engage himself in solving any important questions (for example, oil), taking over only Saudi Arabia's experience concerning the inflow of investments. On the whole, there are many obstacles and I have tried to single out the most prominent ones in the way I see them.

Borys Tarasyuk

Contra to other Central and Eastern European countries, Ukraine had to do simultaneously a lot of extra work in comparison to our neighbors. So, first of all, we have to assert and construct ourselves as an independent country, which was not detest before other Central and Eastern European countries. This country and state did not have many features of an independent state, so we had to create our own national elite capable of secure development of our own country and its economy because we were a part of the economy of the former Soviet Union, but we were not independently developing the economy, unlike other Central and Eastern European countries. Unlike those countries, simultaneously we had to transfer from the socialist model of economy into market economy, which was the common test

for us and for these countries. We were not able to run our economy during the first eighty years of our development as an independent country. Just one figure: in 1993 the inflation was as high as 10,000 per cent. And, among the reasons why we are not that successful in European integration is the cutting off of government's activity in European integration from the declared target of European integration. So, there were a lot of declarations but there was little concrete work done by the government. The corporate and clan interests are taking the upper hand over national interests and, here I can refer to problems with the PCA implementation which was exclusively Ukraine-specific problems in our relationship with the EU. The reason is because the clans — by their nature, objectively — are not interested in the European model of development of Ukraine. Otherwise, they will be deprived of super-profits from investing nothing and acting in the shadow economy. Among other reasons I would mention the inconsistency in the activity of Ukraine and the executive power of Ukraine. Let's take the example of WTO, where we have managed to create a lot of problems, instead of moving towards membership. We have created problems which are making our way toward membership even more difficult, like the decision taken by Ukraine on preferences for some foreign auto company, like the problems created by ourselves in terms of exporting some kind of agricultural products, exports of metal scrap for example, plus a lot of problems in the area of intellectual property rights. And, these are the problems not only on the way to our membership to the WTO, but problems for our relations with the EU. So, they were originated by Ukraine. We had and still have problems with democracy, and during last years even more problems with democracy unlike in economy. And, just a few examples: the falsifications in maneuvering over the elections which has been proven during 2002; what is happening in mass media, human rights, the cases of Gongadze, Oleksandrov have not been investigated properly. A lot of rumors and substantial, I would say, evidences are putting a lot of question marks over actions of the authorities. We had and still have the problems with the functioning of the institutions of democracy, and that is one of the prerequisites for any country to join EU — that is the good functioning of institutions of democracy. We have very weak development of institutions of the civil society in Ukraine. And, last but not least, we have conceptual uncertainty on the part of the EU as to the future of our relationship. So, these are some of the major

reasons and the problems of our way to European integration. Certainly, if there is need to speak about the reasons why Ukraine has to be an inseparable part of the European integration process, this has been answered to my mind during the first group of questions on 'why 'the European choice'".

Ivan Tomych

One can divide this question into two parts. The first part concerns problems that came up in view of objective factors, namely factors of the former development of agriculture before Ukraine's independence. This is a very painful factor; no country except for former Soviet republics suffered such a deep crisis caused by the command-administrative system. There reigned collective and state farm's system, state economy and centralized command planning. It is absolutely clear that, during two or three centuries market mechanisms were forming in western countries and improving in the direction of a socially-oriented economy, effective social order, and this gave the possibility to solve problems positively, which the food sector of that or other country faced. This is an objective factor, which has influence not only in economic, but also in the human context because, due to this obstacle, we in fact extirpated such human qualities as aspiration for self-fulfilment, wish to work effectively, improve one's professional levels and have an adequate to his/her costs material benefit. This situation did not enable to work effectively in full measure, not only in the agricultural sector, but also in other production branches that eventually results in absence of the middle class, the buttress of the society, which would give the dynamics to development of economy. Today, there is a paradox in our agriculture: very small farms that work on two-to-five hectares produce 99% of potato, 88% of vegetables and fruit, and more than 70% of milk and meat. We call them 'private farms'; in Soviet times, they were called 'subsidiary citizens' farms' and were used as an auxiliary food factor; just a negligible percent of such production was realized in the markets. Today's situation is that these small farms became a leading productive section. It is clear that this atomism does not give possibility to work efficiently and qualitatively, to develop an appropriate environment and successfully work in European markets. This is an objective process. On the other hand, now in Ukraine very big companies appeared that work on large areas of 50-100 thousand hectares and more which destroy settlement circuit in the country and do

not bring well-being, form negative opinion, especially among the rural population concerning private property and free market. Both first and second parts are obstacles to normal, civilized development of the farming sector and its interaction with other sectors of economy. These factors need correction both from the side of executive and legislative powers. And, in my opinion, the main problem is in the loss of manpower, rather than loss of economic resources.

As to subjective factors, one should mention that for the last ten years we, i.e. the 'agrarian Ukraine', have lost much, since in 1991-1992 we had exceptional opportunities and potential for carrying out of the land reform, but it started just in 1999. We destroyed what we had without realizing a prospective substitution of the old system of collective property and management for new, private forms of agricultural production. Our agrarian policy often resembled the illustration of Lenin's work 'One Step Forward, Two Steps Back.' The results were tragic for agriculture. The absence of a balanced pro-European agrarian policy caused an inadequate price-formation policy and disbalance in production relations. On the one hand, there is uncertainty, on the other – absence of a concept, an action program. Besides, the lack of political will of the nation and lack of political force that would take responsibility for processes occurring in society – all this proves that the 'agrarian Ukraine' became a country of lost possibilities. In the early 1990s, experts saw great outlooks for our agricultural sector on the assumption of resource potential; and its loss and non-realization played the leading role in deceleration of processes of Ukraine's collaboration with European countries. Like in sports, there formed a situation with different weight categories where, due to its weakness, our state has not the best chances. These are the main socio-economic factors. But, one can remember also the political prerequisites that impede relations on equal rights between Ukraine and the EU, and first of all the political fragmentation of the body of electors — nearly 150 parties – is a negative phenomenon that hampers coordinated work on the economy.

Yulia Tymoshenko

The reason why approaching to the EU can be regarded as a priority of the Ukrainian geopolitical strategy is obvious. The European Union is one of the main centres of evolution of humankind. Its scientific and technical, industrial, investment potential;

democratic and liberal experience, political 'availability' are impressive indeed, in comparison with other regional alliances, and they attract the neighbouring countries which on account of one or another historic reason could not manage to achieve any comparable results. The 'European zone of development', in its turn, is also being a zone of safety for today, and joining to it promises obvious political, economic and military-political advantages to the countries bordering upon the EU; it also provides better opportunities for standing for their own national interests. Ukraine does not make up an exception in this sense: we would like to 'warm ourselves' by the European bonfire and to make use of the above-mentioned advantages.

Concerning the obstacles, I have already mentioned the main one – this is Kuchma's ruling regime and economic oligarchy. Exactly they are those who put obstacles in the way of Ukraine's economic progress, dissipate and squander our national resources, impede democratic movement, dishonour the country and its people before the international community.

I do not see any other important impediments. Most Ukrainians stand for the country's gradual integration into the European Community, what is testified by numerous polls.

Taras Voznyak

Undoubtedly, the reason of our slow integration with the European Community is the post-Soviet heritage; on the other hand, it is a great tradition of non-statehood, being in indefinite space, when the destiny of the nation and persons was decided without our participation.

The obstacles of local character are as follows: uncertainty of EU concerning adaptation of states, starting with Poland and finishing with Albania. I do not understand why Albania (apart from Turkey) can be EU member, and Ukraine cannot.

Another obstacle for Ukraine is that our state is not independent in its choice and its preferences. Influence of the Russian Federation, a great state that is close to us and controls many spheres in Ukrainian life, from economy to information space, hampers Ukraine's moving toward EU. Russia considers Ukraine to be its satellite; but, Russia itself does not express its wish to be an EU member. In the long term, it will have to cooperate with EU however.

Natalia Yakovenko

The reasons, in other words, a necessity, hardly need commenting, as if Ukraine wishes to keep its genuine sovereignty, not a paper one, it merely has no alternative to European integration.

The main impediment, as for me, has still been being the lack of political will in our leaders: 'the European choice' is being declared but not realized, either because of the fuzziness of our geopolitical vector, owing to considerations of the moment and irresolution which are concerned with scrambling for power, or because of engagement in collecting Russian dividends, as well as owing to conflicts of interests within the pro-European lobby; through the fear to lose the customary privileges provided by administrative hierarchy that has in no way been dismantled yet, and through the mere 'Sovietness' of thought, mentioned above, which in this case can be qualified as the fear of any decisive changes.

Yuri Yekhanurov

Unfortunately, now it is difficult to speak about Ukraine's participation in the processes of European integration that needs availability of active positions and consistent realization of some long-term strategy: both from the part of our state and, in fact, the EU. Forced involvement is a more exact and honest definition. We clearly lack a clear articulation of national interests, expressed not on the level of declarations, but of a concrete and effective policy. Hitherto, as it may appear, the European side has not clarified what it intends to do with a new bordering state. This external and internal ambiguity is the main obstacle.

Today, there is a real threat of problems deteriorating when search of the model of relations between Ukraine and EU can be brought to concordance of terms and describing new realities. In this situation, bureaucratic inertia, naturally peculiar to international formations, can turn the setting of either 'associate membership' or 'neighborhood' into a really existing 'iron curtain'. Meanwhile, it should be about the search of a real algorithm of co-ordination of processes, taking place within the limits of united Europe, which reaches a new integral level; and about a potential Europe's constituent, i.e. Ukraine, a country enduring difficult and painful stage of European self-identification.

Volodymyr Yevtukh

First of all, a different understanding of democracy; difference (not for Ukraine's good) in economic development; low intellectual level of so-called authoritative elite of Ukraine; low level of mastering modern technologies, which determine social development of the country. Non-coincidence of phases of countries' political development – Ukraine just starts its construction of a political structure of society similar to Western ones; the public opinion in its majority is not ready for perception and adoption in Ukraine of properties of political and social development in conditions of democracy, as the totalitarian past left a deep track in population's consciousness. And, until the new authoritative and political elite (brought up on the combination of positive features of domestic social development and advantages of the Western way of living) will form, our movement toward Europe is minimal.

Viktor Yushchenko

Internal obstacles are the most important. Ukraine lacks the political will to accept European values. Speaking about outer obstacles, they probably exist, but I would not call it an obstacle, because everyone understands that Europe needs Ukraine and does not renounce it. It is not being discussed in Europe whether one should invite Ukraine to what is called the European house. Instead, there is a question in Europe whether it is necessary to invite Ukraine in the state, like it is today, or not. Surely, the answer is 'no'. For someone, it looks as if there is an outer component of the problem of why we are not in Europe, but the real reason is in the crucial internal component.

If to determine the rating of problems that prevent following the European way, on the first place I would put a tremendous deficit of political will. In order to profess the course of European economic integration, we must start the process with adoption of political decisions that can be formulated only in a consolidated, harmonized society, where leadership of the right and deep political structuring exists, and where power follows democratic methods. That is when, on the civil level and the level of political forces, harmonization of feelings and ideology regarding European choice takes place.

What does acceptance of 'the European choice' mean? It means to put to ourselves many questions. Maybe most of them are not pleasant, but this is that discipline or

that organization without which we can talk about 'Ukraine's European choice' for many years, but we won't feel to be a European state. These are changes that are to be made in the field of internal policy, law, economy, and investments. Are we ready for it? Let's talk about this and about the main obstacle on this path. I am sure that today the power is the crucial hindrance, because it has not will for consolidation and formation of community and political forces.

3. How do you see your country's contribution to the future of Europe; Ukraine's role (real and desirable) in pan-European political, economic and public processes?

Mykola Barabash

Ukraine is able to play a number of various roles owing to its geopolitical position. It can serve as a bridge between the West and the East as well as between the countries bordering upon our state. Ukraine can be a simple transit country of either oil and gas, or illegal migration, depending on which processes will dominate in our country: positive or negative ones. To a certain extent, Ukraine could constitute a factor of stability in the region or subregion (I mean Europe, its eastern part, Transdnistria): the country abandoned its nuclear weapons by its own free will, and there is no common consent about the question amongst the politicians. Thus, with possession of its present defence resources, our country is able to be a guarantor of stability in such a strategically important region as is Eastern Europe. However, as for Ukraine's successful work in this direction or confirmation of its ability to function as a guarantee of security in the region, the country needs to pass a 'campaign against illiteracy' at the European democracy school; we must make changes in all spheres of public, economic and political life.

Volodymyr Barabash

There is no sense to discuss the desirable role of Ukraine; I would like it to correspond with the state's dimensions and population, as well as with the great weight of Ukraine in the world's culture and economy, and with the role the country can play potentially. And, Ukraine's true role, as for me, naturally arises from its unique

geopolitical position. Using the Komsomol vocabulary, Ukraine could play the role of advanced guard in promotion of democratic standards and market reformation in the economy towards the East. Inasmuch as events and processes are much more oppressive in countries of Central Asia than in our country. And, in view of those economic and political relations established in the Soviet period, Ukraine could have been a bearer of democratic ideas farther on, to the East. This is as regards the political role. Concerning the economic role, Ukraine can play as a powerful agrarian country. And, its mythical function of the 'granary of Europe' could have been reanimated, as conditions for agriculture are the most favorable here. So, it would be worthwhile to pass this role to Ukraine. Ukraine could have been able to provide the countries of Europe with necessary foodstuffs. Secondly, there exists Ukraine's powerful potential as a tourist 'Mecca'. Absence of infrastructure prevents the development of this sector of our economy; moreover, there has been a certain dispensation of the sphere in Europe, and to make certain progress in the development of tourist business in Ukraine and bring it to the international level we need a powerful incentive. As regards social processes, I have already spoken of Ukraine's role in the eastern direction. Ukraine possesses broad experience of co-existence of different religions and confessions on common territory – Orthodoxy, Islam, Catholicism – and this co-existence has always been peaceful. Therefore, the country could have used its experience of different religions' peaceful co-existence for reconciliation of Islamic and Christian worlds, based on its own experience of prevention of such conflicts. Perhaps, this is the direction where Ukraine could play a considerable and very important role. I have my personal attitude toward religious processes in Ukraine, as I think that moral standards of both the society and the authorities must be higher. If Ukraine were a part of Europe, where the Catholic Church is objectively being more progressive and able to undergo changes together with the society, this could have influenced our country positively, as the Orthodox Church's inflexibility is estranging people. Things that are more comprehensible and simpler attract them. If the Orthodox Church adopted the experience of positive changes from the Catholic Church, this would have helped to improve the situation, first in the Orthodox Church itself.

Rayisa Bogatyriova

I think that, in the geopolitical aspect, Ukraine's mission will be to wipe finally the ages-old dividing line between Western Europe and Eurasia (namely Russia) and, in the future, become a dominant participant in the creation of that great Europe which de Gaulle dreamt about: from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In any case, realization of such an epochal project is impossible without active participation of Kyiv and, at the same time, in my opinion, it can become a global purpose of Ukraine's geopolitical strategy. I think that this strategy of creation of a 'Mega-Europe' meets the geopolitical and geo-economic potential of Ukraine that is situated in the territorial-communicational centre of the region, on the crossing of trade roads, in the crucial sector for maintenance of continental security.

Andriy Derkach

One can not but notice that the EU is not able to solve all the problems that the continent faces by its own strength. Like every international organization at all times, beginning with successfully ceased the League of Nations, it is disposed to excessive bureaucratism, frequent predominance of minor questions, and not quite quick response and consecution in solution of the most important problems. At any internal alignments of forces among the staff and direction of international organization, there is not direct responsibility before citizens for taking and solution of decisions. Remaining realistic, we should be aware that one can not change anything here; the most of reforms are knowingly doomed for failure. Like living organisms, international organizations exist and develop in accordance with their own laws, and there's a limit to their institutional reorganization. At the same time, mutual attraction between Russia and Ukraine on the one hand, and Germany on the other originates from the epoch of Napoleonic wars. Russia and Prussia were most interested in liquidation of the imposing of will of one superstate with a messianic complex to the continent; and profitability of trade gave additional activity to their cooperation. Otto von Bismark, father of German unity, continued development of this tradition. Under Bismark, the main binding strings of Russian-German partnership finally determined things like the mutual interest in stability on the continent, non-admission of imposing the will of third countries to it, mutually beneficial outlets and common economic complemen-

tarity. 'The Iron Chancellor' was aware that a one-sided German orientation towards Western Europe can not be enough; continental stability will be impossible without cooperation with the East. The situation developed after disintegration of the Soviet Union and appearance of an independent Russia and Ukraine, made precepts of continental cooperation more actual, having connected together historical facts with present-day events. By providing the continent with stable development and security, the geopolitical Berlin – Kyiv – Moscow axis moves more clearly from the sphere of abstract thoughts to today's politics. A continental axis allows to realize a number of tasks vital for EU's stable development. It concerns both economic problems and political security. Interaction of the Organization of Regional Integration and the EU through Russia and Ukraine on the one hand, and Germany on the other, actually means creation of one continental self-sufficient market which meets interests of all the member states of these organizations. In my opinion, this is Ukraine's best contribution to the future of a united Europe.

Stepan Gavrysh

Ukraine is a very important state for Europe, one having a certain geopolitical position, enormous natural and human resources; thus, it can considerably influence on EU policy. On the other hand, it will become possible just when standards of Ukraine's development are essentially changed in the direction of progress. During these years, Ukraine undoubtedly has been evolving into a regional leader (it was unsuccessful though). Having a rather active position in the east of the European continent, Ukraine can play a crucial role as a heavy mediator between Europe and Eurasia. I think that its geographic position that allows to quickly renew the 'Silk Route' even to China is a source of serious economic prospects. The matter concerns also effective energy transportation passages. I believe that Ukraine can become an important security factor for Europe, in particular in the geopolitical aspect, taking into consideration that it has northern borders with states which will never join EU. And, thus it can provide a maximally effective position of the EU from the standpoint of European Community's security of development, but also global security on the whole. I am also sure that Ukraine will make a considerable contribution with its special resources that now get incentives for their development. Firstly, its agricul-

tural sphere, and the sphere connected with new technologies in the field of aircraft construction and the space industry. It is very desirable for Europe to cooperate with Ukraine on the condition that standards of this cooperation will respond to standards of modern European development, i.e. bear high-tech character. Ukraine's integration in Europe will be evidence that Europe gets serious advantages in global competition. I would like to mention that thoughts like this are far from complete; they are connected with understanding that this is possible if we appreciably change the political, socio-economic and social situation in Ukraine and make it respond to Europe's standards of living.

Vitaliy Kononov

As with most things in life and especially with politics in Ukraine, the ideal and the real are marked by a gulf of differences between them. Why and how does this gap happen? Again, it lies in the difference between the pronouncements or declarations made by the policy makers and the real intentions of the elite and how these statements or commitments are translated into action. Our task is to shorten and bridge that gap. We can only do it by enhancing people's participation: to hold policy makers (who are paid from the taxpayers' pocket) accountable for their commitments. Now, coming back to the question, Ukraine's ideal role in Europe is to be a full-fledged modern socially responsible market and democracy and contribute to the further strengthening of peace and stability. Politically, Ukraine should be a link and a bridge between Russia and the EU and not a buffer. Economically, Ukraine should be a market based on effective management of resources and principles of sustainable development. Socially, Ukraine should be a model with maximum protection of human rights and freedoms on its soil. However, in reality, only time and further steps of the policy makers will show what is in store for us.

Leonid Kravchuk

If one is to compare the population of member states of the European Union and that of Ukraine, one can see that only Germany, Great Britain, Italy and France are bigger than our country. Nevertheless, our potential lies not only in quantity of inhabitants but in their cultural and educational quality, not to mention our agri-

cultural sector. Therefore, our perspectives are rather considerable. And, the result depends on the mutual wish to develop and to cooperate.

Until we all together set the single task to build an economically and spiritually rich nation's life that would correspond with European standards; until we start its accomplishment; until we create such a system of power that would guarantee democratic development of the society, we should not say a word about Ukraine's role in Europe and in the world.

Integration into pan-European and Euro-Atlantic structures should be considered in complex with participation in regional and international political, economic, financial and other organizations and institutions like the OSCE, Council of Europe, European Union. As regards the latter, of course, there are certain differences and peculiarities on the way of integration into the EU and NATO.

In this context, Ukraine has to fulfill its obligations and bring its legislation to correspondence with norms and standards accepted by the Council of Europe as soon as possible; to increase the general pace of realization of democratic, social and economic reforms in all spheres; to continue integration of our domestic economy into European and global economies; to guarantee freedom of speech and other rights and liberties of citizens of Ukraine.

Ivan Kuras

It would be very naive to expect that Ukraine's drawing in processes of European integration would cause qualitative changes in the European Community's life. We in Ukraine are aware of the fact that the present state of affairs in our country could rather bring problems to Europe than offer any settlement for them. However, if we try to judge not from the positions of the present state of affairs but from the standpoint of strategic thought, we should take into consideration that the factor of Ukraine will be of great importance for the future of Europe anyway. If Ukraine is not left outside the borders of a 'political Europe', then the very fact will contribute to enlargement of a stability and democracy zone in the world. Otherwise, we will have the chance to talk about an increase of risks for both our state and the whole continent.

Ukraine's contribution to the future of Europe is determined by the country's potential: its human, economic, scientific resources, its experience in keeping inter-

national peace etc. After all, Ukraine in the status of a full-fledged European state will make restoration of the 'Empire of Evil' on the post-Soviet space impossible; it will contribute to the establishment of civilized relations between the EU and Russia and other countries on the post-Soviet space.

Ella Libanova

Firstly, if we can guarantee stability in our state, the implementation of reforms, not rushing from one side to other, but carrying out a gradual policy, then it will in some way guarantee the stability in Europe. Why do our neighbor states act as Ukraine's attorneys in Europe and in the world? Because Ukraine is unstable; first of all, we are a headache for these countries. Secondly, I would like Ukraine to say its word in culture, art and humanitarian field. The possibility to become Europe's raw materials appendage always threatened and now threatens Ukraine. Recently, I've revised research regarding urbanization rates in Ukraine. We got used to the fact that Ukraine is an agricultural region, which specializes in agrarian production. But, Canada or, say, Argentina have the same volumes of agricultural production, but the share of urban population in these countries is much higher: 80% there, 67% at home. And, urban population is another way of living, more access to social conjuncture, and broader world outlook. And, I would like Ukraine to develop harmoniously, like all civilized world, not only Europe, but also North America and Australia. But, here the question was about a desirable role of Ukraine. Unfortunately, Ukraine's real role is to supply of cheap workforce, quite qualified and law-abiding that adapts well to European conditions. I do not mean our girls with doubtful business-plans; the matter is about the real workers. Nowadays, Ukraine is a supplier of grain. And, I would like Ukraine to export flour, not grain. Ukraine is a competitor for Western producers: for example, our Antonov aircraft just is not admitted to European markets. Unfortunately, Ukraine cares for its image very badly. For example, today on the Internet, I saw the information that one of our companies had been declared very corrupt. I opened the site and looked through the list to know who is the neighbor of our company. It turned out that the list contains representatives of all developed countries, not African states, but the Netherlands, Great Britain, the USA, France and Germany. Nevertheless, our journalists present this information in the way as if our country finds itself among

the worst representatives of the world, the most decent of which is Nigeria at best. We know what bad things we have, but is there necessity to add more?

Oleksandr Moroz

Ukraine must strengthen Europe's positions in the world community, having become its full member equal in rights. Our country can come out with an initiative of working out a concept of security and cooperation in the world. The latest events have shown that the necessity of such concept is imminent, and we are able to undertake this mission.

Volodymyr Palij

Ukraine's integration into the European Community will introduce to the last some moments which should be taken into consideration. In relations with Europe, Ukraine should be regarded not as a consumer but as an active participant of the integration process. The world is trying to unite to solve political, economic and social problems. If the process of solving economic and social questions is stirred up in Ukraine, and if connected with the process of integration into Europe, this factor will in turn have positive influence upon irreversible development of democracy in the country.

I am sure that Ukraine is able to bring a lot to the common good of Europe, especially in foodstuff market (agricultural environmentally clean production). If Europe invests in developing Ukrainian farming, in return it will receive high quality natural foodstuffs and convenience foods. For now, it seems that Ukraine is consuming the goods from Europe that partly lost their value. Such categories of goods need new markets, where they could be sold better. Today, Ukraine and other countries of the post-Soviet space cleared their markets for such goods (from hardware to foodstuff). But, Ukraine itself is a country able to make products in demand in Europe. Western investors and managers have to understand this; also, they should have access to information on the Ukrainian market and Ukrainian manufacturers' potential.

There is also another aspect. If Ukraine becomes a full member of the EU, it will simultaneously form a kind of a buffer between Europe and Asian countries. For now, there have been a few cases when natives of Asian countries made their migration ways through the territory of Ukraine. It is possible that certain criminal groups can

make use of this opportunity, too. In this case, Ukraine cannot settle numerous problems concerning the security of both our country and European countries, on its own. In fact, it is customary to help one's own neighbors. If your neighbor is steady on his legs, if you can communicate with him on equal terms, together you will be able to withstand any danger, not to mention that any work is easier to start when it is being started together.

Mykola Plavyuk

To my mind, Ukraine can take a worthy place in Europe. We'll start with economic aspects. Now, mankind enters an epoch when the problem of food for millions takes on special significance. And, Ukraine with its sector of agricultural production can be a serious factor both for Europe and other continents. Ukraine's geographical position is of stupendous importance for Europe with its orientation to the markets of Asia and the Middle East: I anticipate that, in next decades, the main motorways and communication lines will pass through Ukraine's territory. I do not mention our natural resources and the industrial potential with which we can enrich Europe in its competition with North America or Asian states. So, in economic connection I see an important positive contribution of Ukraine for the benefit of all Europe.

The cultural aspect: today's globalization acquires shapes of cultural expansion of Americanism, which in many respects differs from assessment of cultural values of Europe, the cradle of Christian civilization of mankind. In this respect, the elements of Ukrainian culture can strengthen cultural values of the European continent.

One more moment: a sense of social justice peculiar to Ukrainians, though it was more declarative than real, completely finds itself in the course of European traditions. Europeans solve economic problems making greater accent on social justice than northern Americans do. And, in this respect, the Ukrainian experience and traditions can also be useful for the European community.

In the political aspect, Ukraine will be an important factor as well. In our sight, there spreads a game between Atlantic partners: the US and the so-called 'old Europe'. I think that a part of the 'old Europe' will draw attention to the country with 48 million of people. Our neighborhood with Russia is also of great importance. The question with who Ukraine will be — Europe or Russia — is also significant for Europe.

In general, the reality of our contribution to pan-European economic, social and political processes much depends on how quickly we'll settle our internal affairs. We should first of all rely upon our own strength and act on the level of higher standards than we've been acting during the last century. All in all, Ukraine has no grounds to approach Europe with an inferiority complex, because we can not only take something from Europe, but also give it much.

Myroslav Popovych

Ukraine, not only in geographic but also in cultural sense, is a European country with independent and partly traditional European ties and orientations. Beyond the processes of European integration, Ukraine will feel the influence of European events and strive for European contracts most of all (among the post-Soviet countries). In the worst case, Ukraine will be a constant source of trouble and instability for Europe, a territory from which the flows of smuggling and illegal migration penetrate Europe. I consider this scenario to be not only wrong, but also not quite realistic. At best and desirable case, Ukraine can return to the role it played in the south of Europe in 16-17th century, namely that of mediator between the Russian super-state and the West, as well as a guide for European influences to the East. One should especially mention the possibilities of Ukraine's influence on former Trans-Caucasian and Asian Russians, which are linked to Ukraine by modern pro-European orientations and are not separated by the imperial past. If, hopefully, the course of events in Ukraine does not take on catastrophic nature, then this version will one way or another come true.

Volodymyr Pyekhota

Ukraine has already done, is now doing and will do a lot for the future of Europe. Let us remember an unprecedented step taken by our state at the daybreak of its independence, when we declared our status of a non-nuclear state and got out of our nuclear weapons out of our own free will. And today, Ukrainian military units under the aegis of the UN perform their peace-making missions in the world's hot spots.

I hope that the time will come and Ukraine will restore its fame as Europe's granary, though not everybody would like this.

In addition, Ukraine's scientific and intellectual potential, as well as our people's

cultural and historical attainments could be used more effectively on the condition that we integrated into Europe.

I am convinced that we do have things to be proud of and the things to share with the world community. However, this process must be reciprocal and mutually beneficial.

Oleh Samchyshyn

Let us consider this question from three standpoints: political processes and Ukraine's participation in them. Ukraine is a great country with steady political traditions. It is one of the countries which passed the process of natural selection (Israel can also be counted among them), so it survives despite very hard times. And, these traditions, together with Ukraine's role, are being now highly estimated in Europe. I have many contacts with my partners; the year before last, we met our Austrian colleagues, representatives of the Austrian Consumer Association, and they said: 'Do not hurry to join Europe, keep those values you possess'. But, why? Our people have become accustomed to having a master who gained a great authority formed on mostly irrational basis. It may be either a tsar or a president: a non-democratic model of the relations citizens – authorities that guarantees steadiness and stability of even not very high standard of living will always be more comprehensible than a democratic one. Democratic values cannot be transplanted to non-democratic or unprepared soil automatically. Our patriarchal traditions are not so easy to eradicate. If I am not mistaken, Machiavelli said that if we free a man who got used to live in bondage, he will run about like a wild animal, not knowing what to do, until someone clever will make use of this. On the other hand, the culture of the Ukrainian people, from the angle of humanity and tolerance, is being among one of the world's highest ones.

Public processes: the experience gained in the activities carried out by our non-governmental organizations during the last ten years, as well as the work done by our analysts and historians, in fact, has not been appreciated yet. And, we have done a lot during these years of independence. In fact, this is our first attempt at independence, and our achievements are not as unimportant as they may seem. There are few countries which can be characterised by such tense struggle for power. This is rather a positive than a negative process.

And, the economic standpoint: Ukraine possesses the best lands in Europe and age-old traditions of agriculture. I think, in future, Ukraine will set the fashion in Europe as an agricultural-industrial country, in growing of agricultural product, in traditions of farming. For example, biotechnologies and genetically modified products will never be accepted in Ukraine. We have lobbied marking of genetically modified products in article 18 of Ukraine's Law 'On Protection of Consumers' Rights'; it is being a declarative standard so far, but in course of our work, we concluded that these products would never be accepted in Ukraine. In addition, our rural economies have a great outlook, and in the nearest future they could set the fashion in agriculture throughout the whole Europe.

Hanna Skrypnyk

First of all, Ukraine could become an original ground for approach of European values to the Asian space. Confirmation of European norms and living standards in the Ukrainian society will positively influence the formation of civil society and development of a market economy in former USSR republics, most of which haven't overcome the inheritance of totalitarian past yet.

One shouldn't forget as well about potential abilities of the Ukrainian economy. Europe and the world community will be able to widely use the famous Ukrainian humus that, in future, will become an important source of limited food resources of our planet; riches of our entrails that could organically enlarge natural resources of our western neighbors.

In spite of negative tendencies of the last decade caused by actual termination of financing of state scientific programs, the Ukrainian science has not exhausted its potential. Ukraine's positions are strong in aircraft construction, aeronautics, metallurgy and some directions of mechanical engineering. And, though Europe does not always willingly admit competitors to its markets, sooner or later it will have to cooperate with Ukraine. Benefits from such cooperation are obvious. Because artificial removal of the state with almost 48-million population from European markets will, at the same time, mean the loss of the Ukrainian market for Europe that in future will have huge capacity.

The territory of Ukraine has a very important strategic position as a natural transport passage between Europe and Asia, which will soon be covered with a dense

network of modern trunk-railways and highways, renovated gas and oil pipe lines, electric mains, in which Western and Central and Eastern Europe is very interested. My optimism in this matter is being fortified by active actions of the Ukrainian Transport Ministry that, during a short period, has managed to realize some extremely interesting and perspective programs and projects. One of these projects is the establishing of piggyback transportation on a route Illichivsk — Klaipeda and Kyiv – Slavkuv, which are very beneficial both from economic and ecological point of view.

As to the real role of Ukraine in pan-European political, economic, and social processes, then – I repeat once again – it will depend on changes in its domestic life. Without raising of social activity, removal of oligarch clans from power, development of a civil society and formation of new elite, Ukraine's movement to European community will be slowed down.

Volodymyr Stretovych

Taking into account the potential of Ukraine, it should have been one of the leaders of new Europe's development. Taking into consideration not only resources, but also history, geographic position and so on, the economic potential should give us an incitement. I believe in the 'Ukrainian miracle', which typologically resembles economic miracles of South-Eastern Asia. But, the possibility to pass the way for several years that the others passed during decades depends on the political will and political conviction of the population, which is already tired of today's troubles. Probably in 15-20 years, Ukraine will be among those 5-7 countries that will be the trendsetters in Europe's development. At least among the Slavic states, we are going to take a leading role and maintain it on the pan-European level.

There forms a biopolar system in the world: the EU and the US. And, Ukraine can play an important role in the EU. But, all this will depend on the politicians and population, who will support a European choice. Without this we'll make no headway for a very long time. But, we should change the staid approach and vision of Ukraine as a state that did not come about. Ukraine should be a leader not only in territory and population, but also in the policy it will implement.

Natalia Sumska

There is a situation in Ukraine where decisions, on which the destiny of the state and the nation can depend, sometimes even are not brought to people's attention. For example, Ukraine's participation in solution of the Iraqi problem: the overwhelming majority of the population actively express their discontent with this decision, but officials absolutely do not pay attention to the will of their people. Maybe it is a right decision, maybe it can make better Ukraine's image on the international scene, but an ordinary citizen does not understand what we need that for. That's why it is difficult to answer the question what contribution our state can make because authorities won't deliberate with people and will get its own way. It is unpleasant to admit, but there is an impression that nothing depends on the people in Ukraine. On the other hand, our state has experience to keep peace and order in society, yield to no provocation, avoid ethnic and denominational conflicts, at least those that can bring about human sacrifices. This is a positive experience that much depends on mental peculiarities of Ukrainians. I am sure that Ukrainian culture and science will make an invaluable contribution to European culture and science. For this however, one should cardinaly change approaches of the government to financing of these spheres, prevent the drain of brains and talents from Ukraine. Science and culture make progress in society; it is as important as the throat for the human body. They are to be stimulated and not blocked, and then it will be possible to talk about Ukraine's role in pan-European processes.

Petro Symonenko

Up to date, this role is minimal. Ukraine's participation in pan-European processes and, furthermore, influence on their course, will become possible only in the case of democratic transformations in our country, when people become a subject of political and socio-economic processes. One shouldn't exclude that this process can be quite long.

One also shouldn't exclude that the conditions of geopolitical and geo-economic system will make EU concern about increase of a number of states which will cooperate with united Europe more closely. We have already first results of this process. In March 2003, the European Commission determined a strategy of its relations

for next ten years with the 'friendly circle of nearest neighbors' whose entry into European Union is not planned yet. The question is about Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, Belarus and a number of states of the South Mediterranean, from Morocco to Israel to Palestine. Europeans offer this 'circle' a free movement of people, goods, services and capitals.

Nevertheless, we understand that these propositions, suitable for many, are rather caused by external events than the natural course of events. On the basis of a frankly cynical American supremacy, Europeans hasten to declare their own zone of geopolitical influence, anticipating that the US won't fix on Iraq.

In practical meaning, one can name a number of possibilities that can become Ukraine's real contribution to the common European house.

In the political sphere:

- sizable — by European measures — territory and population of Ukraine (almost 50 mn) objectively create prerequisites in order for normal European stability in Ukraine to be an adequate guarantee of military-political stability in all Eastern Europe;
- the processes of demilitarization in Ukraine (rejection of nuclear weapons, a military reform) on the one hand, and high military-technical potential of our state on the other, can objectively become a necessary component of one system of pan-European security guaranteeing neglected before the Helsinki agreements (of 1975) and their principles of territorial integrity and safety;
- on the world scene Ukraine could more often speak one language with all Europe.

In the economic sphere:

- possibility of transit of energy resources through Ukraine's territory from Eurasian and Asian regions to provide all Europe with alternative sources of energy (especially, a partnership between Germany and France would be important here), and tight cooperation in the field of power engineering;
- Ukrainian potential in space and aircraft construction;
- manufacture of engines, high-accuracy facilities, complicated designing and engineering, and telecommunications;
- manufacture of weapon and Ukrainian technology of double-utilization, as

Ukraine is one of the leaders in world weapons market;

- Ukraine is a considerable source of raw materials and resources; with the assistance of European partners we can raise the development of this source to the highest technological level;
- Ukraine's agricultural potential, given the concentration of the best humus in the world within our territory. And, I consider that Europe shouldn't be afraid of low prices for Ukrainian agricultural production; we can guarantee food safety of European partners. Because, are not division of labor and production specialization the driving forces of present-day world economy?;
- Ukrainian manpower that mustn't be sacrifice of 'brain drain', but become a link of pan-European production processes for the welfare of Ukraine and European partners.

As to Ukraine's role in future Europe, it will depend on the success of Ukraine and European partners in the realization of mentioned and other possible contributions to one European prosperity. As to the desirable role, I am going to tell the European Community one thing: Ukraine is not Malta, though it seems so to somebody in Europe the on basis of quite real economic indicators. And, speaking well of it, I'll give just one example: World War 2 and Ukraine's role in it.

Kostiantyn Sytnyk

We (Ukraine and its inhabitants) do not differ from Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, etc. in the intellectual, scientific or cultural sense at all. Perhaps, differences can be observed as regards those countries which are more mature politically, such as Great Britain, Germany and France. We have not become a great country yet, but we possess strong potential in this direction. For instance, if our science were given half the money put into the European science, I am absolutely convinced that we would take the lead over European countries in most main characteristics. Meanwhile we, under our beggarly conditions, are managing to survive and make epoch-making scientific discoveries; and what opportunities our science will have under sufficient financing! In addition, Ukrainian scientists have great authority in the scientific world; they work in countries of the European Union, and one could say that they precisely are influencing Europe's development greatly, even if we are not aware of

this influence. And, when our fellow citizens appear in the Council of Europe, they are influencing EU development, too. In this way, we demonstrate what life should not be like, and suggest right and wrong ways of evolution to Europe. We influence countries of the European Union with our faults. One can take S.Holovaty in different ways; regard him and his counterparts not as patriots who create a negative image of our country. However, these people show that the executive power in Ukraine does not make for any rise of our prestige. Nonetheless, if they had held back negative facts from Ukrainian life or had given untruthful information on the state of affairs in Ukraine, this would have worsened our image much more, as our country is not an isolated space, and one can easily observe most negative phenomena of the inner political and social life with the unaided eye. And, there exists a feedback: they suggest possible ways out this or that crisis, and we are gradually changing ourselves, and changing for the better. Of course, there is also a desirable role of Ukraine in European processes. We would like to act at the level of Great Britain or France, and not to try to catch up with Slovakia or Hungary. We would like to play the key, important role in our region, not being a simple buffer between the West and the East. We intend to be the vanguard, not the rearguard of Europe. Despite our country's tumbledown and a plundered economic system, in trips across Ukraine one can see small and medium enterprises reviving and becoming quite competitive not only in Ukraine but in international markets. This often happens with the help of our foreign partners. For example, in Krasny Luch, in the Donetsk region, the Americans built a clothes factory, production of which finds markets not only in Ukraine but also abroad, and is exported actively. Besides, we have relations of various kinds, first of all, cultural contacts, and I can unambiguously say that we have only one way – the way to Europe.

Borys Tarasyuk

I would say that Ukraine has already contributed and continues to contribute into the common objectives of the Europeans, first of all in the sphere of stability and security where Ukraine has already contributed and continues to contribute. In the Balkans, Ukraine was participant from the very beginning in all major peacekeeping and peace-enforcing operations starting from Croatia, then Bosnia-Herzegovina, now in Kosovo. Then, Ukraine is an institutional peace guarantor in Trans-Dnestr conflict

together with Russia and OSCE and it is active in trying to bring peace to conflict areas in Caucasus. Ukraine is well known, but it is not that often that we hear about its ability to bring peace and harmony to ethnic relations. In doing so, Ukraine has indicated the example of behavior towards national minorities. And, remember that at the beginning of the 90. Ukraine and Hungary were the first to create a bilateral document on national minorities. After that other countries of Central and Eastern Europe followed our examples. So that means that Ukraine can project its own ability to establish ethnic harmony to the rest of Europe.

Ukraine is a powerful agricultural and industrial country which means that Ukraine is both the source of exports to markets of EU and candidate countries and, at the same time, Ukraine is a rather powerful market of 48,5 million customers. In joining EU or being apart of the European integration process, Ukraine is directly facilitating the spreading of the stability and democracy and prosperity to the East of Europe. Ukraine is in the center of Europe and it is logical that Ukraine has to be an inseparable part of the European integration processes. Let's not forget that, in terms of territory, Ukraine is the largest European country, not to mention the European part of Russia, and Ukraine is number 5 in terms of population in Europe. By its geopolitical situation, Ukraine is a connecting link between the North and South of Europe, between the West and East and, in a larger extent, between Europe and Asia.

Ukraine has well educated labor force which was, is and will be in need not only in Ukraine but in other countries and the search of our software specialists is one of the examples.

Ivan Tomych

One thing is our wishes, our reality is another. I would like Ukraine to take its optimal place in the European family. I mean the concord of those interests that have already formed in Europe, and those realities that meet the current level of Ukraine's development. It concerns Ukraine's occupation of those economic niches which are free now, saturation of the European market with goods that are not produced or produced in insufficient quantity in Europe. I believe it would be beneficial for both parties and help economic growth of Ukrainian agricultural production. What do I mean? In Ukraine, agricultural products, both cereals and vegetables, takes place

mainly in environmentally appropriate conditions; these are safe, clean natural products which a high-tech Europe needs. I think that a high level of industrialization of Western states will need such goods. This kind of cooperation and Ukraine's participation in European processes is quite possible. But, one should remember that our state should take a number of responsibilities concerning corresponding standards worked out for EU countries. These are: bringing our legislation to conformity, standardization, and joining the WTO. Then, we could get good chances and positive advertisement for Ukrainian goods to enter global and, first of all, European markets. Another element of cooperation is a complex of favorable conditions for production of not only upscale (due to good natural soil and climate conditions), but also cheap products (because of glut on the market of agricultural labor force). Recently, I've seen an analysis of the EU carried out by a German advisory panel, and with members of this panel we discussed expediency of Ukrainian milk the cost of which is much lower than analogous European products.

Besides, Ukraine's peculiar natural properties are still unused, for example the landscape of the Carpathian Mountains, which can be considered as a base of 'green tourism' and a source of natural resources. We did not work here on the professional level, and did not open the potential of this region neither for ourselves, nor for the world. Also, the Crimea does not work at full capacity, and its uniqueness can be completely used both as a resort, and a tourist zone. Moreover, the combination of Ukraine's agrarian and technological potential and great experience in EU management can give considerable dividends and be a prospective way of cooperation between EU and Ukraine.

Yulia Tymoshenko

Joining European 'Orthodox' countries with the 'Catholic-Protestant' European Union will re-unite civilization 'branches' of the Christian oecumene and thereby change spiritual landscape of the united Europe. I am sure that this 'cultural union' will bring out most impressive results for both 'old' Europe and the whole human-kind. It will fundamentally rejuvenate the European civilization and prepare it for new achievements.

As concerns Ukraine's role, I hope that in a future united Europe our country will become prominent in various spheres – in those of spiritual thought, science and

technology, art, – as Ukraine's endowments in these fields are obvious. Particularly, I hope that the Ukrainian nation, having become part of the European multi-national community, will hinder from the leveling, unifying tendencies of European integration. The ability of the Ukrainians to keep their own cultural identity, cultivated by hundreds of years of dependence, will assist them in finding themselves in new geopolitical circumstances and in responding to the challenges of globalization, with new spiritual attainments.

As regards the economy, Ukraine's joining the EU will provide noticeable benefits. One can speak of the potential Ukrainian industrial infrastructure, innovative potential, energy resource etc. Speaking of geo-economy, I would accentuate only one thing: Ukraine is a communicative hub on the crossroads of Europe and Asia, a favorable base for the EU's outlet to the Caspian region, for enlarging the economic expansion toward Russia and farther to the East. And, there is nothing to add to this.

Taras Voznyak

To my mind, the EU is not only an economic union, or a union like it is today. The problem of European security is extremely serious; the question concerning effectiveness of its eastern regions or those states that belong to Central Europe and are EU members depends on the situation at the borders, the situation of new members 'at home'. If Ukraine is unstable, if Belarus remains as it is today, the success of EU policy in this direction will be under big question mark. And, in this connection, the stability of Ukraine, its benevolence and good level of cooperation is what it will be able to contribute to EU. Moreover, I think that soon the question about energy supply will become extremely topical, because Ukraine as a transport passage for various energy carriers can be not only for those from Russia, but also from Central Asia, Southern Caucasus, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan. This is a great chance for the EU.

In my opinion, the European Union is not ready for the tasks which it will soon face, partly because of small-minded thinking when Portugal, owing to competition cannot admit, for instance, Moldova that can pretend to money from European funds for agriculture or rise of living standard. In the course of time, the EU will rise up to the height of its tasks, especially since the time passes swiftly, and events that take place in Iraq, diversification of oil supply, or vice versa, narrowing of the field in

which energy carries can get from and exhausting of natural resources will at long last make the EU cooperate with Ukraine.

Thinking about the question of what is unique in Ukraine, I came to a conclusion confirmed by Dutchmen that the natural resource of Ukraine is its soil, real humus. It is an inexhaustible resource, which has been giving life to people for hundreds of years. Now, unfortunately, we waste air, water, soil and other resources in vain.

Natalia Yakovenko

I think that Ukraine's potential contribution to future of the united Europe is determined by the geography itself. Today, Ukraine is a geographic bridge between Europe and Asia, and in long-term it could become the territory where the main centres of Euro-Asian economic cooperation would be situated: transport corridors, mediatorial structures, etc. In its turn, this would determine Ukraine's political role as a natural mediator, who would be the one most interested in harmonization of relations between the West and the East. As regards social processes, Ukraine can hardly pretend to possess any independent voice in the nearest future, as civil society is being in embryo here, and the mechanisms of forming and translating public opinion are still being underdeveloped; actually, they are not provided with adequate intellectual support enough.

Yuri Yekhanurov

Ukraine's contribution shouldn't be regarded as something static and disposable, or its role as a fulfillment of actions ordered by somebody. The strength of a united Europe is in unanimity of variety, in riches of cultural traditions and economic structures. Having coped with economic and political problems, having provided its citizens with a worthy life, Ukraine will not only be able to become equal in rights as a member of the EU, but also give it a new impulse for development.

Volodymyr Yevtukh

Ukraine can make a noticeable contribution to the development of science, technologies and, within some framework, provide EU countries with some kinds of agricultural production. As to political and social processes, Ukraine's contribution to this sphere, at least in the present stage of development, is not observed. The main

reason of this is that Europe is not ready to perceive Ukraine with its political and social structure as a state that meets modern European standards within the framework of globalization processes. Culturally, by means of fiction and art, Ukraine can promote understanding and perception by the Western world of people who, due to objective circumstances, being Europeans geographically and mentally, nevertheless found themselves closer to other civilizations than, say, the overwhelming majority of western Europeans.

Viktor Yushchenko

The greatest value for Europe with regard to Ukraine is to see Ukraine a democratic, predictable and clear state in carrying out an internal policy. Figuratively speaking, it is important for Europe to understand where this country is moving. Or, maybe it really goes through the period of feudalism and nomadic tribes which move half a season to the East, and then half a season to the West in herds, depending on weather. I did not meet politicians who would say that Europe is not interested in Ukraine.

If we recall the Warsaw conference in autumn last year on relations between Ukraine and EU, then I would like to remind a key thesis by Javier Solana that Ukraine shouldn't play with European rules, but play by European rules. Undoubtedly, Ukraine's possible role is highly assessed in Europe; the majority of political players of Europe see Ukraine as a European country.

Frankly speaking, I do not understand why there are discussions in the Ukrainian society on the theme of 'who are we': Europeans or not Europeans. Questions like this shouldn't appear even at a subconscious level, because we were and will be Europeans. But, now there takes place a process of a political choice when political powers that declared the European course as a successful one, especially during the first term of President Kuchma, are now unable to realize the European perspective. As a result, we can see that the maximum that Europeans can give us today is to recognize us as neighbors.

This is a geographical status, and since we are a geographical center of Europe, discussions whether we are Europeans or not are to some extent humiliating. If a question like this was put to Poles for example, I think a great number of representatives of this nation would just take offence at such definitions and actions, which have not clear philosophy.

4. Current EU enlargement and its influence upon Ukraine

Mykola Barabash

Just as every change at the neighbor's place influence the situation in your own household, so the present enlargement of the EU will undoubtedly have effect upon Ukraine. Our close relations with Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, our citizens' continual mutual contacts can make up a factor of positive changes in our country, as those transformations that the EU membership requires and which are to take place in our neighboring countries without fail will reflect on the conscience of those our citizens who often visit these countries, and will be transported to Ukraine in this way. And, Europe itself will experience changes, too. But, on the other hand, the world will become harsher, international emulation will intensify, and Ukraine will have to accommodate itself to new conditions. In one way or another, the European Union is approaching our borders, and we have to take into consideration these new conditions, the situation in which we will have to live. Hence, I see the influence exerted upon our country by the European Union's enlargement to the East as mostly positive, because the new economic and political principles the EU is guided by the principles that are to become indispensable conditions for new members of the EU. This will organically come into our economic and political system, as they will develop into a standard in both domestic and foreign policy processes.

Volodymyr Barabash

As with any dialectic process, let us consider two sides of the question. Firstly: the EU's present enlargement is going on without Ukraine's participation, and this is very unfavorable for us, as it preserves the processes which I mentioned while answering

the first question. We stay beyond the bounds of civilized Europe. On the other hand, for progressive forces this is a stimulus to meet the standards which are to be achieved if a country is pretending to membership in EU structures. We are aware of the fact that they do not invite us there, and that our present political elite does not long for the membership at all, as it is non-competitive and will not be able to withstand the pressure of progressive management requirements. They possess no potential for self-perfection, and fear of competition forces them to impede positive processes aimed at European integration from within. And, it is not a question of political processes, but of cultural and legal appreciation of the European civilization's principles and standards. As a businessman, I am not afraid of competition, as I am always ready for positive changes, which cannot be said as regards our elite. That is why I am deeply convinced that the fact of EU's enlargement without Ukraine's participation is a great negative for the future of our country and, on the other hand, this is a good incentive for Ukraine's sound forces to achieve positive changes.

Rayisa Bogatyriova

I think that EU enlargement eastwards will positively influence Ukraine. Firstly, because, having become 'neighbors', EU and the East will have much more concrete grounds for political dialogue, economic cooperation and perspective planning than before. Secondly, EU's approach to Ukrainian borders will promote the strengthening of safety in the region that is of our common interests. Thirdly, I consider that political neighborhood will consolidate humanitarian contacts between EU countries and Ukraine, help us to understand each other better and establish an intense cultural exchange.

Andriy Derkach

EU enlargement for Ukraine's economy will have both positive and negative consequences. EU accession by the 'first wave' countries and, accordingly, acceptance by them of Euro-standards in technological and social spheres will result in increase of manufacturing costs, and the process of manufacture movement to third countries will start. For Ukraine, which has highly professional manpower and cheaper than in EU, this creates certain opportunities, and one should use them in a right way. On the

other hand, the opportunities of export of Ukrainian production will be more limited, both due to Euro-standards, and due to common policy of EU states on defence of their domestic markets. It won't, of course, become an economic catastrophe, as there are huge markets of the states joining the Organization of Regional Integration, but it will bring about the necessity of serious reorganizing of production patterns.

Stepan Gavrysh

This is a global problem for Ukraine. This EU enlargement is both positive and negative. The positive feature is that it stimulates Ukraine to take decisions concerning harmonization of its interests with the EU, and acceptance of the only national choice, i.e. that of joining the EU. And, this choice can not remain just a political declaration. It is to become a practice of everyday state and economic life. The positive is that Ukraine is offered keen competition, and though it requires extraordinary and special efforts, it allows to quickly make new high-tech infrastructures which raise standards of living in Ukraine. In other words, there is an adaptation of all living systems to present-day European standards. The positive is also that Ukraine will get more and more high-tech European investment. Europe will constantly somehow influence any Ukrainian position in search of consolidation of efforts to overcome mutual problems, in search of division of labor and markets and, of course, in search of the model of common security. The latter is the most important today for relations between Europe and Ukraine, because a joint security system provides a rather high and effective standard for a stable evolution of development, especially as Ukraine has quite highly capacious market, able to absorb a considerable part of European production. And, it would be desirable for these relations to be rather fair in order that Ukrainians could be present on highly structured European markets and were pressed by anti-dumping measures on the part of EU as little as possible.

The negative is that introduction of the Schengen regime can essentially affect humanitarian exchange, having changed the volume of so-called 'democratic investment' connected with receiving the European life experience by Ukrainians located in Europe. This will decrease effectiveness of introduction of humanitarian values in Ukraine, and cause diminution of activity in economy, social projects etc. The negative is also that Ukraine will be put into difficulties and, in this respect, it can drift today

towards Russia or Asia, like matter that meets an obstacle and either has ability to surpass the impossible in a given situation, or recede. And, this means that we'll go back to our past, but not advance. Therefore, I am sure that the EU should adopt an individual program of Ukraine's adaptation to the EU, and create some transition corridor, having come to terms with the fact that Ukraine will become an associated member of this organization. It should be an individual program with requirements for Ukraine concerning the fulfillment of its responsibilities, designed to ensure advancement to European standards of democracy and economic development. On the other hand, equal terms of cooperation with the EU are to be guaranteed: a relaxed Schengen regime with so-called 'brief' visas which one will be able to get without burdensome bureaucratic procedures; enlarged possibilities to get investment; rendering of fair preferences on its markets, which would satisfied both parties. One can cite other ten very important terms that concern humanitarian, social, economic, political and military problems alike.

Vitaliy Kononov

When we speak of the impact of EU enlargement, we usually speak negatively about how it is going to affect our people, trade, movement and opening of markets etc. We seldom think what positive impact these changes may bring. First, we will have our western borders protected by a net of multilateralism, something very important for our security and integrity. This is not the case with our eastern borders. What we need to do now is to have comprehensive research done on this issue. The East European Development Institute, of which I am a board member, has recently embarked on such research to analyze the impact of EU enlargement on the labor market, health care, education, social sector and the environment using demographic projections based on the latest census data. We welcome all interested individuals and institutions to join and support this initiative. One of the analyses in this project would be focused on how much assistance (both domestic and international) may Ukraine need in these sectors to safeguard them from serious negative trends.

Leonid Kravchuk

EU's long-expected enlargement is going to happen at last. It is for the first time that it reaches the boundary of the former Iron Curtain. This is a positive step. But, there are certain problems in that. There exists a possibility that the EU enlargement may stop at Curzon's line, having left Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and other CIS countries 'outside'. This is not a pro-Ukrainian policy at all, and we must do everything we can to explain this and to change such an attitude toward Ukraine.

Ivan Kuras

EU's movement in the eastern direction is a positive phenomenon on the whole. Ukraine welcomes this process. At the same time, current enlargement is an alarming signal for our country. We have missed the train on which ten countries of Central and Eastern Europe left. The result is well-known: today officials of the European Commission, other institutions of united Europe, as well as senior representatives of EU Member States avoid any discussions about concrete terms of Ukraine joining the EU. And, the debates on 'borders of Europe' initiated by the head of the European Commission Romano Prodi, in fact, call into question the perspectives of 'Ukraine's European choice' on the whole. I consider both the status of a 'neighboring country' offered to Ukraine by the EU and the slogan 'everything but institutions' in relations with countries left outside the boundary of the renewed European Union in the context of the problem of 'borders of Europe'.

At the same time, let me express an opposite opinion: we will have an opportunity to observe the adaptation of post-Socialist and post-Soviet countries to new circumstances. Therefore, when it is our time to join Europe institutionally (we consider our country to be European in all other aspects), we will be able to use their experience and not repeat their mistakes.

Ella Libanova

If anyone in Ukraine had an illusion that we'll be affiliated with the EU in the nearest future, then large-scale enlargement that we witness destroys all illusions. Let's hope Europe will cope with its new members. If one is to consider this problem from the other side than Ukraine's neighbors who will become part of the European

Union, their attitude to Ukraine will be determined by EU norms and requirements accordingly, but we are neighbors for a long while, and it is for the best. Our relations, for example with Poland are very close, tested by years, and through relations with Poland we will cooperate with EU.

Oleksandr Moroz

Joining EU by Ukraine's nearest neighbors, partners in the former socialist camp, must make the authorities of our state think about the accuracy of reforms which it carries out. It was mentioned above that, in contrast to Poland, Hungary and the Baltic countries, Ukraine is too far from European standards. Therefore, the power will be compelled differently, depending on the influence on structural reorganization of economy, export-import policy, introduction of modern technologies, and promote development of civilized market. Administration, where clans' interests are preferred to the interests of society, will inevitably lead Ukraine to the status of a colony. Therefore, a clear alternative goes on the foreground: integration or colonial position and, following from this, democracy or criminal dictatorship.

Yulia Mostova

The very fact of accession of new members to the EU gives hope to Ukraine; this gives promise to look forward to our country's possible joining this conglomerate sooner or later. Now, countries which understand our realities better than France or Germany are entering the European Union. They remember the troubles we were experiencing in the Soviet times; they know about the inheritance we have to overcome. We communicate with Germans, the French and representatives of Benelux countries in different civilization languages, while Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic to a certain extent could act as interpreters able to translate from the Ukrainian to a civilized language, if they like to. And, this will be an interpretation supported by their understanding of our situation; it is quite another matter how much active our partners will be. But, I think that they will not be able to fence off the country which is being their immediate neighbor, even using barbed wire; therefore, they will be interested in Ukraine's catching up with those conditions and standards which are laid down by the EU for its new members. This will not be an altruistic position; this will be

a position aimed at solving questions of their own national security. It is quite another matter how much time will be given for trying their patience, as one investigates the product that is being of interest for him, as a rule. Unfortunately, Ukraine has been a country of lost hopes for the last eight years, and the loss of interest as regards our country may be conditioned by the fact that we are dragging out our transformations ourselves; and, as time goes on, there is less hope left that these changes can ever take place under the present authorities. However, let me emphasize that the problem of national security will make our European partners be in earnest about the question of bringing Ukraine to European standards.

Volodymyr Palij

To my mind, EU's present enlargement influences the situation in Ukraine greatly; especially this concerns Poland and Hungary joining the Union. The closing of our western borders, or their intensified control has negative consequences for the people: established business and social relations (not to mention relations between neighboring countries' communities and individuals) are being partly lost. On the other hand, a neighbor's example always induces one to actions that are more trenchant. I expect that, in the process of Poland and Hungary's integration into the EU, Ukraine will advance more actively to create proper conditions for accommodating itself to the European Community. After all, in one way or another, these processes are developing on the level of intergovernmental relations and the Ukrainian public conscience.

Mykola Plavyuk

For a short period it can be painful for us, because now we are just 'neighbors', not a part of Europe. But, in the long term, this is both a challenge and a requirement for us: if we really are going to integrate with Europe, we have to draw conclusions from current EU enlargement. I mean not so much Europeism in Europe, rather Europeism in Ukraine. And, the fact that our neighbors have already become EU members means that they organized their internal life better than we. Present-day enlargement of the European Community resembles us that we have done little for European countries to be interested in us. But, sometimes this process insults Ukraine: on the one hand,

a part of the Euro-Atlantic complex presses down on Ukraine, saying 'determine with your multi-vectoriness and act in accordance with your statements about integration with Europe'; and on the other hand, Mr. Romano Prodi and other bureaucrats venture to announce that Ukraine has no place in the EU. And, this negatively influences the social opinion in our state concerning the process of integration with the European Community.

Myroslav Popovych

In spite of the first negative consequences in the form of visa restrictions, EU enlargement to the East will play more and more positive role for Ukraine. The question is: what is more favorable for Ukraine – neighborhood with come-at-able, but rather outdated and provincial commodity (in comparison with Western Europe), financial and cultural-information market of Central Europe, or not so come-at-able, but highly developed market? Of course, the answer depends on many factors, but the general preference of good neighborhood is doubtless. In fact, it means that our neighbors as EU members will have more to do to promote those processes in Ukraine, which will approach it to European standards of living.

Oleh Samchyshyn

The influence is unambiguous: many people in Ukraine have begun to think about our country's perspectives in the new circumstances, and about what we have to do now. The aim is taking its shape clearly, though it is not as close as we would like it to be. Our aim is to become a member of the European Union in the future. Both our neighbors and our politicians speak about this, no matter how the views on mechanisms of entering the EU differ. However, the task has been set, the aim formulated, so now we have to move and bring about all the necessary changes. The present enlargement of the European Union is a strong incentive for Ukraine, for positive changes in our economy, domestic and foreign policy of the country.

Hanna Skrypnyk

I think that current EU enlargement will positively influence Ukraine. Of course, there is a certain threat of division of Europe into 'Europe proper' and its 'neighbors'

the status of which is incomprehensible neither from juridical, nor from moral side. Neighbors differ, but somebody is unlikely to want to have a bad neighbor nearby. Maybe, at least a part of European leaders understands this or will understand a little bit later and, first of all, Ukraine's neighbors who will make more efforts to simplify the process of integration of our state to European house. Sooner or later, the Ukrainian society will 'ripen' for entry into EU, and its present enlargement is an important stimulus for Ukraine's advancement towards European integration. Being in the neighboring countries, our citizens will learn European standards of democracy and economic development, which, undoubtedly, will positively affect all spheres of life of Ukrainian society. At the same time, authorities and corresponding institutions of our state will have to stir up their activity for protection of rights of our citizens abroad. And, this, in its turn, will promote democratic changes in Ukraine.

Volodymyr Stretovych

It can have two consequences. The positive one is when we'll get rid of the 'neighbor' status proposed by Great Britain for Ukraine and get a status of a candidate of the next wave. It can be postponed, but precise mutual signals are necessary. We must declare that we are ready to join the EU after certain time and through fulfilment of requirements put to candidate countries. But, following the path that the EU follows, which does not want to acknowledge Ukraine's right of entry (as a weak, unpredictable country with a high level of organized crime and corruption), being afraid that its problems can turn up like a bad penny for safe Europe, means that we will be pushed in the eastern direction, and provocation of revival of empire disorganized 12 years ago. Now, it is necessary to get a clear acknowledgement of EU interest to see us among the candidates; and Ukraine should confirm 'the European choice' through its everyday actions. Combination of these two interests should give a positive result. The most optimal term is the year 2009, the least optimal is 2014, but the one who goes will overpass the way.

Natalia Sumska

European Union, as I already said, is a great experience which we should study and introduce what is useful for our state. And, close vicinity is a unique opportunity to touch it. However, in addition to positive moments which can not be denied, I see

negative ones as well. For instance the permissiveness and, to put it mildly, doubtful morals that covered our society and our cultural space like a tsunami wave; they are not typical to our society. It is quite possible that this is an indicator of the freedom of choice in the society, but nobody chooses low-grade products. Our society can just prove to be unprepared, like a healthy person who goes to the tropical zone without necessary vaccination and can get ill. I do not urge to impose blinds, models and walls, but permissiveness without limits affects the young generation very negatively. Of course, if the authority of our state increases, we will be able to influence the processes in Ukraine. And, the EU experience in general is very useful for Ukraine, especially in the field of ecology.

Petro Symonenko

The question is difficult, and it depends much on how renovated the EU will look like in practice. But, without going into details, I consider that the EU influence on Ukraine will increase in all spheres. Especially, taking into consideration that EU members will implement a European policy which will considerably depend on the USA.

Today, Poland and Lithuania stir up Ukraine's entry into NATO, and later into the EU. Of course, behind them is the USA, and formation of a new pro-American camp headed by Great Britain and Poland in the future Europe — in opposition to France, Germany and Belgium that plump for centralized and federal Europe — is very beneficial for the USA.

There is another question of this order: whether the move of the American military contingent and bases from the territory of Germany to Poland will take place, as relations between Germany and the US on the eve of the aggression in Iraq have led to it. Today's interest of US border guards in cooperation in experience interchange with Ukrainian colleagues (and there have already been planned some actions) evidences that this possibility is not excluded. Purchase by Poland of US modern military aircrafts at much cost also evidences Americans' wish to strengthen its military presence in Eastern Europe. As a result, the US urges Ukraine to join NATO, but the European partners do not want it though. As a result, with the help of the Baltic States, Poland and Ukraine, the US aspires to create in Europe a Baltic-Black Sea arch in opposition to Russia and old Europe.

In this aspect, the main question for me is what type of NATO are we urged to:

- NATO as amilitary bloc? But we are an off-bloc state, and the Cold war is already over;
- NATO as an anti-terrorist organization? But, terror can not be extirpated by gun shoots, especially as Americans make these shoots on their own, without NATO assistance;
- NATO as a political organization? Then what are its purposes, and how its activity correlates with the UN?

Neither American, nor European politicians gave definitive answers to these questions, even theoretically.

Therefore, I think that up to date, NATO has already had its day. And, my attitude toward EU enlargement is negative, if Europeans implement it only as NATO enlargement, which today has the only status of a US assistant in its forcible policy on the world scene.

Besides, from the institutional point of view, an important question for Ukraine is what place the Council of Europe (in particular, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe) and the Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe will take in an enlarged Europe, because today these organizations embody the interests of Europe as a continent. A solution of this question depends first of all on internal political processes of the EU that enables us to ascertain once more, and European partners demonstrate their political will concerning pan-European integration.

Kostiantyn Sytnyk

Undoubtedly, we have to develop pride for our nation in ourselves. I am extremely worried that Bulgaria, Romania, Poland are advancing towards the European Union with more speed than my own Ukraine does. I consider, and have always considered, that Ukraine has always been part of the European civilization, and a thousand and a half years ago it was developed to a greater extent than today. So what happened? We had Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kharkiv, Lviv universities, and this means that we were a university state. Prominent European statesmen studied in Kyiv-Mohyla Academy in their times. Why, then, are we unworthy of being a member of the EU? Who is responsible for that? The only answer I can give to this: our politicians, our economists,

all those people who had to promote Ukraine's interests on the European level, on account of their professional responsibilities. The same concerns our highest ranks: the two presidents, ten governments. All are responsible, and nobody else. Science cannot be accused of that, as it only proposes, but nobody listens to it. Nobody pays attention to its suggestions. This is being our country's trouble, as for now.

Ivan Tomych

EU enlargement will approach to Ukraine a number of upscale goods and services due to neighborhood with EU member states which, in its turn, will influence changes in the social consciousness of Ukrainian citizens. Therefore, Ukraine can not stand aside those integral processes that occur in Europe. This situation requires more active and drastic carrying out of a complex of reforms, directed to approximate Ukraine and its system of administration and management to European standards. For instance, our land reform had the following format: for ten years we had been deciding what should we do, in 1999 we started land reform, in 2000 owing to nature and private initiative we gained first results and decided to content ourselves with these results, having stated unexampled rise. It was a false way to think that reforms will work for us. Reforms are responsible, hard work intended for long-term period, and one gets results gradually. And, if Europe moves toward us now (let it be a mechanical, 'territorial' movement), it is in Ukraine's interests to advance toward Europe at the same pace, and not in mechanical, but in intellectual, science-technical, legislative and mental way. It should be not only a movement, but also a set of measures that would guarantee a positive result. We wasted much time and, now, while moving toward Europe, it is necessary to develop the resources we have with double efforts. Bilateral movement is able to ensure positive result for both parties. In other words, Current EU enlargement is a certain threat (owing to non-competitiveness of Ukraine), and a good stimulus for our state.

Yulia Tymoshenko

I evaluate the process of EU enlargement to the East rather positively. Firstly, it will substantively bring the European Community nearer Ukraine and vice versa; reduce the political, economic and cultural distance between us to that of a borderline. It will

automatically make mutual exchanges in various spheres easier. Secondly, this will strengthen international pressure on the authoritarian regime dominating Ukraine, contribute to its break-up and to recommencement of democratic, liberal and market reforms in the country. Thirdly, this will permit us to observe the consequences of joining the EU by the Eastern European countries which are kindred to us by their history, mentality and social-economic characteristics, and thereby we could decrease the number of our possible integration mistakes in future.

Taras Voznyak

I think, Ukraine should unambiguously welcome EU enlargement; and the fact that our neighbors — Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and soon Slovakia and Romania will join the EU — is only a positive moment. EU enlargement is not only a creation of the economic union that will regulate the processes of economic development. This is society's development, and the zone of stability. In the nearest future, the EU will create its security organizations, and the closer the spheres of repose, peace and prosperity are to us, the better it is. Besides, the fewer mediators and buffer zones of various kinds are between the EU and us, the better it is as well. Of course, we need to adapt our legislation, the structure of businesses, social life forms, and political mechanisms. If they are adequate and commensurable to EU norms, the question of entry into the EU won't be a problem. Even if Ukraine won't be formally an EU member like Norway or Switzerland, which are not administratively EU members, but de facto are included in the common system, starting with the economy, and finishing with cultural aspects.

To my mind, Europeans get reinsured too much. As a matter of principle, they could promise future membership without discussing the time of when it should take place. It was important for us to hear this phrase. But, as it has not been said, they lack breadth of views, and this is their big mistake.

Natalia Yakovenko

From the standpoint of Ukraine's pro-European interests, the present enlargement of the European Union will play a negative role, as it demonstratively separates Ukraine from the West and thereby stimulates it to establish closer contacts with the Euro-Asian Union.

Yuri Yekhanurov

One wished it had a promotional influence. Ukrainian political elites should come to a clear understanding that outer support of Ukraine's direction towards Europe is only a subsidiary factor, an important, yet not crucial term of successful course of the process. Ukraine must independently pass its part of the way, as new members of the EU did.

Volodymyr Yevtukh

EU enlargement can affect Ukraine mostly positively, having approached large sections of the public to a more adequate understanding of democracy; it will stimulate the formation of civil society; it will increase opportunities of access to European information and cultural space; stimulate more rational production organization and use of resources. EU enlargement will open new impulses for Ukraine to enter the EU, stimulate transformational process from a totalitarian to democratic society, and enhance formation of social opinion in the direction of perception of western countries' values of social development, especially those concerning legal protection of citizens from wilfulness of power and money. EU enlargement will give additional stimulus for overcoming negative stereotypes in relations between Ukraine's closest neighbors, which were being formed under the pressure of historical events (for instance, between Ukraine and Poland). At the same time, the enlargement can gradually destroy current relations, which were formed in Ukraine on quite a positive basis of Christian morals.

Viktor Yushchenko

The positive is that the enlargement of EU is evidence of ideology of formation of a European economic space. This idea captivates new economic partners, especially those who are in Eastern Europe. I think that thus takes place the organization and improvement of economic and political-social choices of states that are being involved in the EU. This is an original way to improve standards, which the states of a new wave pass. In general, it is difficult to realize everything that concerns Ukraine's destiny, because today the borders of Ukraine and the European Union are already common. Ukraine has this problem because of its policy and deficit of democracy.

There is a lack of social and economic standards that could be evidence that this country can pretend to the status of a really strategic partnership, integration and membership.

This situation testifies that this is a way to be passed. I recall that, during the conversation with President of Poland Kwaśniewski, he recollected that, aiming to adapt to new rules of the European market, for five years Poles faced the necessity of adoption of approximately 250 new laws and thousands of amendments to the laws currently in force. The Poles did this in order to unite their life with the EU. We coped with around forty laws in direction of integration with the European legislation. Maybe it is not a bad result, as the state has not only lagged behind in development, it has untalented politicians with respect to their country that discords with the European spirit in itself. On the other hand, this situation testifies what great work we must do at home.

The necessity of adoption of tens or hundreds of laws and rules puts some thought into our minds that the state needs a consolidated political force that would form an effective power in order that the power realized political will for changes of European character. Therefore, by way of these changes, both the parliament and government could ensure adoption of effective legislation – through political consolidation. However, unfortunately, every month we feel that we find ourselves in buffer zone of Europe because of this indefinite, inconsequent and irresponsible policy.

5. Role of neighboring countries intending to become the EU members soon (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia) in executing 'Ukraine's European choice'

Mykola Barabash

The success both of our state itself and of our neighbors aiming to become EU members soon will depend, first of all, on Ukraine's cooperation with them. Many Ukrainian citizens are now being in search of a job in countries of the European Union, but still more of them are being in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. Therefore, we cannot avoid contacts with these countries, and it is important to determine the strategy and the tactics of such cooperation. We are partners equal in rights, interested in enlargement of cooperation. Ukraine needs to re-examine its policy as regards patenting and certification closely, as we have many projects in various spheres able to represent the country on the international scene, but we have to associate ourselves with international standards in force in these fields. Therefore, neighboring countries can play an important role in the process of development of the Ukrainian legislation, first, as well as in forming an effective system of management that would not contradict European standards. In other words, our neighbors' main role as regards Ukraine is the role of teachers who are well acquainted with our historical, political, social and economic situation and able to help to optimize the process of adaptation of the standards common in countries of the European Union to conditions of modern Ukraine, conditions familiar and well comprehensible to our neighbors. We have entered the world, but we have not accommodated to it yet, we are not so much erudite in questions of international law, and this ignorance often causes violation of these standards and serious losses at the level of state image.

Volodymyr Barabash

This question also has two sides. On the one hand, we can see these countries' natural attraction to the European Union, which is more objective, because democratic principles are inherent in these states more organically. However, on the other hand, during the last hundred years, the neighboring countries have acquired close economic and cultural relations with countries which had been a part of the USSR for a long time, and especially with Ukraine. And, in the economic area, these countries realize that they are the neighbors having their own specific shortcomings which the EU brings to them. Therefore, this economic bridge existing between Ukraine and its neighboring countries is positive not only for Ukraine. It allows Poland, Hungary and Slovakia to feel more confident. It is a kind of a safety valve, enabling them to derive from it the economic recourse at their entering, and to soften the economic consequences of joining the EU. I have been going in for sports all my life, and such a comparison came to my mind: in the economy, as in sports, the strongest one always wins; therefore, EU's new member states will need an extra economic resource to become the partners worthy of those EU's members which are economically more powerful. And this is, undoubtedly, a positive for both them and our country. These are the communication channels which are to become a catalyst in the process of our transformation, as they form a kind of a 'window to Europe' for Ukraine, since EU's borders have been drawn nearer to us. And, that is very good. In fact, we will have Europe near at hand.

Rayisa Bogatyriova

First of all, we are interested in the present and future integration experience of countries of Central and East Europe (CCEEs). To some extent, depending on the way in which these countries will integrate with EU in the nearest time, what their achievements and losses will be, Ukraine will correct its policy concerning the opportunities, positive features and perspectives of approaching the European Community. Besides, we count that CCEEs, not only those mentioned in the question, but also the young Baltic states, won't turn into a 'buffer' zone between Ukraine and the West. On the contrary, they will henceforth follow the course to mutually beneficial political and economic partnership, as it is today.

Andriy Derkach

Today, a rather correct construction of countries-providers starts to be developed in the foreign policy of Ukraine. In Asia, these are Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, which for us are a passage to the Middle and Far East. In Europe, it is Poland, Germany and also Russia that has serious authority in the EU anyhow. The fact that Poland, our provider, joined the EU will have positive consequences for Ukraine, as possibilities of our influence in EU will considerably increase. We should add to it an appreciable integral effect from the development of border cooperation with countries-candidates into EU. This is much promoted by creation of special economic zones in border areas. This interaction makes easier further rapprochement and effectiveness of integration of economic systems. When these countries become full EU members, it will be of their economic interests to implement a policy of rapprochement of EU and Ukraine.

Stepan Gavrysh

I believe that our western neighbors, which until recently were 'brotherly' nations only in the socio-economic and political life, will create highest possible conditions for cooperation for Ukraine, and pass us their experience of joining EU. I respect Poland's position that announced itself an attorney of Ukraine in EU, and I hope that this role will be undertaken by Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania after they surmount their own difficulties. I am convinced that orientation to reach our neighbors will give Ukraine effective opportunities to reorganize our economy, implement the administrative-territorial reform and other structural reforms that will promote effectiveness of our development. That's why I regard our closest neighbors as a bridge or doors that Ukraine will open when entering EU. It is very important because these neighbors have got quite clear market relations with us, and there are traditional relations and traditional cooperation between us. Taking into consideration that it will be difficult for neighbors to compete with high-tech EU states, we can expect their dimensioned cooperation with Ukraine. And, it will be a certain formula of success of our state in advancing towards EU.

Vitaliy Kononov

As our neighbors, these states play an extremely important role. On the one hand, they will be bound to introduce regulations restricting the movement of people

and goods, but on the other, they would also benefit from our terms of trade, land transportation artery for fuel and gas as well as goods to Russia and the Caucasus. We may also foresee some investments coming from these states to Ukraine. Thus, the market of Ukraine may offer them better prospects. After all, they would prefer having a friendly neighbor in their eastern borders. Finally, cross-border environmental issues are always crucial in relations between neighbors. That would lead all of us to sit around negotiation tables and discuss. Thus, there is no way that these states will distance themselves from us as soon as they enter EU. Over a period of time, these good neighborly relations will pave the way for Ukraine's European integration.

Leonid Kravchuk

Let me repeat once again that 'the European choice' for us is a way to European values and to upbuilding of the society. Poland, Hungary and Slovakia, our nearest neighbors that are preparing to enter the EU soon follow the same direction. It is quite another matter that they have gained more experience in building a democratic, juridical state and are showing better indices of their social and economic development. And, one more thing: they achieved this during the last fifteen years. On the other hand, these countries have been our neighbors and partners for a long time; therefore, the experience of their adaptation to conditions and requirements of the European Union is very important for Ukraine. We have a lot to learn from them, and we do learn from them as they are more open for us than the founders of the European Union.

Ivan Kuras

The countries mentioned above know and understand Ukraine better than the 'Old Europe'. On the other hand, we also are close to them; we have a number of similar problems. Judging from this, I hope that they will form a bridge that will bring Ukraine closer to Europe.

In Ukraine, one can often hear about the necessity of forming of a 'pro-Ukrainian' lobby in Europe. Despite the conditional character of the definition, the neighboring countries will most probably become lobbyists of 'Ukraine's European choice'. It is principally important for them to have a country-partner, not an element of a cordon

sanitaire on their borders. Poland's position is indicative: the country is consistently emphasising that it will support Ukraine's European course. There were Poles who advanced propositions concerning EU's policy as regards Ukraine a few months ago. The perspective of Ukraine's membership in the EU put in these propositions is not only a mere friendly step as regards a neighboring state. These are precisely the theses that our state would like to be the basis of EU's policy concerning Ukraine.

Ella Libanova

In my opinion, the main role of neighboring countries is to hand us the rules of behaviour, norms and standards used in the EU. The matter is not that they will assert or defend our interests in Europe. While entering the EU, Poland inevitably adopts standards of behaviour, norms and rules of economic, business, political and social behaviour. By contacting with us, Poland will pass these standards to us; and the share of Ukrainians who work in Poland is high and they will 'transport' these standards to us. We can study, read and examine them as long as we want, but the system of European standards will work only when each person realizes that he/she can not live in any other way, but in conformity with these rules and standards. It is impossible to explain, such things penetrate into consciousness, and this is not a one-year problem. Economic aid is minor: how Poland, Hungary and Slovakia can help Ukraine, which is larger than they are? An example of this can be a difficult process of revival of former GDR Laender after German unification, and those billions of marks that are invested in these lands. But, the progress won't be noticeable soon.

Oleksandr Moroz

The EU have already and quite unambiguously let it be known that it does not see Ukraine not only in its membership, but also among countries with a market economy. Nobody will do for us what we must do on our own. And, if the internal and foreign policy of Ukraine remains so irrational, unscrupulous and uncertain, then efforts of any states in adjustment of Ukraine's contacts with European structures will be futile. Besides, bilateral relations with specified countries now will be appreciably corrected by general EU conditions that, at the initial stage, can bring about a reduction in trade-economic relations. In due course, everything will depend on the situation in Ukraine.

Volodymyr Palij

Judging from the international policy Ukraine has been realizing lately, the so-called 'multi-vectority' is being replaced by a clear comprehension of the necessity for Ukraine's integration into a concrete geopolitical setting. I consider this as the result of those transformations that the EU has been experiencing in recent years. The neighbors' perspective has played not the least part in this: they not only made their choice in favor of a united Europe but have already gone a certain part of the way leading to creating conditions for an appropriate formalization of their choice. For Ukraine, this implies that its own integration process as regards Europe is to be stirred up a lot, soon. Forming public opinion and attitudes of local communities within the country towards these circumstances will play an important role: the post-Soviet standards in citizens' consciousness have to be replaced by a distinct realization of the fact that there can be no return to the old world.

A new generation of Ukrainians living in an independent state must change not only state attributes, but also the conscience of millions. Only our active cooperation with the European Community makes this process possible: when, led by the example of neighboring Western countries, the citizens of Ukraine will see real changes in lives of ordinary people in Poland, Slovakia and Hungary.

Mykola Plavyuk

An important role in realization of this choice belongs to Poland that became a peculiar reviewer of Ukrainian affairs not only in European, but also in the Western-Atlantic circle. Therefore, cooperation with Poland is very important for us. On the other hand, flirtation between Paris, Berlin and Moscow remands Poles of divisions of Poland's territory between its neighbors that took place in the past. In this connection, Poland is interested in Ukraine joining Europe and will promote this.

The matter about Hungary and Slovakia is slightly of another kind; however, their experience and orientation to European patterns is an example for us. I believe that these countries, in particular Slovakia, will master the rules of European behaviour quicker, because I think some aspects of relations between Ukraine and Slovakia do not meet European standards yet. And, it is also our fault that we allow forced slovakization of Ukrainians living there and Slovakia's strengthening of so-called

complexes of rusynstvo. As to Ukrainian-Hungarian relations, they have fewer painful problems, the problems exist though. In general, we have all grounds to expect neighborly relations both with Hungary and with Slovakia, and close cooperation with Poland that will take into account geopolitical realities and meet national interests of both countries.

Myroslav Popovych

Poland, Hungary and Slovakia – especially Poland – exerted and will exert great influence on the development of relations between Ukraine and Europe. All the three mentioned states have very close regional ties with Ukraine, and Poland's peculiar role lies in unanimity of its history (including modern history) with that of Ukraine. Poland can be either in the state of historical hostility with Ukraine if everything remains on the level of national prejudices from both sides, or on the level of Entente Cordiale, or 'cordial agreement' that describes the today's relations between France and Germany. Political interests of Ukraine and Poland are so close. Poland, with comparative maturity of its politicians, is so clear from the point of view of Ukrainian realism; vice versa, Ukraine is so clear from the point of view of Polish realism that there are all possibilities for a Ukrainian-Polish 'cordial agreement'. The obstacles are in mainly prejudices, stronger from the Polish side than from the side of (at least Trans-Dnepr) Ukraine, as well as in the weakness of cultural ties in comparison with Ukrainian-Russian ones. Cultural rapprochement with Poland must reach a level where most educated Ukrainians could read Polish literature in the original, as they read Russian books. The distance between Polish and Ukrainian languages is not greater than between Ukrainian and Russian; therefore, this aim is not unrealistic. Accordingly, Polish culture should occupy a great place on Ukrainian television and so on.

Volodymyr Pyekhota

We must realize our own choice by ourselves. I have already said this. But, we would be wrong if we did not take into account our closest neighbors' experience, the experience gained by those countries which had already passed the stage of a transitional economy. We have close relations with these countries in economic and cultural spheres, as well as in political and intergovernmental fields. We are prepared

to improve our further cooperation with these countries that should be based on mutually beneficial partnership. I think that precisely the above-mentioned countries that had made the way very much similar to our own (even if in some way different from ours) are able to understand our problems and assist in our joining the EU.

Oleh Samchyshyn

Ukraine has much in common with countries — new members of the European Union. I take them mostly as a consumer. Poland, Hungary and Slovakia, as in the case of Ukraine, have a well-developed food industry, and their product is known for its high nutritious and gustatory characteristics. Therefore, these countries' accession to the EU is a positive factor for Ukraine, as all these countries treat Ukraine with kindness and appreciation, and I think they can render us assistance, first in advising on the transition to renewed, European conditions of cooperation. We keep close contacts with the consumers' associations of the above-mentioned countries, and they constantly express hope to see Ukraine as a member of the EU in the near future. Recently, we have reached unofficial agreements with Hungary, Slovakia and Ukraine on the exchange of information and strengthening of relations in legal investigations concerning low-quality products.

Larysa Skoryk

It seems that, for Western European countries, Ukraine's drama of the last centuries is not very comprehensible. This can be better understood by the states of Eastern Europe that had to experience 'fascination' of Soviet imperialism in post-war decades, but in a much more 'civilized' form. Among them, only Poland suffered state destruction from tsarist Russia.

Maybe, because of its own experience of forced 'integration' into the space controlled by Moscow, these countries, and especially Poland, are loyal today, and they even sympathize with Ukraine's attempts to realize one of its main priorities in foreign policy, 'the European choice', integration with European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

Ukraine's priority-driven task must be the entry into European Union – first as associated, and then as full member, as well as development of relations and entry into NATO.

Ukrainian history, geographical position, natural resources, present arrangement of forces, in which — more stereoscopic with each time without any grounds — there appears Moscow's nostalgia for revival of world influence and its desperate attempts to involve Ukraine into an 'inviolable' Union of at least 'the four' or in 'one economic space of underdeveloped countries', do not give Ukraine grounds for any doubts in the choice between the West and the East.

Hanna Skrypnyk

An important role in realization of 'Ukraine's European choice' is played by Poland. Every year, it is visited by hundreds of thousands of Ukraine's citizens who have the opportunity to watch the changes that have taken place in this country for the last 10-15 years. And, these changes cannot but affect subconsciousness of our people. Of greater importance for European integration of Ukraine is the position of Poland that, during a long period of time gradually, by concrete actions and actively supports that part of political elite of our state which really longs for integration with Europe. Poland is really a strategic partner of Ukraine. And, this induces our nations' intellectual and political elite of both countries to discuss very carefully and tactfully the painful pages of our common historical past. I hope that, with common efforts, we will be able to understand each other better.

I think that Hungary and Slovakia, the other neighbors that will soon become EU members, will support Ukraine in its aspiration to integrate with a renovated Europe. Our nations have been living side by side, keeping up neighborly relations for many centuries. Recently, Slovakia has demonstrated its striving to continue these traditions: its government had cancelled payments for visa for our citizens. From its part, Hungary has not introduced the visa regime on the border with our state yet, and this is a good sign for Ukraine. As to problems concerning relations between our country and Hungary and Slovakia, one can and should solve them on an equal footing.

Volodymyr Stretovych

The party I head supports the thesis that states which should soon become EU members must be the guides of our interests and our protectors in persuading the EU concerning Ukraine's admission to the European community. The question is that

they did not wall up a door, but we permanently could meet them and persuade that we really try to hasten the time of entry into the EU. In other words, we rest our hopes upon these countries and that they, having got the suffrage in EU, will defend our interests.

At meetings with representatives of these countries, I got confirmation that they are ready for such activity, but we also must give grounds for this activity, realizing certain positive changes (freedom of the press, struggle against corruption etc.).

Natalia Sumska

There can not be doubts that the mentioned countries have close and long-standing contacts with Ukraine and its citizens. Therefore, much of what they are have to pass through themselves during their entry into the EU will be able to hand us in an adapted state, and this is good. Experience of these countries is especially important in the cultural sphere, because they have also outlived a crisis period, and now is not everything all right at them. But, Poland cinematography, for instance, is developing and is not standing still. It means that the matter is not in crisis, but in attitude to this sphere. One should study their experience and try to use those things that do not contradict our conditions.

Kostiantyn Sytnyk

Our neighboring countries that are now preparing for entering the EU (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, even the Baltic countries, as they treat us better than Russia does) can provide moral help through their kindly feelings for us. But, it is up to Ukraine to decide. I am convinced of that. In other words, the neighboring countries' role in the realization of 'Ukraine's European choice', in comparison with the role of Ukraine itself, is a minor one, as neither Poland nor Hungary and Slovakia will not work instead of us. They can share their experience or offer their encouragement, but we will have to work for ourselves.

Borys Tarasyuk

I would distinguish that, unlike in case of NATO enlargement with our immediate neighbors to the West, in case of EU enlargement we are facing a lot of problems,

which are actually in direct relevance to our basic national economic interests, in basic interests of the Ukrainian people. There are some negative consequences of EU enlargement.

That is, first of all, the prospect of introducing the visa regime for our citizens which would certainly impede the ability of our citizens to visit neighboring countries with the purpose of visiting their relatives, of tourism, of economic tourism, and this would certainly hamper the interests of our citizens. Then, we would have a different trade regime with our traditional partners to the West, the largest one being Poland, Hungary, Slovakia; so, it will create a new trade regime within those countries as members of the EU. It will create additional problems for our business community. And, in addition, the enlargement of the EU at the expense of our immediate neighbors to the West would present an additional sociological feeling of the conserving our distance from the EU.

Among the positive elements of EU enlargement, I may refer to the following: first of all EU is becoming our immediate neighbor. Not only Ukraine is becoming an immediate neighbor of EU but EU for Ukraine is becoming an immediate neighbor. So, this very fact may create advantages in terms of cross-border cooperation, including cross-border trade.

In the new EU members, we are seeing additional advocates of interests of Ukraine within the EU. The enlargement of the EU made by expense of our immediate neighbors is a kind of stimulus for introduction of European standards for Ukraine in order not to lose our traditional partners to the West – that means new members of the EU.

And, furthermore, our neighbors can and in fact do demonstrate a positive role in realization of Ukrainian-European integration interests. And, this positive role is being played and demonstrated first of all by Poland. In 1998, together with the Foreign Minister Geremek, we initiated the permanent Ukrainian-Polish conference on the European integration, the major purpose of which was to give the possibility for Ukrainian experts to acquire the experience of their Polish counterparts who have covered this road towards EU membership. This has proven to be a very useful mechanism of our cooperation.

In terms of some of our neighbors, we had a very, so to say, well calculated, well weighted attitude towards Ukraine, first of all from Poland — again — and Hungary. This can be demonstrated in terms of the very active role played by Poland of bringing

Ukraine closer to the EU and NATO, and by both Poland and Hungary not being too quick in introducing the visa regime for Ukrainian citizens, unlike for example Slovakia or some other neighbors which are not on the forefront of the EU membership. The role our neighbors can play is a very important role in the sense that they have the experience, which is well worth being used by Ukraine.

Ivan Tomych

Of course, the approach of EU borders to Ukraine gives certain possibilities for adequately comparing and analysing the situation in Ukraine and new EU members. That's why, of course, firstly we can study the experience of neighboring countries heading toward the EU, and the difficulties they faced when approaching European structures. Their character is that of bilateral agreements, economy's reforming, the process of construction of the civil society, changes in political sphere – a complex of problems that faced Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, and that had to be solved before entering the EU. Experience of our neighbors is a matter of our plan of actions in the process of advancement toward the EU.

Yulia Tymoshenko

The positive thing, as for me, is their integration and reforming experience, mediation in establishing of exchange with other EU member-countries, persuasiveness of their successful model. The above-mentioned countries of the Central and Eastern Europe understand Ukraine's social realities better than the rest of members of 'large Europe', and that will assist them in playing their, indeed, important positive role in Ukraine's approach to the European Union. However, this role can turn out to be negative under certain circumstances. For example, if it is discovered in the course of time that EU's further enlargement would prevent realization of interests of newcomers to the Union. It is especially possible if they decide in Brussels that the process of the EU's further enlargement should be frozen for several decades. This is not improbable, taking into consideration the telling controversies existing within the Union and the economic difficulties the West has been experiencing recently. Under these circumstances, precisely countries of Central and Eastern Europe will accomplish the task of Ukraine's 'ping-ponging' from Europe. I hope this will not happen.

Taras Voznyak

I think that the interest of Poland, Slovakia and Hungary is 'what they will come to EU with?' For instance, will Poland export its production only to Sweden or Germany? Substantially, this is idealism. Poland's political and historical perspective is the East first of all. The East is widely interpreted: not only Ukraine, but also Belarus and Russia. Even Germany's interests are directed to Russia, according to economic circumstances and, on the other hand, to Belarus that is a transport passage. Therefore, in my opinion, what Poland was for Germany, we will be for Poland to some extent, and the perspective of cooperation is mutually beneficial. One shouldn't think that Poland will be our attorney in Europe, owing to its emotional thoughts; it is beyond its national interests. Poland is interested in development of relations with its eastern partners.

Natalia Yakovenko

These countries' role in realization of 'Ukraine's European choice' is literally a key one, as without their support (and without their obvious example, after all) we would have hardly succeeded in those though minor, yet practical changes for the better in our attempts to renew many spheres of life in Ukraine. For example, as a University lecturer and a scientist-humanitarian, I can assert that, owing to 10 years of close cooperation with our Polish colleagues in those Ukrainian universities which were cultivating such cooperation, we managed to achieve noticeable modernization of university studies and to educate a completely new generation of young scientists possessing an unprejudiced liberal mode of thought.

Yuri Yekhanurov

It is difficult to overestimate this role. On the whole, they understand our intentions and problems better than states-initiators of EU formation. However, one should draw attention to a very important nuance. The listed countries (especially Poland) are often called Ukraine's attorney. I think this definition is not rather exact. Firstly, it somehow puts Ukraine in the position of the accused. Secondly, the main problem in relations between Ukraine and EU is not Ukraine's transgression (real and supposed), but lack of mutual understanding and trust on both sides. In spite of enough dialogue

instruments (joint commissions, conferences, consultations etc.), mutual prejudices embarrasses the dialogue itself. In this case, both Ukraine and especially EU do not need attorneys. We need mediators able to perceive kindly argumentations of both sides. Ukrainian neighbors which in the nearest future will become EU members have possibilities and serious motives to undertake this mission.

Volodymyr Yevtukh

Strengthening of ties with neighboring countries will approach Ukraine to the EU, promote Ukraine's participation in globalization processes and consolidation of 'Ukraine's European choice'. The basis of this should become a positive experience in ties in all spheres of social life that were being formed for years. In this connection boundary cooperation, especially youth programs can play positive role.

6. Ukraine's effective way to European structures: independently or together with Russia?

Mykola Barabash

Development of relations between the European Union and Ukraine is not henceforth connected with a leading direction of relations between Russia and the EU anymore. Ukraine has its own way, and it has to walk this way to the European Union on its own. Russia is too big a country, and its possible joining the European Union will threaten the present order of the structure. Statutory acts regulating EU's existence are not designed for such huge dimensions and a corresponding quantity of citizens. Ukraine needs, first of all, agreement of its normative-legal field with those standards that are in force in countries of the European Union. This will permit to normalize our state's economic relations with the structure, and to eliminate the differences, especially in the field of standards. Another direction is development and intensification of Ukraine's bilateral contacts with members of the EU. We should not ignore economic contacts with those new states in the post-Soviet space with which Ukraine possessed long-term experience of industrial and trade cooperation in time of the USSR, either. Our economy 'skidded' after Soviet Union's disintegration, since previous contacts with those countries that had provided us with important components of our manufacturing capabilities were severed. Of course, Russia is playing the leading role here. Cooperation with this country will be useful for Ukraine and its economy. Unfortunately, we cannot manage to set up our own agricultural engineering, and Russian combine harvesters are better in a number of characteristics. However, our cooperation should not be reduced to contacts with Russia

exceptionally, as Russia is drawing us off Europe in a way. Our European neighbors help us a lot. We should direct our efforts toward those attainments the European Union has reached. For example, I deeply appreciate the idea of 'Swedish socialism' as a model of state organization. According to this model, a woman's role becomes more important, in societal, political, economic and public life. We can hardly imagine a woman holding a post of a defence minister. But, this is a normal thing. In today's Ukraine, women have not been playing the role they deserve, yet. Actually, there are few of them in the parliament, and they are absent in the government. However, cooperation with Russia is profitable for us, and we need to maintain close contacts with this country. Thus, the North-Atlantic Alliance has always played a leading role in Europe. Nevertheless, contradictions between a number of European countries and the US have been intensified at the present stage, and it is still unknown what the culmination will be. Under such circumstances, Ukraine has to balance between the powerful European house that is now undergoing reconstruction and a potent (in Ukraine's view) Russia. Our aim is to become a member of the European family, but successful accomplishment of this purpose depends on us solely. Neither Russia nor the EU can help us.

Volodymyr Barabash

One has to keep in mind that different parts of Ukraine have different tendencies, and it is very easy to tear the country to pieces precisely on this ground. We have a deputy, A.Derkach who, in his 'Kyivsky Telegraph' is constantly writing that our way to Europe must be done exceptionally together with Russia. In my opinion, we should move towards the EU independently but synchronously. Ukraine has its peculiarities, and the policy must be well considered. To unite Ukraine's western and eastern parts under a single aim, we have to speak of a common advance towards the EU. Eastern Ukraine is being orientated towards Moscow more than towards Kyiv; consequently, they should have Russia's intention to enter the European Union as an incentive and a unifying factor. This is profitable for our country; this is in the interests of Ukraine. And, at the same time, this is a substantial factor of political unanimity. Moreover, we cannot ignore Russia's important role in Europe and in the world, the improvement of its relations with the US and countries of the EU, as well as Ukraine's certain

isolation in the international scene on the grounds of recent scandals. In Russia, both democratic and economic processes are being more intensive, and the country is advancing in the European direction faster than we do. And, we should make use of this. Therefore, speaking about what is common and what is different between different parts of Ukraine and Europe, I think that we should move towards the EU independently but synchronously with the Russian Federation.

Rayisa Bogatyriova

As far as I know, neither Ukraine nor Russia are present in any plan of EU enlargement. That's why for me, as a politician, this question is without practical sense. Theoretically speaking, one can forecast that Ukraine, which is closely connected with Russia, has free entry to Eurasian markets, realizes large-scale industrial, resources, scientific-technological and infrastructure projects joint with the Russian Federation (for example, within the framework of EurAsEU), is a more beneficial and perspective partner for Europe, more attractive counteragent of Western investments etc. than reserved for Ukraine as resource attachment of EU, a buffer zone between the empires.

As I mentioned above, in my opinion, Ukraine should orient its long-term policy to realization of the project of 'Mega-Europe'. In this project, EU, Russia, Ukraine, states of the Caucasus and Middle Asia would become participants and partners equal in rights, of course, on principles of European democracy and post-modern cultural communication.

Andriy Derkach

Beyond the geopolitical scheme called 'To Europe Along with Russia', any project of a united and stable Europe will be wittingly defective. Any lasting union of European states is impossible without Russia and Ukraine that are traditionally integral element of the continent's safety. Therefore, appearance of the doctrine 'To Europe Along with Russia' became a serious historical stage not only for Ukraine, but for establishment process of a united Europe on the whole, and formation of the common continental economic-political space. On the one hand, realization of this doctrine provides the EU with geo-strategic stability and effective functioning, and gradual and organic

entering of Ukraine and Russia into EU economic and political structures on the other hand. Historical interconnectivity of Ukraine and Russia's interests is postulational; both states belong to one East-Slavic orthodox cultural type that is a polyphonic component of a European mega-civilization. If one considers only the economic aspects of bilateral cooperation, the interlacing of economies is a colonial heritage by no means (as it sees quasi-politicians suffering from complex of national inferiority), it is an impartial necessity proved by the time. Break of economic ties with Russia will be a state catastrophe for Ukraine, as it is theoretically impossible to substitute them. One can not but see it; on the other hand, one may not want to see it. Without a policy of Euro-integration timed with Russia, Ukraine's entering into EU is unreal, and one should realize it precisely.

Stepan Gavrysh

Ukraine should take decisions concerning its national policy, its national choice independently, and realize its sovereignty in its own position. The national program of development created in accordance with European standards, should become the basis of EU entering. And, when we become a democratic country with a highly effective economy, we will be desirable for the EU. In my opinion, today, when Ukraine does not have the appropriate resources, we can not put before ourselves the assignment to join the EU, say, in the year 2010. This means that any plans or assumptions that we can join EU along with some other country, are groundless. I consider that Russia will never join EU, as it is a rather powerful and self-sufficient state, able to compete on the world market. EU is not only a club that sets club interests as an object. It is an alliance, created to participate in the division of products, labor and manpower. It is very important for us to be a member of this alliance. It is clear that European markets have high-tech and highly structured assets and character, and participation in them constantly stimulates development and progress. Ukraine has not another choice, but does everything possible in order for its development to have a European character, and the problem of EU accession did not become the problem of Ukraine's requirements and EU propositions, but a logic completion of a certain stage in the Ukrainian history. One wished it to be the shortest one.

Vitaliy Kononov

The notion that Ukraine will integrate with Europe when our leaders (large part of whom are from the old Soviet elite) shake hands and write memoranda, become members of groups and bodies is a myth. Of course, we need all this as the framework. But, we have to fill this framework with real content for our people. What does this framework mean for an ordinary Ukrainian when he/she has to face harassment to get visas, to go to Europe (even for employment), when women and children are trafficked — in short, when the benefits of European integration go not to the people but to the handful elite, whose children have the material resources to study in costly schools of the West and behave in the same arrogant way as their parents at home? Not just the elite, the Ukrainian people have to identify themselves and understand Europe, see Europe and feel European. People-to-people networks are no less important than the inter-governmental exchanges. Imagine if we had party-to-party, group-to-group, school-to-school contacts with the EU states, should we really care about whether to go alone or with Russia?

Leonid Kravchuk

There has been a lot of lively debate on Ukraine the Euro-Asian economic community and on the doctrine 'To Europe together with Russia'. Somebody has even built Moscow – Brussels – Kyiv a bridge. To my mind, we must say a decisive 'no' to such a philosophy. Ukraine has been an independent sovereign state for more than ten years, and it can be neither a territory where anyone could walk wherever he or she likes nor a land which can be trampled by anyone's boot.

The formula 'To Europe together with Russia' is unclear; it poses more questions than gives answers. In fact, there is no political force in Ukraine opposing mutually beneficial, pragmatic relations with Russia. On the other hand, the objective need of cooperation between the two countries is being impeded by pretensions of Russian Federation's political elite to domination over the post-Soviet space. Despite official declarations by Russia's leaders on taking into consideration of the CIS partners' interests, Ukraine's first, few realize the necessity of equal-in-rights relations with Ukraine. The question must be posed unambiguously: together with Russia or under Russia? If together with Russia as partners which are equal in rights, then such an approach should be welcomed, as this is in both nations' interests.

The 'Eurochoice' does not imply reduction of economic, cultural and political relations with Russia and other countries of the CIS. Their necessity is being dictated by economic and political advisability, as well as both nations' historical past and present. However, both we and the Russians have to think about the future, technical-scientific achievements, civilized life standards and organization of life after democratic models. Everyone understands that these can be found on the West. Therefore, choice of course is the choice of future for our people.

And, these things should not be opposed to each other: if we take a course toward Europe, then, allegedly, we are against Russia's interests. This would have been right only if Russia opposed Europe and followed its own, peculiar way of development. But, the country has determined its European choice, too. There are certain details in this, but they are not so important. Therefore, we do not have to be afraid that Russia may be annoyed at our civilized protection of our own interests. Otherwise, we can get nothing.

Ivan Kuras

Russia is one of Ukraine's strategic partners. Correspondingly, coming from the spirit of partnership, we have to take into account this country's opinion, especially when we are taking steps that will have effect on its position in the international scene, too. Ukraine's potential entering the EU and NATO is precisely a step of this kind. Nevertheless, while taking its steps, Ukraine must be guided by its own interests first of all, and follow the course that was determined in Kyiv, not in Moscow. In our turn, we also can expect from Russia maximum care about interests taken by its strategic partner – and Ukraine is Moscow's strategic partner, too.

The slogan 'To Europe together with Russia' seems to me not a definition of the only possible way, but a desirable variant of developments the final goal of which I would formulate as 'In Europe together with Russia'.

Ella Libanova

There is a serious danger for Ukraine to become Russia's appendage and find itself at the tail-end with respect to Europe and European structures. I do not think we should orient ourselves to Russia, we remain behind it already. It is necessary

to realize that Ukraine is an independent state, we shouldn't look to see what the USA, Russia, Brussels, or Strasburg will say, but decide on our own in what we long for. By the way, Czech Republic followed this way, it was said there: 'You can listen to everybody, but we have our own 'peasant' mind'. Of course, there is a certain dependence of Ukraine on Russia; it is caused by Ukraine's poverty and old ties which remained from the Soviet times. But, this dependence can increase and do nothing. This is an inevitable situation: Mexico depends on the USA, Canada depends on the USA, and Ukraine depends on the giant neighbor. But, we must gradually overpass this situation.

Oleksandr Moroz

It is a far-fetched statement of a question. European integration does not exclude; it stimulates intensification of economic cooperation with all countries, and first of all with Russia. Everything depends on what system of power we will have. Afterwards, as a main factor, what will influence Russia's system of power. But, this is a problem of another kind, it is mainly Russia's problem that indirectly depends on the situation in Ukraine. Easier speaking, democratization of social life in Ukraine, overcoming of corruption as a derivative from administration will cause adequate changes in Russia. We talk about relative things, because progressive transformations in Russia will, probably take place sooner. They will affect the state of affairs in Ukraine, especially as the influence of Russian capital on the use of main means of production swiftly increases in Ukraine. And, this is one of the key factors of influence.

Yulia Mostova

It can easily be converted into the following one: 'To go on a visit along with one's own elephant', and this will be the same. Russia is an independent, self-sufficient state in no way fitting into the EU's structure; Russia will never fit in the EU which is a compact economic organization preserving its integrity. I disagree with those who think that Europe can consider as a serious argument the fact that if Ukraine is not taken under the patronage of Europe, it will be 'eaten up' by Russia. Europe is not the USA; Europe prefers to keep friendly relations with Russia, and it has enough grounds for that. The question of 'either Ukraine or Russia' should never be posed at

all, as the answer will always be 'Russia'. However, one cannot ignore the fact that if it follows a reasonable approach, Ukraine will manage to bring itself to conformity with the European standards much faster than Russia: our country is more mobile, more compact, it is easier to control. So, I think that we do not need any firm ties with Russia as regards our integration with Europe. It is quite another matter that Russian Federation's interests that are not conflicting with Ukraine's national interests should be taken into consideration to a certain extent. Now, we are being in the situation of watershed, inasmuch as Vladimir Putin needs creation of the Common Economic Space. And, the pressure that Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy and the president of Ukraine are experiencing as regards the creation of the Common Economic Space is, in fact, unprecedented. Putin is going to state the creation of the Common Economic Space as an instrument helping to reach the EU free trade zone. In actual fact, this resembles a combination of a horse and a timorous doe. We are aware of the fact that Russia is exerting pressure upon Ukraine, demanding our renunciation of the documents which had been signed within the framework of WTO.

I cannot see any system work on realization of advantages and disadvantages of our accession to the EU, as well as on establishing mechanisms able to minimize the disadvantages. Unfortunately, our people consider the EU as a basket of goods; maybe, there are those who realize that there are also legal guarantees able to give people the opportunity to have secure comfortable circumstances both early in their life and at an old age, in the EU. A narrow circle of specialists analyzes possible consequences of accession to the EU in Ukraine's economy, mostly in the non-governmental sector. Unfortunately, the non-governmental sector cannot influence the minimizing of disadvantages, as it has no strong opportunity to bear any influence upon the process of decision-making and upon working out of the corresponding documents and legislative acts.

Volodymyr Palij

There is no doubt that Russia has its own interest as regards Ukraine. Of course, up to the present moment this interest has been being a stumbling block in relations between Ukraine and Russia, as well as between Ukraine and the European Union. I think that Europe should take into account Russia's not only geopolitical but also

historic influence upon Ukraine. It is impossible to regard the process of Ukraine's integration into the EU without taking Russia's interest into consideration. I think that the existing polarity of public thought in Ukraine concerning these processes should not be cast aside. Especially for some time past, when Ukraine experienced a few crises and partly lowered its ratings in international relations with the EU and the USA, the public opinion tended to position itself in complete accordance with the situation: the pressure exerted from one direction gives grounds for inclining to another side.

Mykola Plavyuk

Each state, each nation has its national interests. Interests of Ukraine and Russia are not identical; therefore, each state should solve its problems on its own. Ukraine should form its path to European structures without taking into consideration how Russia responds to it. I would be glad if Russia also joined the European Community, having listened to de Gaulle's concept 'Europe from the Atlantic to the Ural'. I want to believe that pro-European tendencies will win in Russia that would promote weakening of the traditional imperial complex. It would be beneficial both for Russia and for Ukraine.

Myroslav Popovych

'To Europe along with Russia' – it is a good slogan because it allows to pass over 'Get out of Moscow' (and into Europe), a slogan attractive at first glance. The way to Europe does not mean that we should reject historical contacts with Russia. But, it would be a folly to connect Ukraine's steps westwards with Russia's readiness to make the same steps. For many reasons, Russia can not move towards Europe at the same pace that Ukraine should. Even a final result of movement towards Europe of such a great state as is Russia can not be the same as that for Ukraine. Ukraine is immeasurably more compact and has optimal dimensions, and this permits it to be equal to other countries of Europe.

Volodymyr Pyekhota

Owing to our country's balanced and responsible foreign policy activities, it has succeeded in acquiring a reputation of a constructive reliable partner. Among the

post-Soviet countries, Ukraine was the first to establish partnership with the European Union and sign the Charter on special partnership with NATO. Ukraine became a member of the Council of Europe and UN Security Council. In 1998 and 2000, the Strategy and the Programme of Ukraine's integration into the EU was approved by President of Ukraine's decrees. The EU Common Strategy as regards Ukraine, ratified by the Council of Europe in December 1999, became a significant step in establishing of relations between our country and the European Union.

Tendencies in the development of strategic partnership were outlined at the Fifth Ukraine–EU Summit in September 2001, and the EU Plan of Actions in sphere of Justice and Home Affairs of Ukraine accepted in December 2001.

Simultaneously, we maintained and improved mutually beneficial relations with Russia and the CIS countries; our contacts with countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe were also being developed actively. Ukraine's cooperation with the US was also given due attention.

Today, all these directions of our foreign policy and economic activities should be subjected to our strategic goal of Ukraine's European integration. Therefore, extension of processes of Euro-integration, as well as development and strengthening of our strategic partnership with Russia (based on our countries' mutual interest in integration with the present European economic and cultural space) should constitute the main trends of Ukraine's foreign policy. Balanced and confident relations of strategic partnership with the US will play an important role in strengthening Ukraine's international positions.

By the way, the policy of reforming in Ukraine must be aimed at those institutional transformations which would allow our country to pretend to acquiring status of an EU-associated member by the end of 2007, and to create real pre-conditions for Ukraine's accession to the EU by 2011. The President emphasised this point in his Address to the Supreme Rada of Ukraine, and we support his position.

Oleh Samchyshyn

As regards Ukraine's future accession to the European Union, our country should not become bound up officially with any other state. It is quite another matter that we have to abide the presence of powerful Russian capital in our country. As Irving

Stone once said, 'However high our imaginings would reach, reality should be their pedestal'. It is known that Russia is interested in wide cooperation with Europe, too. And, our political elite has to take into consideration Russia's close interest in controlling the process of Ukraine's approach to the EU. Of course, the idea of entering the European Union together with Russia is not bad in itself, but if Russia says 'no', this must not serve as a decisive factor for Ukraine.

Our effective way to Europe consists in constant improvement of trade and economic relations. We should not be afraid of European capital coming to Ukraine. I consider important the opportunity to obtain services and buy goods of the European level of quality, no matter which capital backs one or another production. Money does not like any borders, and the present-day economy is being structured in such a way that we can hardly assert that only one national producer backs one brand or another.

Larysa Skoryk

In order not to be alone on the European continent (at best), or not to enter again a despairingly technologically backward space 'forever along with' Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus, Ukraine has to find an effective way to EU – but, of course, without 'along with Russia' proposed to it with eastern craftiness. On what grounds and with what perspective? Is it together with Moscow's unforgiven blood Chechen sin; 'democratization' by forces and methods of the Federal Security Service (FSB); much more scaled corruption than in Ukraine; territorial claims of Russian politicians to Ukraine, or in order to please two newest Russia's European allies on the Iraqi problem, concerning which Ukraine took quite mature, state and strategic position?

As to the war against Saddam Hussein's regime, Ukraine made a wise decision on its own. As well independently it should follow the way to the EU, without any additional weight from the past.

Undoubtedly, in order that this path wasn't thorny and long, Ukraine must as quickly as possible achieve success in extermination of the clan character and corruptibility in its own state structures; conduct an administrative-political reform and, resting upon these actions, make economic reforms real, and create favorable investment conditions. Ukraine should determine priorities of development of the

Ukrainian economy and our opportunities in the European market. Ukraine should prove to itself and to the West that it wants to build a civil society; therefore, the Ukrainian state has to create favorable conditions for real development of the system of democratic self-government.

Europe is closer from all standpoints. And, if Europe cares that, on the border of Eurasian space of unpredictable Russia, Ukraine became a country with predictable European democracy as soon as possible, EU member states must put the question concerning Ukraine on a concrete basis and, probably, think that those need intensifying of especially 'negative image' of Ukraine (quotation from Joschka Fischer's speech) in order to make Ukraine's way to the EU more complicated, who so ardently calls upon Ukraine to diametrically opposite 'integration'.

Hanna Skrypnyk

Before putting this question, one should clear up whether Russia aspires to integrate with European structures? Frankly speaking, it causes certain doubts because — impartially — Russia's interests are concentrated in the Asian region first of all. Therefore, it is inexpediently to wait until Russia will determine its position. Ukraine should first of all proceed from its own national interests, which not always coincide with interests of its neighbors. Unfortunately, now a part of the political-oligarch elite of Ukraine openly demonstrates its dependence on position of the northern neighbor. This dependence rides on provincial complexes of certain Ukrainian politicians (who however, often pretend to the role of Ukraine's guides) and on their financial interests, at the heart of which there are economic ties with Russian business that are rather not clear from the legal standpoint. However, sooner or later, they will renounce their positions under the pressure of that part of political and economic elite which will be guided exceptionally by national interests in its foreign policy of Ukraine.

Volodymyr Stretovych

We are a sovereign state. With a certain will of supreme political leadership, we have all the opportunities to realize this 'trip to Europe' on our own, without Russia. Russia can be another step in this direction. But, in order to tie us to Russia, a thesis was made (and a corresponding structure in the parliament was formed) that we should

move toward the EU along with Russia. This thesis upholds a Russian 'fifth column' which exists in Ukraine and can not imagine itself in isolation from Russia.

Today, Russia is a belligerent state. And, until the war in Chechnya comes to the end, irrespective of results of the latest referendum carried out there, one won't speak that Russia should take its place in Europe, because it will appear that there blazes a war at Europe's borders, and all the Europe has to participate in extinguishing this fire.

In my opinion, Russia has more problems in democratic development than Ukraine. That's why we are closer to EU standards. Expecting the time when Russia gives its regions a corresponding freedom, when the pressure of the centre on autonomies reduces etc., can essentially retard our way to Europe.

Natalia Sumska

Ukraine has not simply proclaimed its independence; it became an independent state that carries out independent foreign and domestic policy. That is why there is no point in thinking whether we should move toward West independently, or along with Russia. Of course, independently! And one does not need talk about brotherhood that as if can arise between Russia and Ukraine. We have got different national interests, therefore one should first of all think of them, turn into a strong and independent state and present itself on the world scene. Surely, we should support and develop both economic and cultural contacts, but it is necessary to remember that the borders between our states made ten years ago have done their part: we follow our way. Even if we have a common aim and the same methods, our way is individual. Besides, Russia has many problems, huge territories, where it cannot establish order, a war in Chechnya. What do we need its problems for? We should actively move forward, as a separate state.

Petro Symonenko

In connection with this question, one should mention that Russia does not see the possibility of joining the EU like Europeans see it. The EU and Russia are players of one level on the international scene, though EU surpasses economically, and Russia — military-politically. That's why even under a hypothetical condition of close integral processes between them, one can not talk about Russia's movement toward the EU, but more likely about the creation of qualitatively new pan-European structures.

Under these conditions, new European structures can become an effective way of achievement by the Ukrainian people of European standards of living. But, it is a long-term prospect. I do not consider that Ukraine's entering the European structures (I mean total integration, not close cooperation in some spheres) beyond bilateral Russia-EU relations can be short or medium-term. That only can be effective what is possible. In our case, it is coordination of the Ukrainian policy with Russia because, for Ukraine in any case, it would be more safely and economically and politically expedient to make this movement along with Russia. And, not only with Russia, but with all subjects of the February 2003 Moscow agreements about the creation of the Common Economic Space and Organization of Regional Integration (CES and ORI). Together, we are a ponderable economic and geo-political factor within the Eurasian space, and an important link, which ensures intercommunication of all regions of great mainland Eurasia, from Brest by the Atlantic Ocean to Yokohama and Hong Kong in the Far East. So, having such an important role, we could reach necessary understandings with a united Europe on priority-driven grounds.

Kostiantyn Sytnyk

Ukraine's way towards the European Union and European structures can be only one: exclusively independently and as soon as possible! If our politicians know how economic, industrial contacts can accelerate our advance towards Europe and optimize the fulfillment of requirements set by the European Union (and this is still possible), if we manage to establish such relations and create such a model when our economy profits by strengthening of economic contacts with Russia, then I will understand and appreciate such an advance (merely economic one) 'together'. And, in the political aspect, when they submit an application and we simultaneously do the same: of course, the answer is 'no'. We have kept our close relations from the Soviet times. Consequently, any economic contacts able to contribute to positive processes in the economy should be supported by the government and the lawmakers. However, I am speaking about the economic aspect only, and the cooperation must be based on autarchic, independent positions of the two countries. Moreover, I am surprised at the very formulation of the question: why should we attach everything to Russia? Why do we mean only the same three nations – the Russians, the Ukrainians and the

Belarussians – when speaking about the Slavs? It looks like the Polish, the Bulgarians and the Czechs are not Slavs any more, or not the Slavs that we are bound up with for the future. So we say ‘the Slavs’ and have in mind ‘Eastern Slavs’ solely.

Borys Tarasyuk

This is a very harmful slogan and, personally, I categorically reject this slogan as a policy guideline for Ukraine, because we have absolutely different objectives in our foreign policy, we have absolutely different statuses as countries. Unlike Russia, Ukraine is a purely European nation and its identity is together with other European nations. Unlike Ukraine, Russia has never voiced the objective of joining EU. So, these are arguments against following this wrong way of our foreign policy, and it would be appropriate to refer to the position of leaders of the Russian government (for instance, Khristenko) who themselves refer to this idea as political provocation because they never ever put the objective of joining EU.

Ivan Tomych

This question reminds me of situation where a pupil, after he has finished secondary school, decides what to enter: an institute or a professional school, or follow his desk neighbor's choice. We must seek our own way, without taking into consideration the plans and wishes of the ‘desk neighbor’. We should analyse on our own and decide in the manner of protectionism policy what is profitable for us. The main thing is a positive result for Ukraine. It is not true that our way is impossible without Russia; however, the cooperation with it can bring obvious benefits, and we should make use of that. The problem is in another thing: I can not see a purposeful, considered and clearly formulated Ukraine's policy concerning EU. The position of our authority continuously sways from side to side and, with its uncertainty, it compromises the idea of Ukraine's direction toward European integration. First of all, this problem should be solved on the authority level.

Yulia Tymoshenko

I cannot see any practical meaning in this question. First, Russia has never stated officially its wish to join the EU in future. That is why I consider the slogan ‘to Europe

together with Russia' launched by some Ukrainian politicians to be completely demagogic.

Thereupon I am at one with many Russian high officials who repeatedly expressed their surprise at this formula. Thus, Europe is on its own, Russia on its own, the US on their own, Turkey on its own and so on. Secondly: moreover, everyone realizes that the EU with Russia would represent quite a different geopolitical structure (another question is whether it is a good or a bad one) than the one that Europe has been building for half a century. Therefore, Ukraine joining the EU in tandem with Russia is a plan that fundamentally differs from that one you mean when speaking about Euro-integration. This is mere futurology dealing with the second half, or even the end of the 21st century. And, as a politician, I am not inclined to discuss any projects related to remote future.

At the same time, I do not agree with the opinion that Ukraine's Euro-integration implies its recession from extensive co-operation with Russia. After all, this is impossible in view of numerous political, historic, cultural, ethnic and economic reasons. It is quite another question that this co-operation has to be developed on the basis of parity and mutual benefit, quite unlike it is being done in creating of a gas-transporting consortium. By the way, Germany's role in the project demonstrates that EU's economic activities in the region can be at direct variance with Ukraine's interests. And, this is unacceptable no matter how fine the accompanying words about the 'European choice' would be.

Taras Voznyak

In administrative sense it is full recklessness to talk about movement toward Europe together with someone. It can be perceived as obscuring the issue or information diversion. Russia does not declare its wish to be in EU. As Goebbels said: 'The stupider the phrase is, and the more often it is repeated, the closer it is to the truth', but 'the truth' means disinformation. Ukraine put itself a task to enter the EU, so it must cooperate with Russia and other countries, but to enter the EU along with Russia is just recklessness.

Natalia Yakovenko

Russia's specific weight is so immense and accelerative that to move 'together with Russia' would automatically mean to follow the lead of Russia's political and

economic interests. I think that, for Ukraine, such a way can result in a failure or loss of our own interests and our own state identity which has not being completely formed yet, anyway.

Yuri Yekhanurov

There are clear requirements for candidates joining the EU, i.e. the so-called Copenhagen criteria. They are divided into three groups: political, economic and membership criteria. The latter demands significant changes in the administrative system of a state. Can Ukraine influence transformation of Russian legislation? No, it can not. Can Ukraine interfere in the process of political reforms in the Russian Federation or, for instance, control the dimension of budgeted deficit in Russia? No, it can not. These are domestic problems that relate to exclusive competences of a sovereign state.

Somebody is unlikely to doubt that the negative attitude of Russia to 'Ukraine's European choice' can create additional difficulties for our country concerning integration with Europe. Therefore, as it may seem, the most correct answer to this question is the formula: an independent way against a background of the European vector's predominance in Russia's foreign policy.

Volodymyr Yevtukh

Of course, independently, as Russia is much tied with the eastern civilization. Besides, it is a part of various kinds of Asian global systems. Including one civilization into another is impossible; here, one can speak only about cooperation and interaction. Especially, since in Russia's policy concerning Ukraine, the principles of equal-in-rights partnership are not kept, to some extent there is pressure and submission to Russia's strategic interests that is shown in Ukraine's involvement in Euro-Asian blocs, the forcing of introduction of one economic space, one ruble zone on the part of the post-Soviet territory etc.

Viktor Yushchenko

Frankly speaking, I do not understand this idea because, from the standpoint of economic and political readiness, we can say that Russia achieved much more on

the way of integration with Europe than we did. How can we put someone on our under-developed level of legislation if the other party feels much more modern and confident? One can find only one common thing: both Russia and Ukraine will be perceived by the European party solely on the basis of their internal state.

Of course, when these questions coincide in time and spirit, then it is not out of place to talk about some actions that happen in unison. However, one may not talk about common schedules of modernization of political, economic, and fiscal rules of Ukraine and Russia. Each state faces very specific tasks and responsibilities, therefore thoughts about common steps appeared as a result of a primitive understanding of the way of each country to Europe. Ukraine and Russia have their political will which, depending on effectiveness and success, will allow to realize 'the European choice'.

7. What is common and what is different between Ukraine and the 'Western culture'? Is Ukraine part of the Western world?

Mykola Barabash

Ukrainian culture is absolutely unique, like the culture of any nation experiencing a period of its own formation (and the Ukrainian nation is rather young, though it had not been born yesterday). On the other hand, absence of statehood together with unsuccessful experience of state formation during many centuries has had an effect on certain national features. Ukraine's participation in the Soviet Union made its alterations, too. The Ukrainians turned out to be 'sovietized' in more than 70 years of their being part of the USSR. Nevertheless, such special features characteristic of Ukrainians like tolerance, heartiness, benevolence, hospitality, cheerful disposition, remained unchanged. Besides, let us remember those troubles the Ukrainians faced, especially in the 20th century: revolutions, wars, famines, disintegration of the Soviet system. The United States, for example, have not experienced such upheavals; otherwise, it would be difficult to say what they could have been like today. The tragedy of the World Trade Centre was a very serious blow to the USA and has detonated, in fact, the mechanism of a new war, possibly World War Three. Therefore, we can say that the Ukrainian culture is unique, indeed.

Volodymyr Barabash

This question is closely related to the next one, and I would like to tie them together. Ukraine is heterogeneous, and I do not know whether this is good or bad for

us. Probably, from the point of view of cultural wealth, or the so-called development potential, this is good; but, from the standpoint of politics, this is bad, because this heterogeneousness is often used by politicians with unclean hands for the sake of their populist interests.

Undoubtedly, the differences existing between Ukraine and the West are considerable, and the more we would move east the more noticeable the differences are, because in the area of both territory and state organization Ukraine's different regions have always been orientated in different directions: western Ukraine towards the Austro-Hungarian Empire, with the eastern part of the country towards Russia. Therefore, we could say that the right-bank Ukraine has much in common with the Western culture as regards work and religion, both morally and mentally. As a businessman, I can testify that moral standards are more powerful and effective precisely in western Ukraine, and I think this is caused by deeper religiousness of its inhabitants. In addition, democracy is coming from the western direction.

Rayisa Bogatyriova

Ability of Ukrainian migrants to perfectly adapt to living conditions practically in all countries of the West means that there are no principal differences, but there is much in common. As to the question about belonging to the West, then we do, but, as Americans would say, we belong to the 'Far West'.

Andriy Derkach

To start with, Ukraine is an orthodox state. All Ukrainian statehood and culture had been built and the mentality of our nation had been formed on the basis of faith. In this quality, Ukraine identifies itself as part of the European Christian civilization, not of some abstract western world. If we take geopolitical aspect, Ukraine's uniqueness is in being practically on the border of a uniting Europe and Asia. It is their connecting link. Ukraine will have to play a very important role: not to allow appearance of new dividing lines in present-day Europe. Today, nobody doubts the disastrous effects it can cause. Ukraine should show political will in achievement of objects in view, because its future depends on the result of today's actions: whether Ukraine will be part of one European economic and legal space, or remain in the

‘grey zone’ of the continent. It is necessary to be guided by national interests instead of hysterics of quasi-politicians, who make business on anti-Russian rhetoric, which is in fact anti-European. Only then will Ukraine cease to be ‘a cross mega-field’, i.e. a territory where national interests of other states will be realized; in practice, it will join the family of European nations.

Stepan Gavrysh

Ukrainians belong to the oldest European nationalities. And, not only Ukrainian royal children were present on highest European thrones, e.g. in France and other countries: we have always been in Europe. Unfortunately, it is seldom mentioned that Ukraine was a royal state of Danyl Galytskyi crowned by the Pope. And, this means that we have always been members of European states’ club. We have always been part of the European civilization. In Ukraine, competition between two great dynasties took place: the Habsburgs, the dynasty of Franz-Josef, and the Hohenzollerns, the court of the Romanovs. Ukrainians have culture kindred to cultures of other European nations. And, it is noticeable not only in the elements of cultural heritage concentrated on Ukraine’s territory. These are both Ukrainians’ way of life that is rather European, and the lifestyle. We have much in common with other European nations; therefore, it is extremely difficult to look for differences. It is as good as to look for differences among Austrians, Italians, Frenchmen or the Portuguese. The differences are in temperament, in wish to drink either a cup of tea, or aperitif in the morning, to eat either vareniks or clams. But, these differences enrich us. As to their mentality, ethnic history, biography, Ukrainians are indeed Europeans. We gave Europe a number of nationalities, which once lived in our territory: for example, white Croats that migrated to Croatia and today are a part of a European community. And, we also know that Goths came to our lands from the Vistula banks and stayed to live here. We know that Alans and other nations moved from Ukraine to Europe, and vice versa. Ukraine is close to Swedes, because its glorious Vikings sat on Kyiv thrones. That’s why Europe’s history is at the same time Ukraine’s history. If there were no Ukraine, it is unknown what Europe’s history would be. On the other hand, if there were no Europe, we would not have an Ukrainian state, which had been contested for seven centuries.

Vitaliy Kononov

You may be aware that the geographic centre of Europe lies in Ukraine, in the city of Rakhiv near Ivano-Frankivsk in West Ukraine. However, the political centre of Europe may lie in Switzerland. Traditions and history of Ukraine has been shaped by common events since ancient times. The difference in culture between the West and East of Europe is no wider than that of the North and South of Europe, say, between Norway and Greece, Sweden and Spain in terms of language, folklore etc. But, we share the same history. The 'Western world' as a cohesive political bloc emerged essentially after World War Two and is a product of the Marshall Plan. In that sense, Ukraine was severed from that 'Western world' for quite some time. What is Europe today? Look carefully at the streets of Paris, London and Berlin. People from all over the world stay, work and develop freely. That did not destroy the European identity of these states. I am in favor of Ukraine integrating fully into this global migration of talents, peoples and cultures. With the culture and values that our civilization shares, it is not very far from Western Europe. I would rather say it will be up to the European states to treat us as part of their cultural identity than for us, Ukrainians, to fight hard to prove that we are Europeans. This is a political and not a cultural issue.

Ivan Kuras

When we are speaking about the Western culture, we mean the culture of social relations, supremacy of law, freedom of speech, an idea of a human being as the highest value, first of all. As things turned out historically, Ukraine had constantly been being pushed in the opposite direction. Today, we have stepped onto the way that Europe follows, again. This way is common for both Europe and Ukraine. Yes, we are behind, but both we and those who are going ahead have the same ultimate aim. In view of that, Ukraine is a European country like any other country of Europe.

On the other hand, Ukraine possesses its own unique and self-sufficient culture that numbers more than a thousand years. This culture is based on Orthodox Christianity and age-old traditions of the Ukrainian people. And, the 'Western world' as a reference point of development looks so attractive just owing to the fact that, in this community of states and nations, the slogan of 'unity in variety' is being realized in practice. Creation of common institutions, opening of borders, intensification of inter-

national contacts contribute to enrichment of cultures, but do not produce the effect of a melting pot: every European nation keeps its own identity. Therefore, Ukraine is a part of Europe in a cultural, civilization sense. I mean the part that is full of will to join the processes of European cultural development and able to make its contribution to cultural enrichment of Europe in general and its every nation in particular.

Ella Libanova

In my opinion, belonging to the Western world, or 'Western culture' is determined firstly by the rule of the Catholic Church and, secondly, by common European history. Even Orthodox Bulgaria and Greece are more organic parts of the Western world. Our people too much depend on the Orthodox Church and, recently, these phenomena have become more acute. Probably, my opinion depends on the fact that I am an atheist, I do not know. I am not delighted to see that either a church or a shop is predominantly built in Ukraine. The Dutch say that each Dutchman visits the church three times in life: when he is born, when he marries, and when he dies. Of course, they visit churches more often, but this phrase depicts an attitude to the church. Here, Orthodoxy and religiousness acquired a hypertrophied shape: everything is sanctified, we always wait for a kind of 'tsar-father'. Miners do not go to work because of arrears of wages, do not make check-ups on the level of trade unions: they go to the president to demand and implore. And, unfortunately, I can not see the way out of this situation.

Oleksandr Moroz

The common thing is that in Ukraine, and in the West, and in the East people live who have the right to ordinary human happiness, confidence in the future, security and care of the state. The difference is that in the West, and in some eastern countries, people have it already and try to keep it and increase, while in our country people only struggle for their rights.

As to the second part of the question, I wouldn't narrow it to the geographic framework of belonging to any state. Ukraine is part of the world. Certainly, the mentality and traditions of Ukraine are far from eastern, but they are not identical to western ones. Each state has its own features and morals, realization of internal

and foreign policy, as well as business dealing, etc. Under conditions of globalization when, along with foreign capital, sights of the proprietor of this capital penetrate in any country, all national features are exposed to external impact. Sometimes it is salutary; sometimes it causes resistance. It is necessary to be ready for both variants, keeping all valuable distinctive features of Ukraine. Both the West and the East are components of the world community. They do not need to be opposed to each other. They should supplement each other harmoniously. Probably, Ukraine will have the leading role in the harmonization of cultures, traditions, search of balance between objective processes of globalization and need to keep originality of the countries.

Yulia Mostova

Today, one can often hear discussions about the question whether Ukraine is part of Europe. Speaking of this, we should hold on to a systemic approach of Ukraine's implantation not only in Europe but in the modern world on the whole, as Ukraine is and considers itself part of this world rather conditionally. Ukraine is quite a separate state that has not been integrated enough information-wise; it achieved only several breakthroughs in the economic sphere and in research. But, this cannot be said as regards intellectual moments, when our 'expensive' brains are being drained away to Europe and the US where they are able to find highly paid jobs. In addition, the problems Europe is confronted with, as well as the world's problems in general are covered narrowly and sketchily to an extreme in our country. Let us just watch news on our TV: these are catastrophes and wars without any explanation or consideration of their causes, these are also a lot of pictures of disasters. This is all that our 'window onto the world' is able to provide. For, Ukraine's citizens we feel little influence of the world and think little of the influence we could exert on the world, too. Beyond any doubt, in this situation we must fundamentally change such type of information policy when its holders are able to control the authorities. And, this situation is possible only in the case of overturn in the heads of mass-media holders, when they come to realize the necessity of transition to European standards.

In conclusion I would like to notice that no real understanding of the need of Ukraine's advancement towards the EU can occur under the present regime. Ukraine needs to replace its present authorities at the least; at the most, the country needs

to change the political system. These transformations must result in coming to the power of those people who are able to extract national interests and consider them above their own ones.

There is certain interpenetration among the elites, in principle; businessmen invest their money, scientists come to our country and show interest in our scientific projects; many young people go to study abroad. Further improvement of accessibility of going abroad for those who go to work on probation or to study there should form one of the priority directions in the bilateral relations Ukraine – the EU. As everybody who had inhaled this air and got system knowledge about the EU's vital activities is being an influence agent, in the finest sense of the word. Such a person comes back equipped with those standards that are accepted in the civilized world; and at his micro-level he or she tries to apply these norms to the work of either a scientific research institute, a business-office, an art-gallery or a mass-media he or she represents. There are many people who are trying to work using the strategies [methods, principles] and traditions developed in Europe, in our country, – especially in the capital, especially in business sector. Certainly, these people are Ukrainian yuppies, trying to be in line with the economic standards existing in Europe. The process of the wild primary capital is now coming to the end: today even those who had been engaged in business racket are trying to purchase Oblenergos, build hotels, open restaurants, and these people need qualified managers working after European models. They are beginning to think about their reputation and realize the fact that Ukraine's system of business must possess communicative mechanisms enabling it to establish normal economic relations with European partners. Unfortunately, this happens not to everybody. Those people I have just mentioned above exist not owing to the situation but regardless of it. I consider necessary establishing of order in sphere of trainings concerning NATO. There are people having no relation to the question that is being raised at the training, in our Ministry of Defense. However, Ukraine has drawn its conclusions as regards this matter; certain changes are now taking place. For example, the Ukrainian part had set 130 arrangements, and only 18 of them were accomplished, within the framework of the „Partnership for Peace“ programme. Today the Ministry's attitude toward these things is more serious. It is very important to have the opportunity to audit the selection of a candidature from

those ministries, which are going to participate in training. It seems necessary to have information about the trainee, his or her professional qualities and influence, about his or her abilities to put the received knowledge into practice, available.

Volodymyr Palij

Undoubtedly, the Ukrainians identify themselves with Europe. Most of my fellow citizens know the facts when Ukraine influenced its neighbors' culture, and that happened on both political and social levels (art, philosophy, religion). At the same time, we realize that the culture of any nation is original and unique. The peoples of single countries can unite into the European Community only thanks to openness of their societies. In addition to economic, political and other factors inducing countries to integration, there also is people's objective will to live in peace and harmony. In this sense, Ukraine will always aspire to integration processes so as to be safe and have reliable partners.

Mykola Plavyuk

You know, such notions, as 'Western culture' require a more precise definition. Is 'bad Americanism' part of the Western culture or not? Nevertheless, one can say that in general the notion 'Western culture' is not very positive now. It is mostly connected with achievements of human civilization which, however, at angle of expediency and standardization drive in deeper roots and peculiar features. I am a conservator in this respect, without opposing new modern trends in literature, music, singing etc. However, I would not like that, at the angle of modernization of 21st century or Western culture, we lose our features that — with their deep roots — connected with peculiarities of our historical being. And, therefore, I am not very anxious that we are not considered to be western Europeans. It is enough for me that we are just Europeans, and an adjective 'western' does not impose upon me much. There were times, when Ukraine played a very original role in Europe, when our writing became a state language of our neighbors, when Western Europe was honoured to keep in touch with us in prince's epoch. Chivalry of our Cossacks wasn't worse than the chivalry of the Polish gentry and representatives of martial laws of the states of Western Europe.

As to the 'Western world', this notion arouses many questions. Is North America or Australia part of the Western world? I understand that division of humanity into 'Western' and 'Eastern' have been formed during the Cold War, when the Soviet Union and its satellites were identified as the 'Eastern' world, while Europe and North America as the 'Western' world, but this division is very relative. That's why in some aspects we are rather part of the 'Western' world. For example, our Russka pravda ('Russian Truth') was created much earlier than the Magna Charta, which the Englishmen are proud of. That is, in the 11th century we had our own code of legal regulations that qualifies us as a civilized and well-organised nation. If the question is about the constitutional aspect, one should mention the 'Constitution' by Pylyp Orlyk. And, though it has not been applied in practice, it does not mean that there were no thinkers among our people at the beginning of the 18th century, who thought in categories peculiar to this document. And, let's remember our philosopher Hryhoriy Skovoroda. I think that, in the positive sense of this word, we are a 'Western' part of civilization and culture, though we have always had our own features connected with Byzantine and other influences. These influences have been noted in the church-religious sector; and I do not consider that the Ukrainian Greek Catholic church with eastern formalism peculiar to it is worse than the Roman Catholic western church. I think that we are both 'western' and 'eastern' at the same time. Of course, from the standpoint of economic development, I would like us to be much more 'western' than now, but in cultural aspects keep our features even if they are 'eastern'.

Myroslav Popovych

I had to go with my European colleague across Ukraine from the West to the East. First, it seemed to him that he understood everything: Halychyna and even western Volhynia resembled Europe to him, but more provincial than France or Switzerland. The further we moved to the east, the less civilized everything seemed. But, soon we moved into Trans-Dnepr regions — a new civilization, with other image, other features, followed by something powerful and incomprehensible.

Ukraine is not Europe's province. Historically, it formed the civilization of the Russian empire with its Russian-language, koine and to ethnic (also with regard to ethnic-religious Russian community) urban western culture. Then, rapid processes

followed in the communist empire that created a very powerful industrial-technical civilization with a tiny humanitarian brain. 18th to 20th centuries are times of radical modernization of the Russian Empire, the modernization which Ukraine was involved in. In these processes, the empire emulated the European culture, but mainly of military-technical nature. It resulted in an unique civilisation phenomenon which eventually has some European features, but approaches Europe neither by its values nor by its drawbacks. One needs time to bring Ukraine to European standards. But, both Ukraine and Europe will gain owing to European integration.

Oleh Samchyshyn

Of course, it is. Ukrainians are rooted throughout all continents. We possess a lobby even in the United States (possibly, not a very influential one, but the very fact is important!). We are bound with the Western world by numerous ties.

As regards culture, the Ukrainian lifestyle is more conservative. Our culture is more deep-rooted than, for example, American. However, in my opinion, like most of the Slavs, Ukrainians are more openhearted and not inclined to formalization of inter-human relations. In a certain sense, these features tell us apart from the West. Sometimes they can be positive, but at times they put us at certain disadvantages.

Our political culture is also different; we possess other than in Europe attitude toward democracy. Our people usually cherish excessive expectations for deeds performed by a concrete leader, not for work of a system of democratic institutions.

Hanna Skrypnyk

Beginning with the most ancient, i.e. ancient Russian and late medieval times, Ukraine was in the circle of states of the Western culture. But, because of remoteness from Western Europe, western cultural styles settled down on Ukrainian land in a slightly changed state. These transformations had been coming upon Ukraine's territory indirectly, mostly through Poland. Influence of the Western culture is better perceptible in western, and less in eastern regions of our state which, after the defeat of hetman Mazepa in the early 18th century gradually lost their originality, having turned into ordinary provinces of Russian empire. After divisions of Poland at the end of the 18th century, the same fate awaited Central Ukraine and a considerable part of the West-

ern Ukrainian territory that couldn't but affect the development of Ukrainian culture and brought about its isolation from pan-European cultural property and, above all, changes in the mentality of Ukrainians that had much in common with the mentality of Western Europe: individualism, respectful treatment to a personality, his/her rights and freedoms. Instead of this, centuries-old forced state of Ukrainian ethnos, one of the negative consequences of which was the loss of national elite, deformed its mental principles, namely distrust to the power of foreigners gave rise to distrust to power at all, unwillingness to obey, certain anarchism of world outlook and inability to live after national interests. Repeated defeats of national-liberate competitions, the ruling of the communist regime, mass repressions and physical destruction of a considerable part of the population promoted formation of other negative features of many Ukrainians, especially social passiveness which differs them from Western Europeans and Northern Americans as representatives of the so-called 'Western world'.

Does Ukraine have a chance to become a part of this world? Yes, it does. Because, confirmation of democratic norms and development of economy will guarantee a revival of Ukrainian natural mental features such as individualism, rationalism, religiousness, democracy that are not peculiar to civilizations of the East and indicate a 'European' nation.

Volodymyr Stretovych

If the Western world had had so much hardship that Ukraine did, then a question 'Would that Western world hold out? Would it keep its culture to that extent that Ukraine did?' would have been rhetorical. But, Ukraine has stood it. Today's researches prove that there were some of the most ancient civilizations in Ukraine. We have a very rich language with many convertible terms; and it means that it has been formed during the thousands of years, and we are ancient people on this earth.

We can consider ourselves to be part of the Western world. Our intelligentsia always aspired to the West. I can be reproached that the Saint-Petersburg Academy of Sciences ransomed Taras Shevchenko from serfdom and that Gogol wrote in Russian etc., but the cardinal achievements were made in Prague, Berlin and Vienna colleges, where our main scientists worked. For instance, Ivan Franko, who worked at Western universities. There are many other examples.

The commonality between us is in the consistent priority of pan-human values. Besides, we do not propagate liberalism. Its ideas do not get accustomed in Europe, and in Ukraine more conservative traditions predominate.

Cultural differences have been accumulating for years, and I would like very much that they keep on household, rite and other levels.

Natalia Sumska

It is good that this question is at the end: it promotes a positive answer. Of course, Ukraine is part of Europe and European culture. Since Europe is big and different. Any variety is a positive moment. And, the point is not only that our territory is European geographically; it is in the cultural tradition. Fraternal schools that were built in different cities of Ukraine were a unique phenomenon but, at the same time they were a part of European civilization processes and united our nation with all developed European nations.

It is quite possible and clear that an ordinary Europe's citizen does not perceive Ukrainians and Ukraine on the whole as a part of European world. We are the East for them, a part of Asia. But, even when our people go to European countries in search of a job, they favorably stand out among other earners for their cultural level, ability to adapt and to work. Probably, this displays some European roots lost by Ukrainian people.

Petro Symonenko

Leaving the answer to this question for political scientists, sociologists and cultural scientists, I'll mention: is Eastern European culture part of the Western one? I think that partially it is, and partially it is not. But, certainly, this culture is unique because it originates from Byzantine roots and has Christian essence. Ukraine is an organic component of Eastern European culture.

Kostiantyn Sytnyk

I think that, if taken in its popular, public aspect, the Ukrainian culture in in principle higher than the Western one. Kindness, mutual respect, non-indifference to each other, hospitality, and tolerance are integral characteristic features of our people. If one is to divide today's culture into elitist, lofty and mass (which makes young people look

like a herd of animals), and taking into consideration mass culture's dominating role, probably our culture could be ranked higher. Nevertheless, now there exists a serious threat of the elitist culture's absorption by mass culture in our country. Today anyone able to open their mouth sings. I visit the Opera theatre with my granddaughter from time to time, trying to accustom her to the classics. Even only one for three million of Kyivans Opera-house is not filled up now. And, some kind of the so-called 'modern' music makes an enormous gain. Therefore, probably, in common with the Western culture we have precisely that trash, everything that is negative.

Is the Ukrainian culture a part of the European one? Yes, of course. In addition, the Western world is polysemantic and heterogeneous. I consider myself Ukrainian. But, I participated in various congresses abroad – in Australia, the US, Russia – and communicated with their conferees. Which world am I part of: Western or Eastern? Of course, while sharing our information, we perform interpenetration of cultures; and the Ukrainian culture is an integral part of precisely the Western world and Western civilization.

Borys Tarasyuk

Well, thinking over my answer to your question, I caught myself considering a linguistic or philosophical meaning: what do we mean by 'West' and 'Western culture'? Is it legitimate to use such term as 'Western culture' or 'Western world'? It seems to me that we have to operate within such meaning as 'European values'. Otherwise, we may enter a discussion like the one, which I recently have been taking part in, on European countries and the countries of the EU, claiming that EU actually is Europe. But, Europe is not just 15 countries, not even just 25 countries. Europe is 47 countries, Ukraine including. We are in the center of Europe. I would say, this is a kind of philosophical approach: what we consider ourselves to be.

From my point of view, historically, we are an inseparable part of the European culture. And, in European history as such, I am not talking about medieval ages when Ukraine was a rather influential country, I mean the Kyivska Rus' having family ties with many royal families of Europe, France, the Nordic countries. And, this already made us an inseparable part of the giant European culture. Certainly, if we are talking about European culture, we have to talk about the culture of every nation and

of every people, perhaps those not having their nation but being people with their own identity and the culture.

Certainly, in this sense Ukraine has its own culture, its own tradition. But, the question is: is this culture something alien to the European culture? Either it is part of the European culture, or it is a case of European diversity of cultures... I think that the second answer would be correct. Ukrainian culture is an inseparable part of European diversity of cultures, and it was developing in Europe in communication with other European Slavic, and not only Slavic nations. Ukrainians were developing their culture in relationship with, for example, the cultures of Germans, Greeks, Poles, Bulgarians, Jews and many other nationalities. And, one has to take into account that if, we are talking about European culture civilizationally, in terms of religion, Ukraine has a predominant Christian religion. In Ukraine, like in any part of Europe, there is a difference in that we have Orthodox Christianity. But, this is Christianity too. So, this relates us definitely to the European civilization, and the question is that we have to return to this family of European nations in terms of civilization, democracy, sharing the same values as have been established in much more democratic and prosperous Western Europe united by the EU or NATO.

Ivan Tomych

This question is quite difficult. Of course, to some extent Ukraine is a part of Western world. But, I think that Ukrainian culture is an absolutely unique phenomenon, which formed in the course of historical processes through which Ukrainian people passed. In general, any European nation is unique at a certain stage of its development, and then national features grade in favor of globalization processes. However one can say with confidence that Ukrainian mentality has more European features than Asian. This confirms the high level of Ukrainians' adaptability in EU countries.

Yulia Tymoshenko

It is Ukraine's great attainment and, at the same time, its historical misfortune that it has been developing in the sphere of too active civilization contacts. This caused centrifugal cultural, political, economic tendencies over and over again. The history of partition of Ukrainian churches into Orthodox and Greek-Catholic is a glaring

example of this, as well as the division of Ukraine by empires, etc. And, at the same time, this allowed Ukraine to develop its own unique culture and spirituality which organically combines various mental paradigms, among which there can also be found, of course, a very influential 'Western' one.

The very Spengler's question about the 'Western culture' I personally consider to be rather old-fashioned. Who can explain to me today what exactly 'Western culture' is, when a 'non-Western' Greece and a 'half-Western' Portugal are members of the EU, and entirely Muslim Turkey is being energetically nominated? What is the 'Western culture' of Germany's Kurd enclaves is, or the culture of Chinatowns, 'Asian' towns of the UK, of Ukrainians residential areas in Madrid and Naples? Europeans do not have any clear answer to this question; they have only a complete wish to create the great European home's new culture, based on democratic values and European peoples' advanced accomplishments.

The thesis about the 'Western world' is also for me a rudimentary organ of a Cold War between the capitalistic West and the Soviet East. This East does not exist now, so Ukraine's estimation in this frame of reference is out of place. And, in general, I think that the less we use the out-of-date mythologies and ideological clichés which reflected dividing lines and opposition fronts in the past, the faster we will come to mutual understanding in our common European home.

Taras Voznyak

What commonalities does Muslim Albania have with 'classical' Europe? Or Greece, which in mental respects is farther in the East than Ukraine. What common does Romania have, except for the Latin alphabet? Comparing some Romanian provinces with Ukraine, I come to the conclusion that somewhere Ukraine looks like Germany.

Europe is very heterogeneous. I am against repetition of Huntington's myths, when he referred Russia and Ukraine to Orthodox-Islamite world, because there is very little common between Ukraine and Saudi Arabia. These all are artificial schemes that recently were actualised, when the EU has set objectives and clearly described them. It was very noticeable with what 'pleasure' the newly Slavophiles, starting with Igrunov and finishing with Okara make fun that Ukraine will be in a bad position, as well as all others. Undoubtedly, Ukraine is an organic part of Europe.

If the cultural aspect is important for Okara, then for instance, the expansion of real baroque, not like the one at the Vasyliy Blazhennyi Cathedral, had place not further than beyond Ukraine and Belarus. I mean expansion of the baroque culture, Latin language, Catholicism, the Renaissance, and humanism that were not in Russia, but prospered in Ukraine and Belarus. And, then was forming the Ukrainian national self-consciousness with origins from medieval academies of Ostrog, Lviv, and Kyiv. It is important to know Ukraine's history better, come on excursions to Ukrainian cities and visit not only governmental and administrative institutions, but also historical places such as the Kyiv-Pechersk Monastery and many others.

Natalia Yakovenko

This question implies a rather simplified approach to the problem that is much more complicated, in fact, from a scientist's critical point of view, as we should take into consideration, first of all, a destructive whirlwind of totalitarianism while speaking of forms of self-organization of the society and political culture. On the other hand, there is no univocal definition of the 'Western culture' that is, there is no comparative scale that would be objective. If we conventionally take as a definition of 'the West' the Christian cultural inheritance, then Ukraine, as a non-Muslim country, undoubtedly belongs to 'the West'; moreover, most of its citizens are being the followers of the 'exceptionally Western' churches: Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic or Protestant ones. Reasoning from educational, cultural and artistic traditions, Ukraine's 'European choice' amounts to more than four centuries, and it has been never revised. If one is to take into consideration the level of urbanization and, on the whole, the weight of a city and widely interpreted urban culture in the society's life, then it will be easy to coordinate Ukraine with the idea of 'the West', too. Eventually, at the everyday level, Ukrainians have preserved their tolerant attitude toward those whose language or faith is 'different', despite isolationism and xenophobia cultivated by totalitarian propaganda. In contrast to most other former Soviet republics, this allowed Ukraine to pass the period of disintegration of the USSR without any ethnic and denominational conflicts. To my mind, this circumstance also indicates certain 'Westernness', that is rational moderateness of the Ukrainian national mentality. At the same time, the level of civil liability, forms of civil society, conscious handling of mechanisms of

democracy, as well as other elements of European political culture which began to form in Ukraine at the turn of the 19th century simultaneously with the European ones, were so radically eradicated at the price of millions of lives of most active Ukrainian citizens that today we have to speak of not so much their reanimation as new re-mastering, starting from a clean slate. And, in this sense, Ukraine can hardly be counted in 'the West', though, according to my observations, extremely encouraging processes and transformations are now taking shape among younger people, especially in the intellectual sphere.

Yuri Yekhanurov

In the humanities, there are many definitions of the notion of 'Western' culture. If it means the culture of Western Europe, then Ukraine has its specific character, as it belongs to Western Europe. If the definition 'western' is used as synonym of 'European' culture, different from traditions of the East (for instance, Central Asia, China, India and Japan), then Ukraine is, of course, part of the western world, an integral constituent of European cultural and historical processes.

In general, we have much more common than different. We have a common history and all the basic standards; inter-denominational relations are oriented to the mental European tradition. Most of Ukraine's citizens share and support democratic values of the Western world. Our differences are not principal. At present they are determined by substantial backlog from the West in the field of high technologies, and by socio-economic indicators, showing the citizens' quality of life.

Volodymyr Yevtukh

Differences between Ukraine and the 'Western culture' (under this term I understand civilization, way of living and thinking, results of person's activity in spiritual sphere) were conditioned by these two parts being in different systems of social development for a long time – totalitarian (Ukraine) and, to some extent, democratic (Western Europe). It caused opposite perception of social development, human values and, accordingly, intermediate respond to social phenomena.

Of course, there is much in common in the Ukrainian culture and culture of Western European countries. First of all, these are approaches to estimation of a

person's role in civilization processes and common philosophic ways of interpreting cultural phenomena in present-day world. Since deep principles of Ukrainian culture have been forming for a long time, to some extent under the influence of interaction with the Western culture, then, say, folklore takes an important place in the culture of both parts. Nowadays, due to modern communication and information technologies, Ukraine's culture (music, theatre, variety art etc.) is under influence of the West, and the so-called youth culture of Ukrainians and citizens of other countries develops in one communication space.

To much extent (the elements of the same culture, thinking, formation of social relations, and since recent times – formation of political culture), Ukraine is a part of the western world. More precisely, the factors listed above closely tie Ukraine with this world.

8. Today's state and outlook of European business in Ukraine, and Ukrainian business in EU

Mykola Barabash

Every business must have a purpose, first of all. The Ukrainian business' purpose is to enter the world markets and occupy a place that would be worthy of a European state. For example, Ukraine has worked out many projects in the chemical fertilizers field; these ecologically clean products differ from their present foreign analogues advantageously. But to enter the world or European markets we need to meet the world standards. Our agriculture is now being behindhand; the Arabic Emirates are computerised by 98%, and our farmers mostly have no idea what Internet is, – and it is, first, a flow of new information. Ukrainian agriculture possesses a great potential, but it is unable to compete with European agrarians, especially because of its technical backwardness. Therefore, it is difficult to speak of interests of our business in countries of the European Union, especially as regards the agrarian sector, as without solving of material and technical problems the subject remains within the format of „wishful”, not „real” things. The agrarian sector is a problematic one in general, as it will always depend on nature, weather conditions, first. In addition, our tax system denudes an agricultural producer of absolutely everything: from 40% to 70% unprofitableness of agriculture was fixed last year.

Volodymyr Barabash

We have not so many competitive sectors of the economy; most of them need modernization. Today future prospects of Ukrainian business in the EU, taking into

account the fact that we turned out to be outside the European playing field, can be estimated as minor. This is caused by our authorities' weakness, their unconsidered policy, first of all. As regards the outlook of European business in Ukraine, this is more interesting and multi-faceted. The territory of EU's old members has been businesssed rather tight, and to create a new business is quite difficult here, as one has fewer opportunities for manoeuvring. Therefore, Ukraine's territory is very promising for them. Of course, some businessmen have grown a bit stout on European food; they are unwilling to exert themselves for developing these markets. However, the EU has a few quite young, active and ambitious members who are striving for coming up with their more successful neighbors. These are Italy, Greece, and Spain. They are more dynamic and able to run the risk that constitutes an integral part of the whole Ukrainian business. Other European countries come here a bit differently. For example, Germany is coming via Poland, using the experience of communication with this country, with transfer of risks to another player. However, they can be late. Though active, ambitious Italy and Greece are running risks in another direction. This is a kind of a card play. That is why the perspectives of European business in Ukraine look more interesting than vice versa.

Taking into consideration the specific character of my business, based on conservative things rather than advanced technologies, competitiveness in this field is comparatively tighter than in other spheres. Since, as regards my own sphere, the tea business, differences between Ukraine and Europe are insignificant. For me to compete within the EU is easier than for those Ukrainian entrepreneurs whose businesses are based mostly upon scientific achievements. That is why I consider my business successful for the future. Besides, the brand 'Monomakh' is related to Byzantium, Kyiv Rus, and the old traditions of our relations with Europe. Therefore, our trademark's promotion will progress easier. In addition, we have relations with neighboring countries, for example Poland, Hungary, which can serve as a guarantor of our business' successful development.

Rayisa Bogatyriova

I consider that, soon, the situation in economic partnership between Ukraine and EU will improve. Some years ago, it was completely under the influence of the

‘star’ of economic crisis, downfall of manufacture and export of raw materials. Today, the Ukrainian economy functions in other ‘constellation’ of structural reorganization, capitalization, industrial modernization and activation of the consumer market. And, this provides favorable ‘a business horoscope’ for Europeans in Ukraine, and for Ukrainians in EU.

Andriy Derkach

It was mentioned above, what consequences EU enlargement will have for Ukraine. For domestic business, it will cause strengthening of the competition between Ukrainian and European manufacturers, and necessity of more active actions in the Eurasian economic area. Besides, acceptance of new members will considerably increase the volume of trade operations between the EU and Ukraine. And this, in its turn, will result in strengthening independence of Ukraine’s economic state from the processes occurring in the EU. Thus, additional preconditions are created for more intensive interaction with the EU that can essentially facilitate the process of rapprochement of positions.

Stepan Gavrysh

I think that the main interests are precisely in the EU. This is investment, and EU investments are not just EURO money, but also high technologies and a new stage of Ukraine’s development. While today we compete in the world market with Third World countries, corrupted and complicated from the standpoint of primary semi-products’ production, while Europe sells results of intelligence, i.e. the most expensive and the most effective services. For little money, we sell to Europe our ingots, rolled sheet metal etc. from which high-tech products are made, which become objects of existence of the domestic Ukrainian market. It is important to emphasize that economic relations of domestic business with the EU disables scheming and corruption, and allow for increasing public capital, directing it to social projects of the state. In other words, it is an effective process that quickly enables the increase of state budget due to an enlarged tax base due to removing a great amount of money from the shadow sector, as Europe is not going to cooperate with a country with a high level of shadow economy. And, lastly, it is a school of competition, ability not only to hold a market

position, but to protect it, an ability to carry on a civilized dialogue at this market, to come to an agreement, and thus have a highly effective foreign trade. I consider this choice for Ukrainian business to be the most important.

Vitaliy Kononov

In these days of corporate globalization, could we really speak of European or Ukrainian business? Perhaps, the issue is the way of conducting business or the environment for business and investments. Business in the Ukrainian way is replete with Soviet-style top-down management, total absence of transparency, under-the-table dealings etc. But, we also know that such cases happen in the West as well, for example with Enron, Vivendi and other scandals. What is the answer? Stringent rules? Not only that. While you make enabling environment for businesses, you should also look at the anti-monopoly, environmental and the human sides of it. Business which does not generate employment and enhance people's living standards is of no use, wherever it may come from: Europe, Africa or America. Most of all, if we do not have frameworks for protecting the environment in business projects, then that kind of business is industrialist exploitation. European societies more and more speak of entering the post-industrial stage of development. The key to this is knowledge-based business and effective information and knowledge management. Thus, if Ukraine does not adapt to these new demands of time, it will remain unsuccessful as a market.

Leonid Kravchuk

Ukraine is looking for gradual integration into Western European structures. There are today's economic realities that must be taken into consideration. But, this does not mean that we have to speak about the future in the same phlegmatic way. Ukraine's future is its European choice. And, this formula must be applied to well defined plans of practical work for Ukraine's Supreme Rada, the country's president and its government. If there are no such plans; if even the fundamentals of our domestic and foreign policy are absent; when directions of our foreign policy are being constantly changed, then why speak about the state's course and who will be able to understand us? In this situation, Ukraine's participation in world processes should not be limited by the choice between either a pro-Russian or pro-Western orientation. In both cases,

it is necessary to develop our country's inner potential first and to improve parity relations with other countries: relations based on common, corporate interests, not on the necessity to support one side or another.

The thesis that 'nobody expects us in Europe' must be rejected. They do not expect those who are weak. They do not expect those who did not determine their own wishes and the means of their achievement.

Of course, we must enter Europe as a strong and economically developed country. Therefore, the South-Eastern direction as a spacious market for our domestic commodities, advanced technologies and investments is rather perspective one in Ukraine's foreign policy. We could earn our tail-coat there, to feel comfortable in it in Europe.

Ivan Kuras

Today, European business in Ukraine is suffering from elements of non-economic influence and imperfections of our tax legislation. Ukrainian business in Europe suffers from unequal conditions of competition. Besides, there is a number of phobias. The Europeans are afraid to enter the Ukrainian market owing to our political instability, imperfection of our legislation and corruption. The Ukrainians are slow in entering European markets on account of their diffidence about the ability to manufacture products that would not be worse than those of their Western competitors. Motives of both parties are dubious and their fears exaggerated.

It is difficult to speak about remote perspectives, but in the nearest future the decisive steps should be: for Ukrainian business – recognition of Ukraine as a country with a market economy which will permit to enter European markets with more confidence and to avoid a number of anti-dumping investigations; for European business – creation of a favorable investment climate in Ukraine, improvement of our legislation, overcoming of bureaucratic self-willfulness and corruption.

Ella Libanova

Taking into consideration peculiarities of the European market, its occupation and competition, we can talk about cooperation, participation of Ukrainian companies in transnational corporations. Bilateral-sided cooperation with some EU members can be perspective. The problem is that our neighbors are competitive in spheres where

we are competitive too. For instance, in Poland food, light industry and agriculture are more developed and profitable. Besides, European markets are oversaturated. In these conditions, it is difficult to determine the prospect of Ukrainian business.

Oleksandr Moroz

The economic and political situation in Ukraine is not favorable for the inflow of foreign investments. Corruption, vulnerability of investors' rights, dependence of the Ukrainian economy on mercantile administration and many other factors raise risk of investment which even cheap labor force cannot compensate. Prospects can appear only when this situation will change. As to Ukrainian business in Europe, it practically is not present there: our businessmen prefer transferring money offshore.

Volodymyr Palij

Let me remind once again that, until small and medium-sized businesses in Ukraine feels steady support on the part of Western investors, it will not obtain the level of independence which would allow them a sense of freedom and let them act with confidence. There is a need for real ways and guarantees that the Ukrainian businessmen will have all the necessary conditions for developing their own business, as provided by the state. Reforms of the Ukrainian economy must be immediate and effectual. This is the only way for Ukrainian business to become integrated into the European one. Still, we are having to watch Ukraine being filled with European goods which lost their popularity there. I admit that this happens not without participation of Ukrainian businessmen, but the situation has to be settled by putting regulative functions into force – on the part of not only our state but also EU Member States and candidate countries. Instead, Ukraine is not known for its products in Europe, even if it is able to compete with European counterparts. I consider that, in addition to market laws, political and economic ambitions which have sprung up recently both in Ukraine and in the EU, are in force.

Mykola Plavyuk

First of all, it's attainment of world standards. If we realise, that we must bring our standards to the level of European and world market — it will already be a great

achievement. Everything else will depend on many components. We should get accustomed to severe competition. In order to get a foothold in European markets, Ukrainian society should follow the way of post-war Japan, having analysed its potential and said „We can not do everything better, than others, but there are spheres, in which we can find our place in the outlets“. And only after this, taking into consideration our potential, we should decide what specific spheres of business we are going to develop at ourselves. Being a part of European community, we can originally bargain: we can be buyers of European production, but in order to buy it, we have to be sellers of our production. But we can achieve it only when we become a member of World Trade Organisation, introduce European standards of industrial and agricultural production, become competitive in either production spheres. It's difficult to say in what spheres exactly, but they exist though. We have a high scientific potential and sufficient industrial base, which is not totally outdated. And if we can create national program of economy development, we can become a worthy partner in European business. But this requires additional analysis.

Volodymyr Pyekhota

I think that the sphere of interests which our business has in countries of the European Union will extend proportionally to realization of the reforms that we started. However, today we are ready to increase the export of our metallurgical industry products; both our farmers and food producers are interested in Western European markets, too. Unfortunately, they meet with limitations, economic barriers, embargoes, etc. very often.

Such EU policy as regards Ukraine is impeding Euro-integration processes on the whole. The policy of double standards in interstate relations is discourteous and non-constructive. This is the point that I would advise the EU to change in their policy as regards Ukraine.

Oleh Samchyshyn

The European business' main interest is most probably to be placed into agriculture, as the tendency of returning to ecologically safe agricultural production is gradually prevailing in Europe. In particular, genetically modified cultures constitute

a great problem there. People will completely realize their insalubrity only in decades of years.

Ukraine is being a country of immense lands, first of all. And, it should attract foreign capital, including European. Our problem is that those European companies who have already entered our market, have to accept certain 'shadow' rules of the game, peculiar to our domestic market.

As for our domestic politicians and influential industrial-financial groups, they must contemplate every step they take in the direction of integration into the world economic space, thoroughly. This concerns not only the EU but, for example, the World Trade Organization, too. We are quite able to fulfill all the requirements concerning our accession to these organizations. However, what concrete benefits will we get from this?

Larysa Skoryk

As to the interaction of Ukrainian and European business, one should remember that, as early as at the beginning of independent state life in 1991, the government of Ukraine initiated adoption of 'The Law about Investments' by the Ukrainian parliament that caused keen interest and appreciation of business and financial circles of the West. This law was considered to be the most progressive among all similar laws adopted in different post-Soviet countries, including Russia. Clear and reliable guarantees of the state for foreign investors, a simplified system of direct investment-business relations that allowed to avoid development of scaled corruption and bribery testified to Ukraine's readiness to international business-financial relations and, in 1992, serious business circles were keenly interested in Ukraine. However, further political changes in Ukraine that took place with direct participation of Moscow, prescheduled change of the government (and later of the President) and then abrogation of this law, substitution of state control over the policy of international investment and business contacts by control of groups and clans close to power, corruption of this sphere typical to post-Soviet states caused that, today, Ukraine has to make considerable and urgent efforts in order to become attractive for respected European business again.

Since 1992, in Ukraine there was created a favorable climate for penetration of exceptionally Russian business and investment owing to artificially created Ukraine's total dependence on Russia for fuel and energy.

However, essential changes in foreign policy of Ukraine in connection of its support of the anti-Saddam alliance at last really open a fuel alternative for Ukraine that is long and absolutely necessary for independent state development, and reality of strengthening of business ties with the West.

The fact that the EU can be interested in Ukraine from the business standpoint is based on not only cheap and qualified manpower, high fertility of Ukrainian humus, and possibilities of development of great natural resources, but also on the presence in Ukraine of progressive and highly effective scientific-technical facilities for industrial and agricultural sphere that however, under present difficult financial-economic conditions cannot be realized by Ukraine independently, and need for mutually beneficial cooperation with foreign financial-business structures.

The main directions of economic reconstruction of Ukraine, in which the Western world could play an important role, were stated the 'State Program of Development of Industrial Forces of Ukraine' adopted by the Ukrainian parliament as early as in 1993. But, because of the above-mentioned political changes in Ukraine, this program was cancelled in 1995, and along with it the possibilities of real structural reconstruction of Ukraine's economy. Development of business-investment ties with the West was lost for a long while; and all business directions, as it was mentioned, were artificially directed to Russia.

Hanna Skrypnyk

It seems to me today that domestic business is not ready to enter European markets. One thing is to manage using administrative resource (closeness to the President's Administration, tax inspection, power structures and so on), another is to conduct tense competitive struggle in oversaturated and highly technological markets of European countries. But, one should welcome and keep on the state level even those timid attempts which our domestic business makes trying to 'crash' European markets. Each step in this direction promotes improvement of quality and confirmation of European standards for industrial and agricultural production, ability to agree and master rules of the game usual for the world and European business.

Volodymyr Stretovych

As a result of activity of our law enforcement authorities, tax structure and license structure, Ukraine has an image of a risky country, which is very dangerous to invest money in. In spite of a great need for investment, few investors come to Ukraine.

More quickly than politicians, businessmen feel that some country is attractive for investment. For this, it is necessary to liberalize the economy and simplify taxation system, as well as accept organizers of workplaces, with assistance of supreme and municipal state administration. For some reason, it is considered today that, since foreign investors have come, we should take maximum of them and give back the minimum. At the same time, it is forgotten that they feed people, manufacture goods and give money to the pension fund. The change of attitude to an investor should bring about an investment boom since, among the CIS countries, Ukraine has the lowest index of investment per head.

Ukrainian businessmen without positive reputation make the way to foreign markets with much difficulty. However, we have quite many joint ventures. Business itself moves from cramped place to the place where it is more favorable to start activity.

But, until the main economic decisions are made openly, European business will not come to Ukraine. Ukraine should provide equal conditions for all investors, irrespective of what is the origin of their capital.

Natalia Sumska

Ukraine has a rich potential. It is unpleasant for me to hear that Ukraine is an agricultural state. Because, it means backwardness, slowdown on the level of the Middle Ages. I believe that high technologies and deserted industry will renew soon, and our new bourgeoisie starts not only accumulating, but also investing money in the development of our economy. But, at the present stage our business is unlikely to be able not just maintain, but even formulate its interests in European space.

Petro Symonenko

Ukrainian business is first of all interested in investments, markets and technologies of EU countries. We are ready to strengthen corresponding guarantees for European partners in these spheres in terms of adequate EU policy, but we do not want to get on the situation of full dependence on European capital.

The Ukrainian society has much more broad interests in EU than business, and these interests do not go beyond just economy. They include experience in formation of democracy, parliamentarism, and cultural values. Important spheres are tourism, telecommunications and information technologies (for example, application of information technologies in jurisprudence), as well as science, education and medicine.

The European experience in legal regulations is also valuable, in particular the directives and other EU statements. They represent the highest standards in many spheres of social life, but Ukraine can perceive them only after their adaptation to Ukrainian realities, but in some spheres it is impossible at all.

Kostiantyn Sytnyk

As scientist and head of the subcommittee on science and education, I am very far from business. But, I have always held the opinion that when a German named Hartman had come to Luhansk in 1795 and built a plant existing to this very day, and the machines of Hartman's times have still been working there; when an Englishman John Use had come to the town which was afterwards named after him (present Donetsk) and established a number of enterprises there – this is very good. These are the economic contacts between countries and their businessmen which are mutually beneficial. I think that business should take the lead over politicians. If it is beneficial for us to let a businessman from Holland in, then let it be so. Let him construct and invest his capitals; let both of us enrich ourselves. Business contacts can aid in mutual understanding and drawing countries and their peoples together.

Borys Tarasyuk

Before answering your question in substance, I would like to refer to the same article by Anders Aslund who, to my mind, traced and analyzed very interesting figures of Ukraine among others countries non-aspiring to EU membership, together with Russia, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia. He noticed a very interesting tendency that the closer the countries are to the EU, the less volume of their trade or share of their trade is with EU. And, these are very interesting figures. As he analyzed, for example, Ukraine's share in trade with EU countries in 2000 was 16%, which I claimed not to be correct. To my mind, the share was close to 20 % in 2000. Otherwise, it is very difficult to expect such a big increase between

2000 to 2002 – it is 23%. So, I think that this is a mistake in figures. And, Moldova's export to the EU total 20% of total exports; Russia's, Armenia's and Kyrgyz's exports are up to 35%; and the exports of Azerbaijan constitute around 60%. Interestingly, he traced the composition of exports and found out that in other cases, unlike in Ukraine, they have only raw materials exported to the countries of the EU. E.g. Azerbaijan is exporting oil, Kyrgyzstan is exporting gold, Armenia is exporting diamonds, Russia is exporting oil and gas. But, unlike those countries, the structure of Ukrainian exports to EU countries is much more interesting, because this is the export of so-called middle group of commodities, i.e. exports of steel products, agricultural products, chemicals and textiles. So, this is a very important and very substantial difference.

If I am not mistaken, the share of EU countries in the external trade of Ukraine is something around 22-23%; the share of Ukraine in the external trade of the EU countries is, if I am not mistaken, something 0.5 – 0.7. That means that we have a lot to do in order to prove the declared European integration course. So, what are the problems? The problems are mainly with Ukraine. At the end of 1999, Ukraine managed to manifest 22 concrete facts of violation of its obligation as to the PCA. Among major violations is trade in the agricultural products, car production, metal scrap and intellectual property rights.

What we have as a problem on the part of the EU is that we have protectionism against our most competitive goods like agricultural products. And, last year proved this when Ukraine sharply increased its exports of grain to EU countries. Immediately, we faced protectionist measures. EU is consistently trying to protect its market from Ukrainian low-enriched uranium.

And, in addition, I think that Ukraine and the Ukrainian government has to do a lot in order to change the structure of our trade, especially to increase the share of trade services not only in transportation but, according to tendencies in world trade, considerably increase the share of tourism services. It is increasing sharply in recent years in many countries. Until now, this is not the case of Ukraine. And, in terms of production instead of making just steel for pipes, Ukraine has to change the structure of its production. For instance, the production of different office equipment is in great demand. So, out of the steel that we are producing, why not make products of higher price; the end products, not middle ones.

Ivan Tomych

Of course, I can speak with confidence only about agrarian business, as it is my scope of activity and my pain. Now, the technical policy of Ukraine and modernization of agriculture are on the primitive level, if not at zero. More than 50% of combine harvesters have already worked out their term; 70% of the motor and tractor fleet have worked out their potential. Therefore, foreign combine harvesters, tractors and other machinery, as well as a long-term program of technical cooperation are vast for Ukraine now. Besides, we need a considered finance-credit policy. But, we are unlikely to manage without the assistance of western countries. Ukraine's dimension is ten times, and the natural and human potentials are hundreds times higher than, say, Belgium's, but the technical lag geometric series reduces our competitiveness. That's why only mutually beneficial cooperation is a prospective direction of our activity. With this purpose, one should more actively represent Ukraine at different forums and exhibitions that will enable to intensify economic contacts, raise the interest of potential partners in prospects of future growth. Unfortunately, our cooperation takes place not behind barbed wire, as in Soviet times, but 'behind the glass': the parties can see each other, but can not contact directly.

Those resources that the EU loses both from its consolidated budget and budgets of separate countries for support of production of some kinds of expensive foodstuffs in Europe, one could transfer to other, more profitable productions, and Ukraine could take the manufacturing niche mentioned above. For instance, the production of a ton of grain in the Poltava region and the same quantity in the western Laender in Germany or in the Netherlands under identical technical conditions can differ twice or three times in favor of the Ukrainian grain. Moreover, this production can be solved not only in EU countries, but also used in regions that have foodstuff shortages or hunger. The food market is a great policy. Besides, as I said, there are many free niches, which Ukraine could take up. The example is production of biodiesel. We can work in this direction now, beginning with seeds planting, and finishing with transportation of biodiesel. Both Europe and we have many innovations. The use of them can be very beneficial for both parties. Besides, one can not forget about new conditions in which Europe exists now. It is quite possible that competition between two continents, America and Europe, will soon become more acute, and in condi-

tions of severe competition (where EU has far from such confident and firm positions as the US does), it will be a mistake to underestimate and not use the unexampled potential which Ukraine possesses.

Yulia Tymoshenko

Under that corrupted political regime which is now ruling the country, Ukraine can hardly expect any progress in development of economic relations with the EU. However, potentially the extent of trade, economic co-operation, production, science and engineering exchange is rather considerable.

Taras Voznyak

The Ukrainian market is different: there is a labor market that is supply and manpower that are in Ukraine, their cost. Now, we are already watching transference of a number of businesses from countries that are EU members, for instance Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic to Ukraine's territory. Often, these are not Polish or Hungarian enterprises, but German or French, which started production on these territories. Now, these businesses are being transferred to Ukraine's territory. For example, 'Leoni AG' (40 mn EURO of investment) that produces electrical equipment for 'Opel'. This enterprise is transferred from Poland. When the cost of manpower was cheap, this business was developing there. Now, this business is being transferred to the Lviv region, to Stryi, and from Hungary to the Transcarpathian region. Business has its laws. On the other hand, we have low purchase capacity; therefore, the EU is interested in the rise of our purchasing power.

As to Ukrainian business and its opportunities in the European economic space; let's take the Lviv region as an example, with 40% of exports to EU countries, and 50% of imports of our production from the EU. One should aspire to expansion of such a situation to other regions of Ukraine. During the last years, there has been an annual decrease of export-import exchange with Russia by 3%; at the same time, there is a 3% increase of trade with the EU. If we reach the parity of 30% from both sides, it will mean not only an economic balance, but also a political independence (owing to economic independence).

Yuri Yekhanurov

The present state of business both in Ukraine and in EU is in many respects determined by lack of clear game rules. And, it applies not only to an imperfect Ukrainian legislation and not always consecutive steps of government that scare European businessmen away, but also to the double standards policy rather often used by the West as means of containment of Ukrainian proprietors entering EU markets. That's why prospects for business development (if it means mutually beneficial cooperation, rather than competitive activity with the aim of destruction) will in many respects depend on how the political dialogue between Ukraine and the EU become open, clear and acceptable (with regard to results) for both parties.

Volodymyr Yevtukh

Now, the main interest is the possibility of strengthening of positions in the Ukrainian society and money remittance to the West for own enrichment (the question is about business that was formed on the basis of partition of state property between 'clans'). In the future however, it can be an interest in cooperation for formation of a common economic space and interchange of production activity results that will promote improvements in the social situation, first of all in Ukraine.

9. The problem of visas and migration from Ukraine to the European Union

Rayisa Bogatyriova

For us, the problem of migration is, first of all, the problem of present-day poverty, unemployment and economic crisis that Ukraine endured in the 1990s. Of course, Ukraine much concerns about migration, coming-out of manpower and intellectual potential. But, we are not a 'prison of nations', we are not a totalitarian country like the USSR, where citizens hadn't any possibilities of crossing the boundary freely. The better things in Ukrainian economy are, the less average Ukrainians will want to go abroad in search of a job.

As to Schengen visas and other measures aiming to regulate situation with migrants, I do not think they will lead to some effective result. It is clear that Ukrainians will attempt to go abroad in search of a job to near, white and wealthy Europe, but not to far, black and poor Africa. I think that today, especially when EU expands and Ukraine gets status of 'neighborhood', it would be appropriate to create a common international organism which would engage in registration and legalization problems, as well as protection of Ukrainian gastarbeiters' rights in the EU and study of opportunities of their return home.

Andriy Derkach

It is obvious that EU enlargement will entail introduction of a visa regime by the countries adjoining Ukraine. Boundary control and struggle against illegal migration will be intensified. All this will inevitably affect interests of millions of our compatriots.

From this point of view, questions concerning the regulation of labor migration and guarantees of social protection of Ukraine's citizens are especially urgent. European standards of regulation in this sphere will limit opportunities of job placements for Ukraine's citizens in EU countries. Of course, today we have to mention that a considerable part of Ukrainian labor migrants are illegal aliens. But, toughening of prohibitive measures on the part of EU states won't solve this problem. Ukraine is unlikely to be able to solve the problems of unemployment and low standard of living in its territory in the nearest time. The shadow sector of the EU economy provides demand for illegal migrants' services, and this means that natives of Ukraine will meet this demand. The problem of labor migration needs a complex approach with direct participation of the EU and candidate countries. A number of measures should be taken, beginning with policy — financed by EU — of job creation in Ukraine, and finishing with increase of quotes for legalization of labor migratory streams. In particular, in the foreseeable future, I consider the conclusion of an agreement between Ukraine and EU about labor migration and social protection of Ukrainian labor immigrants abroad as expedient.

Stepan Gavrysh

We've mentioned brief visas above. As to emigration and migration problems, they are very important, and I think that on the EU-Ukraine level, a corresponding convention (ratified by the Supreme Rada) is to be signed. This convention should be about providing appropriate guarantees in EU countries, protection of those who are forced emigrants and living there illegally, honest and fair treatment of them, and rendering all possibilities so that Ukrainians could freely move throughout Europe, which also belongs to Ukraine.

Ivan Kuras

The present hard economic situation in Ukraine forced hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens abroad: they work in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Poland and some other countries. As a rule, they are employed in jobs which do not correspond to their level of education and qualification. Their status is not determined in most cases. This uncertainty and lack of information about the state of affairs result in absence of any legal protection of labor migrants. At this background, any information about

unlawful deeds of Ukrainians in countries of Europe gives a distorted impression of Ukraine and its citizens.

Our country does a lot to create such conditions under which the Ukrainians would not have to seek jobs abroad. However, these conditions will not be created soon. Therefore, the question of legal protection of Ukrainians abroad is burning. Today, we have signed a corresponding agreement with Portugal; an analogous agreement between Ukraine and Spain is being prepared now. I personally consider this way to be civilized, optimal and corresponding with all parties' interests.

As regards establishing a visa regime by new members of the EU, this step has been taken for security reasons: Europe is afraid of an inflow of illegal migrants. On the other hand, establishing a visa regime with such countries as Bulgaria and Slovakia demonstrated all its inconvenience. The idea of asymmetry has originated from this experience. Thus, after establishing a visa regime by Poland and Hungary, Ukraine will not establish visas for these countries' citizens. In their turn, visas for the Ukrainians will be either maximum cheap or free. I think this is an optimal variant. It takes into account both the security reasons and aspirations of citizens on both sides of the border to have wider opportunities for cooperation, travel etc. To my opinion, such a scheme could be established as regards other countries in the future.

Ella Libanova

I did not like the fact that EU policy strictly puts a question about the return via Ukraine of illegal migrants detained at our western border. Borders' construction is a difficult procedure that needs much money. And, here we can not manage without European countries. Unfortunately, our eastern border is very clear, but even under such conditions Ukrainian border guards could hold up a flow of illegal aliens, if we got some assistance in constructing points for receiving and keeping trespassers. This is of EU interests.

Oleksandr Moroz

We should be realistic: while the majority of Ukraine's population will lead a beggarly life, the problem of migration (first of all, illegal) to developed European countries is unlikely to be solved.

Volodymyr Palij

As I have already said, Ukrainians have close social and economic contacts with Poles, Slovaks and other nations who are (or will in the nearest future be) members of the European Community. This is one of the special terms in questions concerning EU migration policy towards Ukraine. Europe should not be a loving mother for some and a severe stepmother for others, as today the concept of Europe increasingly denotes not only a geopolitical idea but a certain standard of living, certain life values, in the public conscience. If the boundary between the 'European' world and 'the other countries' is too harsh, the situation will resemble a cold war, when the world split into two camps: 'good' and 'bad' boys, more and more. The migration policy of the EU, as well as the migration policy of Ukraine or any other country has to rest upon creating safe conditions for their citizens' lives, above all. Safety of life has to become a cornerstone in relations between countries. Dissemination of such approach to migration and visa policy formulation, realized through the mass media in Ukraine, would contribute to formulating a positive public opinion of Ukrainians, even if control of crossing the borders in the west of Ukraine is strengthened.

Mykola Plavyuk

Ukraine does not control the visa situation, and in this respect depends on the good will of its western neighbors. As we can see, Poland and Slovakia refused the payment of their visas, and it will promote closer contacts between our citizens and the citizens of other countries. As to the migration problem then, the Portuguese example shows us that this problem should be solved on the level of bilateral relations. We should agree with all countries, where Ukrainians depart in search of a job in order that civilized norms and rules were applied to Ukrainian citizens. This should be done as soon as possible, because today's situation is a source of conflicts and it influences negatively on Ukraine's image in Europe. As an example, one can cite a sudden deterioration of attitude to Ukrainians and Ukraine in the Czech Republic. It speaks that Ukrainians' stay in this country is not settled by bilateral agreements yet. And, one should solve this problem now, without expecting that we will be affiliated to the European Community. I believe that both governments of European countries and Ukraine will understand it in the near future.

Myroslav Popovych

As to problems of visas and migration from Ukraine to EU, one can be sure that in the near future Ukraine won't enter the European area of free flow of goods, capital and people. It is desirable that the EU policy with regard to Ukraine be based on realistic perspectives of gradual approach of our state and our society to European standards.

Oleh Samchyshyn

Europe considers Ukraine as a buffer, a kind of a filter sifting criminal elements. The visa policy as regards Ukraine is being of a discriminative character, according to this vision. Humiliation starts from the very embassies; on the border you are asked whether you have a certain sum of money with you, etc. Europeans coming into Ukraine do not face such things. However, we also have to reconsider certain points; in particular, we should put a decisive end to the old practice of taking different prices for the same services from Ukrainians and foreigners arriving to Ukraine.

It is difficult to estimate the European Union's policy in general. My experience testifies that there exist essential differences in attitude toward the Ukrainians in different parts of the 'old' Europe.

Hanna Skrypnyk

Let's start with visas. Of course, Ukraine is interested in introduction of a visa-free regime in crossing of outer and inner EU borders. However, it is difficult to reach such agreements in the present stage of relations between the EU and Ukraine. More real is the procedure of simplification of visa registration that provides for expansion of a network of consulates of European states in Ukraine, cutting down of terms of official registration of documents, reduction of sum or even complete rejection on payment for this procedure.

As to migrations, this is a painful problem that also needs adjustment on the level of bilateral relations between Ukraine and the countries of Central, Eastern and Western Europe. The pivot of future agreements should become a clear regulation of rights and responsibilities of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians who, searching the job often become the object of relentless exploitation on the one hand, and

infringers on the other. First, such agreements appeared in Portugal, where citizens of our state can hence work legally, without breaking labor legislation of this country. I consider that the foreign policy department of our state should stir up its activity in this direction, and corresponding departments of European countries should use their experience in legislative adjustment of relations with countries that supply labor force. Everybody will benefit this: citizens of our state who have to search earnings abroad, and the economy of European countries.

There is another aspect of this problem. The EU should take into consideration that, every year, Ukraine loses much funds connected with detecting, holding and transportation to the motherland of a great deal of illegal migrants from Asian countries, who want to get to Western Europe. Probably, the Ukrainian government should more emphatically put a question about partial compensation of these costs. It would give the possibility to increase financing for equipping Ukraine's eastern and northern borders.

Volodymyr Stretovych

This is one of the main problems in the process of joining the EU. But, if the EU is interested that Ukraine would become its member, then introduction of a strict visa regime will do much harm. Oncoming generations should see with their own eyes western standards and traditions and, having returned home, tell those who haven't been to EU yet about them. And, if the borders are closed and Ukrainians are not able to visit EU countries neither during holidays, nor on business trips, nor for other reasons, it will isolate us, of course. Construction of a curtain leaves us in the range of vision of the eastern neighbor.

I believe that the visa regime, nevertheless, will be liberal. Visa barriers won't stop organized crime. We should struggle not against consequences, but against reasons that cause crime. Getting visas and penetration into EU territory is a consequence for making plans about the sale of drugs and people. We are to struggle against the crime that is caused by a low level of economic development and closure of the society. If we overcome these atavisms with EU assistance, then the problem of visas and migration will lose its acuteness.

Natalia Sumska

I do not consider visas to be a problem. It is a norm elaborated by states in the course of their development, therefore I can not see any negative in visas. However, many Ukrainians go to European countries in search of a job, this is their only possible earnings, and visa introduction can hamper them. On the other hand, the majority work in those countries that already have a visa regime with our state. I am not sure that, in the present stage, there is a more effective system of our state's protection because many people enter Ukraine, for instance, from China, Afghanistan, Caucasus states etc. This is a threat for Ukraine, so one should apprehend the visa regime in a normal way. Moreover, borders and visas won't hold our people if the situation in Ukraine deteriorates. State's borders must be under control.

Petro Symonenko

In my opinion, to solve the problem of visas, it would be desirable to take the Ukrainian-Poland model as an example, when Poland will give Ukrainian citizens free visas in simplified order, and Ukraine will provide Poland with a visa-free regime. A corresponding interstate agreement about these terms is to be signed this year. Of course, other new EU members will act in their own way concerning this matter, including on the assumption of their own agreements with EU. But, the necessity of keeping and development of stable relations between Ukraine and these states requires privileged visa terms, which, of course, would be carried out on terms of reciprocity and parity.

As to migration, Ukraine realizes EU trouble concerning the protection of European markets and maintenance of law and order. I consider that, to solve this problem, one should intensify collaboration of law-enforcement services of all interested European partners with Ukrainian ones for efficient reaction to the most dangerous cases of illegal migration from Ukraine to EU; and in order to solve the problem cardinally, i.e. with the help of social-economic, political and cultural methods conduct a gradual strategy of improvement of conditions of job placement of Ukrainian citizens in Ukraine. In the last case, for instance, EU and its members could pay more attention to the social-economic direction of investment and credits that Ukraine receives today, because liberalization process in economy of our state, unfortunately, are not

accompanied by strengthening of socio-economic guarantees of workers. One of its consequences is labor migration of Ukrainian citizens to EU.

Another problem is the maintenance of the rights of millions of Ukrainian citizens who already illegally or half-legally stay and work in EU countries like slaves, because Ukrainian power is not able to provide them with normal social-economic conditions within the territory of native Ukraine. Seeing in this problem first of all Ukrainian trouble, consequences of which will hit Europe, one should mention that EU countries inadequately solve it as well, applying for Ukraine and its citizens some secondary standards in the sphere of labor relations far from being European. We, communists, are ready to make every effort to achieve a civilized interchange of manpower with EU countries.

Kostiantyn Sytnyk

I have always held the opinion that one should do everything properly: from the very beginning to the very end. We are an independent individual country; therefore, we should have visas and borders, as well as civilized rules of their crossing. I cannot understand those people who make complaints or protests like 'How come! We are such good friends, we are all not strangers here, so why demand passports of us on the border?' Open borders imply that anybody goes wherever he or she wants. And, we are situated in the middle. That is why precisely we become those who have to settle the problems of illegal migrants coming to our country from Russia. In addition, this creates favorable conditions for increased profiteering and smuggling, as statutory requirements of Ukraine and Russia differ. Negative consequences of our border policy will cause damages, firstly to our economy, legal order and the image of Ukraine. For example, we have good mutual relations with Poland, but establishing a visa regime is the European Union's compulsory condition. And, we feel drawn to European requirements. Undoubtedly, we have to work at visas' moderateness and accessibility. However, in general, the visa regime should be regarded as a standard of international life and a base for civilized international contacts. As for me, migration has to be altogether limited, but if such are the existing standards concerning refugee status, there is a need to organize the procedure in order that Ukraine would look like a civilized European country with all the necessary elements of infrastructure, including those concerning the refugees seeking political asylum.

Ukraine has serious problems because of the indeterminacy about the status of its border with the Russian Federation. The matter concerns not only those negative economic moments which are taking place – and I have already mentioned profiteering and smuggling — but also that uncontrolled flow of illegal migrants who then accumulate on our western border and have no intention to come back to their native countries. This means that a huge quantity of foreigners will either try to cross the border again and again, and that will do considerable harm to our image, which is dubious anyway, or establish their settlements on the territory of our state, which can noticeably worsen the situation with law and order. Who in Ukraine is engaged in drug trade, especially in traffic of the most destroying and expensive drugs? Natives of African countries are. Who organises trafficking of Ukrainian girls and women to countries of the Middle East? Natives of these very countries do. I do treat any foreigners kindly, but the fact remains fact, and only control of these processes on the part of state structures can reduce negative phenomena in our life.

Borys Tarasyuk

Actually this is one of the largest problems we are facing in connection with EU enlargement to our Western borders. First of all, because this is the problem of people contacting. So, people-to-people contact is the matter for both Ukrainians and their relatives and friends in Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and other neighboring countries. We have to create the maximum favorable and easy conditions for our citizens to travel. The practice of introducing a visa regime on the part of some of our neighbors proves that, in principle, the introduction of a visa regime diminishes visits by Ukrainian citizens to neighboring countries. For example, after Slovakia introduced the visa regime, the number of Ukrainians visiting this country was reduced by 2/3, from 750,000 in 1999 to 250,000 in 2001. Then, the same is being expected by some experts in the case of Poland. In 2001 we had 4.8 million Ukrainians visiting Poland alone. So that means that this figure will be reduced by twice at least, or 2,4 million Ukrainians fewer will visit neighboring Poland then before. 'Business tourism' will suffer and, as a result, also the revenues for neighboring countries. Economies of neighboring countries will suffer as well. Experts foresee the reduction of approximately 1 billion US dollars due to the reduction of Ukrainian visits to Poland, which is a rather substantial figure.

Migration is a very sensitive issue both for Ukraine and countries of the European Union and EU as such. What do we have in this phenomenon? We have, or at least we had, mainly illegal migrants entering countries of the EU for that or another reason, then living in those countries and being employed illegally. As a result, they are suffering most, not the countries of the EU, far from that. If they are being employed there as illegal migrants, it means that there is demand in those countries, and authorities are not doing their best in order not to allow for this kind of business to continue. And, at the same time, thousands and thousands of Ukrainians — because of this illegal status — are suffering as they cannot ask for protection on the part of authorities and our own consular offices abroad. So, what should be done here?

As in the case of Portugal, for those Ukrainian citizens working abroad illegally, we have to provide an opportunity to legalize their status first of all, and to create conditions and appropriate protection for them. Together with the EU and EU member states, we have to regulate this process with our concerted actions on the part of Ukrainian and EU authorities. So, this is the way out.

Yulia Tymoshenko

First of all, I would emphasize that the problem of migration and guest workers is, in the final analysis, the problem of a political regime in Ukraine. The present authorities' policy, their unwillingness and inability to implement effective reforms is forcing infinitely many Ukrainians to seek a better lot abroad. After all, Ukrainians go to EU countries to work in those 'lower' sectors of the economy where natives do not like to work, where no one would work under normal circumstances. To solve the problem of Ukrainians' illegal labor migration to the EU, Russia etc., in principle, we primarily need to exempt Ukraine from Kuchma and his oligarchic surroundings and start intensive social and economic reforms. People are being forced abroad by unemployment and poverty. If the EU helps Ukraine to overcome them, a flow of migrants will rapidly diminish, I assure you.

Secondly, EU countries should not keep their eyes shut to the fact that our illegal migration is possible because of too wide opportunities for illegal work in Europe, the opportunities which the Ukrainians, Russians, Turks, Chinese, Hindu etc. avail themselves of. Clear up with your employers, officials and police officers who, accepting

bribes, accommodate the illegals with opportunities to reside on EU territory, and the pressure of migration will weaken by itself. These are evident double standards: on the one hand, get rich at the expense of cheap and socially unprotected migrant labor force, and on the other, accuse the same Ukraine (under the circumstances of economic depression in the country) of its incapacity for stopping the flow of migrants coming to the West.

As regards visas, nothing can be done there. Visa regime, uniform for all the countries of the Schengen agreement, will be established on Ukraine's border one way or another. And, Ukraine has to accept this until it joins this agreement. Quite another matter is the fact that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, in which the Ukrainians compactly reside, should take into consideration the fact that these people have the right to visit their relatives on both sides of the border without any difficulties.

Taras Voznyak

First of all, introduction of visas is a necessary phenomenon. It was resolved by former EU members, and new members should just fulfil it. We believe that this process will adjust the situation at the border, but on the other hand we are afraid that there will take place the collapse of human relations. For example, businessmen or scientists will be able to get that visa; but, as 6 – 6.5 million people cross the border every year, all consulates of Poland in Ukraine won't be able to issue such quantity of visas. One should seek ways in order that relations between the societies do not break.

As to migration, then one should remember for example that thousands of Poles moved to Germany, France, and the USA, and hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians work in Poland, Czech Republic, Italy and Portugal. For long term, Ukraine is a state, which people should come to, a state in which there takes place depopulation, and in several years we will need those people who leave, and will replenish them rather from Kazakhstan and China (subject to different calculations, there are from one to two million of citizens from these countries in Ukraine) than from Europe. So, this is a natural process, when a part of Ukrainians migrates to the West, while there is migration to us from the East. These are objective processes, which one cannot stop. That's why the West slightly dissembles talking that EU is closed for migrants. In

fact, the European Union is getting older and it needs both low and highly qualified manpower.

Natalia Yakovenko

A visa system simplified to the maximum and favorable is able to soften this barrier, I think, if it cannot be surmounted officially.

Yuri Yekhanurov

Today's visa restrictions are a kind of protective reaction per se on the part of EU. And, from this point of view they are explainable. But, it is also clear how painfully the Ukrainian society perceives these restrictions. Announced EU enlargement will just double up these unpleasant feelings, as it will create extra difficulties for free movement of Ukrainian citizens in the areas where these difficulties are absent.

Despite the fact that some Ukraine's neighbors share our concern in this sphere and make perceptible steps towards us (good examples are agreements with Poland, Bulgaria and Romania), the process of aligning positions is not simple. Besides, there is a tendency of factitiously mixing the problem of illegal migration to Europe from other countries via the Ukrainian territory with the problem of Ukrainian-European visa relations. By formally defending visas and migration restrictions from Ukraine, Europe in fact fences off from huge territories to the east of our borders. One should admit that there is no optimal solution of the problem yet. Probably, it does not exist at this stage. So, time compromises are necessary.

Volodymyr Yevtukh

It is necessary to form new approaches to migration of the Ukrainian population, concluding agreements with Ukraine, in which the points of protection of Ukrainian immigrants in the country of residence would be determined. EU countries should more effectively cooperate with Ukraine in equipping Ukrainian Eastern borders. One ought to revise an unfairly fierce policy of Western European countries concerning visas to Ukrainian citizens, first of all students, scientists, public figures and proprietors – those categories which stimulate Ukraine's interaction with European states, creating pre-requisites for joining one economic and sociological-cultural space.

10. What would you advise to change in the EU policy as regards Ukraine?

Mykola Barabash

The European Union is suspicious of Ukraine as an unstable region. Therefore, they do not see any perspective in future cooperation with the country. At the same time, Ukraine needs European Union's support, especially in technologies. Then it would be reasonable not to forsake Ukraine despite various conflicts. Ukraine is now being in hard conditions of survival. Corruption, as legacy of the Soviet collective system, where there was nobody responsible for serious violations, and the shadow economy — these are stigmas on Ukraine's body and, at the same time, its calamity. Ukraine will not be able to overcome negative processes on its own, without any help provided by Europeans experienced in such matters, soon.

Volodymyr Barabash

This is a very difficult question. The EU is doing all the things I could advise to do, to the great extent. I often play tennis with a journalist from Poland who visits European countries and talks to other journalists writing on Ukraine's problems. And, those journalists, not indifferent to Ukraine's future (mostly from Poland), advise the others (from Germany, France, etc.) 'Do not leave Ukraine! Do not give up on it!' I would advise the European Union the same, too.

The most dangerous thing for Ukraine is to find itself tête-à-tête with Russia. Unfortunately, our authorities are bringing the country to such treatment. Our political elite cannot say for sure that they do not want to enter the EU, because it would be

very difficult to find any arguments against this. Why does a 'red director' of a plant stand against coming of any investors to it; why do investors face such conditions that they are themselves unwilling to put up money in a promising business? Because everybody will have to work in a new fashion, and the director feels comfortable without any changes and does not want to learn. That is the reason why he is non-competitive. The same concerns our authorities. Unable to reorganize their work, they put spokes into the wheel of integration processes until their own problems are not settled. However, they find difficulties in solving their problems, and we are at a loss to replace these authorities. That is our country's tragedy.

Rayisa Bogatyriova

I would advise that, in its policy concerning Ukraine, the EU took into consideration our specific character and our national interests more, not use double standards and directed its attention to strategic perspectives of partnership. I can advise the same to Kyiv officials in respect of the EU.

Andriy Derkach

EU requirements are equal for all candidates for entrance. And, one shouldn't fruitlessly complain, but do everything necessary to make Ukraine meet European standards. It is ridiculous for Ukraine to try to dictate its requirements to the EU. We should have declined 'a Soviet syndrome' long ago, and realized that Ukraine is not the Soviet Union, which statement about anything, or action determined the world policy. Ukrainian state is not a subject, but object of international relations, and we should derive benefits from this. We have time and possibilities to concentrate on solution of a number of domestic problems.

Stepan Gavrysh

I would advise to decline any discrimination, create an individual program of relations with Ukraine, pay Ukraine debts for nuclear weapons with investments, close the Chernobyl nuclear power plant; support amicable development of present-day Europe and thus promote its effective democratic progress.

Vitaliy Kononov

I would recommend setting standards and rules, which are universal and equal for everyone. Europe has to gain from the enormous potential that Ukraine has in all respects. We will harmonize all our legislation, all framework requirements will be in place, and in return we need to have the same treatment towards our natural and human resources. There is no one-way traffic in the case of integration.

Ivan Kuras

I would like to obtain a clear vision of Ukraine's perspective in acquiring the status of an EU associated country first, with the country's future joining to the Community. In my opinion, the European Union possesses no strategy of relations with Ukraine at all. This can be testified, for example, by Ukraine's numbering among the 'circle of friends' together with Belarus (which has never stated its wish to become a member of the EU) and African countries.

The essential point is that in case the EU started to work out such a strategy, Ukraine's position should be taken into account, too. If a clear strategy and definiteness of purpose of cooperation are present, this will permit to escape the negative moments in EU policy as regards Ukraine, which takes place now. The matter concerns, in particular, the dependence on variations of political situation, on personal factor etc.

Ella Libanova

Once, the US proposed the Marshall's plan to Europe. Ukraine needs something like it, if Europe wants to see Ukraine a worthy, stable and safe neighbor. Not credits, but an integral, complex program of economic revival is necessary here. And, 'Marshall's plan' is the most accurate definition. Besides, the direction of scientific exchange and scientific collaboration is also prospective.

Oleksandr Moroz

Not to isolate, but influence democratization of all sides of life in Ukraine. At the same time, use such authoritative institutions as PACE, OSCE and other. Neighborhood with a corrupt and unpredictable state is a constant threat for EU well-being.

Volodymyr Palij

I think, now the EU is not so much concerned with its own image on Ukraine's territory. The impression of this is given mostly by observing the domestic mass media's reaction to the processes of Ukraine's European integration. It reflects either Ukraine's official position or a certain medium's editorial (or other) policy. The elements of interactivity, where ordinary citizens of both the EU and Ukraine could exchange their opinions concerning processes of integration in public, are practically absent here. Especially, the problem is critical as regards regional mass media and non-profit organizations having limited opportunities, of bilateral contacts with identical structures in EU countries. This gives grounds to saying that both parties should use means of so-called 'public diplomacy' more energetically, thus forming public opinion as regards integration processes. For that matter, the first step should be taken by the European Union precisely.

From the standpoint of the region that I am representing, I confirm once again that, despite desirability of cooperation with European countries, there exists a problem with lack of information as regards the will for such cooperation shown by the other part. This happens because of certain monopolization of international relations on both the state level and the level of various funds and structures that have been busying themselves with these relations starting from the times when Ukraine obtained its independence. Therefore, we try to establish communication with our colleagues from neighboring countries on our own but, afterwards, matters do not go beyond mere contacts. There still is a need for our state's practical steps in creating conditions for more open communication between nations, on the level of social institutions, business structures, and non-governmental organizations.

Mykola Plavyuk

More strictly, put a question about necessity of reforms in Ukraine, and at the same time avoid statements that it has not place in Europe. Because, if EU leaders make such statements, it is difficult to speak about European integration. This is a wrong policy. In my opinion, the EU should elaborate such a program of bilateral actions that would be real for us. Sometimes, Europeans demand of us more than they are ready to do themselves; and relations between Ukraine and the Council of Europe

evidence this. As an example, one can cite a requirement to bring in life the Charter of Languages of Minority Groups. This is an absolute example that one demands of us more than, for instance, of France, which is not ready and is not going to meet requirements like these.

Myroslav Popovych

I would not advise EU to change the policy concerning Ukraine. I consider that all claims to our authorities raised by the EU are justified, and I would just like critical reprimands not to turn into a satanic image of a 'country of evil' that the petty bourgeoisie readily accepts.

Oleh Samchyshyn

First, they have to adopt a differentiated attitude toward Ukraine; they should not look at the country through the lens of its worst representatives. Today, a preconceived negative notion is dominating, and this affects concrete contacts badly.

Unofficial contacts must play an important role. I mean interactions on the level of non-governmental organizations, scientific exchanges etc. Programmes like TACIS, aimed at exchanging experience among specialists from various countries, should be continued. And, the Ukrainians must be invited not only for outward appearances there; we need full and effectual participation. Of course, the Europeans should have the right to control changes and results of their financial and technical support.

Hanna Skrypnyk

The European Union should once and for all reject the policy of double standards and uncertainty in its attitude to Ukraine. European leaders should work out a clear program that would, on the one hand, include some requirements to Ukraine and, on the other, provide that in case when these requirements are met, our state will have a chance to become a full member, not just a 'neighbor' of the European Community. Yes, these requirements can and must be strict, but they must be fair and clear for the Ukrainian society. Ukraine's entry into the EU would considerably extend the zone of democracy, making impossible appearance of totalitarian regime near Central and Eastern Europe. Without Ukraine's participation, creation of a new

totalitarian formation in the Eurasian space is impossible; that was firstly pointed out by Zbigniew Brzeziński, and many European leaders understand this.

Volodymyr Stretovych

Relations between Ukraine and EU should resemble movement towards each other. It should be clear, open and efficient. There shouldn't be just mottos; the mottos must have concrete sense. And, then both parties will see how a partner is interested in realization of these plans. The EU must acknowledge Ukraine as a strategic candidate, to which directed all efforts concerning overcoming of all harm of transition period, and therefore work on carrying out of institutional transformations, which are necessary for fulfilment of all EU requirements to entry. It should be beyond monitoring.

If one were to hand over just to Ukraine without technical assistance for carrying out of changes, then this process will be rather long. If to implement both these things, then we achieve it quite quickly. I connect great hopes with the change of power in 2004, when a new team will meet EU proposals and starts realizing everything step-by-step, as planned.

Natalia Sumska

Ukrainians, the bearers of great mentality, tolerance, diligence, can survive in any conditions, but, unfortunately, there are no grounds to hope for swift positive changes. Our people are thoughtless, not confident in their force, unable to actively affect the course of events. Therefore, probably, without an active interference of EU, we shan't soon achieve results which we hope for. Of course, the question is not about interference in internal affairs of our state, just about 'teaching' of Ukrainians by Europeans. The consciousness needs to be brought up. And, a 'school of protest' is not for Ukrainians because we are a peaceful and non-aggressive people. In order to find a right way one should learn, and civilized Europe can play this role, especially since it is of EU interests. A stable Ukraine will be a more beneficial neighbor for the EU than unstable.

Petro Symonenko

I think that my pieces of advice 'have been read' in all my answers, but one should separately mention the necessity of Ukraine's performance in EU information space

more adequate to Ukrainian realities. I also think that combined measures of Ukraine and the EU must mostly be directed to strengthening the confidence between citizens of Ukraine and EU states.

Moreover, to my mind, a prospect for Ukraine is in the Russian idea of creation and development of Euroregions as separate industrially and technically developed Russia's regions, where cooperation between the EU and Russia will acquire specific shapes. The main project in this matter should become the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation. In Ukraine, there are a number of powerful and prospective regions from the economic point of view, where one could effectively concentrate interests of Ukraine, EU and Russia on the principle of Euroregions.

In general, the present status of a neighbor and an amicable state that the EU determined for Ukraine is more realistic and, thus, more effective than ambitious and inexpedient plans of president Leonid Kuchma and the Ukrainian government. Therefore, such status can serve as a basis for relations between Ukraine and the EU in the short and medium-term prospective.

Kostiantyn Sytnyk

I can see no argument to convince me that the EU has ever been biased against Ukraine. Of course, there are certain problems, but Ukraine was noticed for its non-fulfillment of those obligations it had assumed voluntarily more than once while entering the Council of Europe of ratifying certain agreements. Therefore, in future it will be treated more exactly than anybody else. This is a psychological effect rather than a political one. Let us remember the parliamentary hearings on the freedom of speech: the authorities regarded them insignificant, and when Mrs Severinssen confirmed her observations concerning pressure exerted upon the freedom of speech in Ukraine, our Presidential Administration did not invent any better than to accuse the representative of European structures of lies and autosuggestion. Even in the times of strong confrontation between the West and the Soviet Union, they were more unbiased than we were. Broadcasting stations like BBC, Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, and the Voice of America have always been covering various events both in the Soviet Union and abroad more widely and impartially. And, what did our mass media do? They were lying all the time. That situation resembles the

present very much. So, I do not see any problems in this plane. And, though I am longing for a well-off European future and competitive power on the European level for Ukraine however, I still wish European structures to be exacting to our country. This corresponds with our interests. Not to mention elementary things. If someone signed an agreement and assumed the responsibility, why should they be surprised when criticized? Ukraine never said openly and frankly, 'Yes, we have signed, but we are not able to meet our engagements for any of the following reasons'. And, when we are being criticised, and criticised justly, we feel hurt by this. Such a position is not constructive, it is to no avail.

Borys Tarasyuk

I would change a lot. For instance, first of all I would establish a clear-cut concept for the future of our relationship, which does not exist on the part of the EU at the moment. By 'clear concept' I mean something which is sometimes being announced but without a clear official position. That means that, if the country meets the Copenhagen criteria for membership of the EU, it is going to be considered as a candidate for EU membership. It was the case of the European Parliament which approved a comprehensive resolution on the relationship with Ukraine on March 15, 2001, in which, for the first time, the EP specified that if Ukraine meets the Copenhagen criteria it could be considered as a candidate for association. Unlike European parliamentarians, the executive part of the EU never went as far. So, I would change this first of all.

Then, I would do my best in order to prevent EU officials from making provocative statements as to the future of EU-Ukrainian relations, which used to be the case quite recently on the part of the President of the European Commission, Mr. Romano Prodi, by Commissioner Günter Verheugen [statements that Ukraine will probably never become an EU member – ed.]. I think that this does not serve the purpose or content of our relationship; it obviously spoils the atmosphere of our relationship and serves nobody's purpose, just provoking comments on both sides.

So, I would then establish the policy of a step-by-step approach towards Ukraine, thus resolving one problem after another and bringing our relationship closer to the objective we see as common, like the PCA foresees, e.g. the concluding the free trade area agreement.

By the way, the same idea was recently announced by expert Anders Aslund in his article in the 'Financial Times' of February 17, where he put a priority objective for the EU to facilitate entry of Ukraine into the WTO and concluding the free trade area agreement with Ukraine. So, these are the major points I would do being on the EU side.

Ivan Tomych

The EU policy concerning Ukraine is based on democratic principles, market economy, and therefore it does not allow to adequately perceive the situation in which Ukraine is. What do I mean? During the ten years of independence, Ukraine has been getting aid – scientific-technical, professional, financial and moral – both from representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora and from leading persons of the Western world (Europe and the US) in various spheres. Many specialists – politicians, businessmen – have been to Ukraine for these years, but their orientation was based on their mentality, therefore their estimates were not very real and, accordingly, the results of this cooperation were low. For example, let's take the US-Ukraine 'Farmer to farmer' program of aid advertised in the first years of independence. The situation was limited by the contacts of Oleksandr Tkachenko's enterprise (former head of the Supreme Rada of Ukraine, now a deputy, member of the communists' caucus – editor's note): it operated with maize and 'John Dir' harvester combines. And, what did a farmer gain? Our farmers knew nothing about the possibilities of the program; they did not have access to it. Other people used this program. And, this was carried out on the governmental level, without contact with a farmer. Tkachenko was then a minister; he took advantage of the possibility, founded the enterprise 'The Earth and the People', took away harvester combines and maize, and this was the end of cooperation. The weakness of the third sector, apathy of Ukrainian farmers make a serious obstacle on the way to positive changes but, first of all, it is connected with consequences of the long-term subjection of our nation. Therefore, any aid from developed and 'educated' neighbors should be targeted.

Yulia Tymoshenko

The main hindrance to the process of Ukraine's approach to Europe is application of double standards, both in policy and in economy. In fact, EU countries accept existence on their borders of a political mode that does not correspond with the idea

of democracy and a civilized society. This makes the Ukrainian opposition think that those in Europe, in fact, are not so interested in Ukraine's Euro-integration.

Taras Voznyak

I would open a perspective for Ukraine (though it is long-term), having conditioned it by changes that are to take place in Ukraine, I would restructure assistance funds that act in the territory of Central Europe, for instance PHARE. I would change ineffective TACIS that has not fulfilled its task and is not relevant in Ukraine. I would try to soften the social situation in border regions nearest to the future EU, at our western and their eastern border in order that there wasn't a tremendous drop in people's welfare, because it can cause biased attitude of nationalities on different sides of border, as well as hostility and, eventually, conflicts.

Natalia Yakovenko

I would like to change the very attitude toward Ukraine, which should be counted not as EU's 'neighbors' but potential candidates to membership in the EU. Of course, lots of requirements separate a potential candidate and a real one, and Ukraine is still being unable to meet these requirements today. But, the very attitude toward Ukraine as a potential candidate would contribute to overcoming the uncertainty of reference points in the Ukrainian society and augment the number of adherents of the idea of a 'European choice' positively and, therefore, would help to improve reforms and changes in the country.

Yuri Yekhanurov

These changes can be formulated as follows: there is more parity and reality in relations. Financial aid to Ukraine from the EU best demonstrates validity of these changes. For the last 10 years, its total volume amounted to ca. 1.072 billion EURO, but at the same time the positive effect of realization of some basic projects reaches zero. The main drawbacks are:

- poor adaptation to present Ukraine's needs, connected with insufficient level of Ukraine's participation in the process of their working out, ratification and realization;

- 'general political' orientation causing that received results, as a rule, have neither practical nor theoretical application;
- unfairly high share of foreign advisers' fees in the total volume of financing that brings about business closures (in most cases) when the validity of their contract is over.

At the same time, the positive experience gained prompts us what to correct. Firstly, the status of Ukraine's participation at a stage of project development is to be essentially raised. Secondly, one should move stress toward acceptance of narrowly directed projects with practical application. And, thirdly, one should at least provide involvement of Ukrainian subjects in the realization of those projects, who are able to continue started reformation, when financing term is over.

Volodymyr Yevtukh

To those who form EU policy, I would advise to realize that Ukraine is a European country; open more opportunities for interchanges, in particular youth ones; elaborate social programs of Ukraine's integration into political, economic, social and cultural European spaces, but not restrict Ukraine's interaction with European countries by a status of 'country-neighbor'. One should use democratic methods of social life's structuring in foreign policy as well, in particular concerning Ukraine; cancel biases regarding the state on the whole and its population, and strengthen prejudice measures against concrete persons and structures that are inclined to corrupt actions. In its requirements to Ukraine on the way of advancement to the European Union, one should clearly determine desirable time limits and pick out the stages in which Ukraine should implement corresponding actions in order to adapt to EU standards.

Center for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine

The CPCFPU was founded in 1992 as the Ukrainian Center for Peace, Conversion and Conflict Resolution Studies (UCPCCRS). In 1998 the name of the Center was changed in order to better reflect the main subject of its research, which is foreign and security policy of Ukraine.

The main purpose of the Center is the completion of research projects through highly qualified, well-grounded scholar's investigation into current problems of security, political and social development of Ukraine, achieving integration into the European and world community of nations, disarmament, conversion. Research outputs are presented to Ukraine's state bodies, political leaders in Ukraine and abroad.

CPCFPU has published a wide range of analytical reports on the issues, in particular, civil society, human and minorities' rights, external migration, social-economic condition of population and potential of conflicts in the country, and territorial reconstruction of Ukraine, elites, problems of the Armed Forces and the military-industrial complex of Ukraine and civil control over their activities, conversion, international standing of Ukraine and integration with the EU and NATO.

The Center launched the project Ukrainian Monitor (before June 2001 - Monitoring Foreign and Security Policy of Ukraine) in January 1997. This regular project was initiated to compensate the lack of analytical materials on Ukrainian foreign policy and security issues. The Center's experts regularly collect and profoundly analyze factual and sociological information on the main events and trends in foreign and security policy in Ukraine. The mechanism of policy formation and the influence of leading political actors in this process are also examined.

Ukrainian Monitor includes Weekly Headlines and Comments with short analysis of events, government decisions, public opinion trends etc; Policy papers (2–3 extended papers on the most topical issues each month); Quarterly reports of the main developments and trends in foreign and security policies, based on the polling of foreign and security policy experts; Annual report reflecting trends and both short- and medium-term prognostication in the field of foreign and security policy.

Materials of the CPCFPU are being prepared in cooperation with researchers of the National Institute for Strategic Studies, National Institute of International Security

Problems, Institutes of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine, including the Institute of Sociology, Institute of World Economy and International Relations, NGO's, institutions of higher education, etc.

In the year 2001 CPCFPU conducted a project "Implementation of the efficient border policy of Ukraine" supported by Freedom House.

In the year 2002-2003 in cooperation with Stefan Batory Foundation and International Renaissance Foundation CPCFPU implements the project "The Enlarged EU and Ukraine: new relations". A Policy paper "More than a neighbor" was presented in Brussels in February 2003. The Center hosted a presentation of Ukrainian version of this paper in Kyiv in June 2003.

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