

*Slava Ukraini:*

The Evolution of Ukrainian National Identity

By

Lane Johansen

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## Abstract

When Vladimir Putin launched his full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, Ukraine became more unified than ever before, decisively linking its identity to freedom and democracy. Careful analysis of how Ukraine has responded in the face of existential threats throughout its history—increasingly unifying and considering itself a modern European state—reveals why Putin’s decision to launch a full-scale invasion of Ukraine with the assumption of a swift victory was one of the greatest strategic blunders in Russian history. Using an analysis and comparison of the literature, public opinion survey data, and presidential and parliamentary electoral results before and after the watershed year of 2014, I find that Ukraine’s three revolutions since 1990—as well as response to the current war with Russia—can be considered successive stages of nation-building. Throughout this process, Ukrainian national identity has evolved from a negative definition (i.e., “we are not Russia”) to a positive definition (i.e., “we are a modern, democratic Ukraine”) intrinsically tied to Euro-Atlantic integration. This civic national identity has diffused across the country and—catalyzed by intensifying Russian aggression—largely avoided polarization and instead effectively unified Ukrainians, drawing legitimacy from its hybrid character. With an end to macro-regional polarization in Ukraine after 2014, this civic Ukrainian national identity can be considered to have become hegemonic in the country, a development that helps explain the erroneousness of conflating Russian ethnolinguistic background with a pro-Russian political orientation.

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## Introduction

On February 24, 2022, Vladimir Putin officially ordered a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, launching an unprovoked and unjustified war on the country that for over a millennium has represented the borderland between East and West. Deemed a “special military operation” intended to defend Russians and Russian speakers in Ukraine (as well as the Russian Federation itself) from Western interference and military threats, Putin’s war on Ukraine is in reality about preventing Ukraine’s westward drift and maintaining Russian cultural, economic, political, and military dominance in what Putin sees as Moscow’s traditional sphere of influence—an imperial impulse that has sustained Russian influence in Ukraine for centuries.

Western intelligence predicted Russia’s invasion of Ukraine for several months leading up to Putin’s official declaration. As early as November 2021, Ukrainian and Western sources reported the massing of almost 100,000 Russian soldiers on Ukraine’s border, and in early December, US intelligence began warning of Kremlin plans for a massive multi-front offensive against Ukraine involving up to 175,000 troops.<sup>1</sup> Despite reports on February 20 that Russian troops had received orders to invade,<sup>2</sup> Ukraine—and indeed the rest of the world—appeared stunned when Moscow actually launched its attack four days later. The first weeks of war saw a seemingly blind-sided Ukraine scramble to fully mobilize its armed forces and civilian populations. The West, for its part, appeared unwilling to effectively arm Ukraine or take too strong a stance in the first few days, immobilized by fear of provoking Russia and opting instead to prioritize diplomatic engagement with the Kremlin.

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<sup>1</sup> Shane Harris and Paul Stone, “Russia planning mass military offensive against Ukraine involving 175,000 troops, U.S. intelligence warns,” *The Washington Post*, December 3, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Ed Pilkington, “US intelligence believes Russia has ordered Ukraine invasion—reports,” *The Guardian*, February 20, 2022.

Less than twelve hours after Putin appeared on state television declaring a “special military operation” in Ukraine, reports emerged that US officials expected Kyiv to fall in days, predicting the leadership would be replaced within a week.<sup>3</sup> Western allies began withdrawing embassy staff from Kyiv as early as February 12, moving the most critical staff to the western city of Lviv and calling the rest back to their home countries. Moreover, the US government almost immediately began urging Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to evacuate Kyiv as Russian troops launched missile attacks on and appeared to encircle the capital city. The Kremlin, for its part, was convinced that Ukraine was “fertile grounds for subversion”; according to a survey commissioned in February 2022 by the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB), “the Ukrainian population appeared to possess only a moderate level of resolve,” and Moscow had a “good chance of destroying Ukraine’s trusted institutions [e.g., the armed forces and municipal governments] and replacing those that are less trusted [e.g., parliament and the presidency].”<sup>4</sup>

Despite the utter lack of faith in Ukraine’s resilience and defensive capabilities, the country has proven itself a force to reckon with and a symbol of steadfast commitment to freedom and democracy, wildly exceeding all expectations in combatting the Russian army—the alleged second strongest in the world. Leading the charge is President Zelensky, whose incredible courage in the face of overwhelming odds has profoundly unified Ukraine (as well as the Western world) and reflects the extraordinary bravery of the people of Ukraine. Zelensky, who has joined the ranks of leaders of the free world (and has even been deemed the “face of the free world”), refused the US government’s offer to evacuate him, quipping, “I need ammunition,

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<sup>3</sup> Naveed Jamali, David Brennan, and Tom O’Connor, “Exclusive: U.S. Expects Kyiv to Fall in Days as Ukraine Source Warns of Encirclement,” *Newsweek*, February 24, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Nick Reynolds and Dr. Jack Watling, “Ukraine Through Russia’s Eyes,” *The Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)*, February 25, 2022.

not a ride.”<sup>5</sup> This unshakeable commitment to defending Ukrainian sovereignty—exemplified by Zelensky’s countless video addresses and speeches to Western leaders and policymakers—has been demonstrated in Ukrainian society writ large. Almost immediately, virtually every form of humanitarian assistance to territorial defense groups began to emerge, both spontaneously and via government organization. Since the outbreak of war with Russia, the people of Ukraine have undeniably linked their nation with democratic ideals, as well as decisively declared the independence of their national identity from that of Russia.

Thus, instead of expanding Russian cultural hegemony in Ukraine or exploiting long-standing divisions in the country, Putin’s war has accelerated and cemented Ukraine’s Euro-Atlantic aspirations and unified the country more than ever before. However, the current war is only the latest—albeit perhaps most extreme—example of centuries of Russian aggression toward Ukraine. While there are numerous examples throughout Ukraine’s history of Ukrainians uniting (as well as fracturing) in the face of external threats, including from the Russian Empire and Soviet Union, the past 30 years of Ukrainian independence specifically have been marked by several flashpoints of spontaneous democratic action related to Ukrainian sovereignty. Careful analysis of how Ukraine has responded in the face of existential threats—increasingly unifying and considering itself a modern European state—reveals why Putin’s decision to launch a full-scale invasion of Ukraine with the assumption of a swift victory is one of the greatest strategic blunders in Russian history.

This paper will analyze the evolution of Ukrainian national identity since the country gained independence in 1991, seeking to identify the characteristics and political effects of the

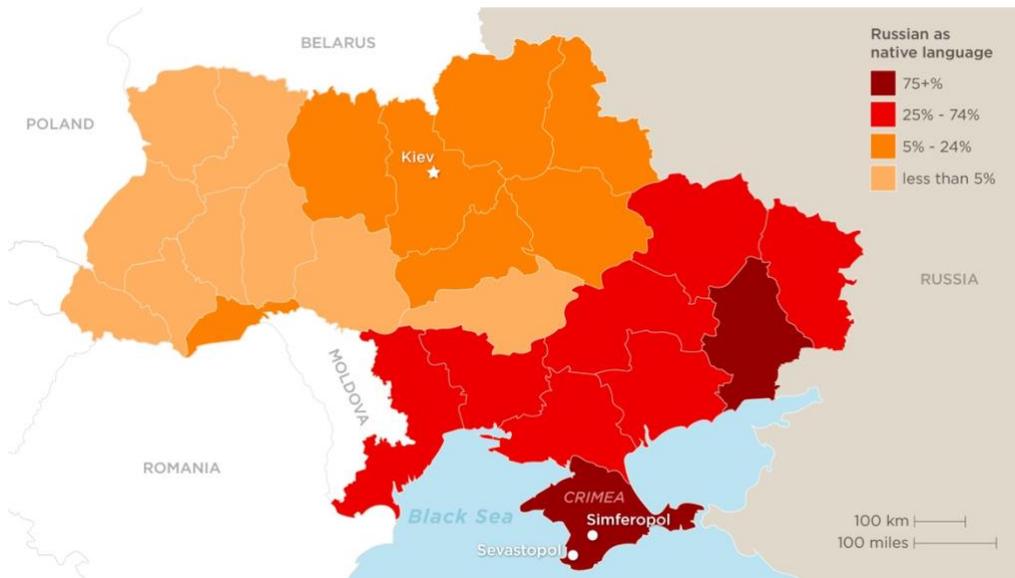
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<sup>5</sup> Anne McElvoy, “How Volodymyr Zelensky became the face of the free world,” *The Evening Standard*, March 7, 2022.

consolidation of national identity in Ukraine. Specifically, I will investigate three main questions: (i) if Ukrainian national identity has become more civic in nature; (ii) how changes in Ukrainian national identity translate to political attitudes and voting patterns; and (iii) how Russian aggression has influenced national identity in Ukraine. Using an analysis and comparison of the literature, public opinion survey data, and presidential and parliamentary electoral results before and after the watershed year of 2014, I find that Ukraine's three revolutions since 1990—as well as response to the current war with Russia—can be considered successive stages of nation-building. Throughout this process, Ukrainian national identity has evolved from a negative definition (i.e., “we are not Russia”) to a positive definition (i.e., “we are a modern, democratic Ukraine”) intrinsically tied to Euro-Atlantic integration. This civic national identity, originating in western Ukraine and possessing ethnolinguistic coloration, has diffused eastward and—catalyzed by intensifying Russian aggression—largely avoided polarization and instead effectively unified the country.

## Background

From its inception as an independent state in 1991, Ukraine has been characterized as a divided nation with stark ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences between the northwest and southeast of the country. Eastern Ukraine, which was under Russian control from the seventeenth century, and southern Ukraine, which was dominated by the Mongol successor state known as the Crimean Khanate from the late fifteenth century, have a higher percentage of ethnic Russians and Russian speakers than western Ukraine, which changed hands between numerous European countries over the course of its history and is populated by a greater percentage of ethnic Ukrainians and Ukrainian speakers (see *Figure 1a*). These ethno-linguistic cleavages have historically translated to macro-regional polarization in voting patterns and geopolitical preferences, as populations in the east and south have tended to favor closer relations with the



*Figure 1a: Russian as a native language, by region (2001)*<sup>6</sup>

Russian Federation, while those in the west express higher support for joining the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

<sup>6</sup> “A divided Ukraine,” *CNN*, March 3, 2014.

The map of support for the “pro-Russian” candidate Viktor Yanukovich and “pro-Western” candidate Yulia Tymoshenko in the 2010 Ukrainian presidential election provides one of the clearest examples of the northwest-southeast divide in the country (see *Figure 1b*). Such

striking regional

differences have been

presented as evidence

of the lack of

consolidation of

national identity in

Ukraine or even used

to question the

legitimacy of Ukrainian

nationhood—as Putin did in his 2021 essay “On the Historical Unity of Russians and

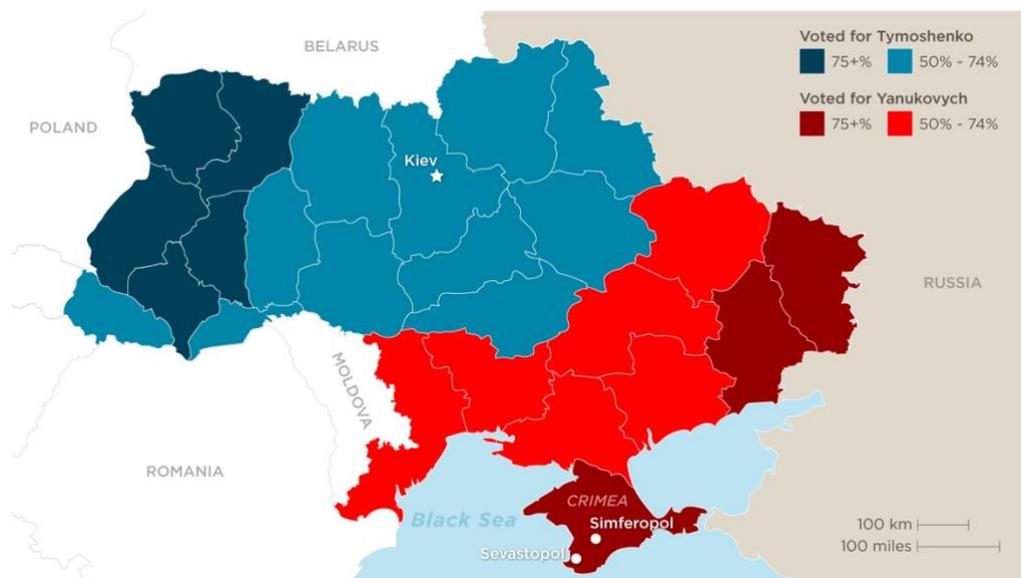
Ukrainians,” in which he suggested that Ukraine is not a real country, but a historical part of

Russia. However, a nuanced understanding of the differences in historical experience between

the various regions of today’s Ukraine illuminate why regional diversity has not prevented a

Ukrainian nation from emerging, but instead allowed for the evolution of a unique, multi-faceted,

and democratic nation.



**Figure 1b:** Results of 2010 presidential election, by region<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> “A divided Ukraine,” *CNN*.

### Historical regional divisions

Serkhii Plokhy, the Mykhailo Hrushevsky Professor of Ukrainian History at Harvard University, provides a comprehensive and authoritative survey of Ukrainian history in his book *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine*. He develops the theme of Ukraine as a frontier between East and West as one of the most important in the country's history, arguing that for millennia Ukraine acted as the "very edge" of Western civilization.<sup>8</sup> The territory of today's Ukraine has represented a borderland between numerous empires, religions, and ideologies, subject to both external and internal divisions, which resulted in an array of hybrid identities developing across the country.

With such a complex and tumultuous history, these identities frequently overlap, creating unique blends in various regions that are difficult to delineate. Various parts of today's Ukraine were at one time controlled by the Mongols, Poland, Lithuania, the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire, the Habsburg Empire, Germany, Romania, and the Soviet Union. Externally-imposed territorial divisions gave rise to internal ethnolinguistic, cultural, and political divisions that persist to date, creating both rifts in Ukrainian society as well as a more inclusive and multi-faceted national identity. However, Ukraine's attempt to transition from a political and cultural frontier between the Russian Federation and the West to a full-fledged member of the European community came to a head in 2014, when Russia illegally annexed the Crimean Peninsula and instigated a low-grade war in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region. Now, the latest and most extreme clash of civilizations is currently playing out on Ukrainian territory as Putin's war on Ukraine is increasingly becoming a proxy war between Russia and the West, autocracy and democracy.

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<sup>8</sup> Serkhii Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 11.

In his attempts to justify his attack on Ukraine, Putin has been relentless in claiming the historical sameness of the Russian and Ukrainian people as evidence that Ukraine should not be a frontier nation (let alone a member of the West), but a constituent member of the Russian nation. Such a Russo-centric understanding of Ukrainian history is illustrated in his July 2021 essay “On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians,” in which Putin argues that Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians are all descendants of the same ancient polity—the Kyivan Rus’—which bound them together by the same language, princely rule, economic ties, and faith. He denies the historical basis of a separate Ukrainian people, attributing the idea that Ukrainians constitute their own nation (and one that represented the true descendant of the Kyivan Rus’) to a Polish invention that “became increasingly used for political purposes as a tool of rivalry between European states.”<sup>9</sup> However, critical analysis of Ukraine’s history brings a different conclusion: the self-realization of a distinct Ukrainian nation dating back to the eleventh century.

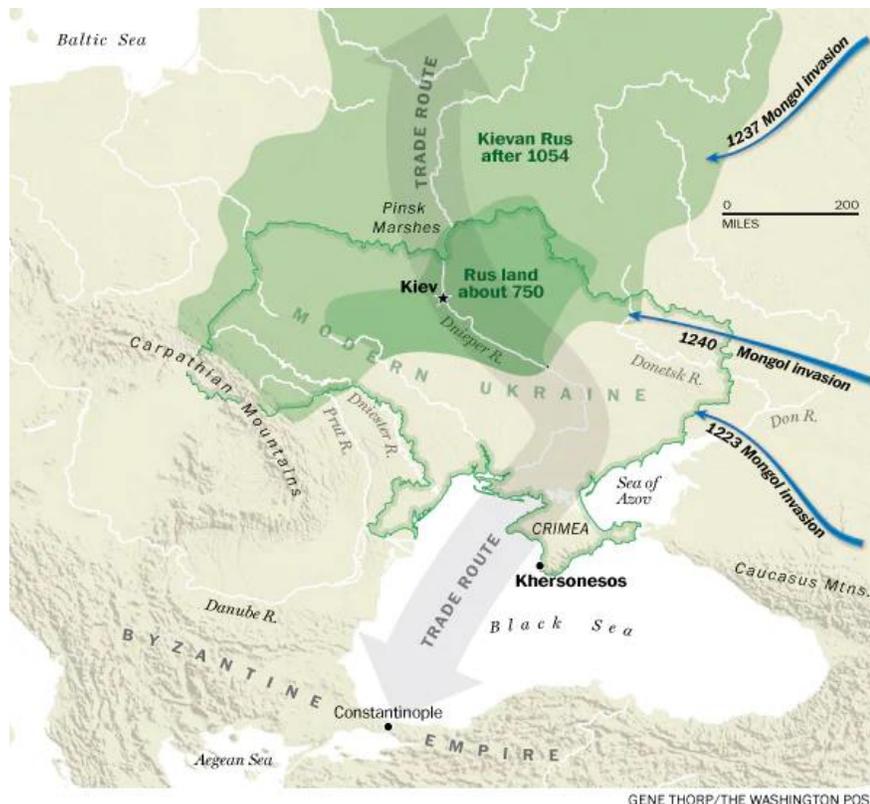
Most scholars trace the origin of modern Ukraine to a political entity known as the Kyivan Rus’. This loose federation of principalities constituted the first East Slavic state, encompassing territory in northern Ukraine as well as parts of present-day Belarus and western Russia, leading all three countries to claim the Rus’ polity as their cultural ancestor. The Kyivan Rus’ was founded in the mid-ninth century by the Varangians or “Rus” people: Viking merchant-warriors who came from Scandinavia seeking to dominate new trade routes. The Dnieper River that flows through the center of today’s Ukraine became a key trade route connecting the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea, Scandinavia and Byzantium (see *Figure 2*).

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<sup>9</sup> “Статья Владимира Путина «Об историческом единстве русских и украинцев»,” *Kremlin.ru*, July 12, 2021.

With the introduction of Christianity to the Kyivan Rus' in 988 AD, the polity was brought into an alliance with the Byzantine Empire and into the world of Eastern Christianity, which unified the federation under the same religion. However, internal division in the Kyivan Rus' polity existed from the very beginning, with economic, tribal, and ethnic cleavages permeating the various principalities that were connected only loosely. These regional cleavages

were exacerbated when the Mongols conquered the Kyivan Rus' in 1240 (see *Figure 2*), imposing a tributary system but treating principalities differently by region, which would mark the beginning of the differing historical trajectories of Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus.



**Figure 2:** Ukrainian territory, 8<sup>th</sup> century to 13<sup>th</sup> century<sup>10</sup>

Galicia-Volhynia, the leading principality in Ukrainian territory (spreading across the west of today's Ukraine), emerged as an essentially unified state amid the stability brought and relative leniency shown by the Mongols to this polity. As Plokhy notes, Mongol rule in Galicia-Volhynia was “less intrusive and oppressive” than in Russian territories (where populations were

<sup>10</sup> Ishaan Tharoor and Gene Thorp, “How Ukraine became Ukraine, in 7 maps,” *The Washington Post*, March 9, 2015.

more rebellious and presented a greater threat to Mongol rule) and rulers in the Ukrainian territory were granted total independence in internal affairs.<sup>11</sup> This area would eventually become the center of Ukrainian nationalism and independence movements.

Mongol rule was also shorter in Galicia-Volhynia than in Russian territories. By the mid-fourteenth century, most of the principality was incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland—marking the first distinct external division of Ukrainian territory. For the next century, Ukrainian territory remained divided between the Mongol Empire (known as the Golden Horde in this region), the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and the Kingdom of Poland. However, with total collapse of the Golden Horde by the end of the fifteenth century, the land of the steppe (the area of southern Ukraine that ranges between the Dnieper and Donets Rivers; see *Figure 3*) and the Crimean Peninsula came to be dominated by the Crimean Khanate, the successor to the Golden Horde.

This division of Ukrainian territory during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries would introduce the first major differences in historical experiences that would have important legacies in the various regions of today's Ukraine. As Plokhy notes, the incorporation of Galicia and parts of the neighboring region Podolia into the Kingdom of Poland “opened the region to the Polish model of noble democracy, the German model of urban self-rule, and the benefits of Italian Renaissance education.”<sup>12</sup> In the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, meanwhile, the elites were “Ruthenized” (Ruthenian being the term for Ukrainian at this time) and spoke Ruthenian, meaning local elites were able to preserve their political influence, social status, and cultural

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<sup>11</sup> Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe*, 50.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

traditions.<sup>13</sup> Such democratic experience (albeit only extended to the nobility) and cultural development did not come to the populations in the Mongol territories.

The next official territorial change came in 1569, when the Union of Lublin united Poland and Lithuania into one state: the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. With this agreement, most of the Ukrainian territories occupied by Lithuania were annexed to Poland, with the territories remaining in Lithuania comprising almost solely lands of modern-day Belarus. To the east, the Grand Duchy of Moscow (the leading Kyivan Rus' principality on the territory of today's Russia), having overthrown the Mongol yoke in 1480, evolved into the Tsardom of Russia in 1547 (to be renamed the Russian Empire in 1721). The tsardom expanded eastward, conquering areas including Siberia throughout the late sixteenth century. Then, during the seventeenth century, the tsardom began its westward expansion, competing with Poland for control of Ukrainian lands.

In his book *A History of Ukraine: The Land and Its People*, Paul Magocsi emphasizes the importance of the Cossack history of self-rule in creating a foundation for modern Ukraine to trace its democratic roots to. In Zaporizhzhia, the “no-man’s-land” between the Polish Kingdom and Crimean Khanate, a semi-nomadic, militarized, and democratic Turkic people known as the Cossacks had begun to develop their own society in the fifteenth century. Living nominally under Polish jurisdiction, the Zaporizhzhian Cossacks developed into a well-organized force by the late sixteenth century, able to secure virtual control of their land and society, which had a fortified capital known as the *sich*. The Cossacks were passionately committed to freedom, as many were runaway serfs or peasants seeking liberty in “landlordless Zaporizhzhia,” and formed

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<sup>13</sup> Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe*, 59.

a self-governing, relatively egalitarian society with an elected representative government.<sup>14</sup> The Cossacks officially gained their own state, known as the Zaporizhzhian Host or Cossack Hetmanate, in 1649 after signing a peace treaty with the Polish government. The new state developed a system of decentralized rule, divided into military-administrative units that were headed by a colonel elected by loose regimental councils known as the *Polkova rada*. However, as Magocsi points out, the Cossacks were never fully independent, but “more or less autonomous units” within Poland or Muscovy.<sup>15</sup> Eventually with the Tsardom of Russia’s westward expansion coming to incorporate Cossack land east of the Dnieper by 1667, the Hetmanate began to lose control of its government, finally abolished by the Russian Empire in 1764.

In the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which lasted until 1795, western Ukrainian populations (in lands west of the Dnieper River; see *Figure 3*) continued to experience the latinizing effects of Polish language and cultural dominance as well as remain under the Polish model of noble democratic assemblies. The territory incorporated into Russia (the land east of the Dnieper River; see *Figure 3*) as well as the Crimean Khanate (which lasted until 1783) did not see such nascent democratic models, but instead would be subjected to autocratic rule for the next three centuries. Additionally, one of the greatest differences between lands under Polish and Russian control was the dominant religion; lands of the Kyivan Rus’ were historically Eastern Orthodox (dating back to the baptism of Rus’ in 988), but part of the latinizing effect of Polish control was the spread of the Catholicism. Plokhy traces the beginning of the pro-Western movement in Ukrainian territory to the Rus’ Orthodox Church in the early 1590s, when Catholic reform posed an “implicit challenge to unreformed Orthodoxy,” leading Galician Ukrainians to

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<sup>14</sup> Paul Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine: The Land and Its People* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 244.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 251.



**Figure 3: Ukrainian territory, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>17</sup>**

Commonwealth asked Rome to accept them into the Catholic Church. The Union of Brest, signed in October 1596, brought the Kyiv metropolitanate of the Orthodox Church under the jurisdiction of Rome, now to be known as the Uniate Church. Nevertheless, strong opposition to the union endured, with numerous Orthodox hierarchs refusing to swear allegiance to the Uniate. As both the Uniate and Orthodox Church evolved, the line between Christian East and Christian West became blurred and varied by region. Thus, one of the most important legacies of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was the emergence of a “pluralistic political and religious culture that allowed discussion and disagreement” and a “society much more conscious of its

reform their Orthodoxy.<sup>16</sup>

The status of Orthodox hierarchs had become increasingly diminished relative to their Catholic counterparts, who had become members of the senate, even maintaining direct access to the king.

This status struggle came to

a head in 1596, when the

Orthodox hierarchs in the

Polish-Lithuanian

<sup>16</sup> Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe*, 87.

<sup>17</sup> Tharoor and Thorp, “How Ukraine became Ukraine, in 7 maps.”

commonalities.”<sup>18</sup> Such pluralism was not to be found in the Ukrainian territories controlled by Russia. As the Tsardom of Russia expanded westward in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Eastern Orthodoxy was returned to Rus’ lands, often by force.

The division of Ukrainian land between autocracy and democratic assemblies of nobles would continue in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this time between the Habsburg and Russian empires. By 1795, the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth ceased to exist entirely after three partitions that divided the territory between Russia, Austria, and Prussia. All the

territory of today’s Ukraine now belonged to the Russian Empire, save the western-most region comprising Galicia, Transcarpathia, and Bukovyna that had come under the control of Austria (see *Figure 4*). The age-old Dnieper boundary had been eliminated. Additionally, the



**Figure 4:** *Ukrainian territory in Austria-Hungary (1867-1918)*<sup>19</sup>

Crimean Khanate—a protectorate of the Ottoman Empire since 1475—was fully annexed by the Russian Empire by 1792, marking the incorporation of almost all of modern Ukraine into Russia. The western-most part of Ukraine would remain separate from the rest of Ukrainian lands until the mid-twentieth century, under the control of Austria-Hungary until the empire’s collapse in

<sup>18</sup> Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe*, 95.

<sup>19</sup> Tharoor and Thorp, “How Ukraine became Ukraine, in 7 maps.”



*Figure 5: Ukrainian territory in Poland (1918-1939)*<sup>20</sup>

dramatically between the two empires. After the partitions of Poland brought about the dissolution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Polish nationalism increasingly presented a threat to the Habsburg and Russian Empires, where Poles began to demand autonomy. In response, the Russian imperial government liquidated the (Ukrainian) Uniate Church and crushed the Ruthenian movement, which it attributed to Polish “propaganda”; the Austrian authorities, in contrast, never persecuted the Uniate Church and chose to encourage the Ruthenian movement in an effort to “counteract [Polish] propaganda” that threatened to undermine the security of the empire.<sup>21</sup> While Galician schools began to introduce Ukrainian as the language of instruction in the 1890s, the Ukrainian language was never allowed into schools in the Russian Empire.

1918, when the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk left this region under German control (see *Figure 4*), and then in the newly-established Republic of Poland after the end of WWI (see *Figure 5*).

The treatment of Ukrainian (or Ruthenian) minorities, whose nation-building efforts accelerated in the mid-nineteenth century, differed

<sup>20</sup> Tharoor and Thorp, “How Ukraine became Ukraine, in 7 maps.”

<sup>21</sup> Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe*, 162.

In addition to the preservation of Ukrainian language, culture, and religion, the Habsburg Empire also extended the democratic tradition in the Austrian-controlled areas of Galicia, Transcarpathia, and Bukovyna. In the Revolution of 1848, both the Hungarians and Poles demanded independence from the Habsburg Empire, while the Ukrainians were among the most loyal to the empire; they “turned a blind eye” to the reactionary, repressive measures adopted by the Austrian government to crush revolution in exchange for Austrian support for their efforts to achieve political and cultural rights, as well as recognition as a nationality.<sup>22</sup> Following their loyalty during this revolutionary year, Habsburg Ukrainians were elected to parliament, bringing them directly into electoral politics and teaching them self-organization not for purposes of revolt but political action.<sup>23</sup> This democratic tradition has for centuries distinguished the westernmost regions, particularly the territory of Galicia, which historically has had the highest support for democracy. As Austrian authorities encouraged the Ruthenian movement after 1848, political self-organization began to give way to national self-realization. Ukrainian intellectuals started to “formulate a political program that would lead to the creation of a national community,” with three competing camps: the Ukrainian orientation, the pro-Polish orientation, and the pro-Russian orientation.<sup>24</sup> This pluralism and self-realization of the Ukrainian nation would in time make its way across the border into the Russian Empire, though to a much lesser extent.

The Ukrainians in the Russian Empire (most of whom were part of the peasant class) received no institutions of their own and were largely prevented from participating in electoral politics until after the Revolution of 1905 introduced universal male suffrage in Russia. Nevertheless, after 1848, Ukrainian activists were united across what Plokhy deems the “porous”

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<sup>22</sup> Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, 435.

<sup>23</sup> Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe*, 164.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

imperial Russo-Austrian border, drawing on historical territorial, religious, and cultural links. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Galician Ukrainians were helping those in Russia “imagine their nation outside the embrace of the pan-Russian imperial project,” and as aspirations for an independent Ukrainian state began to take root on both sides of the imperial border, Ukraine became “united in unprecedented ways... [by] the new idea of national unity.”<sup>25</sup> The Ukrainian political scene in the Russian Empire came to reflect the tripartite division in the Habsburg Empire after 1905, split between the liberal Ukrainophile intelligentsia, the socialists and social democrats, and monarchist organizations.

However, Russian nationalism (and repression of the Ukrainian language) took off after 1905, “effectively replac[ing] whatever remained of Ukrainian distinctiveness.”<sup>26</sup> By 1917, Russian nationalist parties gained 70% of the Ukrainian vote, despite the fact that ethnic Russians made up at most 13% of the Ukrainian population and the majority of elected representatives were ethnically Ukrainian. This imbalance resulted after 1907, when suffrage became more restricted and weighted by class, greatly increasing the influence of the wealthiest populations (predominantly ethnic Russians) in an effort to limit the power of Ukrainians and those outside the nobility in government. Thus, even if Ukrainians in the territory under Russian control were eventually brought into an electoral political system and experienced limited nation-building, this experience did not bring the same self-realization of national identity via political action that the democratic experience of the Habsburg Ukrainians did.

The borders of today’s Ukraine began to be constructed in 1922, when the Bolsheviks declared the creation of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (SSR) in the Ukrainian territory

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<sup>25</sup> Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe*, 172.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

that had been a part of the Russian Empire (see *Figure 5*). Western Ukraine was finally united with the rest of the country in 1939, when the Soviet Union annexed this territory from Poland to the Ukrainian SSR. Czechoslovakia would cede Carpathian Ruthenia—the very southwestern area of Ukraine, known as Zakarpattia today—to the Soviet Union in 1945, marking the full unification of east and west Ukraine for the first time in history. Finally, for reasons which remain unclear, Nikita Khrushchev in 1954 removed the Crimean Peninsula from the Russian SSR and granted it to the Ukrainian SSR, concluding the construction of the borders of modern Ukraine. These same borders would be re-affirmed in 1991 when Ukraine became a fully independent country and explicitly recognized by Russia in the Budapest Memorandum of 1994.

### Independence

The Ukrainian nation-building efforts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries eventually evolved into genuine independence efforts, with three major attempts at declaring an independent Ukrainian state occurring in various areas of today's Ukraine in 1918, 1939, and 1941. Soon after the outbreak of World War I in 1914, when the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires found themselves on opposite sides of war, the “Russophile exodus” left the Habsburg regions of Galicia and Bukovyna entirely rid of pro-Russian political forces by the summer of 1915. Two years later, after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 led to the disintegration of the Russian Empire and civil war broke out across the former imperial land, the all-Russian orientation also came under attack in Russia. Representatives of Ukrainophile political and cultural organizations formed a coordinating body called the Central Rada, which evolved into the parliament of the newly-declared Ukrainian People's Republic that summer, earning the support of almost 300,000 war-weary recruits from Ukrainian provinces sent to the Ukrainian

sector of the eastern front. Magocsi emphasizes the Central Rada's "rapid transformation... into a political body that aimed to represent all inhabitants of Dnieper-Ukrainian territory regardless of their nationality" in order to implement comprehensive social reforms and create a more egalitarian society with increased prestige for Ukrainian culture and language—an effort that was short-lived but would leave an important legacy for Ukrainian nationhood.<sup>27</sup>

The collapse of both the Russian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire (which was officially dissolved in early November 1918 after suffering defeat in WWI) united Ukrainians on both sides of the imperial border under what Plokhy deems the central aspect of the emerging Ukrainian national identity: independence.<sup>28</sup> From the start, the Central Rada resisted the Bolshevik coup, and after Bolshevik troops moved into Kyiv at the beginning of January 1918, the Central Rada proclaimed the total independence of the so-called Ukrainian People's Republic. The Rada sought military protection from the Central Powers, who drove the Bolsheviks out of Kyiv by March. When Russia formally withdrew from WWI on March 3 by signing the Treaty of Brest with the Central Powers, the Bolsheviks were forced to recognize Ukrainian independence. Ukrainian independence was then realized in Austria-Hungary that fall, when Ukrainian leaders began claiming control of their ethnic territories (Galicia, Bukovyna, and Transcarpathia) in October. Fully assuming control of Lviv, the capital of Galicia, on November 1, they declared the creation of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic. On December 1, the two Ukrainian republics—eastern and western—were finally united under a single state.

This independent Ukrainian state lasted for only one year. The Bolsheviks recaptured Kyiv in December 1919, declaring the establishment of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic.

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<sup>27</sup> Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, 502.

<sup>28</sup> Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe*, 213.

By March 1921, when the Soviet Union signed a peace treaty with Poland, today's Ukraine came to be split between four countries: the Soviets retained the Ukrainian SSR, Poland took Galicia and Volhynia, Romania assumed Bukovyna, and the new state of Czechoslovakia took control of Transcarpathia. This latter region (called Subcarpathian Rus' or Carpatho-Ukraine) was an autonomous region that would become the site of the next Ukrainian declaration of independence, which lasted but a day. After Nazi Germany annexed the Sudetenland in September 1938, Adolf Hitler appointed Ukrainian activist Avhustyn Voloshyn to lead the government of Carpatho-Ukraine, which was intended to become the site of a German-sponsored reunification of all ethnic Ukrainian territories. Nevertheless, when Hitler invaded Prague on March 15, 1939, he decided to give Transcarpathia to Hungary, and Carpatho-Ukraine therefore proclaimed its independence that same day. Transcarpathia was soon overtaken, however, and annexed by Hungary on March 16, having been independent—albeit with a fully formed government, national anthem, and flag—for only 24 hours.

The last significant war-time independence movement in Ukrainian territories came two years later in Galicia. When Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, many in Ukraine initially welcomed the German advance after over two decades of repression and trauma in the Soviet Union. This was true across Ukrainian territory, even in the central and eastern regions whose populations were historically closer to Russia, after the experience of the Holodomor—the famine of 1932 and 1933 caused by Stalin's forced collectivization that killed an estimated 3.9 million in Ukraine. Many Ukrainians saw the Germans as liberators, hoping for the restoration of their state. The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), an ultranationalist political organization founded in 1929 in Galicia whose goal was Ukrainian independence, was at the helm of this group of hopefuls. Stepan Bandera, who became leader of the largest and most

radical faction of the OUN (known as OUN-B) in 1939, struck a deal with the Germans in February 1941 and OUN-B members formed two battalions of special operations forces. However, the OUN's cooperation with the Nazis ended four months later when German troops entered Lviv on June 29. The next day, the Bandera faction declared an independent Ukrainian state, but the genuine independence was never realized. The OUN-B leadership were arrested and many, including Bandera, sent to Nazi concentration camps.

The end of WWII brought the full unification of the Ukrainian SSR and dominance of the repressive, centralized Soviet rule that prevented any real independence efforts from emerging in Ukraine for the next half century. Ukrainian independence at long last came with the fall of the Soviet Union, over 1,000 years after the founding of the Kyivan Rus' state. In the summer of 1990, the Ukrainian parliament declared Ukraine a sovereign country, giving the Ukrainian SSR's laws precedence over the Soviet Union's. Mass mobilization for independence then took off, particularly in the western-most regions of Galicia and Volhynia, where intellectuals and former dissidents united under the banner of democratic nationalism. The fight for independence made its way to the capital on October 2, when Ukrainian students began a hunger strike on the October Revolution square in downtown Kyiv, demanding the resignation of the prime minister and Ukraine's withdrawal from negotiations on a new union treaty. Almost 50,000 demonstrators soon marched on the square to protect the 150 students on hunger strike from police in what came to be known as the Revolution on Granite, and the government soon conceded to the protestors' demands.

On August 24, 1991, the Ukrainian parliament voted overwhelmingly to declare independence: 346 deputies in favor, with only 2 against and 5 abstentions. Finally, Ukraine became the first and only Soviet republic to confirm independence with a referendum vote. On

December 1, the people of Ukraine expressed an irrefutable desire for independent statehood: with a remarkable turnout of 84%, over 92% of the voters approved the August declaration of independence. The Soviet Union officially dissolved on December 25, 1991, and Ukraine would spend the rest of the decade with its sovereignty fully secure.

## Conceptual framework

Ukrainians at the forefront of the fight for freedom and democracy looked to ensure sovereignty in all areas—economic, political, and cultural. In order to achieve this, Ukraine would need to leave behind its Soviet past and reform the country’s economic and political institutions as well as support the consolidation of national identity across the country. Thus, in order to achieve post-communist democratization, Ukraine had to undertake both state-building and nation-building. Before analyzing the process and effects of state-building and nation-building in Ukraine, it is necessary to understand what these terms mean.

### Stateness vs. nationhood

The most widely accepted definition of a state comes from the famous German sociologist Max Weber, who defined the state as “a compulsory association with a territorial basis,” meaning it “possesses an administrative authority and legal order... [that] claims binding authority, not only over the members of the state, the citizens... but also to a very large extent, over all action taking place in the area of its jurisdiction.”<sup>29</sup> *Stateness* refers to the viability of a state, including politically, economically, in terms of defense, etc.—anything that contributes to the unity of and ability to maintain a state. Perhaps the most essential aspect of a state, Weber asserts, is its successful ability to monopolize the legitimate use of force within its defined territory, and thus a country is said to have a stateness problem when there are profound

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<sup>29</sup> Max Weber, “The Fundamental Concepts of Sociology,” as cited in Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 17.

differences in the conception of or challenges to the territorial bounds of a state or who has the right to citizenship in that state.

Nationhood, meanwhile, is associated with people, not territorial boundaries, and the sense of connectedness within a specific population. Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, expanding on Weber's conception of a nation as a certain group that exhibits "a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of other groups," define a nation as possessing no autonomy, agents, or rules, but "only the resources derived from the psychological identification of its members."<sup>30</sup> Of course, no explanation of nationhood is complete without Benedict Anderson's concept of imagined communities. In his famous 1983 book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Anderson proposed to define the nation as "an imagined political community" that is both inherently limited (i.e., never encompassing all of mankind) and sovereign, with the ultimate dream of freedom.<sup>31</sup> He argues that nationalism (the imagination of communities) is one of the most effective value systems for providing a "transformation of fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning... chance into destiny" for the entire community that a group imagines themselves to be a part of.<sup>32</sup> Similar to the state–stateness relationship, a nationhood problem emerges when there are profound differences or challenges to the imagined bounds of a nation or who has the right to membership in that nation.

State-building and nation-building have been understood in various ways throughout history and across disciplines, even used interchangeably, but for the purposes of this paper, these terms will be assigned specific definitions in which they diverge in levels of abstraction.

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<sup>30</sup> Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition*, 21-22.

<sup>31</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 6-7.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-12.

State-building, as political scientist Francis Fukayama defines it, is “the creation of new governmental institutions and the strengthening of existing ones.”<sup>33</sup> These institutions must possess certain capacities, which the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) has determined are, at a minimum, the ability to: “overcome critical market failures; assist in the acquisition of new technologies; mobilize and channel resources to productive sectors; enforce standards and regulations; establish social pacts; and fund, deliver and regulate services and social programs... [as well as] reach political settlements with domestic actors in defining public polices and creating developmental and welfare-enhancing bureaucracies.”<sup>34</sup>

Nation-building, on the other hand, refers to “the process through which the boundaries of the modern state and those of the national community become congruent... [in order] to achieve national integration.”<sup>35</sup> This process is closely related to nationalism, a political principle that “holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent”—meaning that whatever the imagined boundaries of a community are perceived to be, these should also be the political composition and territorial boundaries of the state,<sup>36</sup> granting certain rights and privileges to the self-defined members of the nation.<sup>37</sup> Nation-building can result from efforts of both government and private actors, on both top-down and grassroots levels. The defining characteristic of this process is the promotion of a national identity, understood to be “the group definition of itself as a group—its conception of its enduring characteristics and basic values; its strengths and

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<sup>33</sup> Francis Fukayama, “The Imperative of State-Building,” *Journal of Democracy* 15, no. 2 (2004): 17.

<sup>34</sup> “Chapter 10—Building State Capacity for Poverty Reduction” in *Combatting Poverty and Inequality: Structural Change, Social Policy and Politics* (UNRISD, 2010): 257.

<sup>35</sup> Harris Mylonas, “Nation-Building,” in *obo* in *International Relations*.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Lowell Barrington, “Citizenship as a cornerstone of civic national identity in Ukraine,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 37, no. 2 (2021): 156.

weaknesses; its hopes and fears; its reputation and conditions of existence; its institutions and traditions; and its past history, current purposes, and future prospects.”<sup>38</sup>

The manner in which a nation constructs the boundaries of its imagined community and the extent to which these boundaries overlap with the state’s definition of its formal members (i.e., citizens) are intrinsically tied to the potential for democratic consolidation in that country. When the territorial bounds of a state match the imagined boundaries of the nation, this sovereign polity is known as a nation-state. If a country defines its nation in purely ethnic terms, then such a nation-state can only emerge if the population in the state is largely homogeneous in terms of language and ethnicity; Iceland, Japan, and Israel are among the few examples of nation-states in the world today that could be described with such a strictly ethnic definition. However, most countries do not have such homogenous populations—as is the case in post-communist Europe, where the breakup of the Soviet Union led to the emergence of fifteen independent countries with substantial ethnic minorities—raising questions about who constitutes the demos (citizenry) and how various populations should be treated/represented in government. In order for a nation-state to emerge in such heterogenous countries, the state must adopt an inclusive definition of nation, and generally citizenship (as opposed to ethnicity) acts as the main identifier of a member of the nation. The United States is one of the best examples of such a “civic” nation-state, a term that can also be used to describe most European countries.

Linz and Stepan analyze factors that inhibit and assist democratic consolidation in such multinational and multicultural societies, arguing that homogenizing policies are largely not conducive to democratization, which generally requires an acceptance of multiculturalism and

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<sup>38</sup> Karina Korostelina, “Mapping national identity narratives in Ukraine,” *Nationalities Papers* 41, no. 2 (2013): 293.

policies that “grant inclusive and equal citizenship and that give all citizens a common ‘roof’ of state-mandated and enforced individual rights.”<sup>39</sup> They emphasize that one of the primary reasons that the legitimacy of a state is questioned is that the titular (dominant) nationality groups “deny the de facto, multinational character of the state, reject any compromise with other groups, and exclude them from citizenship.”<sup>40</sup> As discussed later, this perceived inequality between the titular nationality (Ukrainians) and minority group (Russians) in Ukraine contributed to the separatist movement that gave rise to violent conflict in 2014, as well as Putin’s current claims about the repression of ethnic Russians and Russian-speakers in Ukraine.

### National identity spectrums

If national identity is understood to be a group’s definition of itself, and nationalism is the pursuits of certain rights and privileges for this self-defined nation, then the more inclusive the definition of national identity assumed by the nation, the less divisive the nationalism that emerges within a multicultural and multinational state. Because of the close interconnectedness of national identity and nationalism, particularly in a country such as Ukraine that had to undertake intentional nation-building, the terms will be used interchangeably in this paper. Two spectrums of national identity will be analyzed: civic vs. ethnic and positively- vs. negatively-defined national identity.

Civic nationalism can be defined as distinguishing the nation by “such features as living on a common territory, belief in common political principles, possession of state citizenship, representation by a common set of political institutions and desire or consent to be part of the

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<sup>39</sup> Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition*, 33.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

nation”; ethnic nationalism, in contrast, defines the nation by “such features as common ancestry, culture, language, religion, traditions, and race.”<sup>41</sup> Scholars disagree on the extent to which civic and ethnic nationalism can be differentiated as well as the implications of each type of national identity on democratic consolidation in a state. For example, Julian Erhardt, Steffen Wamsler, and Markus Freitag argue that civic national identity is “inherently linked to democracy and its promise of equal rights and an inclusive society,” while ethnic national identity is “linked to more authoritarian regime types that promise protection of the in-group by means of a strong leader.”<sup>42</sup> Oleg Zhuravlev and Volodymyr Ishchenko, however, assert that civic nationalism can be just as exclusive as ethnic nationalism, and that the two principles can coexist within the same political movements and symbolic systems of nationalism, with the clout of civic nationalism masking and legitimizing ethnocultural othering.<sup>43</sup>

This paper will adopt both conceptions of the civic–ethnic spectrum of nationalism to analyze Ukrainian national identity, assuming that the boundaries of an imagined community are fluid and that depending on the form it takes and context it develops in, civic national identity can become either more conducive to democratic consolidation or exclusive and problematic for a country’s democratic transition. Ethnic national identity will also be understood to be generally exclusive and prohibitive of democratic consolidation in a multinational country, as virtually every scholar agrees. This interpretation of the civic-ethnic nationalism dichotomy is compatible with Linz and Stepan’s perception of the precondition for consolidated democracy in a

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<sup>41</sup> Stephen Shulman, “The Contours of Civic and Ethnic National Identification in Ukraine,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 56, no. 1 (2004): 35.

<sup>42</sup> Julian Erhardt, Steffen Wamsler, and Markus Freitag, “National identity between democracy and autocracy: a comparative analysis of 24 countries,” *European Political Science Review* 13 (2021): 60.

<sup>43</sup> Oleg Zhuravlev and Volodymyr Ishchenko, “Exclusiveness of civic nationalism: Euromaidan eventful nationalism in Ukraine,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 36, no. 3 (2020): 228.

multinational, multicultural state: “the combination of *collective rights* of nationalities or minorities.... *with the rights of individuals fully protected by the state*” to articulate what they call a “democratic non-nation-state policy.”<sup>44</sup>

The next spectrum of national identity will be the positive-negative definition. A positive definition is understood to be one that has intrinsic meaning, independent of other contrasting terms; in the context of national identity, this will appear as a self-motivated nationalism, a sense of “collective belonging characterized by a sense of relatedness... [and] feelings of solidarity, sympathy, and obligation”<sup>45</sup> built upon “elements of common culture, common values, myths, memories and symbols.”<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, a negatively-defined national identity is understood to be articulated in contrast to some other nation, value system, ideology, etc. As Karl Deutsch defines in his analysis of nation-building, “the choice of national alignments and national identity is related to the decision to choose a common enemy.”<sup>47</sup> National identity will almost always have some combination of both a positive and negative definition because generally a group must have something in common before they perceive some other group as a “common enemy” and each other as allies.<sup>48</sup> As the boundaries of a nation are imagined, they are also fluid and can shift frequently in unstable and rapidly changing environments. As we will

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<sup>44</sup> Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition*, 33-4.

<sup>45</sup> Wilcox, “Culture, National Identity, and Admission to Citizenship,” as cited in Barrington, “Citizenship as a cornerstone of civic national identity in Ukraine,” 157.

<sup>46</sup> Jaskułowski, “Western (Civic) ‘Versus’ Eastern (Ethnic) Nationalism: The Origins and Critique of the Dichotomy,” as cited in Barrington, “Citizenship as a cornerstone of civic national identity in Ukraine,” 157.

<sup>47</sup> Karl Deutsch, “Nation-Building and National Development: Some Issues for Political Research,” in *Nation Building in Comparative Contexts*, ed. by Karl Deutsch and William Foltz, (New York: Routledge, 2017), 10-11.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

see, war is one of the most radical circumstances where such sudden changes can occur, putting the “parameters, meaning, and salience of identities to an extreme test.”<sup>49</sup>

In analyzing the characteristics and content of national identity in Ukraine, this paper will assume that feelings of pride and belonging in one’s country, support for joining economic unions and security alliances with other nations, and positive attitudes toward other countries are associated with positively-defined national identities. Negatively-defined national identities, in contrast, are characterized by feelings of exclusion, opposition to economic and security unions, and negative attitudes toward other countries. One of the most important distinctions in Ukrainian nationalism that will be analyzed in this paper is opposition to the Russian Federation (negative nationalism) and support for Euro-Atlantic integration (positive nationalism). I hypothesize that Russian aggression over the past 30 years of Ukraine’s independence has increased both ends of this national identity spectrum, catalyzing Ukraine’s nation-building process while increasingly filling it with democratic content.

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<sup>49</sup> Gwendolyn Sasse and Alice Lackner, “War and identity: the case of the Donbas in Ukraine,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34, no. 2-3 (2018): 139.

## Findings and discussion

When Ukraine declared independence in 1991, the new government immediately undertook state- and nation-building projects to build a new sovereign, democratic country. One of the first challenges that the country faced was determining the official nation of its state via a citizenship law. This was particularly difficult given that there had been no republic-level citizenship laws and institutions in the Soviet Union (everyone across the fifteen republics was considered a citizen of the USSR), so Ukraine needed to quickly establish its own definition of the people of Ukraine. However, with a significant presence of ethnic Russians living in Ukrainian territory—now, for the first time, as minorities—there was serious disagreement about the boundaries of the Ukrainian nation as well as the potential for conflict if the Russian population perceived itself to not be treated fairly.

Two notions of national identity, neither dominant, were held by the newly-defined population of Ukraine in 1991—an identity split that continues to present one of the biggest threats to Ukrainian statehood today. The two identities could be considered as a right-left split, with the nationalists on the right and communists on the left. The Ukrainian nationalists were led by the political party *Rukh* (“People’s Movement of Ukraine”), which was founded in 1989, drawing the majority of its support from western Ukraine, and which was instrumental in Ukraine’s campaign for independence. *Rukh* articulated the Ukrainian nationalist tenet of “the distinctiveness of Ukraine and the Ukrainians from Russia and the Russians,” imagining the Ukrainian nation as “a multinational political community with an ethnic Ukrainian ‘core.’”<sup>50</sup> The left, in contrast, embraced the East Slavic identity, holding that “the ‘true’ nation was larger than

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<sup>50</sup> Oxana Shevel, “The Politics of Citizenship Policy in New States,” *Comparative Politics* 41, no. 3 (2009): 281.

either ethnic Ukrainians or residents of Ukraine,” instead extending to include all of “Slavic-Orthodox civilization,” of which Ukrainians are constituent members.<sup>51</sup>

These two competing conceptions of Ukrainian national identity played out in a tripartite division between left, right, and center in the Ukrainian parliament (known as the *Verkhovna Rada*, or simply the *Rada*) about the content of the new citizenship law. The right advocated for special provisions for ethnic Ukrainians, proposing to extend citizenship to ethnic Ukrainians who lived in the West and anyone who had “ethnic Ukrainian” documented in Soviet passports. The left, on the opposite end of the spectrum, held the ultimate goal of a union state with Russia and Belarus, and therefore attempted to “derail citizenship legislation altogether or, failing that, to institute dual citizenship.”<sup>52</sup> Meanwhile, the center—represented in the Rada by the party of power, the former communist bureaucrats who became the ruling elite in Ukraine—was characterized by “ideological amorphousness.”<sup>53</sup> For the right and center, dual citizenship was a non-starter, as it threatened the independent statehood of Ukraine; they feared that the blurring of boundaries between the Ukrainian and Russian nations could be used to justify a land grab under the pretense of unifying a nation (which is exactly what would occur two decades later). Such concerns about legitimacy for local secession were particularly strong regarding southeast Ukraine, which had a majority ethnic Russian population and the beginnings of pro-Russian separatist movements in the 1990s. One such project was the “Novorossiia” (“New Russia”) movement that emerged in Odesa in August 1990, contending that the inhabitants of the Novorossiia region—an imperial territory comprising Odesa, Mykolaiv, Kherson, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv, Donetsk, and Luhansk—constituted a separate nation with a history

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<sup>51</sup> Shevel, “The Politics of Citizenship Policy in New States,” 281.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 282.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 281.

distinct from the rest of Ukraine, meaning Novorossiia should be granted autonomy within a federated Ukrainian state.<sup>54</sup>

With the stark divisions in beliefs about who should comprise the official nation of the new Ukrainian state and the threat of irredentism, the Rada decided to adopt a purely territorial definition of the nation, as this was the only compromise accepted by both the right (which was staunchly opposed to dual citizenship) and the left (which was fervently against an ethnic definition of citizenship). For this reason, in her article “The Politics of Citizenship Policy in new States,” Oxana Shevel selected Ukraine as her ideal case of “how contested politics of identity can accidentally result in civic citizenship rules,” with a simple territorial definition of nation representing a “purely civic” citizenship law.<sup>55</sup> The first Ukrainian citizenship law, adopted in November 1991, stipulated that citizenship would be granted to permanent residents as of November 13, 1991, as well as those who were born on, or who had a parent or grandparent born on, the territory of Ukraine—in effect, virtually all residents of Ukraine.

This inclusive civic definition has been reaffirmed and expanded in subsequent versions of the Ukrainian citizenship law, which came in 1997, 2001, and 2005. Currently, Ukraine considers anyone who themselves or at least one parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, full- or half-brother or sister was born or permanently resided on Ukrainian territory to have the right to citizenship. Though political parties on the right proposed special treatment for ethnic Ukrainians in 1997 and 2001, arguing that ethnic Ukrainians should be exempt from residency requirements, these provisions were never adopted, which Lowell Barrington lauds for making the Ukrainian

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<sup>54</sup> John O’Loughlin, Gerard Toal, and Vladimir Kolosov, “The rise and fall of ‘Novorossiia: examining support for a separatist geopolitical imaginary in southeast Ukraine,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 33, no. 2 (2017): 127.

<sup>55</sup> Shevel, “The Politics of Citizenship Policy in New States,” 279.

conception of nation “far less connected to ethnicity than some of the other citizenship policies” in the former Soviet Union.<sup>56</sup>

### National identity divisions

Even if Ukraine ultimately adopted a civic legal definition of its nation, the accidental civic nature of its citizenship law reveals a more worrisome undercurrent: deep divisions in conceptions of Ukrainian national identity that undermined—and continue to undermine—the unity and security of the country. Any literature on Ukraine’s post-communist transition almost certainly mentions some sort of identity split in the country, most salient in the first two decades of the country’s independence. For example, in his 2004 article “The Contours of Civic and Ethnic National Identification in Ukraine,” Stephen Shulman identifies two contrasting identity “complexes” that exist among the people of Ukraine: the *Ethnic Ukrainian* and *Eastern Slavic* national identity complexes. These identity complexes will be used as representative of the general scholarly consensus on the national identity divide between the two macro-regions of northwest and southeast.

The Ethnic Ukrainian identity, epitomized by Rukh, holds a “classic nationalist argument for the privileged rights of the titular people.”<sup>57</sup> This national identity complex emphasizes that Ukrainians are the primary indigenous people of the country; Russia’s history in Ukraine is one of colonial exploitation; and Russification (including the forced spread of the Russian language by imperial Russia and the Soviet Union) has created unnatural divisions in Ukraine—all of

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<sup>56</sup> Barrington, “Citizenship as a cornerstone of civic national identity in Ukraine,” 161.

<sup>57</sup> Graham Smith *et. al.*, *Nation-building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands: The Politics of National Identities* as cited in Shulman, “The Contours of Civic and Ethnic National Identification in Ukraine,” 38.

which, in the view of Ethnic Ukrainian nationalists, “justify the use of special corrective measures by the state to revive ethnic Ukrainian culture and language... around which the Ukrainian nation-state should be built.”<sup>58</sup> The Eastern Slavic national identity complex, in direct contrast, envisages that Russians are fully native to Ukrainian society, and thus Ukraine is “a fundamentally bi-ethnic, bi-lingual and bi-cultural nation” and the Russian and Ukrainian ethnic groups and cultures “form a coherent cultural whole.”<sup>59</sup> Whereas the Ethnic Ukrainian identity argues for the distinctiveness of Ukraine’s history, tracing the country’s historical roots to the Kyivan Rus’ (and lands of Ruthenia) and the Russian Federation’s roots to the principality of Muscovy, the Eastern Slavic identity emphasizes the “brotherly relations,” “Slavic unity,” and “common historical and cultural paths” between Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine.<sup>60</sup>

After the matter of citizenship was decided, Ethnic Ukrainian nationalists and Eastern Slavic nationalists continued to be brought into direct confrontation over domestic and foreign policy preferences. The two biggest issues were (and continue to be) language laws and foreign policy orientations. Domestically, the Ethnic Ukrainian nationalists advocated not only the sole official language status of Ukrainian, but the active promotion of Ukrainian language, history, and culture by the government, particularly among Russian-speakers and ethnic Russians. The Eastern Slavic nationalists, however, insisted on the state declaring both Ukrainian and Russian as official languages and supporting the promotion of Ukrainian and Russian history and culture equally—which would, in effect, “maintain the strong position of Russian language and culture in Ukraine.”<sup>61</sup> Similar to the decision of citizenship, Ukraine adopted a language law intended to

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<sup>58</sup> Shulman, “The Contours of Civic and Ethnic National Identification in Ukraine,” 38.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

pacify both parties (though with preference given to the Ethnic Ukrainian side). In 1989, Ukrainian became the official state language in the country, and this sole official status was reaffirmed in the 1996 constitution, which also guaranteed the protection of the Russian language. Though various politicians and private actors holding the Eastern Slavic national identity have called for the granting of state language status to the Russian language, Ukrainian remains the sole official language in the country, with the most recent version of the constitution ensuring the “free development, use and protection of Russian, and other languages of national minorities in Ukraine.”<sup>62</sup>

The other divisive policy issue in Ukraine is that of foreign policy preference: the Ethnic Ukrainian national identity complex prioritizes integration with Europe and the United States (primarily in the form of the joining the EU and NATO), while the Eastern Slavic identity calls for integration with Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS, the economic and political association formed in 1991 following the collapse of the Soviet Union in order to ensure the continued integration of former Soviet countries with one another). Deutsch’s analysis of the importance of choosing a common enemy in uniting two groups in the process of nation-building helps explain the continued division between those possessing the Ethnic Ukrainian and Eastern Slavic identity complexes: contradictory conceptions of enemies and allies.<sup>63</sup> Or, as Shulman terms the differences, between the “Other” and “Our”. The Ethnic Ukrainian “Other” is Russia, with the nationalists alleging that “Ukrainians tend to be more individualistic, freedom-loving, democratic and tolerant than Russians,” and the Ukrainian “Our” is European culture, of which they contend “Ukrainian culture is part and parcel.”<sup>64</sup> For the Eastern Slavic nationalists,

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<sup>62</sup> *Constitution of Ukraine*, Article 10.

<sup>63</sup> Deutsch, “Nation-Building and National Development,” 11.

<sup>64</sup> Shulman, “The Contours of Civic and Ethnic National Identification in Ukraine,” 40.

Europe (or the West more broadly) is viewed as the “Other,” with Western culture “more materialistic, individualistic and impersonal, and less spiritual” than their culture, while Russia and Belarus, with their common historical and cultural development, represent the “Our.”<sup>65</sup>

On a governmental level, the foreign policy orientation of the Ethnic Ukrainian identity began to take the lead soon after independence. As Plokhy highlights, “the realization of full sovereignty for Ukraine became closely associated with the aspiration to join the European community of nations.”<sup>66</sup> In 1994, Ukraine began its path toward Euro-Atlantic integration, signing a cooperation agreement with the EU as well as a Partnership for Peace agreement with NATO. In 2008, at the Bucharest Summit, NATO affirmed that Ukraine would become a member of the Alliance, though without providing a specific timeline. Four years later, Brussels and Kyiv began negotiations on the creation of a political and economic union known as the European Union-Ukraine Association Agreement. The Association Agreement would eventually enter into force in September 2017, after much turmoil. Finally, Kyiv would enshrine the Ethnic Ukrainian national identity’s conception of “Our” in the Ukrainian constitution on February 7, 2019, when President Petro Poroshenko signed into law an amendment committing Ukraine to become a full-fledged member of the EU and NATO. Moreover, the very preamble of the Ukrainian constitution was amended to “[confirm] the European identity of the Ukrainian people and the irreversibility of the European and Euro-Atlantic course of Ukraine.”<sup>67</sup>

Nevertheless, while the Ukrainian government may have declared a European identity and foreign policy orientation as well as preference for the Ukrainian language, the state’s

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<sup>65</sup> Shulman, “The Contours of Civic and Ethnic National Identification in Ukraine,” 40.

<sup>66</sup> Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe*, 326.

<sup>67</sup> *Constitution of Ukraine*, Preamble.

adoption of this stance is not proof that a unifying national identity consolidated in Ukraine. Rather, nation-level analysis obscures the regional polarization that characterized Ukraine after the country gained independence and the backlash to the adoption of Ethnic Ukrainian national identity complex-type policies.

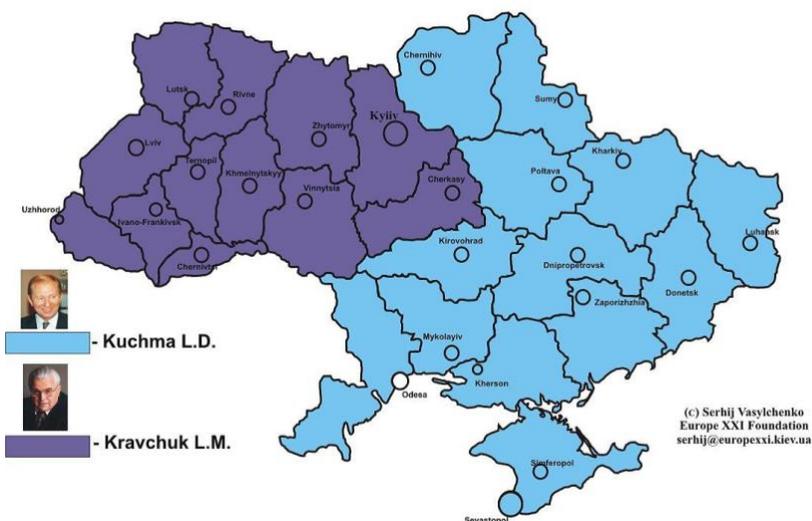
### Regional and ethnolinguistic divisions

The early perception of polarization in independent Ukraine was that the country was polarized along linguistic lines. The 1994 presidential election produced a very clearly regionally polarized map, with the pro-Russian (i.e., promising better relations with Russia) candidate Leonid Kuchma winning every *oblast* (administrative district) in the eastern and southern

regions, and the nationalist (i.e., emphasizing the defense of the Ukrainian nation from Russian interests) incumbent Leonid Kravchuk winning all oblasts to the west and part

of the center (see *Figure 6*).

These regions largely reflected historical partitions, with west-central Ukraine (Kyiv, Cherkasy, Zhytomyr, Vinnytsia, Rivne, Volyn/Lutsk, Ternopil, Khmelnytsky, and Chernivtsi), not coming under Russian control



**Figure 6:** Presidential candidate that won the largest percentage of votes, by oblast (1994–second round)<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Alex Kireev, “Ukraine. Presidential Election 1994,” *Electoral Geography 2.0*.

until the late eighteenth century, and the far west (Uzhhorod/Zakarpattia, Lviv, and Ivano-Frankivsk)—where Kravchuk gathered the strongest support—never belonging to Russian territory until World War II (when it became part of the USSR). The “pro-Russian” Kuchma, meanwhile, dominated in territories that were either historically part of Russia or the Crimean Khanate.

In 1996, Dominique Arel and Valeri Khmelko analyzed public opinion surveys to find that “the main variable explaining the variation in the vote was... the language that people actually prefer to speak when given a choice,” known as the “language of convenience” or “language of preference,” as opposed to the traditional census question of “native language.”<sup>69</sup> The language of preference was the only statistically significant factor for predicting voter attitudes toward the status of the Russian language and Ukraine’s geopolitical orientation toward the Russian Federation—not economic conditions or ethnicity. Arel and Khmelko concluded that linguistic divisions were the main contributor to regional polarization, as populations in the south and east of Ukraine had radically different connections to the Ukrainian language; according to a 2003 survey, Ukrainian was the preferred language of 95% of respondents in the west, while only 15.5% in southern Ukraine and 7.7% in eastern Ukraine reported Ukrainian to be their language of convenience.<sup>70</sup>

However, ethnicity was soon brought into the picture as a predictor of voter preferences. In 2009, Lowell Barrington and Regina Faranda found a statistically significant cleavage in 2005

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<sup>69</sup> Dominique Arel and Valeri Khmelko, “The Russian Factor and Territorial Polarization in Ukraine,” as cited in Arel, “How Ukraine has become more Ukrainian,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34, no. 2-3 (2018): 186.

<sup>70</sup> Valeriy Khmelko, “Лінгво-етнічна Структура України,” as cited in Yitzhak Brudny and Evgeny Finkel, “Why Ukraine is Not Russia: Hegemonic National Identity and Democracy in Russia and Ukraine,” *East European Politics and Societies* 25, no. 4 (2011): 818.

survey data between self-defined ethnic Ukrainians and Russians, particularly on views about relations between Ukraine and Russia, and determined this was an important contributor to regional polarization since the vast majority of ethnic Russians lived in the south and east of Ukraine.<sup>71</sup> Scholars then began to conceive of Ukraine as a country characterized by an ethnolinguistic divide, with ethnicity and language preference significantly correlated; ethnic Ukrainians were far more likely to use Ukrainian as their language of convenience than ethnic Russians, and ethnic Ukrainians, Ukrainophones, and holders of the Ethnic Ukrainian national identity complex comprised a much greater part of the population west of the Dnipro River, while ethnic Russians, Russophones, and those with an Eastern Slavic national identity dominated in the east and south of Ukraine.

This perception that the ethnolinguistic dyad was the most salient factor in Ukraine's lack of consolidated national identity was predominant in the first two decades of the country's independence. However, in 2004, Lowell Barrington and Erik Herron became two of the first scholars to dispute this essentialism, emphasizing the "fluid" or "blurred" nature of ethnic and linguistic boundaries in Ukraine and arguing that ethnolinguistic divides had been overestimated due to improper methodology.<sup>72</sup> Researchers typically divide Ukraine into two regions (east and west) or four regions (east, center, west, and south) when analyzing differences in survey data or voter results, and Barrington and Herron argue that these models lump together oblasts with citizens who hold significantly different (geo)political preferences and the use of too few regions underestimates regional divisions and overestimates linguistic and ethnic divides. Thus, they

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<sup>71</sup> Lowell Barrington and Regina Faranda, "Reexamining Region, Ethnicity, and Language in Ukraine," as cited in Arel, "How Ukraine has become more Ukrainian," 186.

<sup>72</sup> Lowell Barrington and Erik Herron, "One Ukraine or Many? Regionalism in Ukraine and Its Political Consequences," *Nationalities Papers* 32, no. 1 (2004): 62.

recommend using an eight-region model based on important historical, economic, and demographic features of various oblasts. With this model, the scholars conclude that “geographic divisions in the country hold up even when other factors—such as ethnicity and language use—are controlled for.”<sup>73</sup>

Whether ethnicity, language preference, or geographic location was identified as the primary explanatory factor, the literature on Ukraine before 2014 was almost unanimous in concluding that the nation was divided, and many warned that the presence of such stark regional divisions and competing national identities would hinder democratic consolidation and potentially lead to ethnic conflict. In his 2002 article “Ukraine: One State, Two Countries?” Mykola Riabchuk argues that Ukrainian society is “radically divided on virtually every fundamental issue” and the rival pro-Soviet and pro-European groups are minorities, “while the real majority is an amorphous group of those who ‘do not care’, ‘are not interested’, ‘feel undecided’, and ‘failed’ (or ‘refused’) to respond.”<sup>74</sup> With this, Riabchuk highlighted the “vague and quite nebulous” identity of many Ukrainians, lacking both positive and negative definition, and argued that “the totalitarian legacy construed an ‘uncivil’ and easily manipulable society,” which he predicted would hinder the country’s democratic transition and ensure the continued dominance of the oligarchic elites.<sup>75</sup>

However, while Ukraine may have been characterized by ambiguity on most matters, the people of Ukraine would prove their commitment to democracy and rule of law in November 2004, when thousands of demonstrators took to the streets to protest mass corruption and

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<sup>73</sup> Barrington and Herron, “One Ukraine or Many?” 53.

<sup>74</sup> Mykola Riabchuk, “Ukraine: One State, Two Countries?” *Eurozine*, September 16, 2002.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

electoral fraud in what would be known as the Orange Revolution. Yitzhak Brudny and Evgeny Finkel present a different interpretation than Riabchuk of the lack of a consolidated Ukrainian national identity that helps explain this revolution. Developing their concept of *hegemonic national identity*, the scholars argue that the absence of such a dominant conception of nation in Ukraine meant that the Western Ukrainian identity (essentially Shulman's Ethnic Ukrainian national identity complex) was defined more by negative non- and anti-Russian sentiments than pro-market values or a preoccupation on the economy. However, a purely negative definition could not last for long, and since liberalizing economic reform was not a key issue for Ukraine at this time, democratic values became the main positively-defined component of the Western Ukrainian identity. This not only made "Western Ukrainian nationalism... much more liberal, democratic, inclusive, and civic in its nature," but also allowed this identity to retain support in the midst of economic hardship.<sup>76</sup> Thus, Brudny and Finkel conclude, "the absence of a hegemonic authoritarian identity combined with the determination of the Western-oriented elite to embrace a European path of development resulted in the country's ability to resist an authoritarian path of development."<sup>77</sup>

This ability to resist an authoritarian path would be proven in the 2004 Orange Revolution, when thousands of demonstrators protested mass corruption and electoral fraud. The 2004 Ukrainian presidential election was mired in controversy, with the incumbent President Leonid Kuchma deciding to not run for a third term after rumors began circulating that he had ordered the murder of Georgiy Gongadze, a Ukrainian journalist famous for exposing corruption among Ukrainian politicians. Kuchma instead supported Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich—a

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<sup>76</sup> Brudny and Finkel, "Why Ukraine is Not Russia," 813.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 829.

native of Donetsk who had also received the backing of Vladimir Putin—in the presidential race against the pro-Western, anti-corruption candidate Viktor Yushchenko. In early September 2004, Yushchenko was poisoned by dioxin, an assassination attempt that he believes the Kremlin was behind. Yushchenko, whose poison-induced facial disfiguration became one of the most recognizable images of this election, and his team would continue to face hostility and intimidation over the next few months.

According to Ukrainian electoral law, a candidate must win a majority (at least 50%) of all ballots cast, and therefore presidential elections generally occur in two rounds, with only the top two candidates contending in the second round. Yushchenko and Yanukovych emerged as the leading candidates in the first round of voting held on October 31, 2004, with the former winning 39.9% of the vote and the latter close behind with 39.3%. A month later, Yanukovych was announced the winner of the run-off election held on November 21, allegedly garnering 49.5% of the vote (with Yushchenko reportedly winning 46.6% of the vote). However, independent exit-polls conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, the Razumkov Centre, SOCIS, and the Social Monitoring Center had revealed that Yushchenko won the election with 53.7% of the vote, gaining over 10% more than Yanukovych's take of 43.3% of the vote (the remaining 3% of the vote was attributed to blank or write-in votes accepted as valid).<sup>78</sup> The nonpartisan Committee of Voters of Ukraine, which had overseen more than 10,000 independent election monitors, reported that 85,000 government officials had assisted with the fraud, rigging at least 2.8 million ballots in favor of Yanukovych; they declared this to be “the biggest election fraud in Ukraine's history.”<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Volodymyr Paniotto, “Ukrainian Presidential Elections 2004: Exit Polls and Public Repercussions,” *World Association for Public Opinion Research*, Fourth Quarter, 2004.

<sup>79</sup> Adrian Karatnycky, “Ukraine's Orange Revolution,” *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 2 (2005): 37.

The Yushchenko campaign immediately contested the “official” results of the election that were released on November 22, using the exit-poll data as the basis of their allegations of electoral fraud and publicly calling for protests, which erupted that same day. Millions of Ukrainians would participate in nationwide protests over the next seventeen days, wearing orange clothing and carrying orange banners and flags, as this was the color that had come to be associated with the Yushchenko camp. Independence Square in Kyiv (known as *Maidan Nezalezhnosti* in Ukrainian, and the site of the 1990 Revolution on Granite that received its new name the next year after the country gained independence) was the center of it all, with over half a million protestors chanting, “*Mi razom, nas bahato, i nas ne podolaty!*” (“We’re together, there are many of us, and we can’t be defeated!”).<sup>80</sup> Five days later, the Verkhovna Rada declared the results of the election invalid, and on December 3, Ukraine’s Supreme Court annulled the results of the runoff vote and ordered a new round of elections to be held. On December 6, the runoff election was held for the second time, now with the official results accurately reflecting exit poll data: Yushchenko won with 52% of the vote over Yanukovich’s 44% (again, the additional 4% of the vote came from blank ballots or write-in vote accepted as valid). President Yushchenko declared, “We are free. The old era is over. We are a new country now,” affirming the triumph of democracy and rule of law in the success of the Orange Revolution.<sup>81</sup>

However, the old era was not truly over, and Ukraine did not really become a new country after 2004. Corruption, regional polarization, and conflicting conceptions of national identity persisted. Scholars continued to warn about threats to the country’s democratic transition, though not because of the ambiguity of Ukrainian national identity (as Riabchuk had

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<sup>80</sup> Veronica Khokhlova, “New Kids on the Bloc,” *The New York Times*, November 26, 2004.

<sup>81</sup> Karatnycky, “Ukraine’s Orange Revolution,” 47.

argued in 2002), but because of the strength of anti-reformist or “pro-communist” attitudes in certain regions. Although Yanukovych did not ultimately win the 2004 presidential election, he still received considerable support, winning clear majorities in every oblast in the south and east—including over 90% of the vote in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions—even in the December round of the runoff election (see *Figure 7*). Further, in the regions where the Eastern



*Figure 7: Presidential candidate that won the largest percentage of votes, by oblast (2004–second round)*<sup>82</sup>

Slavic national identity dominated—eastern and southern Ukraine—there had been anti-Orange protests and even talk of secession; on November 28, a “separatist congress” of Yanukovych’s supporters was held in Sievierodonetsk calling for the creation of an

autonomous southeastern republic, with the governor of Kharkiv declaring, “We will never allow those Galicians to teach us how we ought to live.”<sup>83</sup> The separatist congress never acted on their threats, and any real secessionist movement died out after the Supreme Court decided to annul the results of the first runoff election and repeat the election, but concerns about the national identity division in Ukraine endured.

<sup>82</sup> Ethan Burger, “Could partition solve Ukraine’s problems?” *Open Democracy*, February 19, 2010.

<sup>83</sup> “Съезд Януковича транслируют про помощи России,” *Українська Правда*, November 28, 2004.

Shulman was among those who found the substantial support for Yanukovich and continued strength of the Eastern Slavic identity worrisome. In 2005, he argued that “the Eastern Slavic national identity hinders mass support for democracy and market in Ukraine, while the Ethnic Ukrainian national identity promotes it,” a finding he found particularly concerning given the Eastern Slavic identity complex was overall stronger than the Ethnic Ukrainian one at the mass level.<sup>84</sup> Rusanna Gaber, who defines national identity as “a cognitive and emotional attachment that is directed toward the nation understood as a political community consisting of all formal citizens and being limited by the territorial borders of the state”<sup>85</sup>—essentially the definition of civic nationalism adopted in this paper—reached the same conclusion as Shulman in 2006 using different data, cautioning that “the combination of a low level of national identity [i.e., identifying with or feeling part of the nation] and high skepticism toward democracy, particularly among the Russian-speaking population in the central and eastern part of Ukraine, is a serious problem for the consolidation of the still very weak Ukrainian democracy.”<sup>86</sup>

During his presidency, Yushchenko adopted several Ethnic Ukrainian national identity-type policies that drew pushback from Russia as well as holders of the Eastern Slavic identity. In January 2008, Ukraine renewed its bid for a NATO membership action plan (MAP), which although not granted, was a clear declaration of European orientation that drew Russian ire; in February, during Yushchenko’s visit to Moscow, Putin threatened to target missiles at Kyiv if Ukraine joined NATO.<sup>87</sup> Yushchenko also encouraged the promotion of the Ukrainian language,

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<sup>84</sup> Stephen Shulman, “National Identity and Public Support for Political and Economic Reform in Ukraine,” *Slavic Review* 64, no. 1 (2005): 81.

<sup>85</sup> Rusanna Gaber, “National Identity and Democratic Consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe,” *International Journal of Sociology* 36, no. 3 (2006): 38.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>87</sup> Rosalind Ryan, “Join Nato and we’ll target missiles at Kiev, Putin warns Ukraine,” *The Guardian*, February 12, 2008.

which the Kremlin condemned as “anti-Russian,” as well as pushed to recognize the Holodomor as genocide and suggested that Ukraine bar Russia’s Black Sea Fleet from operating out of Sevastopol (the capital of Crimea), which Russia had signed a twenty-year lease for in 1997.<sup>88</sup> Moscow responded by cutting off natural gas exports to Ukraine, which undermined the popularity of President Yushchenko as higher gas prices raised discontent with his government, particularly in the eastern and southern regions.

Despite the initial optimism, the Orange Revolution did not bring about genuine democratic transformation. The literature would soon begin to describe how “the window of opportunity was never used and closed,”<sup>89</sup> and “the protestors’ lack of support for democratic values had a negative impact on the character of post-revolutionary administration and did not lead ultimately to democratization.”<sup>90</sup> Oleksandr Reznik summarizes the general consensus that the Orange Revolution was a “cultural-ethnic revolution rather than a democratic one,” with the majority of protestors coming from western regions and of Ukrainian ethnolinguistic identity, motivated more by contempt for President Yanukovich and the Eastern Slavic identity than pure support for Yushchenko and democratic values.<sup>91</sup> Since the Orange Revolution was only a “symbolic revolution,” he argues, it did not bring about a true civil society, which eventually led to an “authoritarian ‘recoil’” after the Yushchenko presidency failed to effect genuine change; the very Viktor Yanukovich whose fraudulent presidential win was overturned in 2004 was elected president of Ukraine in 2010.<sup>92</sup> The openly pro-Russian Yanukovich won 48.95% of the

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<sup>88</sup> Steven Pifer, “Ukraine’s Perilous Balancing Act,” *Brookings* (March 2012): 108.

<sup>89</sup> Mykola Riabchuk, “Ukraine’s ‘muddling through’: National identity and postcommunist transition,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 45, no. 3/4 (2012): 446.

<sup>90</sup> Oleksandr Reznik, “From the Orange Revolution to the Revolution of Dignity: Dynamics of the Protest Actions in Ukraine,” *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures* 30, no. 3 (2016): 754.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 756.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 751.

vote in the second round of this election, a victory that this time went uncontested. His opponent, Yulia Tymoshenko, had served as Yushchenko's prime minister and took 45.47% of the vote (5.58% of votes were blank or write-in ballots accepted as valid). The 2010 presidential election was marked by the same regional



polarization as the 2004 Yushchenko-Yanukovich race, with Tymoshenko winning a clear majority in every oblast in western and central Ukraine and Yanukovich dominating in the south and east (see *Figure 8*).

**Figure 8:** *Presidential candidate that won the largest percentage of votes, by oblast (2010–second round)*<sup>93</sup>

In 2012, Riabchuk updated his analysis of national identity complexes, arguing that the choice of the allegedly pro-Western, pro-democratic strains of Ukrainian society (the holders of the Ethnic Ukrainian national identity complex) to identify Russia as the “Other” and Europe as the “Our” said “clearly more about Ukrainians’ self-assertion and symbolic emancipation from Russian dominance than about their genuine commitment to civic, republican, liberal democratic values deemed to be ‘European.’”<sup>94</sup> Thus, the Ethnic Ukrainian identity had a stronger negative

<sup>93</sup> Vasily Astroy, “Ukraine’s presidential elections: entering uncharted waters,” *The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies*, April 24, 2019.

<sup>94</sup> Riabchuk, “Ukraine’s ‘muddling through,’” 444.

than positive definition, and the choice of Russia as the primary entity to paint Ukraine in contrast to was exclusionary to holders of the Eastern Slavic identity, who understood themselves to be part of the same nation as Russians. This exclusion of large portions of Ukrainian society concentrated in specific areas, particularly the far eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk and the southern peninsula of Crimea, gave rise to concerns about future separatist movements or even civil war, prompting the most worried observers to suggest a preemptive division of the country—such as Georgetown Professor Ethan Burger, who proposed a partition of Ukraine to “better reflect the country’s national/ethnic composition... [and] make the country economically viable, while enhancing European stability.”<sup>95</sup> Burger, however, underestimated the ability of the people of Ukraine to overcome ethnolinguistic and cultural differences in times of crisis. Ukraine did not need partition, but a source of unification—which massive discontent with Yanukovich’s decisions would soon provide most of the country.

During his four years as president of Ukraine, Yanukovich drew his country closer to Russia while attempting to balance relations with the West, which he appeared to assume would “overlook his democratic backsliding and embrace Ukraine,” as he nominally advocated for a strategic goal of closer relations with the EU.<sup>96</sup> He halted the Yushchenko administration’s campaigns for the promotion of the Ukrainian language, recognition of the Holodomor as genocide, and achievement of NATO membership. Yanukovich also signed an agreement to extend Moscow’s lease of the port of Sevastopol for the Black Sea Fleet until 2042 in exchange for a ten-year discount of Russian natural gas. In the summer of 2011, concerns increased about President Yanukovich’s centralization of power and threat to democratic freedoms in Ukraine

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<sup>95</sup> Burger, “Could partition solve Ukraine’s problems?”

<sup>96</sup> Pifer, “Ukraine’s Perilous Balancing Act,” 109.

when former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko—the pro-Western candidate he had run against in the presidential election a year earlier—was arrested on charges of abuse of office concerning a gas import contract she signed with Russia in 2009. This case, which “smacked utterly of manipulation of the judicial system for political ends,” raised questions in the EU about signing an Association Agreement with Ukraine, though Kyiv and Brussels had agreed in 2008 to work to implement such an agreement.

After much tension and debate, the EU and Ukraine moved forward with the Association Agreement, initiating negotiations in March 2012. In August, Riabchuk predicted the impending crisis when Ukraine’s balancing act between Russia and the West finally came to a head: “Moscow is not going to tolerate Kyiv’s ‘multivector’ games anymore, it demands full obedience... Brussels is also tired of Ukraine’s ambiguity and seems less and less eager to tolerate Kyiv’s authoritarian policies covered by shallow ‘pro-European’ rhetoric.”<sup>97</sup> In December, Brussels reiterated its commitment to signing the agreement, calling on Ukraine to “demonstrate determined action and tangible progress” in the areas of “electoral, judiciary and constitutional reforms in line with international standards,” ideally before the November 2013 Eastern Partnership Summit.<sup>98</sup> However, on November 21, a week before the summit, President Yanukovich ordered the suspension of preparations for Association Agreement and announced plans for negotiations with Russia on terms for a \$15 billion loan agreement. He admitted the Kremlin had pressured his government to pursue more Moscow-friendly terms in any deal with the EU. Boris Shmelev captures the Russian perspective of Ukraine’s EU aspirations in his essay “Reasons of the confrontation between Russia and Ukraine,” in which he describes Ukrainian

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<sup>97</sup> Riabchuk, “Ukraine’s ‘muddling through,’” 445.

<sup>98</sup> Council of the European Union, *Council conclusions on Ukraine*. 3209<sup>th</sup> Foreign Affairs Council meeting. Brussels, 2012.

Euro-Atlantic integration as a Western-backed project intended to deter Russia’s great-power ambitions, preventing Moscow from entering the democratic community of states “on its own terms,” and argues that Russia was compelled to “position itself as an independent center of power, opposing the West.”<sup>99</sup> However, the people of Ukraine would not accept this interference.

Protests over the suspension of the Association Agreement broke out immediately, with hundreds of demonstrators—mostly university students—taking to streets to protest that very night. This group soon swelled to tens of thousands occupying Independence Square (Maidan Nezalezhnosti) in central Kyiv, chanting “*Ukraina—tse Evropa!*” (Ukraine is Europe!).<sup>100</sup> These protestors would set up camp for 93 days, in the middle of a fierce winter marked by violent confrontations with the police and seemingly overwhelming odds. Nevertheless, Ukrainians of all ethnic, linguistic, and regional backgrounds proved their resilience and commitment to democracy, refusing to relent even when riot police began to beat protestors, and soon began calling for Yanukovich to leave office. Protest gave way to actual revolution—known as the Euromaidan Revolution, or Revolution of Dignity—which climaxed on February 18–20 when Ukrainian special police forces opened fire on peaceful protestors, killing over 100 civilians and provoking outrage and condemnation from Western leaders. On February 21, Yanukovich signed an agreement with the opposition, brokered by two EU officials, to call early presidential elections, limit the president’s powers, and free the still-imprisoned opposition politician Yulia Tymoshenko. Despite this agreement, Yanukovich fled Kyiv for Russia the very next day, likely doubting his safety after his security detail abandoned him; thousands of

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<sup>99</sup> Борис Шмелев, “Причины конфронтации между Россией и Украиной,” *Проблемы постсоветского пространства* 8, № 1 (2021): 34.

<sup>100</sup> RuslanaTube, “Руслана - Україна - це Європа! | Київ, Євромайдан. 24.11.2013,” YouTube video, 1:21, November 24, 2013.

Ukrainian security forces had fled out of fear of retribution or criminal charges for their violent actions toward Euromaidan protestors.<sup>101</sup> The Verkhovna Rada quickly voted to hold a new presidential election on May 25, which Yanukovich and the Russian government decried as a “neo-fascist” coup d’état choreographed by the West. Charges of neofascism and references to Euromaidan as a coup would return with a vengeance in 2022 as Putin attempted to justify his full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

### Post-Euromaidan Ukraine

The Euromaidan Revolution marks one of the most consequential turning points in Ukrainian history. It was the first revolution in the former Soviet Union that was not directly connected with elections; moreover, the people of Ukraine were brought together more by their common support of an ideal (democratic and Euro-Atlantic aspirations) than opposition to something or someone (as in the Orange Revolution, where contempt for Yanukovich motivated most protestors). As one protestor declared in the documentary *Winter on Fire: Ukraine’s Fight for Freedom*: “We are not afraid to die for freedom. Freedom is for us. Freedom is ours. We will win, and Ukraine will be part of Europe, and Ukraine will be part of the free world. And we’ll never be slaves. We will be free.”<sup>102</sup> Euromaidan was characterized by positively-defined principles, which would have important consequences on Ukrainian national identity. More immediately, Ukraine’s bold and indisputable turn from Russia to Europe would draw the ire of

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<sup>101</sup> Andrew Higgins and Andrew Kramer, “Ukraine Leader Was Defeated Even Before He Was Ousted,” *The New York Times*, January 3, 2015.

<sup>102</sup> *Winter on Fire: Ukraine’s Fight for Freedom*, directed by Evgeny Afineevsky (2015, Netflix), 1:19:15.

the Kremlin, which did not hesitate to exploit lingering divisions in Ukrainian society in order to provoke a stateness problem that would lead to war.

Soon after the ouster of President Yanukovich, Russian troops invaded Crimea and, joining with pro-Russian forces in the area, took control of the Peninsula by early March. On March 16, occupied Crimea held a referendum vote on unification with Russia that was widely rejected by the international community due to the absence of any credible observers. The Kremlin, however, accepted the results of the referendum vote—an alleged 96.7% voting to join Russia, with a reported turnout of 83%—and on March 21, Putin ratified the Treaty of Accession of the Republic of Crimea to Russia, concluding his illegal annexation of the Crimea Peninsula. The Russian challenge to Ukrainian territorial integrity did not stop here, though. In April, Moscow began supporting separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine and seizing territory in the Donbas region, primarily in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, where local pro-Russian separatists declared the independence of the so-called Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR) and Luhansk People’s Republic (LNR). The Donbas War would continue as a low-grade war for almost eight years between the Ukrainian army and a blend of Russian proxies, with over 14,000 confirmed deaths of Ukrainian soldiers and civilians in this war as of December 31, 2021.<sup>103</sup>

The east and south of Ukraine—particularly the Donbas region in the far east, on the border of Russia, and the Crimean Peninsula—had long been a source of concern about a nationhood problem that would intensify into a stateness problem because the greatest concentration of ethnic Russians, Russian-speakers, and holders of the Eastern Slavic national identity complex live in these regions. For example, Brudny and Finkel highlight that in 1998,

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<sup>103</sup> Office of the High Commissioner, “Conflict-related civilian casualties in Ukraine.” *United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine*, Kyiv, January 27, 2022.

unification with Russia was supported by 50% of respondents in eastern Ukraine and 35% in southern Ukraine (compared to only 7% in the west).<sup>104</sup> However, virtually every scholar agrees these views would never have translated into a genuine irredentist movement absent the intervention of the Russian Federation. Further, such ethnolinguistic and regional divisions are not unique to Ukraine, but do not lead to such questions of stateness in other countries; as Peter Dickinson summarizes, “the only thing that makes Ukraine in any way exceptional is the destructive role played by Russia.”<sup>105</sup>

Such blatant Russian interference and aggression in 2014 would divide some parts of Ukrainian society, but on the whole prove unifying. Some scholars criticized the dominance of pro-Western nationalism that followed Euromaidan, arguing that even if it were civic in the sense of uniting citizens from across Ukraine under the banner of democracy and freedom, the inherent pro-Western and anti-Russian stance made Euromaidan nationalism look increasingly like the Ethnic Ukrainian national identity complex, which was exclusionary to many in southeast Ukraine. For example, Elise Giuliano, in her study of who supported separatism in Donbas, notes that residents in this region felt alienated from the post-Maidan government, which they perceived as embracing Ukrainian ultranationalism following the ouster of Yanukovich. The new government did not address the “xenophobic discourse that scapegoated ethnic Russians for Ukraine’s problems,” and even appointed Andriy Parubiy, the former leader of a neo-fascist party, to lead the national security and defense council—all of which aggravated fears of Donbas residents who had witnessed violent nationalist groups at protests throughout

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<sup>104</sup> Brudny and Finkel, “Why Ukraine is Not Russia,” 818.

<sup>105</sup> Peter Dickinson, “Debunking the myth of a divided Ukraine,” *Atlantic Council*, December 29, 2021.

Ukraine.<sup>106</sup> Propaganda likely intensified these concerns, and Donbas residents were ultimately “motivated to support separatism by local concerns exacerbated by a sense of abandonment by Kyiv rather than by Russian language and pro-Russian foreign policy issues,” leading Giuliano to conclude that it would be inaccurate to describe these regions as pro-Russian.<sup>107</sup> Rather, they were excluded from the pro-Ukrainian identity complex.

Oleg Zhuravlev and Volodymyr Ishchenko also interpret Euromaidan nationalism to be exclusive, arguing that it justified the “ethnocultural and regional othering” of Donbas and other areas in southeast Ukraine where the Revolution of Dignity drew less support by referencing the “civic category of ‘true’ Ukrainians, defined here as those who are free to make the correct political decision.”<sup>108</sup> Though recognizing that Euromaidan was perceived as a “massive- all-national civic revolutionary campaign” that transcended the ethnolinguistic divisions of the Orange Revolution, Zhuravlev and Ishchenko lament that the post-2014 nationalism began to “be filled in with increasingly specific political content,” with Euromaidan supporters “radicalizing” and viewing the “true” Ukrainian identity as tied to support for Euro-Atlantic integration.<sup>109</sup>

However, most scholars understand Euromaidan nationalism to be civic, inclusive, and democratic in nature. First, numerous studies have found that support for Euro-Atlantic integration in Ukraine was no longer determined by ethnic identity or native language.<sup>110</sup> Support for and participation in the Revolution of Dignity was still marked by macro-regional divisions,

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<sup>106</sup> Elise Giuliano, “Who supported separatism in Donbas? Ethnicity and popular opinion at the start of the Ukraine crisis,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34, no. 2-3 (2018): 168.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>108</sup> Zhuravlev and Ishchenko, “Exclusiveness of civic nationalism,” 238.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 241.

<sup>110</sup> Oleksandr Reznik and Volodymyr Reznik, “Ukraine’s European Choice as a Social Condition of Democratic Transition,” *Ideology and Politics* 2, no. 8 (2017): 137.

drawing more from western regions of Ukraine, but this was largely due to the dominance of European orientation in these regions; Olga Onuch and Henry Hale found that “controlling for other factors, ethnolinguistic Ukrainians, Ukrainians by nationality, and people who preferred to speak Ukrainian were no more or less likely to join than were ethnolinguistic Russians, Russians by nationality, and people who preferred to speak Russian.”<sup>111</sup> Euromaidan participants frequently reflect on the inclusive nature of the revolution, noting the wide range of ethnic, linguistic, regional, and religious backgrounds; in the minds of many Ukrainians, Euromaidan was a revolution of, by, and for everyone. A protestor in the documentary *Winter on Fire* summarizes this conception: “In Maidan, we didn’t have nationalities, we didn’t have language groups; it was only people who didn’t want to live with the regime.”<sup>112</sup>

Euromaidan nationalism can in many ways be considered the evolved form of the Ethnic Ukrainian national identity complex (or, as Brudny and Finkel term it, Western nationalism) that was forced to abandon “ethnic, authoritarian, exclusionist and xenophobic roots to become much more liberal, democratic, inclusive, and civic in its nature.”<sup>113</sup> An important way that this played out in Ukraine was the evolution of the Ukrainian language from an aspect of an ethnocultural identity—a source of contention between Ukrainian nationalists who wanted to promote the dominance of the Ukrainian language and Eastern Slavic identity holders who preferred to continue to use Russian—to an important element of a civic conception of the Ukrainian nation.

In his 2016 analysis of the impact of Euromaidan and the Donbas War on national identity in Ukraine, Volodymyr Kulyk concludes that an increase in negative attitudes toward

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<sup>111</sup> Olga Onuch and Henry Hale, “Capturing ethnicity: the case of Ukraine,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34, no. 2-3 (2018): 101.

<sup>112</sup> *Winter on Fire*, 00:37:46.

<sup>113</sup> Brudny and Finkel, “Why Ukraine is Not Russia,” 821.

Russia after 2014 did not extend toward the Russian people or the Russian language, but rather was reserved for the authoritarian system and the Kremlin's efforts to undermine Ukrainian statehood, which indicates the "ethnocultural inclusiveness of the new Ukrainian identity."<sup>114</sup> Kulyk expands on this inconsequentiality of rejection of the Russian language two years later, when he analyzes the "bottom-up de-Russification, a popular drift away from Russianness"<sup>115</sup> that occurred in Ukraine after 2014 with widespread changes in ethnonational identifications and language practices (including a new civic conception of native language as "the language of my country") that allowed ethnic Russians and Russian-speakers to come to feel "exclusively Ukrainian" even while remaining mainly Russian-speaking.<sup>116</sup> Dominique Arel, in his analysis of "how Ukraine has become more Ukrainian," would re-iterate this phenomenon of ethnolinguistic "re-identification," arguing that how people *relate* to the Ukrainian language is what matters, not necessarily if they use it as their language of convenience.<sup>117</sup> As long as people felt the Ukrainian language was inherently important to them and their country, citizens across Ukraine did not feel the need to exclusively speak Ukrainian in order to feel part of the Ukrainian nation.

After Euromaidan, observers came to agree that language issues—which had previously been considered incredibly divisive and a possible source of irredentism—were largely overblown, a result of propaganda from Russia and opportunistic Ukrainian politicians. As Giuliano finds through analyzing surveys of Donbas residents, "a grievance about Russian language was *not* widely shared" among this population.<sup>118</sup> Nevertheless, Russia attempted to

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<sup>114</sup> Volodymyr Kulyk, "National Identity in Ukraine: Impact of Euromaidan and the War," *Europe-Asia Studies* 68, no. 4 (2016): 600.

<sup>115</sup> Volodymyr Kulyk, "Shedding Russianness, recasting Ukrainianness: the post-Euromaidan dynamics of ethnonational identifications in Ukraine," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34, no. 2-3 (2018): 119.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibdi.*, 132.

<sup>117</sup> Arel, "How Ukraine has become more Ukrainian," 188.

<sup>118</sup> Giuliano, "Who supported separatism in Donbas?" 169.

exploit perceived linguistic grievances among Russian populations in 2014, arguing that ethnic Russians and Russophones were oppressed in Ukraine, with their language and culture not given equal recognition and support as the Ukrainian counterparts. The Kremlin even looked to revive the Novorossiia project, with Putin himself referencing the Novorossiia region in an April 2014 interview: “Russia lost these regions for various reasons, but the people remained. Today, they live in Ukraine, and they should be full citizens of their country [Russia].”<sup>119</sup>

However, Putin would soon discover that ethnolinguistic and historical similarities between Russia and Novorossiia were not enough to make people feel part of the Russian nation and exploiting local grievances in the Novorossiia oblasts would not be enough to annex this lands. He conflated Russian ethnolinguistic background and the Eastern Slavic national identity complex with support for unification with Russia, but would soon be faced with the folly of this logic: the Kremlin’s efforts to seize southeast Ukrainian territory were derailed in the face of local opposition from Ukrainian patriots—many of whom, to Moscow’s chagrin, were Russian-speakers—and Russia gained only a “relatively small foothold” in the DNR and LNR.<sup>120</sup> December 2014 polling data illuminates reasons for Moscow’s failure, revealing only minority support for the Novorossiia project among populations in this territory—only about 20-25% of respondents supported the creation of an autonomous Novorossiia region.<sup>121</sup>

If ethnocultural divisions were losing importance in distinguishing regions of Ukraine, and these various regions were repeatedly proving their unity in the face of Russian aggression, some value or principle was serving to unify the people of Ukraine. The ideal of independence

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<sup>119</sup> “Direct Line with Vladimir Putin,” *Kremlin.ru*, April 17, 2014.

<sup>120</sup> Dickinson, “Debunking the myth of a divided Ukraine.”

<sup>121</sup> O’Loughlin, Toal, and Kolosov, “The rise and fall of ‘Novorossiia,’” 124.

had long served as the primary unifying factor in Ukraine, but after two decades of independence, the Ukrainian nation had assumed more positively-defined characteristics; the Euromaidan Revolution and the Donbas War led to an “awakening of Ukrainian identities,” of which Ukrainian citizenship emerged to be a central defining component.<sup>122</sup> Barrington describes how a large segment of the Ukrainian population now sees citizenship as “*the* most important part of their identity”—more than ethnicity, language, or region.<sup>123</sup> This is reflected, if not augmented, among populations directly affected by the war; as Gwendolyn Sasse and Alice Lackner find in a 2018 study of the effect of the Donbas War on self-reported identities in Ukraine, mixed or civic identities were either maintained or strengthened for all respondents who were directly impacted by the war (either living in Donbas or displaced in Russia or internally), and Ukrainian citizenship was by far the most frequently self-reported identity in government-controlled Donbas and among internally displaced persons (IDPs).<sup>124</sup>

With Ukrainian citizenship, widespread acceptance of an elevated status of Ukrainian history, language, and culture, and defense of democratic values serving as the primary positively-defined aspects of the predominant post-Euromaidan Ukrainian national identity, a review of the literature as well as general observations of developments in Ukraine after 2014 reveal that a civic Ukrainian national identity that emphasizes and draws legitimacy from its hybrid character can be considered to have become hegemonic in the country. Such a widespread, inclusive nationalism has allowed support for democratic values to endure, if not increase, across the country since 2014—which Adam Terzyan found positively correlates with

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<sup>122</sup> Grigore Pop-Eleches and Graeme Robertson, “Identity and political preferences in Ukraine—before and after the Euromaidan,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34, no. 2-3 (2018): 111.

<sup>123</sup> Barrington, “Citizenship as a cornerstone of civic national identity in Ukraine,” 169.

<sup>124</sup> Sasse and Lackner, “War and identity: the case of the Donbas in Ukraine,” 154.

declining political discontent, a remarkable finding given the economic challenges Ukraine was facing as a result of the war and citizens' low levels of trust in and identification with political parties.<sup>125</sup> Mikhail Alexseev also lauds what he calls Ukraine's "counterintuitive democratic stoicism," arguing that such enduring commitment to democratic values and decline of anti-democracy views (as opposed to a fleeting rally-around-the-flag effect resulting from Euromaidan fervor) occurred not in spite of, but because of the war with Russia; as was true numerous times throughout Ukraine's history, "support for democracy comes through as coterminous with defense of territorial integrity and national dignity, explaining stoicism in the midst of adversity."<sup>126</sup>

#### National and regional attitudes

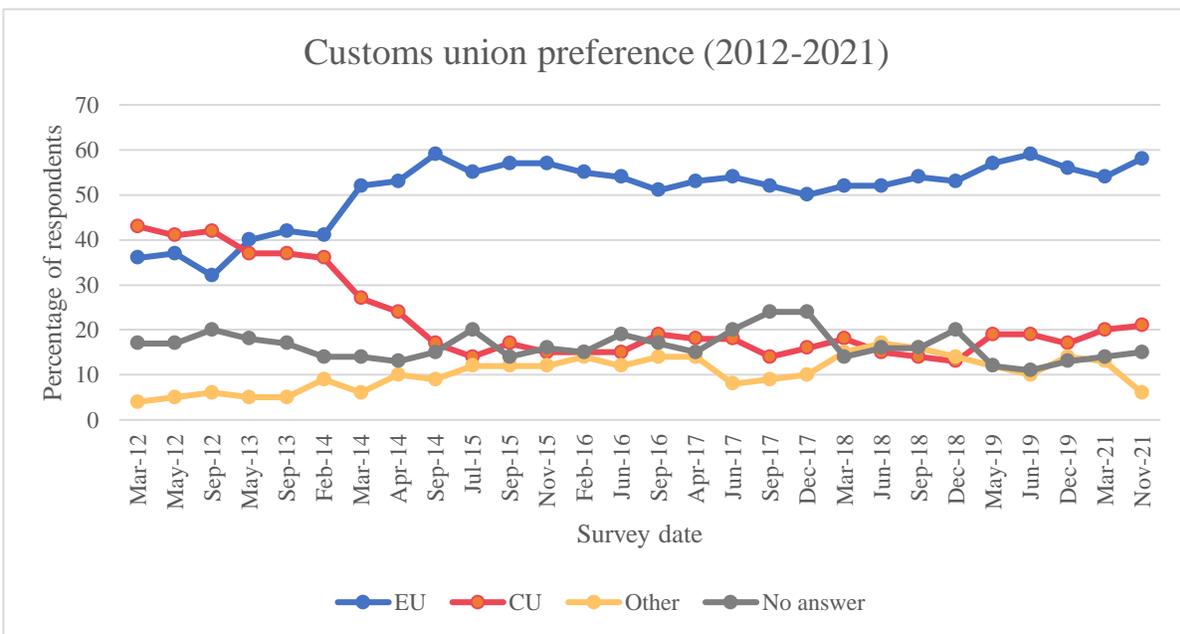
If a civic national identity grounded in support for democratic values has consolidated in Ukraine, how does this translate to citizens' political attitudes and actions? First, an analysis of citizens' attitudes toward Europe and Russia reveals a significant shift toward the West on the national level, as well as enduring regional divisions, but an end to macro-regional polarization after 2014. These attitudes will be measured by nation-wide and municipal public opinion surveys about citizens' preferences for economic customs unions and attitudes toward NATO membership.

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<sup>125</sup> Aram Terzyan, "Towards Democratic Consolidation? Ukraine After the Revolution of Dignity," *Open Political Science* 3, no. 1 (2020): 185.

<sup>126</sup> Mikhail Alexseev, "Ukraine's Counterintuitive Democratic Stoicism: Supporting Democracy-Building in a War-Torn State," *PONARS Europe*, June 20, 2019.

The International Republican Institute (IRI) conducts nation-wide public opinion surveys of Ukrainian residents several times a year, and since March 2012 has included in these surveys the question, “If Ukraine was able to enter only one international economic union, which one of the following should it be?” with the options of “European Union” (EU); “Customs Union with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan” (CU); “Other”; and “Difficult to answer/No answer”. The results of each of these surveys between 2012 and 2021 have been graphed in *Figure 9*.

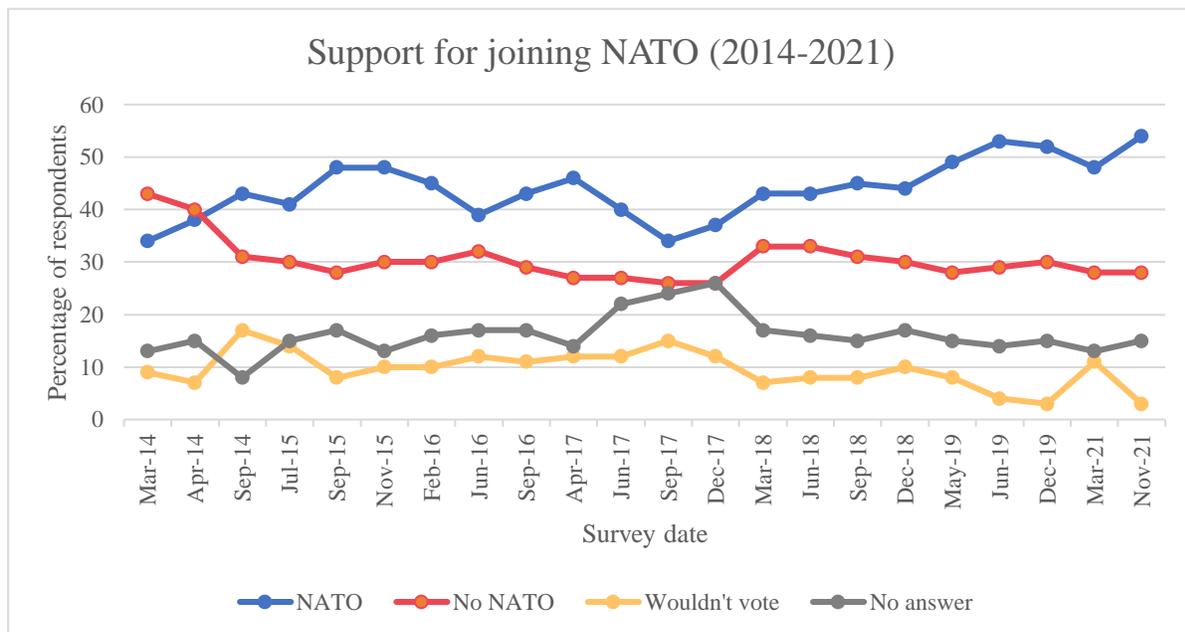


**Figure 9:** IRI nation-wide survey data for the question, “If Ukraine was able to enter only one international economic union, which one of the following should it be?”, by year

In all three surveys conducted in 2012, CU was the most popular option, with 42% expressing support for this option compared to 37% expressing support for the EU in September. However, support for EU integration overtook CU support in 2013, with a huge jump in March 2014 to majority support for the EU (52%) compared to only 27% support for the CU option. Nation-wide support for EU integration would stay above 50% every year after 2014, with an all-time high of 59% in September 2014 and June 2019, as well as the last peak of 58% in November 2021—the same month that Russian began massing troops at the Ukrainian border.

The November 2021 survey was the final poll conducted by IRI before Putin launched his full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, but a poll by the independent research agency *Rating* at the end of March 2022 revealed a record high of 91% support for joining the EU.<sup>127</sup> The post-Euromaidan scholarly consensus that Russian interference “pushed to the foreground post-Soviet societies’ geopolitical choice between the Euro-Atlantic space and Eurasia” was unmistakably demonstrated in Ukraine when Moscow’s interference evolved into full-scale war.<sup>128</sup>

A similar jump in support for joining NATO occurred at the nation-wide level in Ukraine during times of increased Russian threat. Since March 2014, IRI has included in its public opinion surveys the question, “If a referendum was held today on Ukraine joining NATO, how would you vote?” with the options, “Would vote for Ukraine to join NATO”; “Would vote against Ukraine joining NATO”; “Would not vote”; and “Difficult to answer/No answer”.



**Figure 10:** IRI nation-wide survey data for the question, “If a referendum were held today on Ukraine joining NATO, how would you vote?”, by year

<sup>127</sup> “Седьмой Общенациональный опрос: Украина в Условиях Войны (30-31 марта 2022),” *Рейтинг*, April 5, 2022.

<sup>128</sup> Reznik and Reznik, “Ukraine’s European Choice,” 119.

The results of each of these surveys between 2014 and 2021 have been graphed in *Figure 10*. After the beginning of the Donbas War in April 2014, the option to vote against joining NATO dipped to 31% and would stay around this number until November 2021, when NATO opposition had dropped slightly lower to 28%. Preference for joining NATO, on the other hand, jumped to 43% in September 2014 (the first survey conducted after the start of the Donbas War), dropping to a low of 34% in September 2017 until national support for NATO integration began a steady increase to an all-time high of 54% in the last poll of November 2021 (as stated above, the month that Russian troops began massing at the border).

However, while Ukraine at the national level has expressed a clear preference for Euro-Atlantic integration after 2014, analysis of geopolitical preferences at the municipal level reveals some enduring regional divisions. In addition to conducting nation-wide public opinion surveys, IRI began conducting annual municipal surveys in Ukraine in 2013 in each of Ukraine's 24 oblasts (note that after the Russian occupation of parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts beginning in 2014, IRI restricted surveys in these oblasts to the cities of Mariupol and Sievierodonetsk, located in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, respectively).

To analyze differences between oblasts, this paper will adopt the eight-region model of Barrington and Herron (described earlier) in order to discover any lines of polarization that would likely be obscured by the two- or four-region models. The eight regions defined by Barrington and Herron are: *East* (Donetsk/Mariupol and Luhansk/Sievierodonetsk); *South* (Kherson, Odesa, and Mykolaiv); *East-Central* (Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, and Kharkiv); *North* (Poltava, Kirovohrad, Kyiv, Cherkasy, Chernihiv, and Sumy); *Southwest* (Chernivtsi and Uzhhorod/Zakarpattia); *West-Central* (Zhytomyr, Vinnytsia, Khmelnytsky, Rivne, and Volyn); *West* (Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Ternopil); and *Crimea* (see *Figure 11a* for a map of each

oblast). Crimea will not be included in this analysis, since the Russian annexation of the Crimean Peninsula has prevented IRI from conducting reliable survey collection since 2014. The seven regions have been assigned different colors



Figure 11a: Map of Ukrainian oblasts<sup>129</sup>

to help organize the survey data and identify enduring regional divides: East is color-coded orange; South is yellow; East-Central is blue; North is green; Southwest is gray; West-Central is purple; and West is mauve (see Figure 11b for a map of each region).

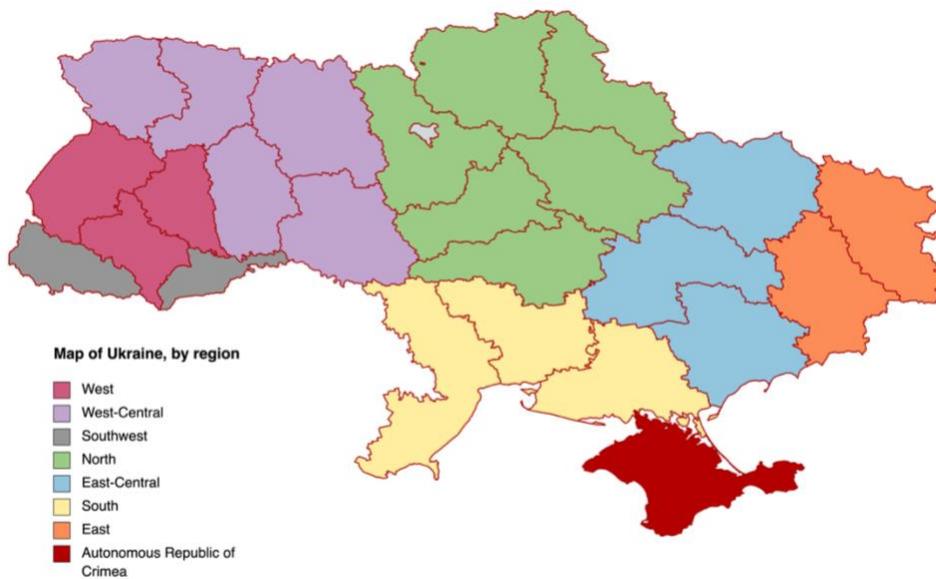


Figure 11b: Map of Ukraine, by region (8-region model)

<sup>129</sup> “Ukraine Maps,” *Geology.com*.

IRI annual Ukrainian municipal surveys, conducted between 2016 and 2021, include the same question about customs union preference as the nation-wide surveys: “If Ukraine could only enter one international economic union, which one of the following should it be?” with the options of “European Union” (EU); “Customs Union of Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan” (CU); “Other”; and “Difficult to answer/No answer”. The percentages of respondents in each oblast that reported the European Union as their preferred customs union are listed in *Table 4a* and the percentages of respondents that reported the customs union with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan (CU) are listed in *Table 4b* (both *Table 4a* and *4b* can be found in the appendix section). The average percentages in each region have been calculated for each year: the average regional preference for the EU is recorded in *Table 1a* and the average regional preference for CU is recorded in *Table 1b*.

**Table 1a:** Average percentage of respondents that prefer the EU, by region

Region	EU 2016	EU 2017	EU 2018	EU 2019	EU 2020	EU 2021
East	27.0	21.0	23.5	28.5	24.5	23.5
South	49.7	39.0	41.7	43.0	39.7	43.3
East-Central	44.0	44.3	43.0	44.7	40.3	43.7
North	62.3	57.3	58.5	58.5	55.8	60.8
Southwest	81.5	69.5	75.0	72.5	70.5	71.5
West-Central	74.6	68.0	67.8	68.8	65.0	70.4
West	90.0	83.0	83.3	83.3	79.7	85.0

**Table 1b:** Average percentage of respondents that prefer CU (with Russia), by region

Region	CU 2016	CU 2017	CU 2018	CU 2019	CU 2020	CU 2021
East	35.0	32.0	29.5	41.0	39.5	47.5
South	17.3	24.3	21.7	25.3	24.7	28.3
East-Central	25.3	20.7	21.0	28.7	27.0	31.7
North	9.5	10.3	11.0	12.2	11.7	13.7
Southwest	3.5	5.5	7.0	7.0	6.0	8.0
West-Central	3.8	5.8	5.2	6.8	5.6	9.0
West	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.7	1.7	2.3

Ukraine's historical northwest-southeast divide can be seen in these tables: a supermajority of Ukrainians in the West, West-Central, Southwest, and North express preference for joining the EU, while less than 50% of respondents in the East, South, and East-Central selected this option. However, the municipal survey data only captures public opinion after 2016, precluding analysis of changes in regional division before and after Euromaidan. Nevertheless, considering the nation-wide average preference for the EU was below 40% before 2013 and consistently above 50% after 2014 (see *Figure 9*), it can be assumed that part of this 20% nation-wide increase came from growing support in the southeastern regions. Further, these tables indicate a significant difference between the East region and the South and East-Central regions: less than 30% of respondents in the East each year indicated the EU as the customs union that Ukraine should join, while over 40% of respondents consistently selected this option in the South and East-Central. The East was the only region where a greater percentage of respondents preferred a customs union with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan over the European Union (this is true for every year between 2016 and 2021). Each year, the EU option received at least 10% greater preference than the CU option in the South and East-Central. Thus, after 2014 it would be inaccurate to group the South and East-Central regions with the East (Donetsk and Luhansk oblast); the macro-regional polarization no longer exists.

One trend that appears to undermine the scholarly consensus that Ukraine decisively moved toward Europe and away from Russia after Euromaidan is that in every single region, preference for the EU decreased between 2016 and 2021 while preference for a customs union with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan increased between these years. However, several caveats help explain this puzzling trend. First, the specific question posed in the survey was, "If Ukraine could only enter one international economic union, which one of the following should it be?"

with the options of “European Union” (EU); “Customs Union of Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan” (CU); “Other”; and “Difficult to answer/No answer”. Thus, expressed preference for the CU does not demonstrate opposition to the EU. In fact, all other indicators demonstrate that support for joining the EU has been sustained or increased over the past eight years as the Ukrainian national identity diffuses eastward, including the expression of a pro-EU orientation by the overwhelming majority of elected representatives in Ukraine (as discussed later).

Additionally, the greatest differences in EU preference comes between the years 2016 and 2021; the percentage of respondents that expressed preference for the EU in 2021 was higher than that of 2017 for every region except East-Central, which was only 0.6% lower in 2021. This can be explained in part by the lingering pro-EU fervor of Euromaidan beginning to fade by 2017 as disenchantment with the prospect of integration rose, as well as disappointment with existing EU cooperation increased. In January 2016, two years after President Poroshenko had signed the economic portion of the EU Association Agreement, the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) component of the agreement became provisionally operational. The DCFTA, which granted Ukraine greater access to EU markets and was intended to pave the way for future integration, had greatly raised hopes in Ukraine about the economic benefits of an EU free trade agreement. However, this optimism gave way to disappointment as full implementation stalled, with Kyiv failing to adopt the necessary reforms and EU member states (the Netherlands in particular) delaying ratification of the agreement.<sup>130</sup> This disappointment helps explain why EU preference fell so much by January/February 2017, the months that the third annual IRI municipal survey was conducted; if the Association Agreement could not be

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<sup>130</sup> Balázs Jarábik, Gwendolyn Sasse, Natalia Shapovalova, and Thomas de Waal, “The EU and Ukraine: Taking a Breath,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, February 27, 2018.

implemented, full EU membership status was looking particularly elusive. The agreement would finally enter into full force in September 2017 after ratification by President Poroshenko and the EU, but closer cooperation with the EU still had less of an impact than expected, which explains in part why EU preference did not increase by much in the 2018 survey.

Regarding rising support for a customs union with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan (CU), this can be partly explained by the fact that these countries were among Ukraine's top trading partners, but Moscow had threatened to remove favorable trade terms if Ukraine deepened relations with the EU. Rising support for CU is thus perhaps explained by a pragmatic acceptance of economic relations, especially considering that CU support was significantly higher in the East, South, and East-Central regions, which have much closer economic relations with Russia than the western regions. With these caveats in mind, the consistent levels of EU support after 2017 actually lend support to Alexseev's argument about "Ukraine's counterintuitive democratic stoicism" and do not undermine the understanding of Ukraine as moving closer to the West.

This stoicism is further proven by the rising levels of support for joining NATO in the face of Moscow increasingly demonstrating this would be a red line. The IRI annual Ukrainian municipal surveys include the same question about attitudes toward NATO as the nation-wide surveys: "If a referendum were held today on Ukraine joining NATO, how would you vote?" with the options, "Would vote for Ukraine to join NATO"; "Would vote against Ukraine joining NATO"; "Would not vote"; and "Difficult to answer/No answer". The percentages of respondents in each oblast that indicated they would vote to join NATO are listed in *Table 5a* and the percentages of respondents that indicated they would vote to not join NATO are listed in *Table 5b* (both *Table 5a* and *5b* can be found in the appendix section). The average percentages

in each region have been calculated for each year; the average regional support for joining NATO is recorded in *Table 2a* and the average regional opposition to joining NATO is recorded in *Table 2b*.

**Table 2a:** Average percentage of respondents that would vote to join NATO, by region

Region	Join NATO 2016	Join NATO 2017	Join NATO 2018	Join NATO 2019	Join NATO 2020	Join NATO 2021
East	19.0	15.5	18.5	21.0	19.0	17.5
South	31.0	25.7	28.3	32.0	34.3	37.3
East-Central	29.7	31.0	32.3	35.0	36.0	38.7
North	46.2	39.2	42.7	52.5	53.2	54.3
Southwest	68.0	58.5	66.0	66.5	61.5	62.0
West-Central	58.4	56.4	55.0	62.2	61.0	65.2
West	84.3	75.0	74.3	78.0	77.0	79.3

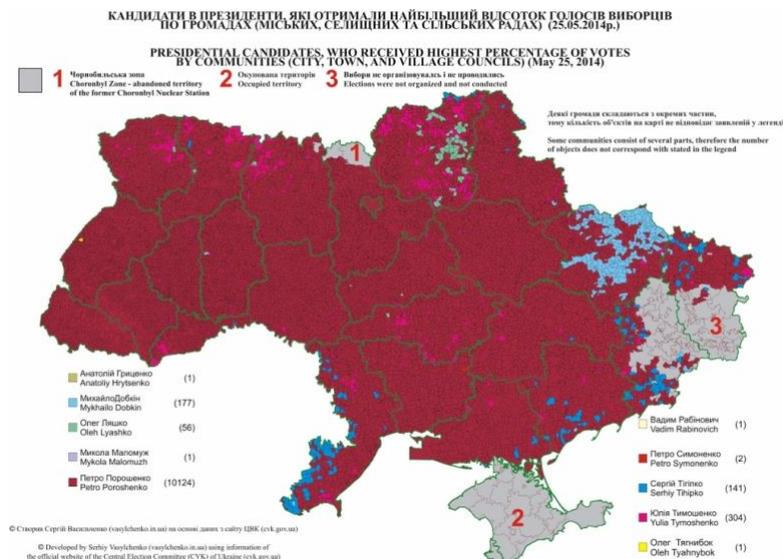
**Table 2b:** Average percentage of respondents that would vote to not join NATO, by region

Region	No NATO 2016	No NATO 2017	No NATO 2018	No NATO 2019	No NATO 2020	No NATO 2021
East	47.5	47.5	45.5	53.5	61.0	60.5
South	41.0	42.0	41.7	41.3	44.7	35.3
East-Central	40.7	40.0	44.7	40.0	44.0	39.7
North	22.5	26.2	25.2	22.8	24.0	21.2
Southwest	8.0	13.0	13.5	13.0	16.5	16.0
West-Central	14.8	15.8	15.6	13.8	18.6	12.6
West	3.7	4.0	5.7	4.7	7.3	5.7

Similar to the survey data on customs union preference, the historical northwest-southeast macro-regional division can be perceived, with a majority of respondents indicating they would vote to join NATO in 2021 only in the West, West-Central, Southwest, and North regions. However, differences in attitudes toward NATO by region can in part be explained by proximity to Russia and the Donbas War, as the regions farther east would be more likely to become targets of any Russian retaliation to deepening ties with NATO. Moreover, average support for joining NATO rose in four regions between the 2016 and 2021 and rose in every single region between 2017 and 2021 (similar to trends in customs union preference).

Opposition to joining NATO, meanwhile, decreased for most regions, and in every region except the East and East-Central, a greater percentage of respondents indicated they would vote to join NATO than vote against joining NATO (in the East-Central region, this difference was only 1%). Thus, the most significant trend demonstrated in these data (as well as the data about customs union preference) is that geopolitical preferences in Ukraine are beginning to converge across the country and the new line of polarization now lies between the East (Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, which are partially occupied by Russia) and the rest of the country.

If some regional differences, as well as a new line of polarization, endure in terms of Ukrainians' attitudes toward Russia, the EU, and NATO, how has this played out in the country's political scene? An analysis of presidential and parliamentary election results reveals important trends in the Ukrainians' voting patterns. After the ouster of Yanukovych in the



Euromaidan Revolution, a new round of presidential elections was held on May 25, 2014. This election, for the first time in Ukraine's history, did not produce a regionally polarized map. Instead, the openly pro-Western, pro-NATO and EU integration candidate Petro Poroshenko won in every single oblast in the first round of the election (see Figure 12 as well as Table 8 in the Appendix).

**Figure 12:** Presidential candidate that won the largest percentage of votes, by oblast (2014–first round)<sup>131</sup>

<sup>131</sup> Sergiy Kudelia, "Ukraine's 2014 Presidential Election is Unlikely to be Repeated," *PONARS Eurasia*, June 3, 2014.

Interestingly, the map of the second-choice candidate in each oblast appears to reflect the age-old regional divide in Ukraine (see *Figure 13*). However, the only candidate on this list that can accurately be described as pro-Russian is Mykhailo Dobkin (dark blue), who received the second-largest percentage of votes in only a single oblast: Kharkiv, where he was born and had previously served as governor.

All other candidates that received the second-largest percentage of votes in each oblast had expressed support for joining the EU and bolstering relations with the West during their campaigns.



Further, even if Yulia Tymoshenko (pink) is

*Figure 13: Presidential candidate that won the second-largest percentage of votes, by oblast (2014–first round)<sup>132</sup>*

understood to be more intensely pro-EU than other candidates (as well as an ardent Ukrainian nationalist), the line of division between regions where she won a larger percentage of votes than Serhiy Tihipko (light blue) is much farther south and east than in previous Ukrainian elections.

Such an evident triumph for the pro-European orientation and insignificance of pro-Russian political parties was reflected in the October 2014 parliamentary elections.

Yanukovych’s party “Party of Regions”—which had won over 50% of the vote in Crimea and Donetsk as well as over 30% in each oblast in southeast Ukraine in the 2012 parliamentary election—did not compete in the 2014 election (and has not since). Instead, the newly-founded

<sup>132</sup> Alex Kireev, “Ukraine. Presidential Election 2014,” *Electoral Geography 2.0*.

*Narodniy Front* (“People’s Front”), a center-right, pro-European Ukrainian nationalist party, and the Petro Poroshenko bloc garnered the 22.12% and 21.82% overall, respectively (see *Table 11* in the Appendix). The two pro-Russian parties that competed in the 2014 parliamentary elections—Opposition Bloc, which was perceived as the successor to Yanukovich’s Party of Regions, and the Communist Party of Ukraine—won only 9.43% and 3.88%, respectively (see *Table 11*). Regional divisions emerge in support for these parties, but even the regions with the highest support for a pro-Russian party (Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, with 38.69% and 36.59% support for Opposition Bloc) did not break the 50% threshold (compare to Donetsk oblast’s 65.09% support and Luhansk oblast’s 57.06% support for Party of Regions in the 2012 parliamentary election—see *Table 10* in the Appendix).

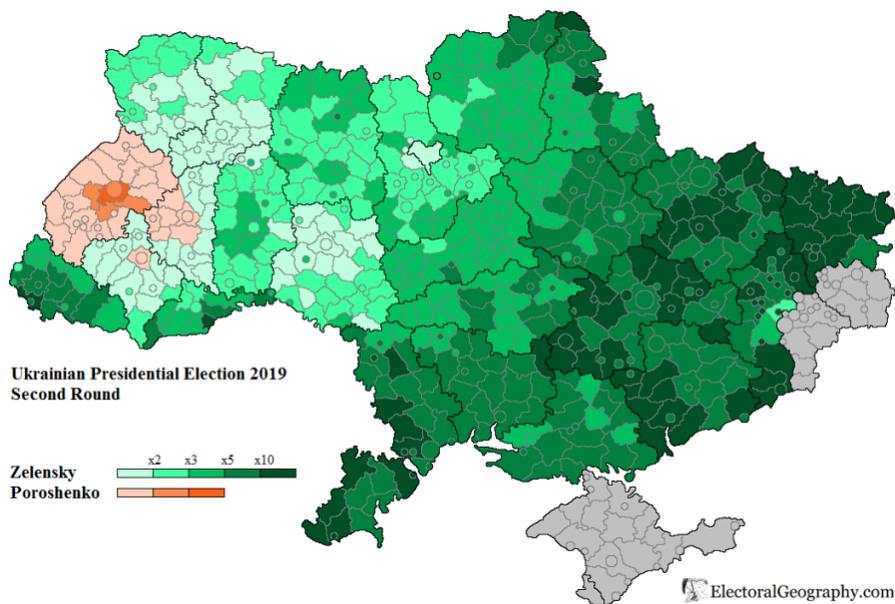
Clearly, 2014 marked a radical change in voting patterns in Ukraine. However, observers such as Serhiy Kudelia soon began to doubt the future success of pro-European parties, predicting that the 2014 presidential election results would not be repeated, but rather were an unusual outcome that resulted from spillover of revolutionary emotion, the external shock of the Donbas War and annexation of Crimea, and strategic voters’ preference for a one-round election.<sup>133</sup> In 2018, Arel expressed a similar uncertainty about the ability of pro-European parties and candidates to obtain sustainable plurality support across the historic northwest/southeast divide, noting that the presidential and parliamentary elections of this year “took place in a contest of disarray for ‘pro-Russian’ parties.”<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Kudelia, “Ukraine’s 2014 Presidential Election is Unlikely to be Repeated.”

<sup>134</sup> Arel, “How Ukraine has become more Ukrainian,” 187.

The 2019 elections would bring the answer to this question. Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine's famous comedian-turned-politician who ran on an anti-corruption platform, emerged from the first round of the presidential election with twice the percentage of votes as the incumbent Petro Poroshenko: 30.24% to 15.95% (see *Table 9* in the Appendix). Yulia Tymoshenko took the third greatest percentage of votes at 13.40%. Similar to the 2014 presidential election, only one candidate could be described as pro-Russian in this election: Yuriy Boyko, who won a total of 11.67% of the vote overall and only won the greatest percentage of votes in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (see *Table 9*). In the second round of the election, Zelensky won in every oblast except for the West region (Lviv, Ternopil, and Ivano-Frankivsk), where Poroshenko took the greatest percentage of votes. Finally, as in the 2014 election, the map of support for each candidate in the 2019 runoff election shows regional



**Figure 14:** Presidential candidate that won the largest percentage of votes, by oblast (2019–second round)<sup>135</sup>

polarization, with the more intensely pro-European candidate (Poroshenko) garnering higher levels of support in the west (see *Figure 14*). However, the fact that the only viable options for president were adamantly committed to Euro-Atlantic integration illustrates the country's

<sup>135</sup> Alex Kireev, "Ukraine. Presidential Election 2019," *Electoral Geography 2.0*.

widespread acceptance of the pro-European orientation, and Zelensky's win in almost every oblast is an important indicator that national unity was not a one-off in 2014. These results were mirrored in the 2019 parliamentary election, when President Zelensky's party *Sluha Narodu* ("Servant of the People") won a plurality of 43.16%. Again, the only oblasts where a pro-Russian party won more support than *Sluha Narodu* were Donetsk and Luhansk, where the Opposition Platform–For Life won 43.41% and 49.83%, respectively (see *Table 12* in the Appendix).

All of these trends can be found in a comparison of total support for pro-Russian candidates since 2004. A calculation of the average total support for pro-Russian candidates in each region in the 2004, 2010, 2014, and 2019 presidential elections has been reported in *Table 3a* (the pro-Russian candidates have been highlighted red in the electoral results listed in *Tables 6-9* in the Appendix). Additionally, a calculation of the average total support for pro-Russian political parties in each region in the 2012, 2014, and 2019 parliamentary elections has been reported in *Table 3b* (the pro-Russian political parties have been highlighted red in the electoral results listed in *Tables 11-12* in the Appendix).

A radical decrease in support for pro-Russian candidates can be seen between 2010 and 2014 in *Table 3a* and between 2012 and 2014 in *Table 3b*. For both presidential and parliamentary elections, this trend was sustained in the 2019 elections. Additionally, similar to the survey data about geopolitical preferences, the new line of polarization lies between the East (Donetsk and Luhansk) and the rest of the country; these are the only oblasts that show even a plurality support for pro-Russian candidates after 2014.

**Table 3a:** Average total support for pro-Russian presidential candidates, by region

Region	2004	2010	2014	2019
East	87.92	78.13	12.30	40.42
South	56.44	52.80	7.26	18.33
East-Central	63.37	52.37	15.66	19.24
North	28.51	24.70	2.34	7.91
Southwest	29.87	25.65	1.91	8.24
West-Central	22.30	18.02	1.21	5.03
West	5.95	7.46	0.30	1.31
<b>Total</b>	44.23	38.86	4.54	11.67

**Table 3b:** Average total support for pro-Russian political parties, by region

Region	2012	2014	2019
East	83.07	48.71	59.01
South	57.45	23.80	27.15
East-Central	59.70	34.06	30.67
North	32.80	7.72	11.63
Southwest	31.07	4.10	12.56
West-Central	26.01	3.97	7.63
West	7.32	1.01	2.60
<b>Total</b>	43.18	13.31	18.31

These data demonstrate that the consolidation of the post-Euromaidan Ukrainian national identity has translated to significantly greater voter harmony and fears that the post-Euromaidan nationalism would be filled with increasingly specific and divisive political content have largely not played. Finally, any enduring regional divisions and EU hesitation (i.e., the rising CU preference discussed above) have almost entirely disappeared since the beginning of full-scale war. Considering how Russian aggression has historically unified Ukrainians and accelerated the diffusion of a democratic Ukrainian national identity, as well as deepened the linkage between the Ukrainian national identity and a pro-European orientation, the future of the “pro-Russian orientation” and the stateness challenges it could pose is bleak.

## Conclusion

Even with the pro-Western orientation gaining dominance in the country, Ukraine—as a heterogeneous, multicultural country—is still marked by divisions and disagreements among its population, including about the characteristics of its national identity. When newly-independent Ukraine began its state- and nation-building projects simultaneously after gaining independence in 1991, Ukrainian nationalism was forced to become more civic and inclusive to accommodate the country’s diverse population, and after 2014 largely lost its ethnocultural center. This translated into the national identity that was shared by substantial segments of Ukrainian society—and thus arguably the newly hegemonic identity—assuming a fundamentally civic nature, though retaining much of the content of the Ethnic Ukrainian identity complex. For example, large portions of Ukrainian society came to support the sole official status of the Ukrainian language, even as they preferred to speak Russian themselves and permit local officials to use the Russian language when appropriate. The nuanced and multi-faceted character of post-Euromaidan Ukrainian national identity reveals that the country’s transition has been characterized by more than just unification in the face of Russian aggression. Rather, the sustained Russian aggression forced Ukraine to look to more positively-defined content for its national identity that would satisfy the needs of national minorities, embarking on a nation-building project that endeavored to include all citizens in an effort to impede any further stateness problems.

All of these trends were confirmed, solidified, and amplified when Russia launched a full-scale war on Ukraine in February 2022. Yet, in the tumultuous months leading up to the Russian invasion, Putin was not alone in equating regional differences with existential division or Russian ethnolinguistic background with a “pro-Russian” orientation that included support for

unity with Russia. In December 2021, Jack F. Matlock, former US Ambassador to the Soviet Union, published an article entitled “Ukraine: Tragedy of a Nation Divided” in which he claimed that “Ukraine is a state but not yet a nation” and, in reference to Ukrainian efforts to regain Crimea, asserted that these were futile for “most of its people, being Russian, prefer to be in Russia.”<sup>136</sup> Putin, Matlock, and many others predicted that Ukraine’s enduring internal division and potential lingering stateness problems made the country hopelessly vulnerable in the face of the Russian army. Instead, Ukraine has become a nation united more than ever before.

As of May 14, 2022, the war in Ukraine has raged for 80 days, claimed the lives of at least 3,500 civilians,<sup>137</sup> and forced over 6 million refugees to flee the country.<sup>138</sup> Countless cases of unfathomable war crimes have been reported and Putin’s war appears to be turning into one of attrition. In the face of this horror, Ukraine been unshakeable in its commitment to defending its sovereignty and the future of a free, democratic Europe that includes Ukraine. Only time will tell what Ukraine’s future looks like, but for now, the country takes pride in its unity. Ukraine has found its identity, and it is freedom.

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<sup>136</sup> Jack F. Matlock, Jr, “Ukraine: Tragedy of a Nation Divided,” *Krasno Analysis*, December 14, 2021.

<sup>137</sup> “Ukraine: civilian casualty update 13 May 2022,” *UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights*, May 13, 2022.

<sup>138</sup> “UNHCR Says 6 Million Ukrainian Refugees So Far From Russian Invasion,” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, May 13, 2022.

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## Appendix

*Table 4a: Percentage of respondents that would prefer to join the EU, by oblast*

Oblast	EU 2016	EU 2017	EU 2018	EU 2019	EU 2020	EU 2021
Mariupol	28	21	24	24	23	22
Sieverodonetsk	26	21	23	33	26	25
Kherson	67	49	52	55	47	51
Odesa	40	39	38	31	33	32
Mykolaiv	42	29	35	43	39	47
Dnipro	45	49	49	44	41	43
Zaporizhzhia	54	49	48	48	43	49
Kharkiv	33	35	32	42	37	39
Poltava	64	63	64	58	50	56
Kirovohrad	55	51	51	59	55	58
Kyiv	64	63	57	62	58	65
Cherkasy	70	59	62	60	61	67
Chernihiv	65	56	61	56	55	61
Sumy	56	52	56	56	56	58
Chernivtsi	79	70	68	75	71	69
Zakarpattia	84	69	82	70	70	74
Zhytomyr	71	64	57	61	59	62
Vinnytsia	71	70	72	67	62	72
Khmelnysky	72	59	58	67	60	58
Rivne	75	71	74	73	72	80
Volyn	84	76	78	76	72	80
Ivano-Frankivsk	93	83	85	84	80	83
Ternopil	93	86	79	83	77	86
Lviv	84	80	86	83	82	86

*Table 4b: Percentage of respondents that would prefer to join a customs union with Russia (CU), by oblast*

Oblast	CU 2016	CU 2017	CU 2018	CU 2019	CU 2020	CU 2021
Mariupol	34	42	37	46	43	48
Sieverodonetsk	36	22	22	36	36	47
Kherson	12	23	14	16	20	24
Odesa	23	34	29	29	28	34
Mykolaiv	17	16	22	31	26	27
Dnipro	22	20	24	27	23	28
Zaporizhzhia	22	19	12	28	27	30
Kharkiv	32	23	27	31	31	37
Poltava	9	6	9	10	9	13
Kirovohrad	7	11	14	13	12	14
Kyiv	6	8	11	8	9	12
Cherkasy	9	12	9	9	12	12
Chernihiv	9	8	10	20	15	17
Sumy	17	17	13	13	13	14
Chernivtsi	6	8	12	6	6	9
Zakarpattia	1	3	2	8	6	7
Zhytomyr	4	8	6	10	9	13
Vinnytsia	6	6	5	8	7	9
Khmelnysky	3	5	11	4	4	14
Rivne	4	5	2	5	5	4
Volyn	2	5	2	7	3	5
Ivano-Frankivsk	0	1	1	2	1	3
Ternopil	0	1	2	2	2	1
Lviv	2	1	1	1	2	3

**Table 5a:** Percentage of respondents that would vote to join NATO, by oblast

Oblast	Join NATO 2016	Join NATO 2017	Join NATO 2018	Join NATO 2019	Join NATO 2020	Join NATO 2021
Mariupol	20	13	17	14	17	17
Sieverodonetsk	18	18	20	28	21	18
Kherson	32	35	33	40	43	44
Odesa	30	25	29	23	29	28
Mykolaiv	31	17	23	33	31	40
Dnipro	29	33	35	38	36	39
Zaporizhzhia	37	37	34	38	40	44
Kharkiv	23	23	28	29	32	33
Poltava	47	46	44	52	49	53
Kirovohrad	39	34	37	49	52	53
Kyiv	51	47	49	58	59	61
Cherkasy	59	42	46	54	58	58
Chernihiv	45	36	38	51	49	50
Sumy	36	30	42	51	52	51
Chernivtsi	61	59	59	69	64	60
Zakarpattia	75	58	73	64	59	64
Zhytomyr	50	44	50	57	58	57
Vinnitsia	60	60	57	60	58	62
Khmelnysky	54	55	48	59	58	62
Rivne	61	59	65	67	65	73
Volyn	67	64	55	68	66	72
Ivano-Frankivsk	85	75	77	81	76	78
Ternopil	89	77	66	75	75	79
Lviv	79	73	80	78	80	81

**Table 5b:** Percentage of respondents that would vote to not join NATO, by oblast

Oblast	No NATO 2016	No NATO 2017	No NATO 2018	No NATO 2019	No NATO 2020	No NATO 2021
Mariupol	49	48	44	58	64	60
Sieverodonetsk	46	47	47	49	58	61
Kherson	42	33	37	30	33	27
Odesa	36	43	45	54	55	44
Mykolaiv	45	50	43	40	46	35
Dnipro	36	37	43	37	41	36
Zaporizhzhia	41	40	48	39	38	37
Kharkiv	45	43	43	44	53	46
Poltava	26	22	32	26	27	24
Kirovohrad	28	24	24	23	22	20
Kyiv	17	19	26	20	20	19
Cherkasy	16	28	20	22	20	17
Chernihiv	19	29	27	26	27	23
Sumy	29	35	22	20	28	24
Chernivtsi	13	18	20	11	15	17
Zakarpattia	3	8	7	15	18	15
Zhytomyr	19	24	16	17	22	17
Vinnitsia	12	13	16	15	21	14
Khmelnysky	23	18	23	17	20	12
Rivne	8	10	11	11	18	10
Volyn	12	14	12	9	12	10
Ivano-Frankivsk	2	5	5	4	7	7
Ternopil	4	4	10	4	7	3
Lviv	5	3	2	6	8	7

**Table 6:** Percentage of votes won by each candidate in the first round of the 2004 presidential election, by oblast<sup>139</sup> (Red highlight indicates a pro-Russian candidate)

Oblast	Viktor Yushchenko	Viktor Yanukovich	Oleksandr Moroz	Petro Symonenko
Donetsk	2.94	86.74	1.31	3.25
Luhansk	4.54	80.00	1.94	5.84
Kherson	32.13	37.44	7.26	10.04
Odesa	17.34	53.4	8.46	6.73
Mykolaiv	17.94	53.97	5.44	7.75
Dnipro	18.72	49.73	5.34	10.60
Zaporizhzhia	16.59	55.65	5.32	8.82
Kharkiv	15.35	57.37	5.25	7.94
Poltava	43.64	25.95	15.36	5.60
Kirovohrad	39.02	30.82	12.49	6.99
Kyiv	59.72	16.73	9.28	3.30
Cherkasy	57.74	17.92	11.77	4.31
Chernihiv	43.35	24.45	16.29	5.22
Sumy	52.71	25.7	7.31	4.05
Chernivtsi	66.63	17.91	2.67	2.63
Zakarpattia	46.61	37.75	2.00	1.45
Zhytomyr	43.51	29.25	10.26	6.27
Vinnitsia	59.66	16.02	12.8	3.85
Khmelnysky	57.89	21.10	7.11	4.07
Rivne	69.25	16.08	5.16	2.28
Volyn	77.19	10.48	3.20	2.08
Ivano-Frankisvk	89.03	4.47	1.38	0.70
Ternopil	87.52	5.51	2.01	0.53
Lviv	87.25	5.81	1.59	0.83
Total	39.90	39.26	5.82	4.97

<sup>139</sup> “Вибори Президента України 2004,” Центральна Виборча Комісія України.

*Table 7: Percentage of votes won by each candidate in the first round of the 2010 presidential election, by oblast<sup>140</sup> (Red highlight indicates a pro-Russian candidate)*

Oblast	Viktor Yanukovich	Yulia Tymoshenko	Serhiy Tihipko	Arseniy Yatsenyuk	Viktor Yushchenko	Petro Symonenko	Volodymyr Litvin	Oleh Tyakhnybok
Donetsk	76.04	4.32	7.21	2.76	0.67	4.08	0.57	0.19
Luhansk	71.07	6.51	9.46	2.38	0.68	5.07	0.63	0.21
Kherson	40.37	19.33	15.5	5.92	1.87	7.67	2.27	0.75
Odesa	51.12	10.18	21.13	3.95	1.5	2.62	2.59	0.52
Mykolaiv	51.27	13.53	13.42	5.48	1.45	5.36	2.85	0.62
Dnipro	41.67	14.78	22.48	6.53	1.23	4.65	1.42	0.63
Zaporizhzhia	50.83	12.26	17.68	5.12	1.06	5.03	1.25	0.48
Kharkiv	50.18	10.68	18.81	5.92	1.46	4.75	1.36	0.57
Poltava	25.27	32.02	12.25	9.09	3.07	4.85	3.72	1.21
Kirovohrad	26.74	34.58	14.5	5.83	1.58	4.48	4.43	0.77
Kyiv	15.45	42.29	15.35	8.77	3.02	2.02	3.57	1.56
Cherkasy	17.36	41.21	12.88	6.96	3.41	3.44	3.72	1.26
Chernihiv	19.51	42.74	13.35	5.54	2.13	4.41	3.14	0.81
Sumy	18.66	36.78	14.47	7.05	4.34	5.99	3.91	0.79
Chernivtsi	19.12	32.31	8.85	19.27	7.91	1.44	2.33	1.18
Zakarpattia	29.65	26.23	10.00	10.17	5.93	1.08	3.25	1.02
Zhytomyr	24.27	32.64	13.48	8.36	2.8	3.54	6.98	0.99
Vinnitsia	15.01	46.90	11.2	9.48	2.85	3.12	2.60	1.26
Khmelnysky	15.23	40.06	13.22	11.48	3.27	2.77	4.49	1.70
Rivne	12.48	43.85	10.68	7.03	7.28	1.76	7.06	2.70
Volyn	9.60	53.78	10.15	5.41	4.51	2.33	4.27	3.31
Ivano-Frankivsk	5.11	38.98	4.36	13.8	25.09	0.58	1.06	4.95
Ternopil	9.82	35.67	4.80	9.91	26.43	0.54	1.56	4.89
Lviv	5.67	34.70	4.77	11.04	30.76	0.67	0.74	5.35
Total	35.32	25.05	13.05	6.96	5.45	3.54	2.35	1.43

<sup>140</sup> “Вибори Президента України 2010,” Центральна Виборча Комісія України.

*Table 8: Percentage of votes won by each candidate in the first round of the 2014 presidential election, by oblast<sup>141</sup> (Red highlight indicates a pro-Russian candidate)*

Oblast	Petro Poroshenko	Yulia Tymoshenko	Oleh Lyashko	Anatoliy Hrytsenko	Serhiy Tihipko	Mykhailo Dobkin	Vadim Rabinovich	Olha Bohomolets	Petro Symonenko
Donetsk	36.15	7.64	2.90	4.16	19.66	6.81	5.53	2.60	4.34
Luhansk	33.17	7.77	6.17	4.55	15.74	8.02	5.89	2.41	5.43
Kherson	48.71	11.48	5.87	5.96	10.31	2.67	3.49	2.16	3.41
Odesa	41.78	9.48	3.58	2.93	18.57	3.85	6.18	2.60	3.83
Mykolaiv	45.97	9.74	5.22	4.14	13.11	4.31	5.49	2.53	3.72
Dnipro	44.72	9.43	6.29	6.26	10.53	4.74	5.15	2.68	3.22
Zaporizhzhia	38.15	9.73	4.91	6.22	13.74	5.98	6.97	2.98	4.15
Kharkiv	35.28	7.64	3.92	4.42	8.54	26.25	3.82	2.14	2.65
Poltava	54.55	13.95	10.64	5.52	4.26	1.38	1.92	1.98	1.38
Kirovohrad	50.96	16.15	11.55	5.83	4.09	1.32	2.03	1.92	1.50
Kyiv	61.67	13.61	9.75	5.12	2.16	0.43	1.14	1.72	0.60
Cherkasy	54.61	14.08	11.88	9.04	2.18	0.51	1.19	1.66	0.78
Chernihiv	44.81	19.48	16.59	6.23	3.76	1.16	1.50	1.47	1.30
Sumy	55.40	14.34	9.33	5.69	4.18	2.01	1.81	1.60	1.64
Chernivtsi	56.72	18.84	10.50	3.12	2.70	0.43	1.09	1.46	0.75
Zakarpattia	62.02	12.87	7.41	4.02	3.14	2.07	1.52	1.46	0.56
Zhytomyr	58.64	15.08	9.54	4.42	3.55	0.61	1.46	1.67	1.21
Vinnitsia	67.32	15.57	5.55	4.11	1.68	0.47	0.85	0.94	0.64
Khmelnitsky	56.26	16.95	11.82	4.73	2.05	0.60	0.87	1.71	0.77
Rivne	55.46	16.06	13.23	5.04	2.10	0.28	0.76	2.10	0.56
Volyn	52.41	17.32	14.55	6.15	1.90	0.43	0.56	1.93	0.47
Ivano-Frankivsk	65.13	14.78	9.01	4.63	0.57	0.11	0.28	1.53	0.19
Ternopil	60.63	15.17	10.12	7.54	0.69	0.11	0.24	1.21	0.17
Lviv	69.92	11.19	6.78	5.86	0.83	0.11	0.34	1.47	0.22
Total	54.70	12.81	8.32	5.45	5.23	3.03	2.25	1.91	1.51

<sup>141</sup> “Позачергові Вибори Президента України 2014,” Центральна Виборча Комісія України.

*Table 9: Percentage of votes won by each candidate in the first round of the 2019 presidential election, by oblast<sup>142</sup> (Red highlight indicates a pro-Russian candidate)*

Oblast	Volodymyr Zelensky	Petro Poroshenko	Yulia Tymoshenko	Yuriy Boyko	Anatoliy Hrytsenko	Ihor Smeshko	Oleh Lyashko	Oleksandr Vilkul	Ruslan Koshulynsky
Donetsk	24.74	12.64	3.61	36.87	1.35	2.47	2.65	11.99	0.31
Luhansk	25.05	6.58	4.89	43.96	1.53	1.99	3.17	9.16	0.33
Kherson	37.58	11.51	10.33	15.73	3.93	5.04	6.02	5.29	0.54
Odesa	41.26	9.08	8.02	21.92	2.87	3.00	3.50	6.09	0.31
Mykolaiv	40.74	9.69	8.84	17.33	3.16	4.05	5.72	5.94	0.48
Dnipro	45.34	8.32	8.52	12.36	3.29	4.78	2.81	10.93	0.49
Zaporizhzhia	39.75	8.76	8.24	18.79	2.97	4.58	3.73	9.40	0.38
Kharkiv	36.41	8.52	7.35	26.58	3.12	3.71	3.19	7.47	0.36
Poltava	35.62	10.61	15.86	9.48	5.27	7.66	7.54	2.09	1.06
Kirovohrad	34.52	11.79	18.53	8.74	4.34	6.28	8.17	2.02	1.07
Kyiv	30.86	18.56	16.86	5.20	7.22	8.8	4.92	1.32	1.64
Cherkasy	30.06	12.20	16.71	5.50	9.41	10.75	8.09	1.50	1.25
Chernihiv	26.28	12.77	19.43	7.33	5.89	8.45	12.53	2.47	0.75
Sumy	32.66	10.66	16.42	11.19	5.42	8.21	8.15	2.29	0.65
Chernivtsi	31.07	14.09	19.67	8.99	5.16	5.24	7.54	1.13	1.31
Zakarpattia	38.35	11.41	15.7	7.48	5.13	4.74	6.27	2.02	0.97
Zhytomyr	27.83	15.94	17.42	7.20	5.72	8.42	9.71	1.72	1.04
Vinnytsia	23.42	22.37	17.61	4.84	6.23	8.98	8.71	2.27	1.12
Khmelnysky	24.89	16.63	17.59	5.07	8.59	7.65	9.84	1.08	2.98
Rivne	24.01	22.32	15.98	4.41	7.70	5.73	9.88	0.97	2.80
Volyn	21.63	18.98	19.84	3.63	9.01	6.92	9.90	1.10	2.85
Ivano-Frankivsk	16.07	21.30	22.51	1.03	15.16	3.86	4.04	0.31	6.86
Ternopil	14.67	24.36	18.87	1.55	17.08	5.14	7.41	0.37	5.46
Lviv	11.96	35.32	14.85	1.34	19.02	4.68	3.45	0.32	4.66
Total	30.24	15.95	13.40	11.67	6.91	6.04	5.48	4.15	1.62

<sup>142</sup> “Вибори Президента України 2019,” Центральна Виборча Комісія України.

*Table 10: Percentage of votes won by each political party in the 2012 parliamentary election, by oblast<sup>143</sup> (Red highlight indicates a pro-Russian party)*

Oblast	Party of Regions	Fatherland/All-Ukrainian Union <i>Batkivshchyna</i>	Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reforms	Communist party	<i>Svoboda</i>	Ukraine—Forward!	Our Ukraine	Radical party of Oleh Lyashko
Donetsk	65.09	5.26	4.71	18.85	1.20	1.46	0.22	0.44
Luhansk	57.06	5.49	4.74	25.14	1.29	1.82	0.25	0.98
Kherson	29.34	21.80	13.63	23.34	4.71	2.40	0.62	0.77
Odesa	41.90	15.49	13.77	18.16	3.30	2.17	0.49	0.59
Mykolaiv	40.51	16.93	12.51	19.09	4.30	2.15	0.59	0.71
Dnipro	35.79	18.38	14.61	19.38	5.19	1.99	0.42	0.80
Zaporizhia	40.95	14.93	12.40	21.16	3.85	2.21	0.41	0.71
Kharkiv	40.98	15.21	12.82	20.84	3.83	1.88	0.51	0.76
Poltava	21.91	30.14	18.47	13.49	7.94	1.82	1.24	1.29
Kirovohrad	26.25	32.17	14.87	13.46	6.22	1.61	0.66	1.80
Kyiv	21.00	36.63	18.73	6.11	10.84	1.45	0.82	1.28
Cherkasy	18.65	37.78	17.23	9.29	9.48	1.54	1.15	1.52
Chernihiv	20.09	30.73	12.91	13.20	5.98	1.73	1.13	10.69
Sumy	21.09	36.27	16.71	12.24	6.37	1.89	1.53	0.93
Chernivtsi	20.77	39.60	19.13	5.46	8.71	1.12	1.59	0.56
Zakarpattia	30.87	27.69	20.03	5.03	8.35	1.41	1.70	0.64
Zhytomyr	21.61	36.15	14.19	12.82	7.47	1.84	1.56	0.94
Vinnitsia	17.38	45.01	13.38	8.86	8.40	1.33	1.42	1.15
Khmelnitsky	18.69	37.71	16.33	8.81	11.79	1.46	1.31	0.94
Rivne	15.80	36.59	17.25	6.21	16.63	1.20	2.27	1.20
Volyn	12.92	39.46	15.96	6.97	17.98	1.30	1.64	1.14
Ivano-Frankivsk	5.18	38.21	15.25	1.78	33.79	0.62	2.98	0.44
Ternopil	6.40	39.04	14.68	1.92	31.22	0.65	3.56	0.53
Lviv	4.70	35.58	14.44	1.99	38.02	0.70	2.70	0.44
Total	30.00	25.54	13.96	13.18	10.44	1.58	1.11	1.08

<sup>143</sup> “Вибори до Верховної Ради 2012,” Центральна Виборча Комісія України.

**Table 11:** Percentage of votes won by each political party in the 2014 parliamentary election, by oblast<sup>144</sup> (Red highlight indicates a pro-Russian party)

Oblast	Narodniy Front	Petro Poroshenko bloc	Samopomich Union	Opposition bloc	Radical party of Oleh Lyashko	Fatherland	Svoboda	Communist party	Strong Ukraine	Civil position
Donetsk	6.14	18.22	3.85	38.69	4.14	1.95	1.19	10.25	8.51	1.13
Luhansk	5.94	14.32	5.14	36.59	5.36	2.33	1.47	11.88	8.77	1.40
Kherson	16.14	22.26	6.70	10.39	8.98	5.68	3.52	8.91	6.14	3.35
Odesa	9.76	19.63	7.23	18.05	5.41	4.44	2.30	8.97	11.35	2.04
Mykolaiv	14.04	20.64	7.71	15.88	7.78	4.65	2.79	9.21	6.80	2.50
Dnipro	12.24	19.48	8.59	24.27	7.59	4.66	2.84	5.29	3.81	3.04
Zaporizhzhia	10.91	16.94	8.59	22.18	5.92	4.61	2.20	9.75	7.15	2.92
Kharkiv	8.13	15.17	7.49	32.16	6.38	3.88	2.08	8.53	4.55	2.84
Poltava	23.33	23.24	9.22	5.33	10.85	6.22	4.58	3.93	2.73	3.06
Kirovohrad	23.66	21.73	7.90	7.00	11.67	8.34	4.11	3.44	1.81	2.98
Kyiv	28.25	24.28	13.13	2.67	6.91	6.56	5.64	2.77	1.90	2.68
Cherkasy	26.79	22.50	9.83	2.76	10.05	6.44	5.85	2.25	1.57	4.64
Chernihiv	19.49	21.46	7.63	3.88	16.42	7.43	3.87	3.36	2.80	3.64
Sumy	21.81	25.09	8.28	4.64	10.61	7.19	4.24	4.28	2.78	3.23
Chernivtsi	32.39	21.20	8.56	2.85	8.79	7.45	4.82	1.64	2.66	2.25
Zakarpattia	25.63	28.05	9.63	2.41	6.83	5.12	3.51	1.30	3.27	2.59
Zhytomyr	26.39	23.03	9.12	3.30	10.63	6.52	4.16	3.05	2.43	3.06
Vinnitsia	22.41	37.45	7.59	2.26	6.09	6.60	4.25	1.66	1.26	2.58
Khmelnysky	26.09	24.98	10.39	2.23	9.33	7.65	5.43	1.72	1.40	2.39
Rivne	29.31	24.21	11.08	1.75	7.91	6.65	6.51	1.20	1.63	2.51
Volyn	33.22	16.89	11.46	1.47	9.70	7.48	6.38	1.20	1.42	3.06
Ivano-Frankivsk	37.48	18.25	14.69	0.54	4.85	6.19	8.81	0.37	0.46	2.58
Ternopil	36.50	19.73	11.3	0.61	6.59	6.31	8.18	0.31	0.52	3.68
Lviv	33.03	20.42	18.78	0.71	5.35	4.73	6.19	0.50	0.42	4.43
Total	22.14	21.82	10.97	9.43	7.44	5.68	4.71	3.88	3.11	3.10

<sup>144</sup> “Позачергові Вибори до Верховної Ради 2014,” Центральна Виборча Комісія України.

*Table 12: Percentage of votes won by each political party in the 2019 parliamentary election, by oblast<sup>145</sup> (Red highlight indicates a pro-Russian party)*

Oblast	Sluha Narodu	Opposition Platform-For Life	Fatherland	European Solidarity	VOICE	Radical party of Oleh Lyashko	Power and Honor	Opposition Bloc	Groisman's Ukrainian Strategy Political Party	Party of Shariy
Donetsk	27.19	43.41	1.95	3.59	1.31	1.20	1.65	10.77	0.70	5.55
Luhansk	28.83	49.83	2.11	2.94	1.30	1.82	1.35	4.78	0.69	3.68
Kherson	49.71	17.97	5.29	6.00	2.82	3.97	3.34	3.12	1.51	2.40
Odesa	47.03	23.35	4.55	4.19	2.41	2.07	1.97	4.86	1.12	4.72
Mykolaiv	52.18	18.99	4.68	5.03	2.32	3.23	2.45	3.18	1.25	2.86
Dnipro	56.70	15.17	4.70	4.64	2.22	1.71	2.95	4.62	0.87	3.17
Zaporizhzhia	48.39	21.79	4.40	5.20	2.25	1.98	2.69	5.07	0.90	3.60
Kharkiv	42.72	26.55	3.56	4.95	2.67	1.65	2.19	7.78	0.83	4.25
Poltava	52.53	10.12	10.31	5.36	3.06	5.00	4.33	1.61	1.42	1.61
Kirovohrad	51.40	9.73	11.84	5.88	2.50	5.47	3.88	1.47	1.73	1.20
Kyiv	46.48	6.16	11.07	9.86	5.82	3.98	5.25	0.94	2.22	1.73
Cherkasy	51.03	6.28	9.23	6.43	3.75	6.25	6.56	1.25	1.99	1.21
Chernihiv	44.26	8.23	14.28	5.84	2.66	8.13	5.15	1.91	1.94	1.33
Sumy	50.94	11.90	10.08	5.04	2.83	5.01	4.60	1.69	1.69	1.38
Chernivtsi	50.67	8.87	10.26	6.71	4.55	4.85	3.55	1.36	1.92	1.01
Zakarpattia	49.86	8.01	10.04	4.58	4.38	2.89	4.06	5.06	2.95	0.81
Zhytomyr	47.04	8.16	9.96	7.04	3.71	7.69	5.51	1.47	2.94	1.14
Vinnytsia	37.91	5.41	10.03	8.29	3.40	6.13	5.13	2.36	15.39	0.96
Khmelnysky	46.77	5.35	10.67	6.92	4.10	7.30	4.69	1.09	3.26	0.8
Rivne	41.87	4.21	10.56	9.65	7.96	8.15	4.54	1.04	2.97	0.84
Volyn	41.76	3.78	13.08	8.02	6.96	7.86	4.99	0.82	3.75	0.73
Ivano-Frankivsk	33.81	1.37	14.67	11.94	13.25	3.94	3.59	0.66	2.08	0.43
Ternopil	31.51	1.70	12.23	12.59	13.07	7.37	4.07	0.67	3.05	0.39
Lviv	22.03	1.71	9.44	19.87	23.09	4.13	3.31	0.34	2.60	0.53
Total	43.16	13.05	8.18	8.10	5.82	4.01	3.82	3.03	2.41	2.23

<sup>145</sup> “Позачергові Вибори до Верховної Ради 2019,” Центральна Виборча Комісія України.