

## UKRAINE'S EUROPEAN CHOICE AS A SOCIAL CONDITION OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION

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**Abstract.** *The Euromaidan events in Ukraine actualized discussion on the possibility of the country's democratic transition. In this article, we demonstrate that mutually exclusive geopolitical orientations of the population in Ukraine are conditioned by different values and cultural identities. Using logistic regression, we have found that the geopolitical split in Ukrainian society is caused not only by regional and ethnolinguistic differences. Support for the course of Eurointegration has become possible, owing to combining national identity (including preservation of the status of the Ukrainian language as a single state language) with democratic and market values. Support for rapprochement with Russia, on the other hand, corresponds to the domination of Russian ethnic identity, support for an official status for the Russian*

*language, negative attitudes toward a multiparty system, and support for planned economy.*

**Keywords:** *geopolitical orientations; European choice; values; transition; Ukraine*

## Introduction

Several years have passed since the events of the Revolution of Dignity (Euromaidan) in Ukraine. The example of people's willingness to stand for their geopolitical choice at the cost of their lives has already faded, because of the aggressive actions of Russia – annexation of Crimea and the war incited in Donbass. The development of democracy and capitalism in post-Soviet countries has become one of the most pressing problems with the renewal of Cold War manifestations. If the Baltic countries have rather successfully passed the process of transition, the remaining countries that are geographically related to the European continent – Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan – move differently along the path of modernization. Russia's interference in the domestic affairs of these countries—since it considers their territories as the space of Russia's vital interests—has pushed to the foreground post-Soviet societies' geopolitical choice between the Euro-Atlantic space and Eurasia. The attempts of these countries to make radical transformations were met by the hostile resistance of Russia, which restrains the Westward course of these countries with the help of direct aggression or the support of separatist enclaves. The irreversibility of modernization reforms in these countries threatens Putin's authoritarian regime and the imperial essence of Russia itself.

In this regard, the attention of researchers is focused on the political and economic values of those post-Soviet countries that border different cultural spaces. However, an important aspect in the study of transition countries is the problem of geopolitical orientations and their alignment

with modernization values. Moreover, the nature of these orientations is associated with the prospect for formation of national identities. The movement toward integration with Europe has provided the development of new national identities, while the reproduction of the Russian integration project would have graded these identities and be revived imperial identity.

There are superficial stereotypes about Ukraine as a country with regional and linguistic divisions that serve as the main determinants of geopolitical orientations. We hypothesize that the geopolitical orientations of Ukrainians are determined not only by traditional socio-cultural divisions, but also by political and economic values. Using Ukraine as an example, we demonstrate in our article that the approach to transition becomes efficient, if the foundational values of geopolitical orientations in those societies which have a historical bent toward the European cultural space are analyzed scrupulously. A comparison of the factors of geopolitical orientations amongst Ukrainians is important for understanding the prospects for further democratic transition in Eastern Europe, which has become an arena of struggle not only for foreign-policy preferences, but also for two competing value systems.

### **Theoretical framework**

The problematic character of the “classical” transitology approach consisted in the fact that it prioritized the procedural aspect of the transition from authoritarianism to democracy (Rustow, 1967; O’Donnell, Schmitter, 1986). After the fall of the Berlin wall, the development of

events in the countries of the “second world” gave additional grounds for considering the methodological aspects of the new scientific trend of transitology; it allowed for system analysis to be performed in the search for the determinants and factors of modernization amongst post-communist countries. The study of the political reforms involved in the transition to consolidated democracy was the field of research for transitology. However, the transition differences amongst post-communist countries have testified to the scantiness of the transitology approach and raised the question of whether it is possible, in general, to use knowledge of “East-European exclusiveness” of transition when analyzing given processes (Schmitter, Karl, 1994; Bunce, 2000). The problem became that the processes of transition from communist authoritarianism to democracy were very different and more complicated than transitions from “ordinary” bureaucratic authoritarianism to democracy. The ambiguity of democratic transition in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet successor states convinced researchers to revise some aspects of transitology and conclude that there are many paths that a society may take after the collapse of an authoritarian system (Carothers, 2002). The present reality of democratic condition in Turkey and the countries of Latin America have forced researchers to return to socio-cultural bases of democratic transition. Researchers now try to embrace both institutional and value dimensions in disclosing the reasons for successful or unsuccessful social transitions (Inglehart, Welzel, 2005; North, Wallis, Weingast, 2009).

However, the value component still has not acquired a central place in the research of democratic transition. The reason for this may be the successful democratic transition of the countries of Central-Eastern Europe and the Baltic area; their experience was compared with other post-Communist countries that had delayed democratic development. In connection to this, there appeared a caution to transitology: its studies had been developed as based on the research of ethnically homogeneous societies and thus could not serve as the basis of transition analysis under conditions of ethnic diversity and unsolved problems of national identity (Roeder, 1999). The methodological basis of this caution was to be found in an interpretation of the words of D. Rustow, who founded the transitology approach and noted that the social unification should precede the process of democratization (Rustow, 1967: 120-132). Unification is, first of all, considered to mean ethnic homogeneity. Examples of successful transition in the countries of Central Europe confirmed this peculiarity. After World War II, Poland and Hungary lost part of their territories but, nonetheless, acquired a strong national identity. That is, the ethnocultural homogeneity of these societies was a favorable factor. Through the removal of obstacles in the way of transition, Czechoslovakia was divided into two ethnically homogeneous countries. A short-term blockade of the Baltic countries by Moscow, as well as the latter's armed attempts to seize power in January 1991 in Vilnius and Riga, further consolidated nationalist feelings in these societies' strivings to leave the USSR. In Baltic countries, ethnic minorities were limited by the policy of refusing citizenship for non-native persons who settled there after the Soviet occupation (Barrington, 1995; Park, 1994; Kolstø and Tsilevich, 1997). Those people still reside in Latvia and feel

marginalized. They identify themselves as “Russians” rather than as citizens of the political community of their country (Duvold, Berglund, 2014). Now, when the Kremlin has used Russian minorities in post-Soviet countries in hybrid wars, non-Russian citizens look at them with fear as at “the fifth column” of the Kremlin and potential soldiers of the hybrid war against the citizens of Baltic countries. During the time shortly after the collapse of the USSR, the policy of restricting the civil rights of minorities allowed for the performance of radical economic and political transformations. The weakening of Russia in the 1990s allowed the governments of Baltic countries to ignore the displeasure of Russia and join NATO and the EU. Thus, even artificially created institutional homogeneity allowed these post-communist countries to move toward democracy via European integration.

Transition has been most complicated for such countries as Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and Georgia, since they were little involved historically in the social space through which passed modernization and the rationalization of consciousness. On top of the unformed political nation and low levels of political participation in newly created countries, economic difficulties and abuses in the course of privatization of public property were superimposed. In addition, the democratic transition in post-Soviet territories faced an influential obstacle – Putin’s Russia, which had gradually turned to the support of authoritarianism, became a kind of gendarme in the post-Soviet space. Even in the time of Gorbachov and Yeltsin, the Kremlin participated in the creation of a series of ethnopolitical conflicts in neighboring Soviet republics; Moscow agreed to resolve the

conflicts in exchange for geopolitical loyalty. The transitology approach to post-Soviet transformations was untimely, since it was erroneous to compare the transition in Eastern-Central Europe with social transformations in the countries of the former Soviet Union. In addition to a transition to democracy and market economy, and a strengthening of sovereignty, these countries had to create nations (Kuzio, 2001). In this context, Kuzio saw national identity and nationalism as central elements for studying the successful democratic transition of post-Soviet countries (Kuzio, 2010).

From the reasons stated above, some researchers pointed to the problem of national identity in relation to Ukraine's development, where regional and ethnocultural delimitations had become the main obstacle to democratic transition and formation of market economy (Shulman, 2005; Shulman, 2006; Hansen, Hesli, 2009; Kuzio, 2010; Constant, Kahanec, Zimmermann, 2011; Constant, Kahanec, Zimmermann, 2012). Ukraine's adherence to European development, democratic values and maintenance of market economy were supported, to a large extent, by residents of the Western and Central regions, who were ethnic Ukrainians, Ukrainian-speaking people, and those who identified themselves as citizens of Ukraine. On the other hand, adherence to union with Russia (Eurasian orientations), and antidemocratic, antimarket sentiments were spread largely among residents of the Eastern and Southern regions, who were ethnic Russians, Russian-speaking people, and those who did not identify themselves as citizens of Ukraine. The problem of language (and the status of the Russian language, in particular) has also become a key factor of

foreign-policy orientations. Advocates of raising the status of the Russian language hold to pro-Russian orientations, and the opponents of this step mostly support European integration (Zalizniak, 2009; Olszanski, 2012).

At the same time, it was evident that a number of post-Soviet countries (for example Russia and Belarus), while relatively homogenous in ethnic and cultural terms, lack the formation of political nationhood, competitive market economy, and free democracy—i.e., ethnic homogeneity and national unity are not always a sufficient condition for transition. The success of transition in post-socialist Central-European and Baltic countries related to a long-term historical belonging to European culture. Their transitions were reflected in mass consciousness as a return to the habitual, sustainable social order based on democratic and market values (Cichowski, 2000; Szczerbiak, 2016). The weakening of the USSR and newly-created Russian Federation allowed these countries to avoid looking back to the East and move daringly to the West. The objective of joining the EU urged these countries to reform and inspired them to overcome economic difficulties (Tucker, Pacek, Berinsky, 2002; Mansfeldová, Sparschuh, Wenninger, 2005; Schimmelfennig, Sedelmeier, 2005; Kollmorgen, 2013). In this sense, geopolitical orientations are a key aggregator of important social values for democratic transition. Geopolitical orientations in this case can be interpreted as “geopolitical vision” which G. Dijkink defined as: “any idea concerning the relation between one’s place and other places, involving feelings of (in)security or (dis)advantage (and/or) invoking ideas about a collective mission or foreign policy strategy” (Dijkink, 1996, p. 11). In some cases, geopolitical orientation may be vague or ambivalent.

However, when there is an existential threat to national identity, geopolitical orientations combine with the values that are appropriate to the object of these orientations.

### **European integration as a new framework for post-communist transition in Eastern Europe**

Regardless of regional and ethnocultural splits, the absence of a perception of values in the democratic transition was a problem for Ukraine, rather than the absence of a homogeneous society. The Orange Revolution of 2004 changed the administrative scenario of presidential election in Ukraine, and the combination of regional and ethnolinguistic identities with pro-European aspirations favored the mobilization of active groups during this time. However, both the protest participants and the rest of the population were not distinguished by any particular adherence to democratic and market values (Lane, 2008; Beissinger, 2013). The Ukrainian population's increase in anti-market sentiments and negative attitude toward the idea of joining NATO, as well as the intensive formation of a mass consciousness oriented toward the Eastern geopolitical vector, became negative tendencies in the mid-2000s (Golovakha, Panina, 2006).

Simultaneously, a process of substituting the traditional set of ethnocultural identities with a value-rational comprehension of the advantages of democracy and market economy occurred among the active part of Ukrainian society. The European integration of Ukraine represented these advantages, and Ukrainians European structures as a certain check on corrupt political elites. Moreover, European and Eurasian modes of

Ukrainian development became clearly differentiated in the public consciousness on the eve of the dramatic events of Euromaidan and especially after Russia's aggression. The monitoring results of the Institute of Sociology at NAS of Ukraine demonstrate that the number of ambivalent supporters of the both modes of development in the first half of the 2000s reached above a quarter of adult population (see *Table 1*). A considerable decrease began even before the Euromaidan events. A summer 2013 survey observed a two-fold decrease in the number of ambivalent opinions, as compared to previous years. Starting in 2014, the number of ambivalent opinions became minor.

**Table 1.** Dynamics of ambivalent attitudes toward Ukraine's geopolitical orientation (simultaneous positive attitude toward European and Eurasian integration of Ukraine)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2008	2010	2012	2013	2014	2015
n	343	480	386	476	507	340	367	341	412	371	202	45	86
%	19.0	26.7	21.6	26.6	28.4	18.9	20.4	19.0	22.9	20.7	11.2	2.5	4.8
total	1807	1797	1786	1785	1788	1797	1800	1795	1795	1792	1794	1784	1782

Source: The sociological monitoring of the Institute of Sociology, NAS of Ukraine, authors' own analysis

The dramatic events of citizen activation in Ukraine during the winter of 2013-2014 were caused by the government's refusal to sign the Association Agreement with the EU. The Revolution of Dignity became the

first revolutionary protest in the post-Soviet space that was not directly connected with elections but with democratic aspirations. This is evidenced by a comparison of determinants of participation in two revolutions in Ukraine. The common factors of both protests were microregional splits and the population's concern with foreign-policy priorities. However, in determining participation in the Orange Revolution, these factors were combined with those of language identification, as well as age and status differentiation. By contrast, participation in the Revolution of Dignity was also conditioned by support for democratic and market values (Reznik, 2016). The perception of external threat and new hopes of citizens favored the formation of a national consensus as to the key political problems. The war triggered a spike in civil national pride and the sense of national belonging; support for Ukraine's joining the EU and NATO increased, while support for integration with Russia decreased (Alexseev, 2015). The geography of the expansion of Ukrainian identity spread everywhere in the Eastern and Southern regions, except for Donbass, where considerable pro-Russian orientations were observed even in the territories controlled by Ukraine. But changes have occurred even in these territories: Eurasian orientations have decreased and European ones increased (Dembitskyi, 2015).

Thus, a characteristic feature of Ukraine consists in the existence of historically determined orientations toward the West and toward Russia, as intertwined with Ukrainian and Russian identities. Geopolitical orientations themselves cannot be the basis of democratic transition without corresponding political and economic values which favor social

modernization. Thus, the successful democratic transition of Eastern European countries needs a geopolitical objective that includes democratic and market orientations as being important for the transition. Key problems of Ukraine's democratic transition are not the traditional regional and ethnocultural limitations, but the differently directed geopolitical aspirations that are also based on important political and economic values.

Thus, our hypothesis is as follows.

*Hypothesis:* Differences between the adherents of European and Eurasian modes of Ukrainian development consist not only in the regional and ethnolinguistic limitations, but also in the conception of political and economic values. The proponents of a European course for Ukraine are disposed, to a greater extent, to democratic values and market economy than the proponents of a Eurasian course.

## **Date and Method**

Our analysis is based on a national survey of Ukraine's population, which was conducted from June-July 2016 by the Institute of Sociology at the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of Ukraine, in collaboration with the Charity fund Intellectual. The survey was conducted according to quota sampling that represented the adult (ages 18+) population of Ukraine. The survey also was conducted in all regions of Ukraine (except for The Autonomous Republic of the Crimea annexed by Russia and the occupied territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk Regions), and by way of personal interviews conducted at respondents' places of residence. In total, 1,802

persons were questioned. The sampling error does not exceed 2.3%. Sampling was three-tiered: stratified, random, and quota screening. In the first stage, places of residence were selected (where surveys were conducted according to geographical region). In the second stage, specific postal addresses were chosen (at convenient highway routes and/or crossroads). In the third, respondents were chosen. The quota screening of respondents in the final stage allowed for proportions to be maintained with regard to every oblast (region), size of settlement (city, town, village), sex, age, and education level typical of each region and for that type of settlement.

To reveal the factors of participation in protests, binary logistic regression was used. Binary logistic regression allowed for analysis of the effect of factors on dichotomous dependent variables. In the survey, researchers used a dichotomous variable for the answer to the questions/dependent variables “What is your attitude toward the idea of joining the union with Russia and Belarus?” and “What is your attitude toward the idea of joining the European Union?” (see *Table 2*). In both cases, the variables take the value either of 1 for those who gave a positive answer about these ideas, or 0 for the group of those who gave a negative or uncertain answers. It should be noted that only 2.6% of respondents showed ambivalent views or simultaneously supported both.

**Table 2.** Distribution of answers to the question “What is your attitude toward...?”

	The idea of joining the union with Russia and Belarus		The idea of joining the European Union	
	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>
More negative	57.3	1032	29.5	532
Difficult to say	17.6	318	22.5	405
More positive	24.9	449	48.0	865
No answer	0.2	3	0.0	0

The factors pointed out in the survey as independent variables are as follows: (1) macroregional division (west/center vs. south/east); (2) ethnic identity; (3) native language; (4) national identity; (5) attitude toward the status of the Russian language; (6) attitude toward democracy as political system; (7) support for a multiparty political system; (8) support for a planned economy; and (9) positive attitude toward the privatization of large enterprises. *Table 3* contains descriptive statistics of the independent variables used in the social survey.

**Table 3.** Descriptive statistics for analytical samples

	<i>n</i>	%
<i>Region</i>		
West	377	20.9
Center	660	36.6
South	193	10.7
East	572	31.7
<i>Ethnic identity</i>		
Ukrainian	1603	89.0
Russian	170	9.4
Other	29	1.6
<i>Native language</i>		
Ukrainian	1274	70.8
Russian	512	28.5
Other	13	0.7
<i>Whom do you most consider yourself as...?</i>		
Village/city inhabitant	397	22.1
Resident of some region	124	6.9
Ukrainian citizen	1081	60.1
Ethnic representative	52	2.9
Former Soviet Union citizen	71	3.9
European citizen	18	1.0
World citizen	47	2.6

Other	9	0.5
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*Do you believe that the Russian language in Ukraine should gain official language status?*

No	1001	55.6
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Difficult to say	254	14.1
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Yes	546	30.3
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*Democracy is the best political system for any modern state*

Completely disagree	39	2.2
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Somewhat disagree	161	8.9
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Difficult to say agree or disagree	365	20.3
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Somewhat agree	667	37.0
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Completely agree	569	31.6
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*In your opinion, does Ukraine need a multi-party system?*

No	804	44.7
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Difficult to answer	508	28.3
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Yes	485	27.0
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*What do you think is the government's role in regulating the economy?*

The government's role must be minimized – the market regulates everything	207	11.5
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Government control should be combined with market practices	927	51.4
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A return to a planned economy with complete government control is a necessity	465	25.8
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Difficult to say	196	10.9
<i>What is your attitude toward the privatization of large enterprises?</i>		
Rather negative	1122	62.4
Difficult to say	426	23.7
Rather positive	249	13.9

Indicators of ethnic identity, native language, national identity, attitude toward the status of the Russian language, support for a multi-party political system, support for a planned economy, and attitude toward the privatization of large enterprises were converted into fictitious dichotomous variables. The processing and statistical analysis of the data were performed using the program package SPSS.

## Results

The construction of equations for binary logistic regression to examine the influence of various factors on dependent dichotomous variables of geopolitical orientations allowed for the discovery of the value-based differences between foreign policy priorities (see *Table 4*).

**Table 4.** Determinants of geopolitical choice, logistic regressions

	The idea of joining the union with Russia and Belarus	The idea of joining the European Union
Macroregional division (1 = West/Center; 0 = South/East)	-0.766*** (.465)	1.058*** (2.882)
Ethnic identity (1 = Ukrainian; 0 = Russian/Other)	-0.660*** (.517)	.363 (1.437)
Claims Ukrainian as native language (0/1)	-.023 (.978)	.061 (1.063)
Identifies primarily as citizen of Ukraine (0/1)	-.399** (.671)	.422*** (1.526)
Russian language should gain official status (0/1)	1.909*** (6.748)	-1.029*** (.357)
Democracy is the best political system for any modern states (1–5)	-.109 (1.115)	.352*** (.703)
Ukraine needs a multi-party system (0/1)	-.434** (.648)	.700*** (2.013)
A return to a planned economy with complete government control is a necessity (0/1)	.483*** (1.621)	-.277* (.758)
Positive attitude toward the privatization of large enterprises (0/1)	-.270 (.763)	1.143*** (3.136)
Constant	-.964 (.382)	-.575 (.563)
Nagelkerke R Square	.364	.313
<i>n</i>	449	865

Note: Entries are B-coefficients with odds ratio (the exponentiation of the B-coefficients) in parentheses

\* $p \leq .05$ . \*\*  $p \leq .01$ . \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

Analysis of the coefficients of the set of equations demonstrates that the influential determinants of support for Ukraine's joining the union with Russia and Belarus were as follows: macroregional division (residents of the South and East of Ukraine prevailed); ethnic identity (predominantly those who reported their ethnic identity as Russian and other); support for official status for the Russian language; support for a planned economy. National identity (those who did not identify primarily as citizen of Ukraine) and disapproval of a multiparty system showed a somewhat smaller impact. However, native language, attitude toward a democratic political system and attitude toward the privatization of large enterprises had no effect on the dependent variable.

The analysis of coefficients of the set of equations demonstrates that the influential determinants of support for Ukraine's membership in the EU were as follows: macroregional division (residents of the West and Center of Ukraine prevailed); national identity (those who identified primarily as citizens of Ukraine); negative attitude toward official status for the Russian language; confirmation of the supremacy of the democratic political system; support for a multiparty system; and positive attitude toward the privatization of large enterprises. Disapproval of a planned economy showed a somewhat smaller impact.

Thus, our hypothesis is confirmed as a whole. Adherence to different foreign-policy priorities in Ukraine's development involves distinct, reflexive determinants, which follow indicators such as macroregional division, national identity, attitude toward the status of the Russian language, attitude toward a multiparty system, and support for a planned economy. Moreover, European orientations are determined distinctly by the value factors of support for democracy and privatization of big enterprises, while, Eurasian orientations are determined by ethnic identity and in contrast to pro-European orientations.

## **Conclusions**

Our assumptions about the value differences between supporters of European and Eurasian modes of Ukraine's development were confirmed. A distinct connection between the European aspirations of Ukrainians and democratic values proves the sincerity of the European choice. It also shows that it is not just a pragmatic desire to enjoy the economic welfare of a political space that is more successful in economic and social contexts. However, concerning pro-European respondents, assumptions about the differences between supporters of geopolitical orientation on ethnolinguistic grounds are not justified. European orientations are not determined by ethnic identity and native language. Such differentiation shows that European orientations have gotten rid of ethnolinguistic character. In any case, the absence of the effect of ethnolinguistic factors and the availability of value factors of pro-European orientations signal the rationalization of these respondents' aspirations.

However, there exists of a considerable part of Ukrainian society that is oriented toward Russia, advocating for the opposite political and economic values, and displaying their ethnic rather than national identity; this calls into question the thesis of the irreversibility of democratic transition. Eurasian orientations are attached distinctly to ethnic identity. The existence of such complex identity-based splits inevitably decelerates democratic transition. This is also connected with the fact that the geopolitical orientations of Ukraine's population preserve a national feature that necessarily will be used by the Kremlin with the aid of hybrid warfare. And only the unraveling of such identities will sustain the prospects for successful democratic transition.

The problem of giving the Russian language official-language status in Ukraine is also an important condition of the democratic transition. On the one hand, the Russian language preserves its powerful potential, owing to tradition, the considerable number of native Russian speakers in the country, and the rapid development of digital mass media; on the other hand, the future of the Ukrainian language possessing the status of official language also looks promising, since speaking Ukrainian proficiently has a positive effect on the capacity to perform professional duties within state or civic activities. All that is favorable to raising the status of the Ukrainian language and preserving a certain language balance, thus, contributes to stability. A shift in this balance toward increasing the status of the Russian language causes resistance from the active part of the society, due to their Ukrainian and pro-European identity. As it was in the case of Baltic countries, where Russian minorities were politically marginalized, language

policy is a key factor for the successful democratic transition of Ukraine. Finally, Ukraine's successful integration with its Euro-Atlantic surroundings would see an expected decrease in pro-Russian geopolitical orientations and favor the strengthening of Ukrainian identity.

Despite disappointment at the rate of Ukraine's European integration, the European orientations of Ukrainians remain the only ideologeme fit for democratic transition. Ukraine's problem is that it has to pass the way of assimilating the values of modern Europe (capitalism, civil society, rationalization of public relations). However, Europe at present is spreading post-modern values that are untimely and often unclear to Ukrainians, who can be disposed to authoritarianism and incited against the market. The latter is evidenced by Ukrainian attitudes toward the existence of multi-party system and the privatization of big enterprises. The question here is the insufficient legitimacy of the institution of private property in Ukrainian society, which is caused by the population's perception of the privatization of industry and land as dishonest, unfair, and having given birth to the oligarchic system of a corrupt economy. Further, the long-term practice of the financial maintenance of political parties by oligarchs also has reflected on the attitudes of Ukrainians toward a multiparty system. Still, a distinct connection between the European aspirations of Ukrainians and democratic values proves the sincerity of the European choice. It also shows that this choice is not just a pragmatic desire to enjoy the economic welfare of a more socioeconomically successful political space.

The study of the factors of geopolitical orientations in Ukraine gives us an opportunity to understand the course of democratic transition in the

post-Soviet countries of Eastern Europe. The results of this research demonstrate the conditions under which the geopolitical orientations of the population (in this case, those that have been formed in Ukraine after the Revolution of Dignity) can be counted as facilitating the possibility of democratic transition.

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