

**The Situation in Ukraine and  
Its Implications for the European Union's  
Common Foreign and Security Policy**

**John Dunn**

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# **The Situation in Ukraine and Its Implications for the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy**

by  
**John Dunn**

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## **Introduction: Aims of the Paper**

This paper examines the interaction of two recent, but complex developments in Europe: the establishment of an independent Ukrainian state and the response of the European Union (EU) to this development in the context of the recently inaugurated Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

To achieve this, the paper examines Ukraine's internal and external security configuration and highlights the significance of Ukraine's problems for the Union. In a subsequent section, it tests the relevance and effectiveness of the major CFSP competences and instrumentalities to the Ukrainian situation. Having analysed these competences, the paper goes on to draw some general implications and conclusions about the CFSP and to suggest some general guidelines that could inform a broader EU policy towards Ukraine.

## **1. The State of the Nation**

### **1.1. Political**

In a referendum on 1 December 1991, some 90% of Ukrainians voted in favour of independence. For many, however, independence came so quickly that they were ill prepared to accommodate it. Even nationalists in the "Rukh" (Popular Movement of Ukraine) had given little consideration to policies that might be suitable for the post-independence situation. This failure to elaborate detailed post-independence programmes meant that there was initially little opposition to the communist elite (nomenklatura) which, having effected an apparently effortless transition from communist internationalism to Ukrainian nationalism, remained in power.

Although the ex-communist nomenklatura — or "party of power" as it was sometimes called — was not a organised political entity, it managed to retain a political, administrative and economic influence disproportionate to its numbers both at the centre and in many regions. The concerns of this elite were two-fold.

First, with the historical experience of previous, abortive attempts at independence in mind (1654 and 1920), the "party" developed an initial consensus with nationalists on the desirability of "state-building", i.e. securing territorial integrity, countering outside interference and establishing the attributes of statehood. Further, independence was to be consolidated by avoiding policies that might disrupt the social order. In particular, there was a determination to avoid any form of economic reform that could exacerbate the problems of the industrialised east and south and thus accentuate Ukraine's latent regional differences.

This programme of "state-building" was, of course, minimalist and conservative in economic terms and thus fitted well with the second major concern of the nomenklatura: the preservation of their own privilege. From the start, therefore, Ukraine avoided both radical political change and the economic "shock therapy" which reformers under Yegor Gaidar were attempting to introduce in the neighbouring Russian Federation.

Initial consensus on "state-building" soon began to collapse, however. On the nationalist side, there was concern that independence had brought little change in either personnel or policies, but had been accompanied by a precipitous economic decline. Meanwhile, in the industrialised east, which inclined politically to the left, the same economic decline was prompting disquiet about falling living standards, government ineffectiveness, centralised control and ruptured relations with Russia. Ironically, therefore, the conservative policy of "state-building" eventually produced the very regional disquiet that it was designed to prevent.

The most potent expression of growing eastern disquiet was a miners' strike in the Donbas in June 1993, which linked protests against sharply rising prices with demands for economic



autonomy and referenda to test public confidence in both president and parliament. Quickly the Kiev government acceded to the economic demands of the strikers, but it tried to avoid the proposed referenda on political competence. Only later, in September 1993, possibly under the influence of contemporaneous political violence in Moscow, did the sitting Parliament agree to hold pre-term parliamentary and presidential elections in March and June 1994, respectively. In preparation for these elections, the Parliament passed a Law on the Election of Peoples' Deputies of Ukraine. By facilitating the registration of independent and workers' collective candidates (many of whom were sympathetic to the concerns of the sitting nomenklatura), this law did little to encourage the development of a stable, multi-party political system in Ukraine.

In the subsequent parliamentary elections in March and April 1994, nationalists and reformists fared badly. Out of a total of 338 deputies elected,<sup>1</sup> "Rukh" won only 20 seats, while the centrist Inter-Regional Reform Block, led by ex-Prime Minister and current President Leonid Kuchma, got four. The biggest single party in Parliament became the reconstituted Ukrainian Communist Party with 86 seats, followed by its allies, the Peasant and Socialist parties. The most significant result, however, was the election of 163 unaffiliated deputies who owe allegiance to no particular party, but who often lean towards the communists and socialists. Given that these 163 unaffiliated deputies are not subject to any party discipline, it seems unlikely that the new Parliament will be more decisive on issues of reform than the previous one.

Similarly, the June and July presidential elections were dominated by figures from the communist past. The incumbent, Leonid Kravchuk, managed to deflect popular attention from precipitous economic decline by concentrating on issues of national sovereignty. In the first round of voting, he beat his main rival, Leonid Kuchma, by polling 37.7% of the vote against Kuchma's 31.3%. In the second round, however, Kuchma acquired the votes of socialists and communists from the East and beat Kravchuk to become Ukraine's second post-independence President.

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<sup>1</sup> There remained 112 seats unfilled.

## 1.2. Economic

The results of the parliamentary elections held in 1994 indicate that among Ukrainian voters radical economic reform was not a primary concern. One opinion poll conducted shortly before the 27 March parliamentary election suggested that 55% of Ukrainians were opposed to price liberalisation,<sup>2</sup> a step usually considered essential to economic reform. It is, therefore, hardly surprising given this coincidence of interests (the wish of the nomenklatura to protect its position, the desire not to disrupt the regions and popular ambivalence about reform) that economic reform in Ukraine did not make significant progress in the first years after independence.

Certainly, Ukraine began its independence in the most difficult economic circumstances. Although it had inherited some major industrial assets,<sup>3</sup> disrupted trade links with Russia and the other ex-Soviet republics meant that the country lost one-fifth of its export markets on independence.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, it had to continue to import Russian energy at prices which increasingly approximated world levels. This combination of factors produced both falling income and rising costs and thus serious liquidity problems in Ukraine's antiquated (and still state-owned) industries. To meet these costs, the government increased taxation to punitive levels (thus inducing domestic entrepreneurs to move their activities into the underground economy and simultaneously reducing the tax base) and made up deficits by simply printing money.

Thus, as independence progressed without systematic or systemic reform, Ukraine witnessed an explosion in the money supply and a huge rise in government spending. Between November 1992 and November 1993, the amount of currency in circulation increased from 462 billion coupons to 12.5 trillion. The result was "hyper-stagflation": at one stage,

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<sup>2</sup> *The Economist*, 19 March 1994, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> In 1989, Ukraine produced 34% of the Soviet Union's steel, 46% of its iron ore, 36% of its televisions and 53% of its sugar. See "Ukraine", *The Economist*, Special Report, 7 May 1994, p. 3. (In future abbreviated to "Ukraine", p. 3, etc.)

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

inflation reached around 100% per month, while industrial production fell 20-30% during 1993 alone.<sup>5</sup> Official figures from the Economics Department of the Cabinet of Ministers indicate that the decline in GDP was even steeper in the first months of 1994.<sup>6</sup> Despite the adoption of no less than eight plans for structural reform since January 1992, Ukraine's economy continued on a path of apparently inexorable decline.

Not surprisingly, the macroeconomic collapse that accompanied independence had a devastating effect on those who depended on the official economy for their livelihood. In spring 1994, average Ukrainian pay was about \$9-\$10 per month, i.e. about ten times lower than that of the average Russian,<sup>7</sup> and around 85% of the population was estimated to be living below the poverty level.<sup>8</sup> However, official statistics take little account of a significant and growing private, "black" economy. This sector was stimulated by the decline in the official economy and, since winter 1993, by a credit squeeze designed to rein in inflation. In some cases, this meant that wages were not paid for months. Workers were thus forced to look beyond their official jobs to cover their basic needs. Thus, private (and sometimes criminal) initiative, combined with work in garden plots, barter activity and a significant dollar and D-Mark turnover, meant that despite the travails of the official economy, some (but certainly not all) Ukrainians were better off than before independence. On the one hand, this means that many Ukrainians associate private enterprise with crime, corruption and growing income differentials, and thus call for tighter state control. On the other hand, it also means that there now is a small but growing constituency in favour of the macroeconomic discipline which might underpin a market economy.

Historical precedent suggests that no country can live long with "hyper-stagflation": either

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<sup>5</sup> D. Vydrin, "Economic War between Russia and Ukraine - To Win is to Lose", *Kievskie Vedomosti*, 19 March 1994, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> UNIAN News Agency, Kiev, 21 May 1994, 1130. (Also, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts SU/2005 D/7ff. In future, abbreviated to: SWB ...)

<sup>7</sup> J. Kipp, "The Ukraine's Socio-Economic Crisis", *Military Review*, March 1994, p. 33.

<sup>8</sup> R. Solchanyk, "Ukraine: A Year of Crisis", *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Research Report*, 7 January 1994, p. 38.

politics become radicalised as citizens turn to populist politicians offering radical solutions, or the state becomes effectively ungovernable, or government finds the political will to impose painful reform. There are now signs that, with the election of President Leonid Kuchma, Ukraine may have found the political will to adopt the latter course.

### **1.3. Regional Divisions**

Whatever his failures in economic policy, most Ukrainians give former President Kravchuk credit for the fact that with a policy of dogged centrism he held Ukraine together and preserved peace. This peace was by no means a matter of course, and cannot be taken for granted in the future. Parliamentary and presidential elections have all underlined the regional character of Ukrainian politics: the west is predominantly nationalist, constitutionally unitarian and more open to market reform; the eastern and south-eastern oblasts, on the other hand, are broadly socialist, Russophone, federalist and more sceptical about independence. These differences of vision have led to much political invective, but so far no violent confrontation.

Only in one region have these tensions become critical. In Crimea, strong popular pro-Russian sympathies have been a consistent feature for generations and have survived several wars. Here, the region's Russian orientation is reinforced by an ethnic Russian majority and by the presence of the formerly Soviet Black Sea Fleet, which has its headquarters at Sebastopol and is dominated by crews keen to preserve their subordination to the Russian Federation. In peninsular presidential elections in January 1994, a Russian nationalist, Yuriy Meshkov, was elected President with 73% of the popular vote. Subsequently, in the March 1994 elections to the Crimean Parliament, Meshkov's party also won a large majority, showing that the policies of distancing Crimea from Ukraine and upgrading relations with Russia had wide popular support.

For most of 1994, Meshkov followed a populist policy of distancing Crimea from Ukraine, and thus provoking fears of clashes with Ukrainian security forces and western nationalist para-militaries. Subsequently, however, Meshkov and his erstwhile supporters in the Crimean Parliament clashed over the division of powers and thus weakened their own

separatist cause. The feud between Meshkov and the Crimean Parliament left Kiev an observer. However, when the current confusion clears, Kiev will probably enjoy stronger control than at present without having to resort to force to restore its influence. Crimea thus set a separatist precedent which could be replicated in other regions, for example, among the Rusyns in Transcarpathia or the Romanian minority in Bukovina and Bessarabia.

It is incorrect, however, to equate Crimean separatism with tensions in other eastern oblasts, especially in the Donbas. Here there is no significant ethnic component; the concerns of the Russian minority (totalling approximately 11 million and concentrated in this region) are largely shared by the local Ukrainian population. Also, the threat of secessionism is limited; local leaders recognise that the heavily industrialised Donbas has political clout within Ukraine, but would lose out to more efficient areas such as the Kuzbas were it to join the Russian Federation. Thus, disputes with Kiev centre on the desire for greater local control, a federalist as opposed to a unitary constitutional order, better contacts with Russia and a rejection of Ukrainian as the only official state language.

The regional polarities described above mean that tensions in Ukraine could develop along several fault lines. First, tensions between the pro-integrationist east and nationalist west cannot be discounted. Here, however, the absence of contiguity between potentially inimical regions limits the conflict potential. (Russophone areas in the east and south do not border on nationalist, Ukrainian-speaking Galicia in the west. Between them are areas with ill-defined and diverse political, linguistic and cultural sympathies which represent a significant stabilising factor in Ukraine's regional patchwork.) Secondly, and more likely, tension between the central government and the outlying regions remains a threat. The lack of common perceived interests or a unifying political ideology may mean that the central government will find it difficult to govern effectively.

#### **1.4. The Kuchma Presidency: A New Era?**

The tensions that built up within the Ukrainian body politic from independence in 1991 led many observers to predict the impending demise of the new state. In particular, Ukraine's

rapid economic decline and regional tensions seemed to threaten national coherence.<sup>9</sup> The scenario was one of declining central control and growing regional ungovernability. This, combined with the strong attractive power of Russia and the latter's determination to increase its influence throughout the Commonwealth of Independent States seemed to indicate that some Ukrainian oblasts would drift back to Russian control. Ukrainian statehood would be lost in all but name.

In fact, the election of Leonid Kuchma in July 1994, makes this scenario less likely. Kuchma's presidency has heralded a significant change of course in domestic politics, in economic thinking and in foreign policy. His election completes a decisive "shift eastwards" in politics. Political thought is no longer dominated by a western, nationalist agenda; "state-building" is declining in importance as the needs of the eastern industrial base come more sharply into focus. The old communist ruling class has been largely removed from power and replaced by a second-echelon, eastern industrial elite. Increasingly, the elaborate networks of patronage, established by the first, ex-Soviet administration which did so much to impede reform, are crumbling. Under Kuchma's leadership, old systems of corruption are coming under attack, and in Leonid Kuchma the Parliament has an eastern industrialist who at least understands the concerns of its eastern members. This may facilitate cooperation, although turf-wars remain to be fought over the constitutional division of powers.

It is, however, in economic thinking that Leonid Kuchma has introduced the most startling change. Kuchma appears to have appreciated the unsustainability of Ukraine's previous economic course. He has thus emphasised the need for change, insisting in particular on agricultural reform, privatisation, tax reductions and exchange-rate liberalisation.<sup>10</sup> Most significantly, his government has concluded a preliminary deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which could open the way to aid worth \$4 billion, as promised by

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<sup>9</sup> See, for example, the US government's National Intelligence Estimate of January 1994, reported in D. Williams and R. Jeffrey, "US Intelligence Sees Economic Plight Leading to Breakup of Ukraine", *The Washington Post*, 25 January 1994, p. A7.

<sup>10</sup> SWB SU/2051 D/1 and *The Economist*, 16 July 1994, p. 33.

the G-7. In return for the liberalisation of prices and trade policy, the unification of exchange rates, cuts in the budget deficit (from a current level of around 20% of GDP) and the introduction of structural reform, Ukraine would receive an initial tranche of \$365 million. Later, if reform proceeds successfully, Ukraine would benefit from a further stand-by agreement which could be worth an additional \$1.24 billion. In addition, Ukraine could receive a further \$400 million rehabilitation loan from the World Bank.<sup>11</sup>

Of course economic reform will be difficult. It will face opposition in Parliament (indeed constitutional unclarity makes it unclear precisely who has responsibility for economic policy). Even from within government there is opposition; Prime Minister Masol is known to be sceptical. Also, reducing the deficit will mean reducing subsidies to key industries and thus to those very enterprises whose workers brought the president to power. Nevertheless, Mr. Kuchma seems to have appreciated the need for radical change; he has signalled his reformist determination by returning to government Viktor Pynzenyk, a well known radical. The hope must be that the President can convince the population and Parliament of the inadmissibility of further procrastination.

Mr. Kuchma's election will also mean significant changes in the configuration of regional politics in Ukraine. Under the previous presidency, alienation from central government reached dangerous levels in the eastern oblasts. In Crimea, the determination of the peninsular government to distance itself from Kiev was matched by an equal determination on the part of Kravchuk to uphold Ukrainian territorial integrity. Dangerous stand-offs occurred on several occasions. Under Kuchma, however, tensions have abated significantly. In both the Donbas and in Crimea significant majorities voted for Kuchma, making it much more difficult to sustain opposition to Kiev. Of course, the new danger will be of alienating the nationalist west, but it is much less significant in terms of population and thus of political and economic influence. Contrary to the expectations of some western nationalists, the election of Leonid Kuchma may actually have saved Ukraine as a coherent political entity.

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<sup>11</sup> *The Economist*, 24 September 1994, p. 44.

## 2. Relations with Russia

The election of Leonid Kuchma has also heralded significant change in the conduct of relations with Russia. Not surprisingly, relations with Russia have consistently dominated Ukrainian foreign policy; under Kravchuk those relations were never easy. Ukrainian politicians and officials frequently accused Russia of being unwilling to come to terms with Ukrainian independence or to accept Ukraine as an equal partner. Russians, they argued, displayed a persistent neo-imperialist attitude which was, allegedly, characteristic not only of national patriots but of reformists and liberals too.

Advocates of this line found it easy to adduce proof. They pointed to Russia's hesitancy about recognising Ukraine's borders<sup>12</sup> and to Russia's declared intention to protect the 25 million Russians and Russian-speakers living outside the Russian Federation. They further pointed to President Boris Yeltsin's February 1993 appeal to the UN to grant Russia "special powers to act as a guarantor of peace and stability" in the former Soviet Union. They believed that Russian "peacekeeping" activities in the "near abroad" (Georgia/Abkhazia, Moldova/Trans-Dnestria and Tajikistan, etc.) and a growing number of Russian military cooperation agreements with other ex-Soviet republics were merely a cover to legitimise a Russian troop presence in pursuit of Russian hegemony. They referred to Russia's use of economic leverage against Moldova and the Baltic states as evidence of Russia's willingness to put pressure on its neighbours to conform to Russian geo-strategic plans.

Ukraine is of course particularly exposed to Russian influence. In addition to its large Russophone minority, Ukraine suffers from a significant structural trade deficit with its northern neighbour. Much of this relates to energy; Ukraine is dependent on Russia for some 90% of its supplies. Reports suggest that in the first quarter of 1994, Ukraine consumed (but did not pay for) Russian oil and gas worth \$900 million.<sup>13</sup> Energy debts

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<sup>12</sup> See, for example, the comments of Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, reported in J. Krauze, "Andrei Kozyrev n'exclut pas de rectifier les frontières", *Le Monde*, 8 June 1992.

<sup>13</sup> "Ukraine", p. 15.



are now estimated at 732 billion rubles and total debt to Russia at \$2.5 billion.<sup>14</sup> Two further issues bedeviled bilateral relations: the Black Sea fleet and nuclear weapons. The Russian-dominated Black Sea fleet remains stationed in the Crimean port of Sebastopol. Despite repeated attempts to agree on a division of this rusting asset (Dagomys, 1992; Yalta, 1992; Moscow, 1993; Massandra, 1993), ultimate agreement has eluded the parties so far. Likewise, arguments over nuclear weapons were often intemperate. Largely because of deteriorating relations with Russia, Ukraine began to equivocate on its original decision to eliminate nuclear weapons from its territory. It only agreed to their complete removal at the 14 January 1994 Moscow tripartite meeting with Russia and the US, and only in November did it accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a non-nuclear weapons state.

Even before July 1994, however, there was a growing appreciation of interdependence with Russia. This recognition was reinforced by the growing political influence of Ukraine's russophone east, and demonstrated by the 24 September 1993 decision to accede to the CIS Economic Union as an Associate Member. Under Kuchma, this recognition was made explicit. Kuchma criticised his predecessors "romantic" notion of Ukraine's place in the (Western) world and stressed that while there would be no political union with Russia, Ukraine had to recognise its position as part of cultural and economic Eurasia. Ukraine needed to develop a "strategic partnership" with Russia in which mutually beneficial economic contacts would contribute to Ukraine's long-term stability and independence.<sup>15</sup>

Obviously, there are dangers in this policy of rapprochement with Russia. First, Kuchma must convince Ukrainian nationalists of the utility of the policy; failure to do so will increase domestic political tension and internal instability. Secondly, Kuchma must hope that Russia's express ambitions to exert influence within the "near abroad" will be limited. At the very least, Russia seems set to use economic and diplomatic leverage in pursuit of

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<sup>14</sup> *Country Report: Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova* (London: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1st quarter 1994), p. 21.

<sup>15</sup> See, Kuchma's speech to the Verkhovna Rada of 11 October 1994 (Reprinted in *Golos Ukrainy*, 13 October 1994).

its goals and interests as a regional great power. The danger for Ukraine is that Russia may treat the CIS, and therewith also Ukraine, as a zone of special interest in which it tries to develop exclusive influence. (This scenario seems particularly plausible in conditions where Western relations with Russia deteriorate — e.g. as a result of NATO expansion — and where Russia was then inclined to consolidate its regional control in response to a perceived Western threat.) Alternatively, as Motyl argues, popular "great power" ideologies within a still unstable Russia could yet spur Russian generals and policy-makers to favour forms of military intervention in order to protect Russian interests.<sup>16</sup> Such intervention would have repercussions well beyond the borders of the CIS.

### 3. Relevance to the European Union

The preceding description of Ukraine and its relations with Russia shows that it presently fulfils Freedman's criteria for a "weak state":

States are weak because of the fragile nature of the civil society upon which they have been built, their undeveloped institutional structures, which are often unable to contain and channel political tensions, and their problems of poverty and economic adjustment. These weaknesses can lead to breakdowns of law and order, to secessionist movements, to outright civil war.<sup>17</sup>

In his article, Freedman goes on to explain that during the Cold War both East and West had a strong strategic interest in supporting and wooing weak states. However, with the demise of East-West confrontation, the relevance of these states to Western interests is no longer immediately obvious. Indeed, experience in formulating policy towards the states of former Yugoslavia indicates that perceptions of relevance (and thus policy prescriptions) may diverge significantly, even among established partners. In many Western democracies, the lack of a clear strategic interest has therefore produced an unwillingness to become involved and a preference to ignore, or at best contain (rather than resolve), the problems

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<sup>16</sup> A. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence: Ukraine after Totalitarianism*, New York, 1993, p. 121.

<sup>17</sup> L. Freedman, "Weak States and the West", *The Economist*, 11-17 September 1993, (Special Supplement: "The Future Surveyed"), p. 49.

and/or conflicts of weak states. However, Freedman also points out that the absence of "strategic" interests does not mean that the West does not have "vital" interests in some weak states, and that their problems, if unresolved, may eventually impinge on Western interests and security.<sup>18</sup>

Admittedly, Ukraine's current ability to impinge on the West directly is limited. Ukraine is now giving up its inherited nuclear weapons. Earlier, these gave Ukraine a form of nuclear capability, and the capacity to disrupt the global non-proliferation regime by which the West set so much store. Furthermore, while Ukraine's armed forces are large, they are of uncertain combat effectiveness and thus of limited relevance to Western military planners. Also, Ukraine plays a minimal role in global trade and competition<sup>19</sup>; its cultural and historical attachment to the West is limited; and, like other ex-Soviet republics, it is simply a long way away. Assuming these arguments to be correct, a hard-headed assessment of Western interests might indicate that a policy of minimal exposure to Ukraine is advisable.

Notwithstanding the above, a dispassionate analysis indicates that Ukraine's fate is of considerable, possibly even "vital interest" to Western Europe. The events of April 1986, i.e. the Chernobyl explosion which spread nuclear contamination over Europe, are a striking indication of Ukraine's wider relevance. If Ukraine's socio-economic problems continue, the difficulty of maintaining adequate supervision of this and other nuclear reactors can only increase. Further, were instability in Ukraine, or tension between Russia and Ukraine to increase, this could pose a threat to the supply of natural gas to Western Europe; 16.5% of the EU's natural gas comes via Ukraine. Alternatively, instability or even continued economic decline could provoke a flow of migrants which would create significant political

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 50. See also, L. Freedman, "The Politics of Military Intervention within Europe," in "War and Peace: European Conflict Prevention", *Chaillot Papers* 11, Paris, October 1993, p. 39 ff.

<sup>19</sup> EC Commission figures indicate that in the first three quarters of 1993 EC imports from Ukraine amounted to only 0.18%, and EC exports to Ukraine to only 0.31% of total EC trade. *Commission Information Document IP/94/244*, "Ukraine and European Commission Initial New Partnership Agreement", London, 23 March 1994, p. 4.

and economic pressures in the recipient countries.

Undoubtedly, however, the most important reason for Ukraine's significance lies in its relations with Russia. As indicated above, a degeneration in Russo-Ukrainian relations cannot be ruled out, even under the leadership of Presidents Kuchma and Yeltsin. As Ukraine and Russia come to define themselves on their own terms as independent states with different national interests, tensions and disagreements will inevitably arise. Unfortunately, a significant number of potentially clashing interests remain, e.g. minorities, basing rights in Crimea, differing visions of the CIS, etc. Between advanced, stable democracies such differences might be coordinated, negotiated and managed. Unfortunately, neither Russia nor Ukraine is yet stable or fully democratic. Motyl may therefore be right when he asserts that the Russo-Ukrainian relationship could degenerate as far as armed conflict and that "the impact on West European security and thus on global stability would be enormous".<sup>20</sup>

Further, in a critique of US policy towards the former Soviet Union, former US National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski argued that Ukraine is particularly relevant to Western interests because it is a test case for Russia's willingness to set aside its imperial past and to join the community of modern states:

It cannot be stressed strongly enough that without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be an empire, but with Ukraine suborned and then subordinated, Russia automatically becomes an empire.<sup>21</sup>

Further, Brzezinski insists that Russia can be "either an empire or a democracy, but it cannot be both."<sup>22</sup> He argues that:

... efforts to recreate and maintain an empire by coercion or economic

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<sup>20</sup> Motyl, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> Z. Brzezinski, "The Premature Partnership", *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1994, Vol. 73, No. 2, p. 80.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

subsidy would condemn Russia not only to dictatorship but to poverty."<sup>23</sup>

Since it was partly the cost of maintaining the Soviet empire that impoverished Russia, the best hope for prosperity and stability throughout the former Soviet Union is, according to Brzezinski, the creation of a system of "geo-political pluralism",<sup>24</sup> for which the linchpin would be a politically stable and economically viable Ukraine. If, on the other hand, Russia manages to reassert imperial control over Ukraine, it will essentially have re-established the empire and thus become a renewed threat to both regional and pan-European security.

Although the arguments above have concentrated on the negative reasons for Ukraine's significance to the West (i.e. on its disruptive potential), these should not obscure the many benefits that will accrue to the European Union and the Western community as a whole, if Ukraine evolves positively and peacefully into a successful, modern state. In terms of geopolitics, a stable Ukraine would be a significant factor for regional stability. In this context, it is significant that Ukraine has expressed its support for the Partnership for Peace initiative<sup>25</sup> and a willingness to accept an eventual expansion eastwards by NATO. It would therefore be a considerable asset to an enlarging Western European economic, political and defence community. Finally, even if its current difficulties make the day seem distant, Ukraine is also a huge potential buyer from and supplier to EU markets. Because of its geographical position, its size and wealth in human and natural resources, Ukraine's future development will have a powerful influence on the economic, political and security landscape of the entire region.

#### **4. The Provisions for a CFSP and Their Relevance to Ukraine**

The European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), as instituted by Title V of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) was conceived as a qualitative advance in the

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>25</sup> Foreign Minister Zlenko on a visit to NATO in September 1993. Reported by P. van Ham, "Ukraine, Russia and European Security: Implications for Western Policy", *Chailot Papers* 13, February 1994, p. 48.