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## Factors influencing the formation of the strategic position of the EU on Russian-Ukrainian problem

The article shows that the current EU common position on rejection of the Russian actions in Ukraine and sanctions imposed against Russia are based upon a fragile compromise of the multidirectional interests of the countries of the united Europe. However, the author argues that although some EU countries have taken an ambiguous stance on the conflict and are unwilling to share the burden of the economic sanctions against Russia, it is unlikely that in the near future their position can be a real obstacle to the implementation of the EU joint action.

***Keywords:*** *EU Member States, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, the common position, Russia, sanctions.*

## Фактори впливу на формування стратегічної позиції ЄС щодо російсько - українського питання

У статті аналізується нинішня спільна позиція ЄС стосовно несприйняття російських дій в Україні і запровадження санкцій проти Росії, що базується на основі хиткого компромісу різноспрямованих інтересів країн об›єднаної Європи. Водночас доводиться, що хоча частина країн ЄС зайняла неоднозначну позицію щодо конфлікту і не бажає розділяти тягар економічних санкцій проти РФ, малоймовірно, що найближчим часом їхня позиція може стати реальною перешкодою для впровадження спільних дій ЄС.

***Ключові слова:*** *країни-члени ЄС, російсько-український конфлікт, спільна позиція, санкції, Росія.*

## Czynniki wpływające na kształtowanie się pozycji strategicznej UE w kwestiach rosyjsko-ukraińskich

W artykule analizuje bieżące wspólnego stanowiska UE w sprawie odrzucenia działań Rosji na Ukrainie i sankcji wobec Rosji, która opiera się na kruchych kompromisowych wyrównawczych interesów zjednoczonej Europy. Jednocześnie dowodzi, że chociaż niektóre UE podjęła

niejednoznaczne stanowisko w sprawie konfliktu i nie chcą dzielić ciężar sankcji gospodarczych wobec Rosji, jest mało prawdopodobne, że w niedalekiej przyszłości ich pozycja może być prawdziwą przeszkodą w realizacji wspólnego działania UE.

***Słowa kluczowe:*** *państwa członkowskie UE, konflikt rosyjsko-ukraiński, wspólne stanowisko, sankcje, Rosji.*

In the creation and implementation of foreign policy of the European Union has always played an important role still played by the positions and interests of individual member states. This stems primarily from the restrictions associated with unanimity voting in the EU Council and the European Council on the basic amount of foreign policy and security issues. In most cases, it is necessary to achieve the consensus of the Member States of certain actions and decisions of the EU. And if it fails, then repeatedly consensus that acquired forms of "rotten compromise"[1], which is very limited effectiveness of joint activities. For example, on the Polish-Swedish proposals on "Eastern Partnership" after reaching a consensus among Member States in the EU institutions at the output remained almost anything that would contain a value-added tax, compared with current until the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Therefore, the position of the EU on the international stage is often the "lowest common denominator", the process of working hours - a long and rather energy is used to resolve internal disputes, instead of forming a strong common position in relation to other states.

The positions of the Member States are very important for the formation of a comprehensive long-term strategy for the EU, which would be aimed at strengthening Ukrainian statehood and integration of our country to Europe and coherent EU policy towards Russia in the conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Therefore, understanding how serious are the differences between the Member States and how to change this situation, is paramount.

Russian-Ukrainian military conflict demonstrates weak cohesion of Europe to external threats, the main reason why, no doubt, is the divergence of interests of EU member states in terms of their foreign policy priorities in general and towards Eastern Europe in particular. The main interests of most EU countries in Eastern Europe are economic in nature, related to energy and access to markets. The interest of some of the EU in cooperation with Eastern Europe also follows the issues of security and immigration. But in general we can speak of the traditional Member States' deficit of political will and common interest to form policy towards its eastern neighbors. Eastern Dimension of EU policy that was of particular importance for Brussels after extensions 2004 and 2007, has remained one of the most controversial and contradictory perception among members of the Union. Finally, D. Milcharek rightly points out

[1] Milczarek D (2005). Foreign and Security Policy - a Challenge and a Strategic Choice for the European Union of the 21 Century // The Global Challenges / eds. A. Kukliński, K. Pawłowski. - Nowy Sącz,. - P. 35.

that the formation of a common coherent EU policy towards Eastern Europe was not conducive ambivalent position themselves recipients of this policy [2].

Advantages Revolution in Ukraine and Russian-Ukrainian war, unfortunately not led to the formation of a broad consensus in the united Europe. On this occasion the American realist Robert Kagan notes that "even Europeans XXI century, despite all the benefits of their union, unable to unite against a predator in their environment and, in the past, willing to give at the mercy of the weakest to save their own (financial ) skins". In our opinion, such a verdict exaggerated and perhaps premature. Indeed, although there are doubts and some EU countries do not approve, for example, increased economic sanctions and other restrictive measures to Russia, but in the end result: still no Member State did not dare veto right joint action or EU position on these issues. At the meeting of the Union for Foreign Affairs June 22, 2015 automatically without discussing sanctions against Russia were extended until 31 January 2016. EU countries adhere to a common position on the rejection of Russian actions in Ukraine and sanctions against Russia by consensus of all 28 members is considered a significant achievement. However, it is necessary to agree with John. Sherr that Russia's policy towards Ukraine is largely fueled by the conviction that the lack of resources and core national interests outweigh leading European countries and will enable Russia to realize its interests in the post. However, says the expert, the idea of the Kremlin were false[3].

Reaching consensus among the 28 EU member states - a complex process. In discussing the extension of sanctions against Russia, not to mention the introduction of new restrictive measures, serious differences remain and continue discussions on the matter. Among EU countries, on the one hand, there are "hawks" calling rigidly resist Russia, strengthening economic sanctions and providing active support to Ukraine. Some even involves supplying weapons for protection. Since the beginning of this hard line chosen Poland, the Baltic states, perhaps to a lesser extent - Romania. Each of them has its own internal reasons, related primarily to the near history. This group also tend United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries.

The earliest and most fundamental position on the "Ukrainian crisis," the Russian annexation and subsequent military campaign in the Donbass formulated Poland, Lithuania and Estonia. Polish foreign minister, together with his French and German counterparts intermediary in negotiations between the protesters and the President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovych February 20, 2014, while Lithuania has used its presidency of the UN Security Council to convene an emergency meeting of the Ukrainian issue. In turn, the Estonian President TH Ilves at the meeting with Ukrainian leaders in September 2014 said that the Ukrainian-Russian conflict - a "war between Europe and non-Europe, the conflict between different value systems "[4] in response to the violence against euromaidan Estonia, Lithuania and Poland gave the wounded

[2] Мільчарек Д. (2008). Європейський Союз та його місце в сучасному світі. Львів : «Інформація. Поступ. Перспективи». - С. 149.

[3] Шерр Дж. (2014). Міркування про нову сварку Сходу і Заходу / Національна безпека і оборона. - № 5-6 (148 149). - С. 89.

[4] A Region Disunited. (2015). Central European Responses to the Russia-Ukraine Crisis : Europe Policy Paper / ed. by Joerg Forbrig1. - Washington : The German Marshall Fund of the United States. - P. 3.

Ukrainian health care in their hospitals. in addition, all three countries have mobilized strong reaction of civil society to the events in Ukraine.

Although the position of Poland and the Baltic countries, which have long pointed to the threat from Russia (in 2009 a group of experts from Central Europe warned in an open letter to the administration of Barack Obama, published in Gazeta Wyborcza that Russia is returning to the policy of the nineteenth century . with tactics and methods of the XXI century [5]) has long been the position of the minority and they were called alarmists, with the growth of aggressive behavior of Russia and increased the intensity of the fighting in eastern Ukraine, it gradually became a majority position. The leading role in this process is played by Germany, as Angela Merkel has made great efforts to agree the EU institutions common position on Russia's actions in Ukraine and sanctions it considers as "necessary and inevitable" [6]. A clear and unambiguous position of German Chancellor most articulated was made in November 2014 after brysbenskoho summit of G20: "We can not afford to beat the old notion of spheres of influence, along with the neglect of international law. "We will oppose this policy", no matter how long it did not last matter how hard it was and how much failure did not bring it. According to John Sherr, with its resolute, methodical and consistent approach, Angela Merkel during the past year was the embodiment of Western firmness and solidarity [7].

However, some EU countries have taken an ambiguous stance on Ukraine and Russia in the current war. They are conventionally called "Russia's understanders" ("those who understand Russia"). France, South Union Member States (Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, South-East Europe) in no hurry to confront with Russia through Ukraine. It is possible that some EU countries in the future may veto new sanctions against Russia or block extension. Such intentions have repeatedly expressed in government circles in Italy, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Greece and Hungary. Some warning at various times put forward representatives of the authorities of Austria and France.

Surprising rather uncertain position of some Central European countries on Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Despite the common history as a Soviet satellite, and (most of them) direct occupation of Moscow in the twentieth century., Still fresh experience your own transition, good understanding of contemporary Eastern Europe and Russia, proximity to the conflict zone, deep historical, cultural, social and economic ties with its neighbors in the East, the region is surprisingly rozdilysya in relation to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Unlike Poland and the Baltic States, the response of the southern part of Central Europe to the events was more restrained. It ranged from cautious condemnation of Russia's actions in Bulgaria, noticeable distancing of these issues in Romania quiet pragmatism in Slovakia and clear pro-Russian vote in the Czech Republic and Hungary. Representatives of these countries at meetings of

[5] An Open Letter to the Obama Administration from Central and Eastern Europe // Gazeta Wyborcza. - 2009. - July 15

[6] Шергін С. (2015). Україна, США і ЄС: криза дипломатії доби глобалізації / Зовнішні справи. - № 1. - С. 26.

[7] Шерр Дж. (2014). Міркування про нову сварку Сходу і Заходу / Національна безпека і оборона. - № 5-6 (148 149). - С. 89.

the European Council or vidmovchuyutsya of the Ukrainian issue, or take too vague or not pro-Ukrainian position. The debate in the EU on sanctions against Russia only deepened the differences between the countries of Central Europe. While in Warsaw, Tallinn and Vilnius are calling deepen restrictive measures against Russia, delete it from your system Swift and even expressed willingness to supply weapons to Ukraine, Prague, Bratislava and Budapest has repeatedly publicly stated their doubts about the effectiveness of sanctions, pointing to their negative effects themselves and other EU countries, and strongly oppose the supply Ukraine arms. It is clear that this factor plays an important role their energy and financial dependence on Russia. However, their post-war history, dependence on Moscow via Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance should at least promote a greater understanding of the potential threats from the Kremlin. The diversity of views and responses from the countries of Central Europe casts doubt on its ability to act as an internal advocate for the EU's eastern neighbors and weakens the ability of the EU as a whole to respond effectively to the spiral of violence in Ukraine.

It should be borne in mind that the key line of conduct of the Russian Federation in the European direction today is to encourage divisions within the united Europe, where noticeable hesitation and reluctance of some countries to follow the economic losses due to the introduction of sanctions. She hopes to divide Europe and weaken the West to increase its own importance in the world. Europe is slowly moving in understanding the nature and danger of the Russian challenge. However, most of the group "Russia's understanders" too dependent on the EU in terms of economic well-being, in addition they need to Brussels and Berlin to address other issues. So far they agree with the general principles of EU policy regarding the rejection of Russian actions in Ukraine.

A key role in shaping a common EU position on the Russian-Ukrainian conflict plays today, without a doubt, Germany. As noted by William Speck, a leading position in the eurozone crisis, which forced Germany to make forward as a great country with a strong economy, Chancellor Angela Merkel was among the leaders on the issue of the conflict with Russia.

Influence Germany played a crucial role not only in implementing effective sanctions of the EU against Russia in March 2014 and their expansion in July and September 2014, and in disrupting the pipeline project "South Stream", stopping / slowing the convergence of Hungary and Russia, dragging France with a group of skeptics on the issue of sanctions to the opposite camp and indirect impact through Paris to other southern member states. In general, German policy fits into the overall approach to the conflict, the European Union, which includes 3 components: Sanctions against Russia Ukraine financial support and search format of negotiations for the settlement of certain aspects of the conflict diplomatically. Germany strongly supports sanctions against Russia for the purpose of putting pressure on Moscow to end fighting in eastern Ukraine, but also actively working to create the conditions under which they may be eliminated in the future. This refers to the efforts of Germany's bilateral with France with

a view to a political settlement, support of the contact group set up under the auspices of the OSCE, the coordination of a united Europe from the United States. Angela Merkel realizes that to lift the sanctions against Russia for that increasingly louder appear dissatisfied with the Member States, it is necessary to progress in resolving the conflict. It is unknown how many endure agreed by skeptical about sanctions Member States.

The current position of Germany on the Ukrainian-Russian conflict demonstrates significant modification of its eastern policy. For chancellorship G. Schroeder and Merkel German accents Eastern policy focused mainly on Russia - a close relationship with it have a long historical tradition, and now both sides are to each other important partners, especially in the economic sphere. The trade turnover between Germany and Russia in 2013 amounted to 76.5 billion euros [8]. Russian annexation of the Crimea and the war in eastern Ukraine had led to greater realism in German policy towards Russia. This gives reason to believe that in the near future may change the paradigm of German Eastern policy, in particular its attitude to Russia and Eastern Europe and South Caucasus covered by the "Eastern Partnership".

Today among German politicians, researchers, activists and journalists engaged in Ukrainian-Russian conflict with science, journalism or social position, is the debate about interpretation and evaluation of events in Ukraine. Fifth December 2014 60 prominent representatives of German political, business and cultural circles published in newspapers Die Zeit and Der Tagesspiegel, and later Russian online inoSMY.Ru appeal "new war in Europe. Not in our name!", Known as " Call 60 German celebrities. " In it, they asked Berlin to continue its partnership with Moscow. A week later, in mid-December 2014, 142 German experts on Eastern Europe published in the newspaper Zeit Online (Hamburg), Der Tagesspiegel, Die Welt, Berliner Zeitung (Berlin) and Der Standard (Vienna) treatment response, which called to ensure that German policy towards Russia based on realities, not illusions. Noting that "this war is a clear aggressor and victim clearly identified," the signatories said that "we Germans can not again turn a blind eye when it comes to the sovereignty of one of the former Soviet republics, the survival of the Ukrainian state" in our own interests to oppose the export anti-liberal ideas of the Kremlin in the EU"[9].

This discussion, formal statements of many members of the German political elite and the country's position in the EU concerning Ukrainian-Russian war show that many members of the German political elite, including the Social Democrats and the business community have changed their attitude to Russia, and then there is every chance that in the near future Eastern policy of Germany will be more realistic and balanced in the context of relations with Russia, on the one hand, and the countries of the "Eastern partnership" - on the other. But Berlin, like Paris or Rome, it is difficult to give up their long-term policy, based on the hope that economic

[8] Шерр Дж. (2014). Міркування про нову сварку Сходу і Заходу / Національна безпека і оборона. - № 5-6 (148 149). - С. 89.

[9] . Умланд А. (2015). Захист миру замість винагороди експансії / Андреас Умланд // Дзеркало тижня. Україна. - № 3. - 30 січня.

cooperation with Russia eventually transform it politically. A more sober and realistic view of Russia in the making.

In the negotiations with Russia, a major partner in Germany today is France. Angela Merkel coordinates with French President Francois Hollande, bringing it to the problems associated with the Russian-Ukrainian war ("Normandy format"). Although France has foreign policy interests in the South (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East), Paris, seeking to strengthen its position in Europe in recent years actively involved in the formation of EU policy in the east. Overall, the European Union can distinguish two informal units in terms of geography major political and economic interests of individual Member States. On the one hand, this "Eastern bloc", to which the central Germany and who expects to shift the Union's center of gravity further east. On the other - "Southern Bloc" led by France. Acting jointly with the French in "Norman format", Germans are more likely that the results of the negotiations positively perceived other southern member states, especially Italy and Spain.

It is a pity that the "negotiating team" from the EU is not represented Poland. Seen that the Weimar Triangle format that worked well in his time in terms of promoting European integration Poland, could be useful in the settlement of certain aspects of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. These capabilities were demonstrated during the "Ukrainian crisis" when the foreign ministers of Germany, France and Poland acted as intermediaries in negotiations with Yanukovych Maidan. Today has created favorable conditions for deeper involvement of Poland to the formation of EU's Eastern policy - talking about the presidency of the former Prime Minister of Poland Donald Tusk in the European Council and its close interaction with Merkel (whose grandfather was a Pole).

Regarding France should recognize that the most difficult challenge for its leadership in terms of responding to Ukrainian-Russian conflict is an agreement for the sale of two French helikopteronostsiv "Mistral" of Russia. Today delayed transfer of the last first "Mistral", but Ukraine should be ready for that in the future, "Mistral" still can be transmitted Russia.

In general, assessing policies southern EU Member States on Russia and Ukraine in the current conflict, it is necessary to indicate that its contents determine several factors. First, the geographical priority for these countries has always been South Europe, the Maghreb, Africa and the Middle East (plus Latin America for Spain). In the Eastern Neighborhood, unlike Germany, they have geopolitical interests. Secondly, these countries have traditional historical ties with Russia and other states of the former Soviet Union tend to think through the Russian prism. Hence - the vision of the EU's Eastern policy on the principle of "Russia first", a tacit recognition sphere of "privileged interests" of this space, lack of knowledge of Ukrainian realities, a false perception of events. It should be added that these countries never experienced a direct threat from Russia for their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence, not suffered from its aggression. Third, the financial and economic interests factors significantly influence their policy on this issue because these countries are important economic partners of Russia.

Fourth, the growth of negative trends in several European countries, including those considered above as euroscepticism, anti-Americanism, anti-globalization, antyliberalizm (which demonstrated the results of recent elections to the European Parliament, where noticeable results gained extreme right party), automatically multiplies the number "friends of Russia" in Europe. Fifth, revealing a powerful Kremlin propaganda through the media and concealed them support some political parties and campaigns, which exposes the vulnerability of many countries of the EU to the Russian influence.

The differences in the approaches of Member States to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict led to the formation of a double strategy of the European Union on the one side - sanctions against Russia, and on the other - search format of talks to resolve the conflict diplomatically. However, after the already numerous agreements with Russia in various formats ("Geneva", "Normandy"), and above all Minsk-1 and Minsk-2, it is not executed and continues aggression against Kyiv, diplomatic way to turn Russia into a more " cooperative "status seems problematic.

The revolution of dignity in Ukraine, the Kremlin's annexation of Crimea and Russian-Ukrainian war created new fault lines around the world. In the situation today, each of the countries, especially the EU should take any sides. Unfortunately, some countries have begun to realize the seriousness of the situation in Ukraine only after such a dramatic event as whipping "Boeing" Flight MH17.

The challenge for the EU member states - Spain, France and Italy, not to mention Germany - are working to resolve the conflict and stop Russian aggression. This is no easy task, considering the financial aspect in times of crisis, but the current conflict concerns the most fundamental principles of the EU. So the most important thing in Rome, Paris and Madrid can do to help Ukraine - is, first, to adhere rate agreed in Brussels.

Secondly, they must have a common position and vision of what should happen that the sanctions were lifted. Do ceasefire will be sufficient or necessary fully implement the Minsk agreement, including the establishment of effective control over the Ukrainian constitutional authorities of the Russian-Ukrainian border.

Third, Ukraine desperately needs help from the EU Member States. It is not only financial support but also assistance for reform and putting pressure on the Ukrainian authorities to fight corruption and reform the judiciary.

Fourth, these three countries should consider applying sanctions reputation for Russians support Putin's aggressive behavior. For example, it could be withdrawal of the decision to award Gennady Timchenko Order of the Legion of Honor, which he received in 2013.

In turn, Ukraine should significantly develop their communication, both formal and informal levels, Rome, Paris and Madrid in areas of mutual interest. Moreover, Kyiv should not just protest and argue on the basis of mutually beneficial proposals. For example, you should consider attraction of Paris, Rome and Madrid to modernize its army through contracts with companies from these countries and by expanding their participation in the NATO Trust Fund.

Cricket Ukraine is important for other former Soviet republics, as well as for stability in the border states. The way Ukraine should be viewed in the wider, as, for example, the French Revolution, which went through a long and painful reforms to modernize. Ukraine keeps its chance of success, and if it can be realized, it will be a positive example for the "Eastern Partnership" and beyond, including Russia.

Thus, EU sanctions against Russia will most likely be saved. Although part of the EU would be willing to canceled the slightest movements of the Kremlin toward the settlement of the conflict or even without any conditions, it is unlikely that their position can be a real obstacle to the implementation of joint action. At least until the sanctions regime will support Berlin.