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Polish factor in formation and elaboration of the European Union's policy in regard to Ukraine

the paper focuses on interrelations between two countries in the sphere of European integration policy, Poland's assistance and support to Ukraine on its way to the EU. The author analyzes Poland's external policy in regard to Ukraine over the last ten years after the former joined the EU, points out the attempts to force integration of Ukraine to the EU under V. Yushchenko, to commence dialogue with V. Yanukovych and compel the latter to start reforms, and over the last years – these have been the attempts to support democratic transformation of Ukraine. However, the fact is that despite friendly relations with Ukrainian leaders and lobbying Kyiv's interests in the European Union, at none of the stages could Warsaw succeed in achieving its objectives concerning Ukraine. Nevertheless, Poland does not give up on implementing its vision of the "Eastern policy" as to Ukraine. Nowadays, Poland pursues efforts within the program of the eastern partnership, to make its main "mission in the east" – strategic partnership with Ukraine – an imperative for the EU foreign policy, despite all rageful changes, which have taken place in the post-Soviet territory or as a result of them.

Keywords: *Poland, Ukraine, the European Union, European integration, transformation, reforms, democracy, European parliament.*

ПОЛЬСЬКИЙ ФАКТОР У ФОРМУВАННІ ТА РОЗВИТКУ ПОЛІТИКИ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОГО СОЮЗУ СТОСОВНО УКРАЇНИ

У статті досліджено взаємовідносини двох держав у руслі політики європейської інтеграції, допомогу і підтримку Польщею України на її шляху до Європейського Союзу. Автор аналізує зовнішню політику Польщі за минулі десять років після її вступу в ЄС щодо України, вказує на спроби форсувати інтеграцію України з ЄС при В. Ющенку, розпочати діалог з В. Януковичем і підштовхнути його до реформ, а в останні роки – намагання знову підтримати демократичну трансформацію України. Однак фактом є те, що попри дружні взаємини з українськими лідерами і лобіювання інтересів Києва в ЄС, ні на одному з цих етапів Варшава щодо України не змогла досягти своїх цілей. Втім, Польща не полишає спроб втілити в життя своє бачення «східної політики» стосовно України. Нині Польща

продовжує зусилля у межах програми східного партнерства, щоб її головна «місія на сході» – стратегічний союз з Україною – все-таки став імперативом зовнішньої політики ЄС, попри бурхливі зміни, що настали на пострадянському просторі, або ж завдяки їм.

Ключові слова: *Польща, Україна, Європейський Союз, європейська інтеграція, трансформація, реформи, демократія, Європейський парламент.*

When Ukraine declared its independence, its relationships with the EU were little or no different from those of other post-Soviet countries, except the Baltics. Formal contacts between Kyiv and Brussels were initiated in 1992, when the first meetings of the European and Ukrainian leaders took place. In 1993 the representational office of the European Commission opened in Kyiv, and in 1994 the EU Council determined goals and priorities of cooperation with Ukraine: initiatives for human rights, elaboration of democratic institutions and market economy as well as modernization of Ukrainian energetic sector. At that time, Ukraine was the first among the post-Soviet countries to sign a typical partnership and co-operation agreement with the EU, which came into force only in four years after being ratified by the Ukrainian part. "Multi-vector" policy declared by President L. Kuchma, at first was focused at re-establishing relations with Russia, but at the same time did not mean refusal of European ambitions, stated by First president L. Kravchuk. It became evident on June 11, 1998 when L. Kuchma adopted the strategy of the EU-Ukraine association agreement, which presupposed strategic steps to association with the EU, and then full membership.

In October 1998 took place the second EU-Ukraine summit, and the relations between Kyiv and Brussels were characterized as strategic partnership, and Ukrainian party confirmed its desire to sign the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. However, athwart Kyiv's expectations the European Council insisted on implementation of the previous Association Agreement as "the preliminary condition for successful integration of Ukraine into the EU economy and declaration of its European nature"[1]. Moreover, due to close relations between Russia and the biggest European countries (France, Germany, Italy), which were established at the beginning of V. Putin's presidential term, chances of Ukraine to join the EU became less real, as the leaders of the abovementioned countries believed that it could lead to isolation of Moscow[2]. At the same time, blazed up the scandal concerning G. Gongadze case and anticipated shipments of weapons to Iraq in violation of an international embargo, and these brought discredit to L. Kuchma's administration in the eyes of the West. The situation essentially changed in 2004, when over a short period of time two events took place: on May 1 Poland became the affiliated

[1] European Council Common Strategy of 11 December 1999 on Ukraine // Official Journal of the European Communities. 23.12.1999 [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: https://www.consiliumeuropa.eu/uedocs/ cmsUpload/ukEN.pdf.

[2] Hud B., Didukh A. Ukraine-European Union relations: achievements, challenges and prospects / B. Hud, A. Didukh // Poland in EU: Adjustment and Modernisation. Lessons for Ukraine / Ed. A. Adamczyk, K. Zajaczkowski.UniversitasVarsoviensis. – Warsawa – Lviv, 2012. – P. 239.

member of the EU (and the lobbyist of Kyiv's European interests)[3], and in November-December Ukraine witnessed the Orange Revolution.

Presidential elections in Ukraine, where rivaled V. Yanukovych, who believed to be L. Kuchma's successor and a candidate from opposition V. Yushchenko became an impulse for the revolution. Scandals had accompanied the presidential campaign long before the very elections: on September 5 Yushchenko's adherents claimed the former to be poisoned during the dinner with a high rank official of the State Service of Ukraine, and after that the version of dioxin poisoning appeared. On the first ballot Yushchenko defeated his rival with the advantage of 0.5%, however on the second ballot, which took place on November 21, 2004, Yanukovych was claimed a winner with the advantage over 2.5%. Ukrainian opposition said that they did not recognize elections as valid due to numerous violations and headed their adherents in the streets (after that appeared the name "Maidan Nezalezhnosti"). During the two-week public opposition between the Ukrainian authority and protesters, international mediators made active efforts to regulate the situation, and Poland played crucial role.

From the very beginning, Polish public opinion in its majority supported V. Yushchenko, who openly stated his democratic pro-Western orientation (against V. Yanukovych was blotted reputation of L. Kuchma, both after the murder of G. Gongadze and other scandals of his second presidential term). On the eve of the second ballot demonstrations and pickets in support of the Ukrainian opposition took place in Warsaw, and hence they strengthened a lot after posting of the results. With the outbreak of the crisis V. Yushchenko personally turned to former Polish president L. Walesa, asking the latter to come to Kyiv and support protesting Ukrainians and he willingly agreed. At that time acting president of Poland A. Kwasniewski, benefiting from close relations both with L. Kuchma with whom he had been cooperated since 1990s and with Ukrainian opposition, started preparing the ground for international mediation under the EU aegis. The Polish party proposed and applied the format of "round table", where besides L. Kuchma, V. Yanukovych, V. Yushchenko, the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada V. Lytvyn participated presidents of Poland and Lithuania A. Kwasniewski and V. Adamkus correspondingly, the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy J. Solana, the OSCE Secretary-General J. Kubis and the speaker of the Russian Duma B. Gryzlov.

Three rounds of the round-table negotiations brought no visible results, but, definitely promoted to work out a compromise alternative: on December 3 the Supreme Court of Ukraine upheld Yushchenko's claim in part, overturning the results of the poll and setting the revote. After the positive result of this "third ballot" Yushchenko, first of all, gave a call to O. Kwaskiewski to thank for mediation. Such an outcome of the Ukrainian political crisis caused extreme enthusiasm among authorities, expert and civil circles in Poland, which believed it to be

[3] Wasiuta S. Stosunki polsko-ukrainskie / S. Wasiuta // Polska wobec sąsiadów: współczesne stosunki polityczne / Red. W.T. Modzelewski. – Olsztyn: Instytut Nauk Politycznych Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego, 2009. – S. 95.

the most profound success of the Polish "eastern policy" and a real pivot of Kyiv to democracy, which opened the way for Ukraine to the European Union and NATO[4].

Warsaw immediately commenced active actions in this direction, having declared from the mouth of minister of Foreign Affairs A. Rotfeld its desire to promote "new phase of relations between the West and Ukraine"[5]. Polish final aim was to make the EU open for Ukraine the prospect of membership and the NATO offered the course of actions within the Alliance (Membership Action Plan). And at the beginning these efforts were successful – on April 21, 2005 the NATO proposed Kyiv to start an intensified dialogue concerning the prospect of membership (the plan was supposed to appear in 2008).

That year Ukraine and six countries-members of the European Neighborhood Policy signed with the EU a three-year Action plan for cooperation. It predetermined the conditions which were to be accomplished by Kyiv in order to move closer to the European Union: establishing democratic state, reformation of the system of justice and implementation of market reforms necessary to enter the WTO. The latter was required to create the free trade zone with the EU and the European Commission contributed to that, officially declared Ukraine the country with the market economy (November 2005). At the same time the European Commission did not support the claim of the European Parliament to provide Ukraine with the clear European prospect through "other forms of associations", except the ENP action plan[6], which Warsaw constantly supported. Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Meller publicly stated that "great enlargement of 2004 revived the EU", that its borders should be drawn aside towards the east and south-east, including Ukraine. To his point of view, the EU eastern neighbors with pro-European orientation, which was easily shifted, could not be doomed to the status of everlasting partners, but should have the right to count on membership, no matter how long-term this prospect was[7].

Let us mention, that against this background bilateral relations between Poland and Ukraine were quite active: only in 2005 presidents Yushchenko and Kwasniewski met ten times; there were several meetings in four-party format of presidents of Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania and Georgia, and in June 2005 Kyiv held the economic forum, involving heads of Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova. It clearly identified those post-Soviet countries which were not interested in cooperation within the CIS frame, and which

[4] Fedorowicz K. Polityka Polski wobec Rosji, Ukrainy I Bialorusi w latach 1989-2010 / K. Fedorowicz. – Poznań: Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, 2011. – S. 206.

[5] Informacja Rządu na temat polskej politiki zagranicznej przedstawiona na posiedzeniu Sejmu 21 stycznia 2005 roku przez Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych RP prof. Adama Daniela Rotfelda [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/polityka_zagraniczna/priorytety_polityki_zagr_2012_2016/expose2/expose_2005/?printMode=true.

[6] European Parliament resolution on the result of the Ukraine elections.13.01.2015 [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу:http://www.europarl.europa/eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P6-TA-2005-0009.

[7] Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych S. Millera o zadaniach Polskiej politiki zagranichnej w 2006 r. przedstawiona na 10. Posiedzeniu Sejmu RP V kadencji. 15.02.2006 [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http://www. msz.gov.pl/resource/a9903f58-ddbb-4bc-0-ba49-ee81c688d690:JCR.

were relying on the new EU members (first of all Poland and Lithuania) in their desire to integrate into European and Euro-Atlantic structures. Confirming the shift of Polish-Ukrainian relations to the new level, Kwasniewski and Yushchenko in 2005 opened the reconstructed Cemetery of the Defenders in Lviv, which all the time was a symbol of grievous historical heritage within relations of two countries. Having won presidential elections in December 2005, the leader of right-wing conservative party "Law and Justice" L. Kachynski carried on the policy of Polish-Ukrainian cooperation. New Polish President was, probably, even more active supporter of pro-Western and democratic Ukraine, than his predecessor and immediately stated that strategic union with Kyiv must take more concrete shape.

Soon Kachynski advanced his first initiative, when the gas conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine (late 2005) happened, offering to create within the EU and NATO an absolutely new organization "European Pact for Energy Security". It was mentioned in the draft that all members of the treaty committed themselves to take measures in case there is a kind of energy threat towards one of them. And though Poland often declared that the initiative did not bear anti-Russian nature, big European countries, interested in cooperation with Russian Federation (Germany and Italy) as well as the EU leaders spoke out against it. However, when Ukraine tried to revive the idea to elongate the already built pipeline Odesa-Brody to Plock and Gdansk to fill it with the Caspian and Middle-Asian oil and consequently lower dependence on Russian energy resources, Warsaw did not support it. Except the advantage of rhetoric over factual steps, clear anti-Russian underlying message of Kachynski's policy concerning support of Ukraine did not put new quality into Polish-Ukrainian relations[8], especially since there was a considerable split within the new Ukrainian government itself.

In September 2005 president Yushchenko dismissed the prime minister, his former companion in the "Orange Revolution" Yu. Tymoshenko and after the victory of the Party of Regions in the parliamentary elections of 2006 had to put up with the appointment to this position his rival V. Yanukovych. Though, polish prime minister Ya. Kachynski declared that Poland would cooperate with any democratically elected government of Ukraine; it was difficult for politicians to find common language with Yanukovych, who was supposed to be pro-Russian and authoritarian. Frequency of Polish-Ukrainian top-level contacts reduced, and sometimes there were differences of foreign policy opinions. Thus, in 2006 in Brussels Prime Minister Yanukovych declared that in the near future Kyiv would not take up an action plan, concerning its joining the NATO, whereas the President of Poland continually repeated that the alliance would enlarge with the help of Ukraine. Another example of divergences became a ban on meat and meat products from Poland (as well as Belarus and Moldova), introduced by the Ukrainian government, due to the absence of necessary veterinarian documentation, and to be precise, in particular the fact that the negotiations over the ban removal lasted almost a year. Yushchenko

[8] FedorowiczK. PolitikaPolskiwobecRosji, UkrainyIBialorusiwlatach 1989-2010 / K. Fedorowicz. – Poznań: Uniwersytetim. AdamaMickiewiczawPoznaniu, 2011. – S. 207.

and Kachynski led their own policy of bilateral relations, where the crucial role belonged to historical issues – condemnation of the Soviet past. Thus, the President of Poland on more than one occasion participated in mourning events, dedicated to the memory of Holodomor in Ukraine in the 1930s.

In December 2007 Poland and Ukraine tried to reload the relations between the countries, signing the declaration on common challenges and new dimensions of strategic partnership. Therefore, the declaration contained the claim to the EU countries and institutions to take into account the resolution of the European Parliament of November 15, 2007 in reference to Ukraine, namely that negotiations between Ukraine and the EU must lead to adoption of the Association Agreement, including the following possibility of membership[9]. Negotiation mandate, as to the document which was to substitute the Agreement on partnership and cooperation of 1994 was issued by the European commission in 2007, but in fact the talks commenced in February 2008, when Ukraine entered the WTO. At the EU-Ukraine summit in September 2008 it was decided to turn this treaty into the Association Agreement, while within the EU at that time was widely discussed the Polish-Swedish initiative of the "Eastern Partnership", which gave the same right to all the members. Thus, as in case of the ENP in 2003, Ukraine now appeared in the same list of countries, which had quite less experience of cooperation with the EU (this time only together with its post-Soviet neighbors), which of course did not set off any approval on the part of the Ukrainian authority.

The prescient were the words of former president of Poland Kwasniewski, who in 2007 warned that "out of five minutes, which Ukraine had in its newest history, four had already passed away and one was left"[10]. Thus, Kyiv had less and less chances to convince the EU to force their relationship, as it constantly immersed itself into political chaos and economic stagnation.

The conflict between president Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yanukovych led to the fact that in April 2007 the former exercised the right to dismiss the parliament and set the elections on the basis of formal violations, while creating the former ruling coalition. After a two-month political crisis, accompanied by mutual mass actions, the parties agreed to conduct parliamentary elections, where the Party of Regions gained the majority, though the coalition was formed by Yushchenko's and Tymoshenko's adherents. The reunion of the "Orange coalition" was marked by a distinctive scandal, when the president, new Prime Minister Yu. Tymoshenko and Speaker of the Parliament A. Yatseniuk secretly sent a letter to the NATO headquarters stating the desire of Ukraine to get the Action Plan, the request

[9] European Parliament resolution of 15 November 2007 on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http://www.Europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language= EN&reference=P6-TA-2007-0538/

[10] Wójciechowski M. Nowy plan Juszczenki. Wywiad z Aleksandrem Kwasniewskim / M. Wójciechowski // Gazeta Wyborcza. – 2007.– 19.04. – № 92. – S. 24 [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу:http://www.arhiwum.wyborcza.pl/Arhiwum/1,0,4857709,20070419R-P-DGW,NOWY_PLAN_JUSZCZENKI.html

which was denied at Bucharest summit due to the active opposition of the Russian Federation and cautious position of many European countries. However, quite soon an ordinary struggle for power as well as different reactions to the Russian-Georgian armed conflict in 2008 (Yuhchenko together with his Polish counterpart Kachynski sharply criticized Moscow's actions, while Tymoshenko gave a reserved attitude to it) again led former allies to split.

In Poland after the parliamentary elections of 2007 D. Tusk, a leader of the centrist party "Civic Platform", became the Prime Minister and decided to implement more pragmatic "eastern politics" approach. Besides, the attempts to adjust relations with Russia, which seemingly had been irrevocably ruined by his predecessor, Tusk openly raised an issue, whether to support Ukraine, after all the failures of the "Orange Team" or not. It was in contrast with the position of acting President L. Kachynski, who promised Ukraine support like a "friendly country", and in one of his speeches showed his adherence to the historical stereotypes, citing J. Giedroyc's famous phrase: "The more friends we will have in the east, the more significant we will be in the west". Presidents of Poland and Ukraine repeatedly met with their Azerbaijanian counterpart G. Aliev in the frame of energy summits, to convince him to supply energy resources into the region to reduce dependence on the Russian Federation. The negotiations involved Georgia, Turkey and the Baltic countries, but the strategic project as to elongation of the pipeline Odesa-Brody across Poland did not succeed. Moreover, some problems appeared between Poland and Ukraine, if not particularly threatening, but which stimulated to believe, that the relations between two countries had finally changed from strategic partnership to common relations between two equalized neighboring countries[11].

Polish government ahead of time had solved the problem of issuing new entering visas for Ukrainian citizens, after joining the Schengen zone in 2008, though it was believed that there would be plenty of applications due to intensive frontier trade and contacts between two countries. The Consulate of the Poland Republic in Ukraine was so overloaded, that president Yushchenko had been obliged to address polish government personally to readjust the process of visa issuance. Warsaw did not in due time agreed with Kyiv upon the simplified visa regime for population of the frontier areas and Polish-Ukrainian Agreement on local border traffic came into force only on August 1, 2009, while Slovakia and Hungary signed the same agreements immediately after joining the Schengen zone. Finally, even that "historical policy" constantly pursued by brothers Kachynski and Yushchenko came to the deadlock, when the latter in January 2010 awarded the title "Hero of Ukraine" to S. Bandera for "upholding the national idea and fight for independent Ukrainian State". Yushchenko did that to support own political rating before the presidential elections, but this only demonstrated that historical contradictions between Polish and Ukrainian peoples had

[11] FedorowiczK. PolitikaPolskiwobecRosji, UkrainyIBialorusiwlatach 1989-2010 / K. Fedorowicz. – Poznań: Uniwersytetim. AdamaMickiewiczawPoznaniu, 2011. – S. 208.

not completely vanished. It is hard to imagine something more offensive and unacceptable for the Republic of Poland, than to commemorate the leader of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, responsible for death of many Poles before and during the WW2, and Kachynski pointed that out to Yushchenko in his message[12].

Besides an absolute collapse of the state power, on the background of continual conflicts with Prime Minister Tymoshenko, and consequences of the world economic crisis, which painfully affected Ukraine, the last years of Yushchenko's presidency are renowned by the most acute and long-standing "Gas War" between Russia and Ukraine. It started with a public conflict between the President and Prime minister concerning preservation of the mediator "RosUkrEnergo", responsible for gas purchasing from the Russian Federation, and whom Kyiv owed a great debt, but this rapidly led to unpredicted consequences. After fruitless negotiation of the further price on gas and Ukrainian debt, on January 1, 2009 "Gazprom" cut off gas supplies to Ukraine, but transferred gas to the Europeans through the territory of Ukraine, and later on reduced supplies due to non-authorized gas withdrawal. In a week, just in the midst of the heating season, supplies to the Europeans through Ukrainian territory were completely ceased. It mainly affected countries of Eastern, Central and South-Eastern Europe, which did not have any alternatives both to the Russian supplies and the Ukrainian pipeline (Poland and Germany imported gas through Belarus, and Turkey did that under the Black Sea). Reputation of the Russian Federation and Ukraine as reliable EU partners was put at serious threat.

In this situation Poland backed Ukraine up, not only in the person of President L. Kachynski, but also Prime Minister D. Tusk, who, after the meeting with the leaders of the Visegrad Group, stated that Russia was a worse partner for the EU in this negotiations than Ukraine[13]. On January 14, President of Poland hosted Yushchenko in his residence and organized phone talks with Czech Prime Minister M. Topolanek, whose country headed in the EU, to arrange meeting between the conflict parties and the EU countries' heads in Prague[14]. However, Kachynski and Yushchenko's initiative was not supported, and on the contrary, the Russian government in Moscow called a conference on assurance for Russian gas supplies to European consumers, where Ukraine was represented not by the President, but by Prime Minister Tymoshenko. Poland, as the majority of the EU members, except the Czech Republic and Slovakia (which were represented not by the first persons of the countries as well), did not participate in the event. Nevertheless, Yu. Tymoshenko agreed with V. Putin as to the new gas formula and renewal of gas supplies, having signed the agreements for

[12] PrezydentKaczyńskipotępił Juszczenkę/TVN24.04.2010 [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/prezydent-kaczynski-potepil-juszczenke,124329.html

[13] Tusk: ProblemywkonflikciegazowymstwarzaRosja //Rzeczpospolita. – 2009. – 08.01[Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http://www.rp.pl/artykul/245515.html

[14] WasiutaS. Stosunkipolsko-ukrainskie / S. Wasiuta // Polskawobecsąsiadów: współczesnestosunkipolityczne / Red. W.T. Modzelewski. – Olsztyn: InstytutNaukPolitycznychUniwersytetuWarmińsko-Mazurskiego, 2009. – S. 117.

a term of several decades, which were later called as "oppressive" for the Ukrainian economy and left the gas problem between Kyiv and Moscow open.

The consecutive year of 2010 was crucial for Polish-Ukrainian relations, as sharp shifts took place among the highest-level leaders, which conclusively summarized the second version of the strategic partnership over the times of the "Orange Revolution" (the first one was created by Kuchma and Kwasniewski). At the presidential elections, which took place in Ukraine, the victory was gained by V. Yanukovych, who, at this time, by a wide margin won the elections over the leaders of the former "Orange Coalition" V. Yushchenko and Yu. Tymoshenko. Exhaustion of Ukrainian voters from economic and political instability issued him a mandate for action, including the international scene, where he immediately tried to show his independence and desire to carry on an even-minded course. Thus, the first foreign visit as president he, despite all expectations, called not to Moscow, but to Brussels, and confirmed the official policy of European integration and conduction of systematic social and economic reforms. Relations with Warsaw, as Yanukovych believed, should be restarted on the up note, and promised to abolish Yushchenko's decree, concerning awarding S. Bandera the title "Hero of Ukraine" (the decree was abolished on 12.01.2011). Besides, active contacts between two leaders of the countries were contributed by mutual realization of the biggest sports event – the European Football Championship 2012.

But the reason for the first visit of President Yanukovych to Poland was tragic: on April 18, 2010 in Krakow he attended funeral of Polish President L. Kachynski, who with his escort died in the air crash near Smolensk. Marshal of the Seim, representative of the ruling party B. Komorovski was temporarily in charge and later he won the early presidential elections. Thus, both key posts – presidential and premier belonged to the representatives of the "Civic Platform" and that signified final refusal of Poland from the previous support given to Ukraine in favor of more pragmatic policy of cooperation. At the first meeting of the Presidents in October 2010 in Yalta, B. Komorowski confirmed that Poland as before wanted to share its experience with Ukraine and support its European ambitions. Relatively soon, there was the first EU-Ukraine summit for Yanukovych, where Kyiv due to active support of Warsaw got its action plan concerning visa abolition agreement – the first one between the European Union and countries, which belonged to the "Eastern Partnership" (in a month Moldova received it as well). However, an alarm bell for Ukrainian government was a statement presented by the head of the European Parliament, former Polish Prime Minister J. Buzek, who said that Europe did not rely on Ukraine, even though Ukraine was the best student in the class in the region two years ago[15].

In February 2011 took place the first official visit of the President of Ukraine to Warsaw, on the eve of which Polish politicians noted that Yanukovych had not yet defined the course

[15] Для ЄС Україна – більше не пріоритет в регіоні / Інформаційне агентство УНІАН. 04.02.2011 [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http://www.unian.net/politics/457111-polsha-prakticheski-ne-zametila-vizita-yanukovicha

of external policy and the doors were open before him either to the east or to the west[16]. In fact, it was a crucial moment in Polish-Ukrainian relations, as in five months Poland was to preside as chairman in the EU and was about to grab this opportunity to promote further negotiations on the Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement and the free trade zone. But at that time Yanukovych started making real steps, which later on led to his complete isolation from Polish and European politicians. Criminal prosecution of former leaders of the "Orange Coalition", started in 2010, now was crowned with an attempt to arrest former Prime Minister Yu. Tymoshenko, which at that time was prevented by interference of J. Buzek, US and EU ambassadors in Ukraine and some leaders of the countries. In May, 2011 (on the eve of Polish presiding in the EU) commenced the trial over Tymoshenko on a charge of official misconduct while signing gas contracts in 2009, in particular she was charged of concluding contracts with "Gazprom" on consciously hard terms for Ukraine and prejudice to "Naftogaz" and Ukraine financial damage in the sum of 200 million dollars. To some extent Yanukovych adopted a position of foreign political "neutrality", as Moscow was not interested in this case, as it could create basis to reconsider gas prices[17]. Soon after D. Medvedev and V. Yanukovych signed the so-called Kharkiv Agreements, according to which Ukraine received discounts on gas in exchange for prolongation of the agreement on presence of the Russian Black Sea Navy fleet in Sevastopol.

However, the subject of the criminal case against Tymoshenko pressed upon the second summit of the "Eastern Partnership" in September 2011 in Warsaw, nevertheless the Polish party had been preparing that event for too much time and it had to become the apex of its presidency in the EU, to doubt it in order to criticize Yanukovych. Negotiations with Ukraine on the Association and free trade zone had not been accomplished yet, and there were no plans to initial the Agreement between the first country of the "Eastern Partnership" and the EU at this summit. Therefore, the final resolution contained only acclamations of "fruitful talks with Ukraine on the Association Agreement, free trade zone and the statement of hope, that it could be ready to the next EU-Ukraine summit in December 2011" (to be more precise, there was an attempt to condemn one country-member, but it was Belarus). In the course of Polish presidency of the European Union the process of contract preparation was accomplished, but no one referred to soon initialing of the Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement, as in October 2011 the Ukrainian court passed a guilty verdict on Tymoshenko and sentenced her to 7 years of imprisonment and compensation for huge material damage. International reaction to this sentence was extremely harsh: it was condemned not only by the EU countries and institutions, but also Russia, the US and other countries altogether pointed out the political

[16] ZalewskiP. DzwonekbijedlaKijowa / P. Zalewski//Rzeczpospolita. – 2011. – 03.02[Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http://www.rp.pl/artykul/2,604303.html

[17] Заявление МИД России в связи с решением Печерского районного суда Киева арестовать Ю.В. Тимошенко. –.2011. – 05.08 [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/Brp_4.nsf/arh/ DAEBF8D685E197D9C32578E-3005660C2?OpenDocument

basis of the case. Official response of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs differed in a way, that they not only characterized the process and the sentence themselves as "an example of politization on Ukrainian judicial system", but also underlined the status of Ukraine as a state, "which carries out fundamental pro-European transformation"[18].

Immediately after the verdict European leaders deferred to an indefinite period the already planned on October 20, 2011 Yanukovych's visit to Brussels. The EU-Ukraine summit took place in Kyiv on December 19, 2011, where in a strained atmosphere the parties confirmed their readiness to initial the Association agreement and free trade zone. However, the EU leaders let everyone know, that initialing of the Agreement would be just a technical step, and their ratification would depend on holding democratic parliamentary elections in October 2012, struggling with the examples of "selective prosecution" and implementing reforms. All this time Ukrainian government was under the pressure: for instance, in May, 2012 the EU leaders put under boycott summit of Central and Eastern European countries which took place on Ukrainian territory in Yalta, and then, in their majority boycotted the Ukrainian part of the European Football Championship. Among those, who expectedly could not miss this event was the head of the country-co-organizer B. Komorowski, who met with V. Yanukovych at the opening of the championship in Warsaw and its closing in Kyiv. At this crucial for the EU-Ukrainian relationship time polish diplomats did their best to gain some indulgency in Tymoshenko case and to mitigate the position of the EU. It was no mere chance that one of the co-heads of the European parliament observation mission on Tymoshenko's and other opposition members' case was former president of Poland A. Kwasniewski.

The parliamentary elections which took place in October 2012 in Ukraine and which grabbed the EU attention, at first caused no complaints in Brussels. Having remarked "that the results did not correspond to the international standards of judicial processes and that the opposition members were not allowed to participate in the electis" High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy K. Ashton and **Commissioner** for **Enlargement** and European Neighborhood Policy S. Fuele noted just separate drawbacks[19]. And in two weeks when the election results in many election districts were overturned, they criticized "violation of the post-electoral process, election count delays and lack of transparency in the electoral boards" and commented on deterioration in a number of spheres, in comparison with the previously achieved standards[20].

As to the reaction of some European countries, the US and other countries concerning the elections, it must be stated that it could not be positive, since the party of the acting president,

[18] OświadczenieMSZwsprawiewyrokuskazującegoJulię Tymoszenko // MinisterstwoSprawZagranicznychRP. 12.10.2011 [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http: //www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/ oświadczenie_w_sprawie_wyroku_skazującego_jJulie_tymoszenko.

[19] Joint stamen by High Representative / Vice-President Catherine Ashton and Commissioner ŠtefanFüle on the parliamentary elections in Ukraine. –Brussels. 29.10.2012 [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http:// Europa.eu /rapid/press-release_IP-12-1162_en.htm?locale=en.

[20] Ibid.

who did not make any visible steps to alleviate Tymoshenko's situation, won the elections. Another tone could be noticed in B. Komorowski's comments, who accepted the election results and called them manifestation of Ukrainian pro-Western orientation, as "all parties, which entered the parliament, except the communists, declared the aim of European integration"[21].

Uncertainty kept till the very end: Ukrainian government failed to implement all necessary reforms in due time and was not willing to free Yu. Tymoshenko (indeed, she was put on new and new charges), but carried out separate steps, which were to show seriousness of their intentions, for instance granting pardon to Yu. Lutsenko and another former minister – G. Filipchuk.

Things came to a head a week before the summit of the "Eastern Partnership": Ukrainian government stated that they ceased the process of European integration to preserve trade and economic affairs with the CIS countries, and the ruling majority in the Verkhovna Rada blocked the Law "On Office of Prosecutor General" and six legislations, which allowed Tymoshenko to get out of jail or to go and receive medical treatment abroad. In return Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland R. Sikorski stated that the EU would not "haggle" with Russia about Ukraine and that all Kyiv attempts to maneuver between Brussels and Moscow would "end like it had been happening over 20 years – with lost time and unaccomplished reforms"[22].

However, the Republic of Poland did not suppose that Yanukovych would sign the Association Agreement at the Vilnius summit, as he was constantly mentioning that Ukraine made a forced stopping on its way to the European integration. But, V. Yanukovych restricted himself just to a simple visit to the summit, where he was given the cold shower. His sudden foreign political maneuver caused protests among the part of population, which started with some peaceful demonstrations, but the opposition with law enforcement bodies and following victims transformed them into a real street war in Kyiv. Again, like during the "Orange Revolution" of 2004, Kyiv's Maidan was visited by J. Kachynski and other representatives of Polish political elite, who openly supported opposition. R. Sikorski together with F.-W. Steinmeier played a role of a key mediator during the talks between V. Yanukovych and the opposition.

Therefore, Poland's policy towards Ukraine over the last ten years has passed the full cycle, which observed attempts to force integration of Ukraine into the European Union under Yushchenko, build bridges with Yanukovych and stimulate him to implement reforms and finally appearance of new hopes for democratic transformation of Ukraine. However, the fact that despite friendly relations with Ukrainian leaders and lobbying Kyiv's interests in the EU, Warsaw could not succeed in any of the tasks. Nevertheless, Poland does not give up on implementing its vision of the "Eastern Partnership" as to Ukraine. Minister of Foreign Affairs R. Sikorski in his speech in the Seim in May 2014 stated "he was pleased to mention that in the light of the past events in Ukraine they could not change them [basics of Polish foreign policy], as the things

[21] Komorowski: Wybory szansą dla Ukrainy / Rzeczpospolita. 31.10.2012. [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу:http://www.rp.pl/artykul/947817.html.

[22] Торга с Москвой по Украине не будет, заявил глава МИД Польши // РИА Новости. 28.11.2013 [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http:// ria.ru/world/20131128/980311264.html#ixzz36bku4WXx.

which were happening at that time, – return of Ukraine on the European integration track, was actualization of these basis"[23]. At the same time he highlighted effectiveness of the "Eastern Partnership" in two aspects: as an instrument to encourage reforms in the countries-members and as means to unify and organize eastern policy of the EU. Thus, Poland will pursue its effort in accordance with this program, to make its main "mission in the east" – strategic partnership with Ukraine – an imperative for the EU foreign policy, despite all rageful changes, which have taken place in the post-Soviet territory or as a result of them.

[23] InformacjaMinistraSprawZagranicznychRadoslawa Sikorskiego o zadaniach polskejpolitykizagranicznej w 2014 roku. 08.05.2014 [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http: //www.msz.gov.pl/pl/c/MOBILE /aktualnosci/wiadomosci/ informacja_ministra_spraw_zagranicznych_o_zadaniach_ polskej_polityki_zagranicznej_ w_2014_roku.