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1. INTRODUCTION

This report on Ukraine is one in a series prepared within the framework of the EU-LISTCO project, funded under the EU's Horizon 2020 programme. EU-LISTCO investigates the challenges posed to European foreign policy by identifying the risks connected to areas of limited statehood and contested orders. Through analysis of the EU Global Strategy and Europe's foreign policy instruments, the project assesses how the preparedness of the Union and its Member States can be strengthened to better anticipate, prevent, and respond to threats of governance breakdown and to foster resilience in Europe's neighbourhoods[1].

Ukraine makes for a special case within the EU-LISTCO project. It is the second-largest country in Europe and has the longest land border with the EU. For a decade, it has been a member of the EU Eastern Partnership initiative. The EU–Ukraine Association Agreement was signed in 2014. Three years later, Ukrainians were granted visa-free travel to the EU. Ukraine's security is fundamental to the stability of Europe, as well as EU–Russia relations. As a result of Russia's aggression, Ukraine has lost control over some 7% of its territory, including the Crimean Peninsula and some parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The EU has imposed several restrictive measures on Russia for its destabilisation of Ukraine and has supported Ukrainian authorities in their struggle to reform state institutions.

The purpose of this report is to answer the following research questions: [Q1] what is the background of the areas of limited statehood and contested orders in Ukraine; [Q2] how and when could the areas of limited statehood and contested orders in Ukraine turn into areas with governance breakdown and/or violent conflict; [Q3] what are the mechanisms of resilience in Ukraine; [Q4] what are the interests of third parties towards Ukraine.

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[1] For details, see: https://www.eu-listco.net.

Four research hypotheses have been adopted. First, areas of limited statehood in Ukraine have been to a large extent the result of external interference rather than domestic vulnerabilities. Second, the biggest risks and threats to Ukraine's security, which could potentially bring about violent conflict or governance breakdown, are those of a military nature, given the ongoing Russian aggression, rather than those of political origin stemming from the poor reform track record. Third, since 2014, Ukraine has been steadily building its resilience, although it is still based more on social trust rather than on institutional design. Fourth, a key role in either strengthening or weakening Ukraine's resilience is played by external actors.

The report is divided into seven parts. It starts with an introduction and a methodological explanation. Four chapters follow, dedicated to the identification of areas of limited statehood and contested orders in Ukraine (chapter three); identification of risks and tipping points (chapter four); mechanisms of resilience in Ukraine (chapter five); and, the roles and interests of external actors in Ukraine (chapter six). In conclusions, the authors give their final remarks and verify the research hypothesis.

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2. EU-LISTCO CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This report is based on the theoretical approach elaborated in the EU-LISTCO project, according to which there are two challenges to external action by the EU and its Member States.

The first challenge is represented by **areas of limited statehood** in which central government authorities and institutions are too weak or unwilling to set and enforce rules and/or do not have a monopoly on the means of violence. The ability to set and enforce rules or to control the means of violence can be limited in various dimensions: 1) territorial, i.e., parts of a country's territorial space; 2) sectoral, i.e., with regard to specific policy areas; 3) social, i.e., with regard to specific parts of the population; and 4) temporal, i.e., existing only for a limited period of time. Areas of limited statehood are neither ungoverned nor ungovernable. Some of them are reasonably well governed by a whole variety of actors—state and non-state, domestic/local, and international— while others are not. The challenge for EU foreign policy is to foster good governance in areas of limited statehood.

The second challenge is represented by **contested orders** in which state and/or non-state actors challenge the norms, principles, and rules according to which societies and political systems are or should be organised. Order contestations might relate to already existing governance systems and polities. Yet, orders can also be contested in situations where actors compete to establish their own sets of rules. For instance, at the global and regional level, powers such as Russia have challenged and called the liberal and law-based order into question. Order contestations always involve competing ideas and discourses about what is considered an appropriate political, economic, or social system. The challenge for EU foreign policy is to foster conditions in which order contestations remain peaceful and do not contribute to governance breakdowns in areas of limited statehood.

Both limited statehood and contested orders create vulnerabilities and pose risks, but they do not in themselves amount to threats to the EU. Only if and when contestation occurs in areas of limited statehood can the risk of governance breakdowns and violent conflict turn into threats to the security and stability of the EU, its Member States, and citizens. The moment "when" is here described as the "tipping point". Whether risks turn into threats for European security depends on the extent to which resilient societies can successfully contain these risks through effective and legitimate governance at the local, domestic, and regional levels.

The report builds on a critical analysis of literature and documents, as well as on materials gathered during a study trip to Kyiv in November 2018. For this purpose, the authors interviewed more than a dozen of Ukrainian experts and officials, as well as officials from the EU Delegation in Kyiv and the EU Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform in Ukraine. While analysing the possible scenarios and tipping points, the authors applied the experience gained from the workshop "Mid-Term Risks for Governance Breakdown and Violent Conflict in the European Union's Eastern Neighbourhood", which was held in November 2018 in Berlin, hosted by the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPI) within the framework of the EU-LISTCO project.

3. BACKGROUND ON AREAS OF LIMITED STATEHOOD AND CONTESTED ORDERS

In this chapter, we identify key areas of limited statehood and contested orders in Ukraine and try to assess how widespread they are, which dimensions they cover, and where they originate. We start with the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine, which makes for a special case of both an area with a contested order and territorial areas of limited statehood (Crimea, Donbas). Afterwards, we analyse selected reforms conducted by the Ukrainian government since 2014 to identify sectoral areas of limited statehood. Next, we focus on radical groups in Ukraine that we perceive to be a particular example of the social aspect of limited statehood. Finally, we look at the situation in Transcarpathia and try to assess to what extent it constitutes a contested order.

3.1. Crimea and Donbas: Contested Order and Territorial Areas of Limited Statehood

Since 2014, the condition of Ukrainian statehood is determined first and foremost by the ongoing Russian aggression against the country, the most visible results of which have been the illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by the Russian Federation and the un-declared Russia-Ukraine war, waged on the territory of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. The Russian actions, aimed at regaining influence over Ukraine, which Moscow almost completely lost after the Revolution of Dignity and subsequent escape into exile of then-Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych, together with most of his political entourage, have had a destabilising effect on the situation in Ukraine across the board and constitute a long term threat to the very existence of the Ukrainian state (Kuzio and D'Anieri 2018).

The Russian aggression against Ukraine is part of a wider revisionist policy that Moscow has long been pursuing in the region. Ever since the Soviet Union collapsed, Russia has sought to undermine the order that formed in its neighbourhood, regarding this territory as its exclusive sphere of influence (Haukkala et al. 2003). It is usually believed that the aggressive Russian foreign policy behaviour derives from Moscow's feeling of insecurity, namely fear of an alleged threat from the outside world, especially from the West (Sergunin 2016), and is based on the centuries-old perception of "Russia surrounded by enemies approaching its borders" (Persson and Vendil Pallin 2014). Russia had seen Europe as a security threat already in tsarist times. The Soviet Union, and then the Russian Federation, retained the image of Eastern Europe as a front against Western expansion, first against German *Drang nach Osten*, and later on against NATO's supposedly aggressive plans. Even today, Russian military doctrine and posture are subordinated to the objectives of a global confrontation with the West (Giles 2018). The myth of "NATO encircling Russia" has frequently been used by the Russian authorities to justify Russia's own adventurism. In fact, less than one-sixteenth of Russia's land border is shared with NATO members, and only five out of 14 neighbours of Russia are NATO members (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation 2018a).

Russian revisionism has traditionally been deeply rooted in ideology. A key role in this regard has been played by the "Russian World" (Russkiy Mir) concept, which builds on an intellectual tradition of Russia as a distinct and self-sufficient civilisation embedded in a geopolitical order of traditional values, based on the assumption that the collapse of the Soviet Union brought negative consequences for the entire Russian nation. The "Russian World" concept provides the Russian authorities with justification for "reactivating" inherited "Russianness", which is allegedly based on a common language, culture, and heritage and serves as a link to the Russian state. For example, in July 2013, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that Russians and Ukrainians are "one nation", given the unity between the western and eastern *Rus'*, that is, Ukraine and Russia (Popescu 2014). The Russian authorities use "Russian World" to conceptualise the well-known

19th-century idea of Pan-Slavism, or unity among the Slavic nations—Russians, Ukrainians, Belarussians—under Russian leadership. It refers also to religious matters, with the idea of Moscow as "the Third Rome" and the protector of the whole Orthodox Christian world, since, from Moscow's perspective, the Russian Orthodox Church is the quintessence of fundamental moral values, destined to unite peoples separated by state borders under the auspices of *Holy Rus'* (Naydenova 2017). While such a narrative is built on the linear and unrealistic assumption that Russian speakers will always act and think as Russians wherever they live (Frear and Mazepus 2017), it proves that Russia does not see its neighbours as fully sovereign countries and perceives the current political situation in the region as temporary only.

The Russian authorities declare they are in geopolitical competition with the West over the shared neighbourhood, which fully satisfies the EU-LISTCO definition of contested order as "incompatibilities between two or more competing views about how political, economic, social, and territorial order should be established and/or sustained" (Börzel and Risse 2018: 12). The difference is, however, that while the EU and NATO have been promoting the rule of law and resilience-building in the region and were guided by the principle of voluntary cooperation, Russia's own standards-setting policy has centred on a robust and resolute interpretation of sovereignty and national self-determination, and from the very beginning assumed the use of coercion. The Russian political offer to its neighbours was "sovereign democracy"—a political model for corrupt authoritarian regimes that emphasizes the need for these states to follow their "national paths" to democracy, free from foreign intervention (Popescu and Wilson 2009).

From the Russian perspective, Ukraine has been of key importance in this competition, since the Russian political elite hold the view that Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic choice challenges Moscow's efforts to build its own integration projects in the post-Soviet space (Sergunin 2016) and may even undermine the political system in Russia (Mahda 2018). As Zbigniew Brzeziński put it, "without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be an empire, but with Ukraine suborned and then subordinated,

Russia automatically becomes an empire" (Brzeziński 2012: 95). Russian leverage in Ukraine was largely guaranteed by a strong pro-Russia lobby, which has always existed in Ukrainian politics and society, especially in the southeastern part of the country. Still, Russia has never hesitated to use pressure against Ukraine if the authorities in Kyiv did not take into account the Russian objectives, a tendency which manifested itself long before the 2014 aggression, among others, in the territorial dispute over Tuzla Island in 2003 (Zhurzhenko 2007). For the Russian authorities, the 2014 Revolution of Dignity constituted an attempt by Ukraine to break its dependence on Russia. Therefore, they eventually resorted to military force with a view to blocking Kyiv's closer integration with the EU and NATO, which resulted in Ukraine losing control over the Crimean Peninsula and part of the Donbas region. In this way, order contestation has led to the creation of areas of limited statehood.

Formally, both Crimea and those districts of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts that are currently outside the control of the government in Kyiv satisfy the EU-LISTCO definition of an area of limited statehood, as they "constitute those parts of a country in which central authorities (national governments) lack the ability to implement and enforce central rules and decisions and/or in which they do not control the means of violence" (Börzel and Risse 2018: 9). Ukraine's sovereignty over these territories is beyond dispute, as neither was Russia's annexation of Crimea legal[2], nor the Russia-controlled quasi-states in Donbas, so-called Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics, which lack international recognition. For the purpose of this report, therefore, we consider Crimea and part of the Donbas as areas of limited statehood. In practice, however, labelling both regions as having "limited statehood" seems misleading since it puts too great an emphasis on internal Ukrainian factors while also omitting the decisive causal importance of the external factor, which

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[2] In a resolution, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 27 March 2014, as much as 100 UN member states (with 11 against, 58 abstentions and 24 absent) condemned the annexation, affirmed their commitment to the territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders and declared the Russian-organised referendum invalid (United Nations General Assembly 2014).

is the direct Russian military intervention. In fact, both in Crimea and in some districts of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, there is now practically no Ukrainian statehood at all, as these areas are effectively under Russian occupation. The difference is that the peninsula has been unlawfully incorporated into the Russian Federation, but in Donbas that has not been the case.

Crimea has been *de facto* a part of Russia since 18 March 2014, after military units under Moscow's control, acting without insignias (so-called "little green men") (Galeotti 2019), secured full control over the peninsula and an illegal referendum was held there. The Russian occupation administration has since then pursued a policy of dismantling Ukrainian institutions in Crimea. Ukrainian laws were substituted by Russian laws and Russian citizenship was imposed on the local population. A new "constitution" was approved, paving the way for the instalment of new illegal "authorities". The Mejlis, the parliament-like body of the Crimean Tatars, was declared to be an extremist organisation and banned. Mandatory re-registration requirements were also imposed on NGOs, media outlets, and religious communities, with many of them being subsequently denied the right to re-register on procedural grounds. Repression and persecution of individuals followed, with arbitrary detentions, disappearances, ill-treatment and torture, and even extrajudicial execution documented (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2017). Tens of thousands of people decided to permanently leave Crimea[3], most of them settling in other Ukrainian regions. For those who stayed on the peninsula, the Ukrainian authorities, with assistance from the EU, have started to provide basic administrative services in neighbouring Kherson Oblast. Monitoring of the local situation remains a challenge since Russia systematically blocks the access of the OSCE observers to the region.

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[3] The exact figures are not known.

In the five years of occupation, Crimea has become gradually isolated from mainland Ukraine. Freedom of movement was severely restricted after Russia established "a border" between the peninsula and Kherson oblast, and Ukraine suspended air, train, and bus connections to Crimea. Energy deliveries were disrupted after transmission towers located in Kherson oblast and supplying electricity to Crimea were damaged in November 2015, and the contract between Ukraine's energy operator and Crimea's occupation authorities expired afterwards. Water supplies were cut off, with failed supply negotiations and Ukraine building a dam on the North Crimean Canal, which subsequently led to water shortages and an environmental disaster in Crimea. Finally, Ukrainian assets were "nationalised" and transferred to the control of Russian companies. Meanwhile, the peninsula has been further integrated into Russia. After a two-year period of having the status of a separate Russian Federal District, Crimea was merged into the Southern Federal District in July 2016, and a bridge across the Kerch Strait, connecting Crimea and Russia's Krasnodar Region, was partially opened in May 2018, becoming the first and only road/rail route between the peninsula and mainland Russia. Therefore, as of today, it is the Russian authorities who fully provide governance on the territory of occupied Crimea.

While part of eastern Ukraine has also been under Russian occupation, the situation there has been different, given the ongoing military clashes, with Russia/Moscow's persistent denial of its involvement. Although fighting has remained territorially limited and its intensity has decreased since the Minsk-II Agreement was signed in February 2015, Russia has not fulfilled a single provision of the document; the ceasefire has been violated on a daily basis and both sides continue to suffer battle casualties along the frontline. Several thousand Russian troops, heavily equipped and regularly supplied from Russian territory, remain present on Ukrainian territory in Donbas, commanding and training "local armed forces". In the districts of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, which were taken over by the Russian army (they account for around 2.5% of Ukraine's territory), two quasi-states—so-called People's Republics—were brought to life under

Russian management. These mafia-like structures are supervised by the Russian security services and their existence is to serve the Russia-promoted narrative of an alleged civil war in Donbas (Legucka 2017).

Unlike in occupied Crimea, where Russia fully provides governance, in the uncontrolled territory of the Donbas region, governance is provided by Russia through its intermediaries, and the situation is much more complicated. With a significant part of the economy and infrastructure of these areas destroyed, and the natural environment heavily contaminated as a result of military operations, the occupied part of Donbas has been on the brink of humanitarian and ecological catastrophe. Traditional supply and production chains have been decisively disrupted since Ukrainian authorities enacted a "trade blockade" of these territories in April 2017 (Szeligowski 2017). The "local authorities", who are mainly engaged in the expropriation of private property and industrial facilities and in smuggling, including illegally mined Ukrainian coal, have been largely dependent on Russian subsidies. Most of the remaining enterprises have been transferred to the control of the South Ossetia-registered company *Vneshtorgservis*, associated with Serhiy Kurchenko, a young fugitive businessman with close ties to the former Ukrainian President Yanukovych. On top of that, Donbas has become one of the most explosives-contaminated areas in the world from the numerous minefields and remnants of the war. Ukraine's Defence Ministry estimates that mine clearance in the region would take as long as 40 years (Ponomarenko 2018). Given all these circumstances, full reintegration of the occupied parts of Donbas with the rest of Ukraine will be impossible in the short to medium terms, even if a political solution is found.

Given the security reasons and economic hardship, it is likely that as many as 3 million people have left the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts[4], with most seeking a new place to live in other

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[4] The exact figures are not known.

Ukrainian regions, adding to the migration flow from Crimea. With more than 1.5 million people officially registered as internally displaced persons (IDPs) (Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine 2019), Ukraine has become home to the ninth-largest number of IDPs in the world, according to the UN (Kyiv Post 2017). There has been no accurate profiling exercise carried out for IDPs, however, which makes it difficult to respond appropriately to their needs for assistance and protection, or to develop strategies for durable solutions. Still, another 2-3 million have remained in the occupied territories and have been in need of international humanitarian aid. With almost €120 million of aid since 2014, the EU has been one of the biggest contributors of humanitarian assistance for eastern Ukraine.

Unlike in Crimea, an OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) has been deployed to the uncontrolled part of the Donbas region, although it faces regular restrictions from Russian troops, who prevent the observers from accessing many parts of the occupied territory. Apart from the two border crossings in Gukovo and Donetsk, the OSCE SMM has also had no access to the part of the Russian-Ukrainian border currently outside the control of the government in Kyiv, the result of a Russian veto within the OSCE, as Moscow tries to hide evidence of its involvement in eastern Ukraine. Yet, even the limited presence of the mission has already contributed to decreasing tensions on the ground and provided the opportunity to rebuild some basic social infrastructure along the frontline.

Apart from the security challenges, the Russian aggression has been a significant economic burden for Ukraine. Total damage inflicted by Russia on Ukraine is still beyond evaluation. Nevertheless, according to Ukrainian authorities' preliminary estimates from 2015, the Russian aggression costs Ukraine around $5 million daily and has destroyed 20% of Ukraine's economic potential (Government of Ukraine 2015). In the face of the Russian threat, Ukraine was also pushed to radically increase security and defence spending, amounting to almost 6% of GDP in

2019, which significantly reduced the possibility of allocating money to other sectors of the economy, including investment and social programmes. This created an additional area of sectorally limited statehood in which the state is not fully able to implement rules at the central level regarding the country's economic development. With support from international financial institutions, as well as the EU, which has provided Ukraine with €3.3 billion of macro-financial assistance since 2014, the largest amount of aid of this kind ever given to any non-EU country, Ukraine managed to regain macroeconomic stability. In January 2019, the country's foreign exchange reserves exceeded $20 billion for the first time since 2014. However, the situation still remains volatile as Kyiv faces repayment of a vast amount of its foreign debt—more than $15 billion—in the short-to-medium term.

3.2. Sectoral Areas of Limited Statehood

After the Revolution of Dignity, Ukraine's new authorities embarked on an ambitious and comprehensive reform process to (re)build strong state institutions that, in fact, had never been fully established and had been further undermined during Yanukovych's presidency. Due to the lack of proper institutional design, the state had been for years unable to enforce its decisions in several policy areas, a condition that satisfies the EU-LISTCO definition of an area of limited statehood. The decisive factor in setting up the direction of the post-2014 reforms has been the ongoing Russian aggression, which pushed Ukraine to prioritise strengthening its security and defence sector, especially increasing the military potential of its armed forces. However, the pace of the reforms soon became affected by the interests of the most influential political and business groups, including the authorities themselves, who slowed the changes to maintain the status quo from which they had benefited.

The modernisation of Ukraine's security and defence sector, with some minor exceptions, had been rather a neglected policy area until 2014, even though the country has been an important recipient of Western institutional assistance since Ukraine became a NATO partner state in 1994. The Alliance's support led to several successful transformative examples, such as maintaining the rotating Ukrainian presence in the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq, or the build-up of the cadre of mid-career officers with professional education and training in NATO member states, but these were always fragmented reforms that lacked a systemic approach under successive Ukrainian governments. The years of Yanukovych's "predatory" administration further degraded the country's defence and security, which finally made it impossible to manage the challenge of Euromaidan and left Ukraine on the brink of disintegration in the wake of the Russian aggression.

During the first months of 2014, the security and defence sector in Ukraine was clearly an area of limited statehood, understood as a lack of "capacity to implement and enforce central decisions including maintaining a monopoly on the means of violence" (Börzel and Risse 2015: 5). The law enforcement officers not only failed to control the Euromaidan protests but after the mass shootings in Kyiv at the end of February 2014, they simply left the city. Restoring public order required informal activities of protester organisations, such as Euromaidan Self-Defence, which at the time assumed the functions of state institutions, although Ukraine's parliament was able to bestow these activities with a cloak of legitimacy during extraordinary sessions. Furthermore, the state was initially unable to provide organised resistance to the Russian aggression in Crimea and the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and had to rely on groups of volunteers, local business and power elites, and even oligarchs, who joined their ranks and/or supported the regular security forces, as was the case with liberating the critically important building of the Kharkiv Oblast State Administration, and resisting the power takeover by Russian forces in other regions, such as Dnipropetrovsk and Odesa.

Starting from mid-2015, however, the state gradually began to reassume its functions. The Ukraine Armed Forces have been significantly strengthened, with the number of troops in active service having nearly doubled to more than 200,000 people. The vast majority of volunteer units have been integrated into the army or other defence forces, such as the newly created National Guard and territorial defence units. Although some rudimentary small paramilitary groups have not yet been formally integrated, they are effectively controlled by the state and work within the unified command-and-control structure. The state has established forms of cooperation with volunteers who can be activated in case the armed conflict escalates or Russia invades other regions of Ukraine or opens "new fronts" in the ongoing war. Several substantial defence and security reforms have also been underway, with support provided by NATO and the EU, including police reform, albeit the pace of the changes has been rather slow (Bugriy 2016). A key milestone in this regard was the adoption of the Law on National Security in June 2018, although it is a framework law and many more legal acts need to be adopted, including a new law concerning Ukraine's security services. Still, a few areas that to some extent may be regarded as having the character of limited statehood continue to exist in Ukraine, such as organised crime-controlled Odesa and illegal amber-mining zones in Polissya. The monopoly of the state on the means of violence remains a challenge, too, which has manifested itself with frequent attacks on civic activists.

In parallel, the long-awaited state capacity-building process has been launched, which is key to strengthening Ukraine's resilience, although so far it has produced mixed results and the state remains in transitory mode. Weak state capacity has usually been in Ukraine a combination of a lack of resources and a deliberate choice of political elites, who undermined state institutions in order to reap political and financial benefits (so-called "cunning state" phenomena). This reached its peak during the Yanukovych presidency. Given the Russian aggression, lack of resources will probably remain a challenge for some time to come, although compensated to some extent by

the increased financial assistance from the international community. Meanwhile, the Revolution of Dignity brought to the highest echelons of power representatives of the new middle-class and creative-class elite who had not belonged to the existing networks of political patronage. Yet, without having achieved critical mass, they were unable to overturn the old system of governance and many of them quickly left their posts within state institutions.

The most visible change in the governance sector has been the EU-supported decentralisation reform, which led to the consolidation of many local communities and increased their powers and financial autonomy. As of March 2019, around 39% of Ukrainian territory was covered with new amalgamated administrative units, hromadas, in which 27% of the Ukrainian population lives (Ministry of Regional Development, Construction, Housing and Communal Services of Ukraine 2019). A key aspect of the reform was fiscal decentralisation, as a result of which tax revenues for local budgets increased significantly (more than 20%, year-on-year, in 2018). Decentralisation has been positively assessed by ordinary Ukrainians, with more than 40% in favour of the reform (Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2018a). However, it does not enjoy support from many local vested interest groups, which attempt to block the voluntary amalgamation of administrative units, fearing loss of influence, as well as support from some branches of the central administration since the reform undermines their control over the situation in the regions and benefits local political elites.

Less visible, although no less important, has been EU-funded public administration reform, which strongly contributed to the building of depoliticised, professional, and independent civil service, and introducing transparency to the decision-making process within the governmental bodies. The financial support from the EU, intended in part for increased salaries for some senior civil servants, helped to partially address one of the biggest problems of Ukrainian bureaucracy—the traditional compensation of official salaries with side payments, often arranged by oligarchs.

However, public administration reform, too, has met with strong resistance from vested interest groups, whose political and financial interests have been undermined. For this reason, part of the reform was reversed in November 2017, when the parliament abolished previously introduced obligation to select the heads of Oblast and Regional State Administrations through a competition procedure and granted the right to appoint them again to the president, a move that marked the intention to strengthen the so-called "power vertical" of the presidential administration.

On the other side of the spectrum (but directed to the same aim) have been Ukrainian efforts to fight corruption, which constitute probably the biggest failure of the post-Maidan authorities and a vivid example of an area of sectorally limited statehood, in which the state is unable to enforce its rules. Anti-corruption policy was supposed to be a priority for both Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk and Volodymyr Hroysman. Some important institutional changes took place in this respect under the pressure from the international institutions and civil society, like establishing the National Anticorruption Bureau and introducing an electronic system of asset declarations for officials and politicians. A new public procurement system called ProZorro has also been successfully launched. Nevertheless, anti-corruption activities have met with fierce resistance from part of the political elite afraid of revealing their illegal activities and reducing future profits (Kościński and Szeligowski 2017). According to Transparency International, Ukraine ranks 130th out of 180 countries on the Corruption Perception Index, second-worst only to Russia in Europe. The key problem in fighting corruption remains the still unfinished reform of the justice system in Ukraine, which makes it possible for corrupt judges and prosecutors to sabotage anti-corruption actions at their final stage. Although the judicial system has been subject to some change after the Revolution of Dignity, too, with the introduction of a new three-tier system of courts, restrictions on judicial immunity and launching a procedure for the evaluation of judges, this has not decisively affected the old practices.

Another factor undermining state capacity are the oligarchs, who still maintain strong influence over the political and economic situation in the country, although their overall position has weakened since the Revolution of Dignity. In 2014-2018, the 100 wealthiest people in Ukraine lost about two-thirds of their wealth (in dollars) and were worth $26-27 billion at the beginning of 2018. Interestingly, their personal wealth did not recover along with the country's economic growth, as their relative value dropped to some 20% of Ukraine's GDP in 2018, while it was more than 50% in 2014 (Shavalyuk 2018). The same situation has affected the top 10 wealthiest Ukrainians, who are worth about 10% of the country's GDP, compared to almost 30% in 2014. The main reason for these changes was the Russian aggression, as a result of which the richest Ukrainians lost many of their assets in Crimea and Donbas. The reforms also played a role, especially in the financial sector, which made it more difficult for oligarchs to use old money-laundering schemes. Still, oligarchs managed to largely maintain their grip on the energy sector, which traditionally has been a source of income, and even a few new "minigarchs" connected to the post-Maidan authorities have emerged in this sphere. As before, oligarchs exercise significant control over Ukraine's parliament, Verkhovna Rada. According to the study by the Ukrainian Institute for the Future, a Kyiv-based think tank, as much as 65% of the MPs in the previous term (2014-2019) may have been under oligarchic influence (Ukrainian Institute for the Future 2018), voting for laws that allowed their patrons easy access to public funds. Importantly, top oligarchs have also maintained their monopoly position on the Ukrainian media market, which gives them and their protégés an upper hand in every election campaign in the country. The oligarchs themselves may be considered a separate area of socially limited statehood. Yet, their influence on the state should be regarded as an example of sectorally limited statehood, as it leads to a situation in which the state is unable to enforce its decisions in different policy areas, especially in those being of particular interest to the most powerful oligarchs.

The relatively weak state capacity has so far taken a heavy economic toll on Ukraine. According to estimates by the Centre for Economic Reforms, another Kyiv-based think tank, as much as an additional $8 billion could be received by Ukraine's state budget every year if only the law at all levels was respected and enforced, and structural reforms were carried out (Centre for Economic Strategy 2018). This greatly exceeds what Ukraine has ever borrowed from the International Monetary Fund. In addition, corruption, impunity, and a lack of trust in the judicial system remain the main obstacles to new investment in Ukraine, as confirmed by a number of opinion polls (see, for example, European Business Association [2018]). Under such conditions, financial support from external actors, crucially important in providing a lifeline to the country's authorities, increasingly depends on Ukraine's performance in reforming the rule of law area.

While much attention has recently been given to the migration issue in Ukraine, this policy sector had not yet created any areas of limited statehood in the country, in contrast to the migration problems in the EU's southern neighbourhood. However, it has already brought about negative economic consequences for Ukraine that should not be overlooked. After 2014, Ukraine witnessed a large outflow of workers, mainly to Poland, as a result of the declining standard of living in Ukraine (in 2014-2015, cumulative GDP decline was more than 16%). The wave of migration reached its peak in 2017-2018 and probably will stabilise or decrease in the coming years (Jaroszewicz 2018). The State Statistics Service of Ukraine estimates the number of migrant workers at 1.3 million, but experts say the real number may actually be 2-4 million. Remittances from abroad have significantly increased at that time, ranging over $14 billion in 2018, and vastly contributed to the economic stabilisation of the country. Nevertheless, the collateral damage has been that the Ukrainian workforce has shrunk by 5-8%, which has resulted in the economic recovery being slower than initially expected. Ukrainian enterprises increasingly face a labour shortage, with many young and skilled workers seeking better job opportunities abroad, and ordinary Ukrainians perceive the mass migration of their compatriots as one of the

biggest threats to the country, (Rating Group and Kyiv International Institute of Sociology and Razumkov Centre 2018). Still, as many Ukrainian experts point out, the problem of mass migration has become exaggerated as a result of domestic political infighting in Ukraine[5].

3.3. Radical Groups: Social Area Of Limited Statehood

The deliberate involvement of radical groups in the Ukrainian defence and security sector, especially during the initial phase of the Russian aggression in 2014-2015, coupled with weak state capacity, created in Ukraine an exceptional temporal area of limited statehood, when the central government and some oblast authorities had limited ability to implement and enforce defence and security-related measures and effectively control the means of violence. This particular area of limited statehood was not specific to any territory, although it was more characteristic of regions directly affected by the hostilities, and neither to a specific policy sector, but rather to specific social groups that voluntarily assumed responsibility for the country's defence due to the extraordinary circumstances. While it is fair to say that, as of now, the Ukrainian state apparatus has largely regained control over these groups, and over the means of violence in general, the country is still suffering residual after-effects of its earlier loss of monopoly on the use of force and may face, in the short-to-medium term, growing extremism and political violence as a result.

While Russian aggression on Ukraine has set the firm binary divide of pro-Russia versus pro-Ukraine radical groups, Ukraine's radicalisation is rather "a dynamic, multi-staged and multifaceted phenomenon that occurs at the interaction of individual vulnerabilities (biographical

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[5] Based on authors' own interviews with experts on migration, conducted during the study trip to Kyiv (11-17 November 2018).

exposure) with an encouraging environment and is therefore always context-specific" (Dzhekova et al. 2016: 6). In fact, radicalism had manifested itself in Ukraine already prior to 2014, with harassment and physical attacks against government-critical journalists and protesters. These incidents were committed by groups of unidentified men in civilian clothes, usually members of sports clubs or plain criminals employed by the then authorities with remuneration in exchange for illegal activities. These groups later become collectively known as "titushky" and played an active role during Euromaidan on behalf of the government, beating and kidnapping protesters, and even torturing some of them to death.

Many radical groups had been, indeed, financed and supported by Russia long before 2014, and actively joined the ranks of the Russian-controlled forces in Donbas soon after the beginning of the aggression. One of the most notorious groups was Kharkiv-based Oplot (Stronghold), an MMA fight club whose members took part in attacks on Euromaidan protesters in Kyiv and later were responsible for at least several acts of terrorism and sabotage in eastern Ukraine. For example, Oleksandr Zakharchenko, the self-declared leader of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic in 2014-2018, was formerly the head of the Donetsk branch of Oplot. Numerous other Ukrainian radical and paramilitary groups also participated in the hostilities on the Russian side, including Cossacks and other irregular military groups bearing "Orthodox" (adherent to the Russian Orthodox creed) names, committing war crimes in Donbas. There are several pro-Russia "security" groups, *de facto* mobile paramilitary units, which still exist in central and western Ukraine, mainly under the umbrella of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church Moscow Patriarchate, although Ukrainian experts believe these groups are closely monitored by the Ukrainian security services and the national police[6].

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[6] Based on authors' own interviews with experts on security and radicalisation, conducted during the study trip to Kyiv (11-17 November 2018).

Likewise, many (more than 30) radical and paramilitary groups took part in the hostilities in Donbas on the Ukrainian side. Among the most important were Right Sector, Azov, Aidar, Donbas, and Dnipro-1, which were volunteer battalions consisting of as many as a few hundred individuals, with their own chain of command, logistics, and funding, although at the frontline they cooperated closely with the Armed Forces of Ukraine and often relied on artillery support from the regular Ukrainian army. Their presence in Donbas was crucial at the initial stage of the Russian aggression, compensating for the deplorable condition of the army. However, at least several times they showed poor commitment and discipline, and later on, with only a few exceptions, they were integrated into the official army structures. There were cases of these groups committing crimes and abuses, with probably the most notorious example the Tornado battalion, which was disbanded by the Ukrainian authorities in June 2015 after it had transformed itself into a *de facto* organised crime group. Nevertheless, the Ukrainian authorities have so far been hesitant to investigate and prosecute extremists for actions and crimes committed by the volunteer battalions, given their contribution to the war with Russia and high trust (over 50%) within the society (Razumkov Centre 2019).

While not all Ukrainian radical groups and volunteer battalions are ideology-driven, some of them are affiliated with right-wing political parties and organisations, and a few of their commanders even managed to enter parliament in the October 2014 elections, although as members of other political factions. No far-right party managed to pass the threshold at that time and they largely stayed outside big politics, focusing on street marches. In March 2017, the leaders of three nationalist organisations—Svoboda, National Corps (civil branch of the Azov battalion), and Right Sector—signed a joint political manifesto (Svoboda 2017) calling for the transformation of street actions into parliamentary politics. Support for the document was expressed by three other organisations—the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists, and S14. However, together they failed to prepare a joint platform or even put forward a single

candidate for the March 2019 presidential elections. Notably, the link between political parties and street groups has been weak, and it may be the case that a strong political movement of the Ukrainian far-right will not emerge, especially given that the political weight of Svoboda, which was previously present in the Rada (2012-2014) as a separate faction, far exceeds that of the other radical formations. As radical parties did not make it into parliament in the pre-term July 2019 elections, it is both possible that the radicals have become marginalised or that their radicalisation may even escalate, as parliamentary politics has turned out to be inaccessible to them[7].

Of particular concern for Ukraine are those radical groups that are issue-driven and do not publicly adhere to any party ideology. An example of such a mixed ad-hoc group is the radicals that initiated the trade blockade of the occupied territories in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts in spring 2017. Those were not individuals affiliated with political parties, but war veterans, who won support for their case to "stop trade with the enemy" from a substantial part of society and who forced the government, which opposed them, to eventually approve their demands and permanently institute the blockade despite certain economic losses. While there was no direct political agenda behind this action, it nonetheless had a significant political effect on the national level, as the state was again unable to enforce its will. Other, although less pronounced, examples are radical groups employed by oligarchs and business representatives, and sometimes also by organised crime groups, in illegal activities. Frequently, their task includes asset-grabbing, which is the illicit acquisition of a business belonging to a competitor, or intimidation of their patrons' opponents. There have been cases in which war veterans were employed as contract killers. While issue-driven radical actions have not been numerous so far, they may become more widespread in the future given the lack of state policy on reintegrating war veterans into society

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[7] Based on authors' own interview with *Vyacheslav Likhachev*, conducted during the study trip to Kyiv (11-17 November 2018).

and helping them to cope with war trauma. A driving force for change in this respect could be the new Ministry for Veteran's Affairs, established in November 2018, yet it remains to be seen how effective this institution will be.

3.4. Transcarpathia: Contested Order?[8]

Until recently, Transcarpathia had not received much interest from either the central authorities in Kyiv or foreign observers. The region hit the headlines only in autumn 2017 after a conflict between Ukraine and Hungary broke out over the rights of the local Hungarian minority. However, Transcarpathia is an interesting case for at least three reasons—geographic, historic and ethnic. First, it is an area squeezed between Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania, and physically isolated from the rest of Ukraine by the Carpathian Mountains. Infrastructure connections are better developed with Slovakia and Hungary than with Ukraine. The same is the case with the local economy, which remains highly dependent on smuggling to the neighbouring EU countries. Second, Transcarpathia has had a long history of changing states. Before it became part of Ukraine in 1946, the region belonged to the Hungarian Empire, constituted an autonomous area within Czechoslovakia, and was partly occupied by Hungary. Third, Transcarpathia is an ethnically diverse region. According to the 2001 nationwide census, the region was inhabited by about 1,250,000 people, of whom 80.5% were Ukrainians, 12.5% Hungarians, 2.6% Romanians, 2.5% Russians, 1.1% Roma, and 0.5% Slovaks. The largest national minority, Hungarians, live in tight groups in the southern part of the region, especially in the Berehove, Uzhhorod, and Vynohradiv raions, which are well-organised and enjoy strong support from the Hungarian government. In socio-political terms, therefore, Transcarpathia appears to be a relatively "distant"

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[8] Jakub Pieńkowski from the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM) contributed to this chapter.

and "foreign" region as viewed from Kyiv, with the visible engagement of a third party on top of that, which, at least theoretically, makes it fertile ground for order contestation.

Pro-autonomy tendencies manifested themselves in the region already during the 1991 independence referendum, when a large majority of Transcarpathians voted for the region to have autonomous status within Ukraine, although this never materialised. Since then, the local Rusyn community, which is not recognised by the Ukrainian state as a national minority, twice attempted to secure autonomy from the central government, but their demands never gained popular support and triggered a harsh reaction from the capital. In 1993, a self-proclaimed local government was established but soon was banned by the central authorities. In 2008, another self-proclaimed local government was set up, and even an ultimatum was voiced that Rusyns would declare the independence of Transcarpathian Rus if local autonomy aspirations were rejected again (Iwański and Żochowski 2015). That declaration pushed Ukraine's security services to operate more decisively. In 2012, Dmytro Sydor, the chairman of the Congress of the Carpathian Ruthenians, which issued the ultimatum, was sentenced to three year's imprisonment with two years' probation for encroachment on the territorial integrity and inviolability of Ukraine's borders. The reason why both attempts failed was that separatist Rusyn tendencies have actually never been strong in the region but were largely inspired by Russia (Korduban 2008). It is indicative that Sydor himself was an archpriest of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, and Petro Hetsko, the self-declared head of the 2008 "Rusyn government", conducts his "political" activities from Moscow. Still, the "Ruthenian question" may easily be incited in the future by an external actor as an instrument of order contestation, raising peoples' anxiety. Russian media, which serves as an important source of information for many Rusyn communities in Canada and the U.S., intentionally promotes the narrative of Rusyns as a brother Slavic nation of Russians and calls Ukrainian policy towards Rusyns ethnocide (Wiktorek 2010).

Unlike Rusyns, the Hungarian community has not taken practical steps to obtain local autonomy, although such demands have been voiced by the Hungarian authorities. In May 2014, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán announced that Hungarians living in Transcarpathia should have their own self-government and be allowed to obtain a second, Hungarian, passport. From the Hungarian point of view, the former would take the form of a separate administrative district covering areas inhabited by the Hungarian minority, or a special constituency, thus allowing a Hungarian representative to enter the Ukrainian parliament, but the idea has been contested by Ukraine, concerned about increasing separatist moods (Kałan 2014). The move towards granting a second passport, even though Ukraine does not allow dual citizenship, was put in motion by the Hungarian government already in 2010, and estimates are that more than 100,000 passports have been distributed to Ukrainians of Hungarian origin in Transcarpathia since then. That led to a diplomatic incident in October 2018 when Ukraine expelled the Hungarian consul in Berehove after it was revealed that he had handed out Hungarian passports, and his associates urged the new citizens to conceal their second citizenship (Jóźwiak and Szeligowski 2018). In fact, the conflict between Ukraine and Hungary escalated even earlier, in autumn 2017, when Ukraine adopted a new education law that, among other provisions, changed the existing regulations regarding the language used in teaching in schools. This could potentially limit education in national minority languages. For the Hungarian minority, which enjoys numerous privileges in Ukraine, including bilingual information signs, its own organisations, media, educational institutions, and even political parties, that constituted a serious restriction on minority rights. In response, the Hungarian authorities started to block Ukraine's efforts to strengthen cooperation with NATO and the EU, including by means of vetoing NATO-Ukraine Commission meetings.

While Hungarian policy towards Transcarpathia largely satisfies the EU-LISTCO definition of contested order, understood as "incompatibilities between two or more competing views about how political, economic, social, and territorial order should be established and/or sustained"

(Börzel and Risse 2018: 12), it is imperative to acknowledge that Budapest has not aimed at any territorial changes in the region, but has rather used its compatriots living abroad as a source of legitimisation of internal Hungarian politics. This concerns not only Ukraine but also other countries with Hungarian minorities, such as Slovakia and Romania. Therefore, the prospects for any "Hungarian separatism" in Transcarpathia are low and will remain low as long as there is no rapid governance breakdown in Ukraine resulting in a total loss of control over the situation in the region. And even this loss of control might not be enough, as it was in Ukraine after the change of power when President Yanukovych fled in 2014. This is not to say, however, that the climate of distrust between Ukraine and Hungary that has recently appeared will soon go away. The tension will likely continue in the near future, with Transcarpathia a potential spot for third-party provocations aimed at inciting ethnic hatred.

4. RISKS AND TIPPING POINTS

As mentioned before, areas of limited statehood and contested orders create vulnerabilities and pose risks, but they do not in themselves amount to threats to the EU. Only if and when areas of limited statehood and contested orders deteriorate into governance breakdown and violent conflict, do the risks become threats. The moment "when" is here described as the "tipping point" at which governments lose the capacity to cope with, adapt to, or recover from security crises. In the following chapter, we examine four selected tipping points, at which areas of limited statehood and/or contested orders in Ukraine, identified in the previous chapter, are likely to deteriorate into governance breakdown and violent conflict.

4.1. Territorial

The most important risk for Ukraine's security in the short-to-medium term is a resumption of the large-scale military operation by the Russian Federation. Although the military potential of the Ukrainian Armed Forces was significantly strengthened after 2014 (Ukraine can count on the 200,000-strong Armed Forces and another 200,000 reservists with combat experience), it is still insufficient to repel a full-scale Russian conventional offensive and will remain so for the foreseeable future for several reasons, including financial constraints. For the last few years, Russia has been actively building up its military presence near the border with Ukraine. The Ukrainian authorities estimate that there are at least 80,000 Russian troops deployed just in the direct vicinity of Ukraine's borders, including in Crimea and occupied Donbas. What is more, a series of strategic exercises conducted by Russian forces revealed that Russia "prepares to launch strategic-level war-fighting operations at any time of its own choosing, in any war theatre adjacent to Russia and against peer adversaries, in other words, both to go to war and wage it on a large scale" (Norberg 2018: 51). The less successful Russia's attempts to destabilise Ukraine through political meddling and economic pressure are, the more it will be willing to use direct military force against Ukraine again.

There are two main directions from which a potential Russian offensive might be launched. The first is the Crimean Peninsula. Following the annexation of Crimea, Russia rapidly built up its military presence there, a move which has had serious ramifications for stability in the wider Black Sea region because it has shifted the regional balance of power to Russia (Petersen 2019). According to data provided by the Ukrainian Defence Ministry, the number of Russian military personnel on the peninsula increased almost threefold, exceeding 30,000 personnel, and several hundred units of military equipment have been transferred to the region, including coastal and air defences, and electronic warfare systems (Minich 2018). There is no evidence of nuclear weapons present in Crimea, although some types of Russian weapons deployed there are able to carry nuclear warheads.

The second direction is the occupied part of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and/or mainland Russia. The military capabilities of Russia's Western and Southern Military Districts, which border Ukraine, have been systematically developed, both through re-arming and training. About 400,000 soldiers are deployed in these regions (Dyner 2018). Additionally, in occupied Donbas alone, there are 35,000 local armed forces (United Nations Security Council 2019), composed of a combination of Russian soldiers, foreign volunteers, and local fighters, integrated into the chain of command of Russia's Southern Military District.

While any large-scale Russian offensive would obviously lead to a further violent outburst in the conflict between Ukraine and Russia, we identify one specific tipping point at which a governance breakdown would also be likely, namely further territorial losses. Such a scenario would likely enhance conflicts between former members of volunteer battalions who became regular army soldiers and their current military commanders, as well as possibly give rise to small-scale military operations undertaken independently by radical armed groups, without coordination with the Ukraine Armed Forces. Increased political infighting between the authorities and the opposition, including far-right parties and their armed formations, would be likely, leading to street protests and possibly even riots, which would additionally pose an enormous challenge to the law enforcement agencies. However, it should be noted that the full implications of this scenario are difficult to assess as they are dependent on the scale of the Russian incursion.

4.2. Political

Another important risk to Ukraine's security in the medium term is the loss of legitimacy by the government and a subsequent anti-government uprising. This would probably be triggered by

political factors rather than economic ones since both the Orange Revolution and the Revolution of Dignity were of political origin. The most likely background for social unrest would probably be the ongoing war with Russia. As many as two-thirds of Ukrainians declare the military conflict in the country's east to be the most important problem and that lasting peace is the thing that Ukraine lacks the most at the moment (Rating Group and Kyiv International Institute of Sociology and Razumkov Centre 2018). In fact, the war in Donbas has already triggered social resistance at least twice, and in both cases, the key role was played by radical and paramilitary groups. In 2015, parliament's decision to adopt on first reading constitutional changes clearing the way for a "special status" for Donbas was accompanied by bloody demonstrations in which three people were killed and more than 100 were injured. In 2017, Donbas war veterans started an illegal trade blockade of the occupied territories in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, which pushed the authorities to officially authorise it a few weeks later after yet another series of clashes had taken place. Both times, the subject of the contestation was the government's policy towards occupied Donbas, which was considered to be too soft.

Ukrainians largely favour making compromises with a view to ending the war with Russia—two-thirds say it is necessary. Nevertheless, only 16% would agree to any kind of compromise while 51% are of the opinion that only some compromise is acceptable. A closer look at the opinion polls proves that Ukrainians are even less inclined to make compromises with Russia, as actually none of the ideas that are currently on the table enjoy popular support in the society. The most acceptable scenario encompasses parliament adopting a law on neutrality, yet still, only 30% of Ukrainians would advocate such a decision and 45% would be against. The same situation concerns the political provisions of the Minsk Agreements—30% of Ukrainians would support giving a special status to the occupied parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts but 48% are against it; 17% would support creating local police and prosecutor bodies from just the local population but 53% are against it; 15% would support providing amnesty for people taking part in the hostilities in Donbas but 60% oppose it; and, 13% would support holding local elections in the

occupied part of Donbas on conditions proposed by the representatives of the so-called People's Republics but 60% are against that idea (Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2019). Therefore, a specific tipping point, at which anti-government protests would likely result in a governance breakdown and/or violent conflict would probably be the imposition of a resolution to the conflict in Donbas, which would be perceived as seemingly based on Russian conditions and would not correspond to the popular demands of Ukrainian society. There are at least two basic likely scenarios in this regard.

The first of them is Ukraine's military defeat or political capitulation, which would result, for instance, from pro-Russia political forces re-taking power in the country and giving in to Russian pressure. The second is the full implementation of the political provisions of the Minsk Agreements, which would provide for legalisation of the Russian proxies in eastern Ukraine and enforcement of the abovementioned solutions, widely considered to be unacceptable compromises. This would likely bring about the mass involvement of war veterans as well as radical and paramilitary groups in violent street riots, including storming government buildings and using firearms and explosives. Increased political infighting would be highly likely, with some members of law enforcement agencies defecting to the side of the opposition, as the authorities would probably be recognised as traitors of the national interest.

4.3. Social

The Ukrainian state has so far quite effectively controlled radicalisation, in part through co-optation mechanisms, yet the risk remains in the medium term that violence without a political agenda, but which has a political effect anyway, would spread. In fact, two of the risks and tipping points mentioned above are to a great extent based on the active involvement of radical groups.

While it is fair to emphasize that, as of now, these groups are relatively small and almost invisible in the political ranks, it has to be acknowledged that the radicals who contributed to the fall of the Yanukovych regime or those who assisted Russia in annexing Crimea and instigating war in Donbas were, too, not many in number but and still exerted a significant impact through violence. Therefore, it is of key importance to identify the conditions under which such a threat emerged in the past.

There were at least four factors that facilitated the rise of strong radical groups in Ukraine: 1) disposition to use violence; 2) financing through corrupt business; 3) connection to local law enforcement agencies, which gave the radicals informal legitimacy from the government; and, 4) a specific ideological element, often fuelled from the outside. The Oplot group is a case in point. Started as an MMA fight club, its members were often employed to provide corporate security for questionable business activity. The group cooperated with the police during Euromaidan, for instance, helping to transfer protesters to police stations. Their leader, Yevhen Zhylin, had even been a police officer. Also, Oplot opposed the glorification of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) and promoted Soviet values. Zhylin came up with the initiative to erect a monument to Stalin in Kharkiv in 2013, supported by Russian nationalists. The Ukrainian authorities at the time, under Yanukovych, reached for support from the radicals especially when the regime was constrained by laws and norms that made it impossible to enforce punishment and terror, or when the state lacked the capacity and manpower to act. Many of these four factors still exist in Ukraine. For instance, the infamous far-right S14 group, although often engaged in clashes with the police, is widely believed to work in cooperation with the authorities. Members of the group were engaged in dispersing LGBT marches and attacking Roma camps. At the same time, they have received financing from the state budget for projects dedicated to national-patriotic education of youth. Moreover, S14 members supported anti-corruption activists demanding the dismissal of corrupt officials over the death of civic activist Kateryna Handziuk, which also may be regarded as a way of seeking legitimacy. Another example has been the far-right community gathered around the

Azov battalion, which on many occasions cooperated with the police and the National Guard (the battalion was officially incorporated into the National Guard at the end of 2014). In 2018, members of this community established a sort of "National Militia" to assist the law enforcement bodies "where the authorities either can't or do not want to" take actions (Coynash 2018). Vadym Troyan, former deputy commander of the Azov Battalion, was first appointed as head of the Kyiv Regional Police, then promoted to the rank of First Deputy Head of the National Police, only to become Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs in 2017.

What is missing, though, and what we identify as a specific tipping point, at which radicalism would play a decisive role, is a systemic institutional crisis within the country, when the regime's protection by law enforcement bodies takes precedence over observing the law, as a result of which the disorganised state apparatus loses control over the radical groups, as was the case after Euromaidan. One such scenario could be the mass contestation of election results by the society or opposition forces, which lead to street protests and result in a governance breakdown. The combination of several tipping points would be likely as well since both further territorial losses and/or a resolution to the conflict imposed on Russian conditions would likely be followed by an institutional crisis and create the conditions for radical groups to use violence.

4.4. Economic

Although emigration from Ukraine has probably already peaked, there is still the risk of another wave of migration in the medium term, if some conditions are met. These conditions are economic rather than political. Ukrainian migration has so far been a function of the economic situation in the country, especially the divergence in the standard of living and remuneration between Ukraine and the neighbouring EU countries. The direct cause has been the rapid fall the hryvnia since

2014 in favour of other currencies, which has made labour migration much more profitable, from around UAH 8 per $1 in Q1 of 2014 to about UAH 30 per $1 in Q1 of 2015. Political crises, on the other hand, did not affect the migration situation in Ukraine significantly, neither during the Orange Revolution nor the Revolution of Dignity. The reason is that there is no observable cause and effect between political crises in Ukraine and the depreciation of hryvnia.

The first wave of hryvnia devaluation was caused by the Asian financial crisis of 1997 and the subsequent default of the Russian economy in 1998. The second wave is easily attributed to the impact of the global financial crisis of 2008. At that time, the exchange rate of the national currency remained quite stable, both during the "Ukraine without Kuchma" campaign and the Orange Revolution. After Euromaidan, the cumulative effect of the predatory economic policy of the Party of Regions in 2012-2013, as well as the Russian aggression, triggered the third wave of hryvnia devaluation, not the political protests of the Revolution of Dignity.

Interestingly, there has also been no observable reverse link between political crises and the depreciation of hryvnia, that is, none of the political crises—the "Ukraine without Kuchma" campaign, the Orange Revolution, or the Revolution of Dignity—were determined by the depreciation of the hryvnia or any other economic factor, but were always driven by the internal political agenda.

Therefore, as a specific tipping point at which another wave of migration from Ukraine would be likely, we identify the further rapid depreciation of the national currency, which would probably serve as a strong motivator for Ukrainian citizens to look for employment abroad, especially in EU countries. Two basic scenarios include the depreciation of the hryvnia as a result of a global economic slowdown or crisis and/or the fall in the exchange rate brought about by a renewed Russian military operation in Ukraine. The hryvnia's depreciation would also be possible in the

event of the long-term suspension of cooperation between the Ukrainian authorities and the IMF, although the drop would probably not be as rapid as in the other two situations. While it is unlikely that the depreciation of the national currency would lead to violent conflict, a new wave of migration could eventually trigger a governance breakdown by means of a labour market crisis and subsequent perturbations in the social security sphere.

5. MECHANISMS OF RESILIENCE

Risks do not always have to turn into threats to European security. Whether or not this happens depends on the extent to which resilient societies in EU neighbourhood countries can successfully contain these risks through effective and legitimate governance. Resilience is likely to help societies, communities, and individuals manage risks in a peaceful and stable manner, and to build, maintain, and restore livelihoods in the face of major pressure. In other words, resilience affects the tipping points in such a way that it can mitigate the effects of the risks and thereby prevent a governance breakdown and violent conflict from happening. In the following chapter, we focus on three dimensions of resilience: social trust, legitimacy, and institutional design.

5.1. Social Trust

Social trust has been a key source of resilience in Ukraine. Ordinary people in settlements are at the very top of the list of institutions as far as the trust-mistrust balance of the general population is taken into account, with +56 ratio, followed by volunteers, at +47 [Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, 2018]. Trust in unfamiliar groups of people turned out to be of utmost importance during the initial phase of the Russian aggression, when volunteer movements financed the basic needs

of the Armed Forces and the volunteer battalions operating on the frontline, and therefore provided governance in the absence of effective state mechanisms. In fact, both the Orange Revolution and the Revolution of Dignity proved the high capacity of Ukrainian society for self-organisation, which made up for the distrust of state institutions.

The Church in Ukraine (+28 trust-mistrust balance) also plays a significant role. Ukrainians see the primary role of the Church as defending the interests of the poorest citizens, especially when government decisions negatively affect people's living standards. They also point out that religion strengthens people's morality, as well as helps to revive national identity and culture (Razumkov Centre 2018). In this regard, the Church constitutes an important instrument of strengthening societal resilience, and the establishment of the new Orthodox Church of Ukraine will likely further increase the public role of religion. However, there have been cases of Ukrainian Orthodox Church Moscow Patriarchate priests who openly advocated against the Ukrainian state and declared their support for the Russian aggression on Ukraine, which proves that, given its ability to shape public opinion, religion may at the same time contribute to weakening societal resilience.

On the other hand, ordinary people have relatively low trust in internally displaced persons (IDPs), with only a +16 trust-mistrust ratio. This may easily be attributed to negative media coverage in Ukraine, which often portrays IDPs as audacious, fastidious, and ungrateful, accuses them of taking jobs from local people and avoiding military service in Donbas [Media Sapiens, 2015]. The same low level of trust-mistrust, at +16, characterises Ukrainian NGOs. The reason for this is probably that many Ukrainians misunderstand the role of these organisations and believe they simply replace government services, which creates an atmosphere of suspicion.

5.2. Empirical Legitimacy

According to Max Weber, a legal system is legitimate if its subjects have made a value judgment that the laws promulgated by that system should be obeyed (Weber 1954). In Ukraine, however, which is still a country in transition, the legal system largely retains the features of the soft rule of law. Moreover, those responsible for law-making are strongly disapproved of by society. The approval-disapproval balance of the activities of the parliament, the government, and the president in December 2018 were, respectively, -60, -63, and -81 (out of 100) (International Republican Institute 2018)[9]. As a result, Ukrainian elites have been continuously compelled to propose alternative concepts for maintaining the legitimacy of the existing social order, which was built largely on ideology.

Most of the ideological concepts come down to four big ideas. First is the idea of a national state and national renaissance, which refers to the history of Ukrainian statehood at the beginning of the 20th century, further attempts to restore it during World War II, the Ukrainian Cossack State of the 17th-18th centuries, and even to the earlier history of state creation on the territories of contemporary Ukraine. Second is the idea of a social or welfare state, to a large extent based on paternalistic expectations of the population inherited from Soviet times. The third idea is of a strong state, capable of establishing and maintaining the stability of the social order, which is derived from a positive perception of the results achieved by more authoritarian neighbours, such as Russia, Belarus, or Kazakhstan. The fourth idea is of a European state, based on the experience of Poland and the Baltic states, which managed to complete their transition from Soviet satellites to members of NATO and the EU (Tsokur 2014).

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[9] President's approval-disapproval balance has sharply changed after Volodymyr Zelensky was elected in April 2019, and was +53 in June 2019.

Nevertheless, the vast majority of the Ukrainian population perceives none of these ideas, or any combination of them, as legitimate. Instead, these concepts have largely defined the continuum of polarisation of Ukrainian society. Ideas of a national and European state were traditionally more legitimate in the western regions of Ukraine, while the population of the eastern and southern regions leaned towards ideas of a strong and paternalistic state. Within these regional dimensions, there has been even an additional layer of social polarisation that followed the axis of liberal vs. conservative values. Geographical distinctions are largely the result of the different history of the western and eastern regions of Ukraine and the collective memory of their population. Eastern regions were historically part of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, while western regions had belonged, among others, to Poland, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Romania, and became an integral part of the Soviet Union only after World War II (Plokhy 2015).

After 2014, relatively country-wide legitimacy has been gained by the fourth concept of the European state. In June 2019, as much as 59% of Ukrainians would have supported their country joining the EU if they had to decide which one economic union they could enter while 19% would have supported joining the Russia-led customs union, 10% would have opted for any other option, and 11% remained undecided (International Republican Institute 2019). The regional differences are still in place, with the highest support for joining the EU in the western regions and the lowest in the eastern and southern regions.

There is yet another relatively country-wide concept of legitimacy in Ukraine that builds on the rejection of corruption and abuse of power by the authorities. It served as a common denominator for the advocates of the different ideas of legitimacy mentioned above who took part in both the Orange Revolution and the Revolution of Dignity. In fact, in both cases, the non-state actors promoting a "Western-oriented" model of legitimacy, based on European and national aspirations, deposed the "Eastern-oriented" model of legitimacy, based on a strong paternalistic state. This

perception allowed the social order shifts resulting from both revolutions to become legitimate for the majority of the population all over Ukraine.

Regardless of the four legitimacy concepts mentioned above, Ukrainians tend to deeply distrust their state institutions, which are key to providing effective governance. Ukrainian state institutions are at the very bottom of the list of institutions as far as the trust-mistrust balance is concerned. The most distrusted institution is traditionally the parliament, with a -72 ratio, followed by the government at -63, and the president at -54[10]. A negative balance of trust-mistrust characterises the law enforcement agencies—the security services have a -26 ratio and the national police have -20. The only state institution with a positive balance of trust-mistrust is the Armed Forces, with a +24 ratio [Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, 2018]. The low level of trust in state institutions comes mainly from past experience, including the corruption and lawlessness during the Soviet and post-Soviet times (Lewicki and Wiethoff 2000). The judiciary and law enforcement bodies have often been used against ordinary people while serving vested interests. Distrust in politicians is also the effect of a lack of real dialogue between the rulers and the ruled, which has been intermittent and superficial only (Lovell 2002).

At the same time, the distrust towards state institutions leaves much space for external actors to affect the country's resilience. For example, the EU enjoys a +40 trust-mistrust balance with Ukrainians, which makes it a reliable partner for civil society in pushing reforms in Ukraine (EU Neighbours East 2018). As much as 55% of Ukrainians acknowledge that the EU's influence on Ukraine has been positive, while 29% say it has been negative (Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2018b). In comparison, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) has a -19

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[10] President's trust-mistrust balance has likely changed after Volodymyr Zelensky's victory. However, no new opinion polls on this issue have been released at time of writing the report.

trust-mistrust ratio, and an overwhelming 75% of Ukrainians consider Russian influence on Ukraine to be negative, while only 8% say it has been positive.

5.3. Institutional Design

Since 2014, Ukraine's institutional setup has been subject to systematic and systemic change, with financial as well as technical assistance coming from the international community, including the EU. Soon after Yanukovych fled the country, the 2004 constitution, which limited the competencies of the head of state, was reinstated by parliament (Choudhry et al. 2018). However, in practice, the constitution provides for two centres of power to exist in parallel, one being the Presidential Administration and the second being the government (prime minister), which often brings about internal friction, as was the case with President Petro Poroshenko and Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, and much earlier between President Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Julia Tymoshenko (under the same constitution). Cooperation between the two centres depends largely on informal arrangements, which makes the system vulnerable to personnel changes, and therefore unsustainable in the longer term.

The practice shows that, at least since President Leonid Kuchma, each and every Ukrainian president after taking office has tried to expand his influence on other institutions, either formally, by introducing legislative changes, or informally, by building a network of patronage. The most successful in this regard was President Yanukovych, who quickly monopolised power and created a highly centralised management system, which eventually led to almost a full governance breakdown in the country. After 2014, many steps have been taken to prevent such a scenario in the future. On one hand, several state institutions, like the National Bank of Ukraine, have had their capacity increased and their independence strengthened. On the other, a decentralisation

process has been launched to decrease the dependency of local communities on the central authorities, thus making them more resilient to power changes on the national level. Nevertheless, the predominance of informal institutions over formal ones still exists, especially when it comes to the judiciary.

In 2014, it was largely parliament that mitigated the negative effects of the governance breakdown by reinstalling legitimacy to the political system. Under ordinary circumstances, though, parliament does not play a major role in Ukraine and is rather a conglomerate of different business interests, which either compete with each other or forge tactical alliances (Matuszak 2012). One of the main reasons for that has been the current mixed majoritarian-proportional electoral system with closed party lists, which makes it difficult to enter the parliament without financial and/or media support from oligarchs. On the one hand, it favours building dependencies between the most powerful political and business groups, as well as allows the inclusion of regional elites in governance mechanisms through co-optation. It is important to underline that during the first phase of the Russian aggression, many oligarchs and regional elites in the most vulnerable Ukrainian regions greatly contributed to maintaining Ukrainian statehood. On the other hand, this system translates into extremely low legitimacy for parliament, as confirmed by the public's trust-mistrust balance, mentioned above. In June 2019, parliament finally passed a long-awaited new electoral code, providing for a fully proportional electoral system, with regional, open party lists.

Of key importance to Ukraine's resilience is building strong and independent law enforcement agencies that are able to deter both internal and external influence, which causes instability, and at the same time are able to increase the legitimacy of the political system by means of improving the rule of law. Some steps in this direction have already been taken, such as reform of the police. However, there are still many shortcomings as a result of vested interests, which, for instance,

translate into obstruction in reforming the security services or introducing parliamentary oversight in the defence procurement system (Bugriy 2016).

6. EXTERNAL ACTORS

Even resilient societies may not be able to contain the risks and prevent them from turning into threats to European security if they become subject to external influence. Third parties can weaken societal resilience, making governance breakdown and violent conflict more likely. Yet, third parties can also strengthen resilience, allowing managing risks in a peaceful and stable manner. In the following chapter, we focus briefly on four external players that have influenced to a great extent the situation in Ukraine since 2014: the Russian Federation, NATO, Turkey, and China.

6.1. Russian Federation

After Euromaidan, Russian political influence in Ukraine has been in systematic decline all across the board. Politically, Ukraine's new authorities embarked on a path of integration with Euro-Atlantic structures (the EU, NATO) and steadily cut ties with Russia. They withdrew from the bodies of the Commonwealth of Independent States (Ukraine had previously taken part in CIS works but was not a member of the organisation, since Kyiv never ratified the treaty), which was the first Russian integration project in the region. They also began to review the legal framework of the country's relations with Russia with a view to terminating those agreements that did not correspond to Ukraine's interest, and eventually decided not to prolong the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership with Russia (Szeligowski 2018b). Meanwhile, pro-Russia parties were either banned (the Communist Party) or imploded on their own (Party of Regions), and the

traditional pro-Russia electorate has largely remained on the Russia-occupied territories, therefore lacking the possibility to take part in the electoral processes in the country. Russia-oriented political forces managed to join ranks again and enter parliament in the October 2014 elections as the Opposition Bloc, but their impact significantly decreased. However, in the early parliamentary elections of July 2019, pro-Russia forces—the Opposition Platform "For Life"—came in second, obtaining a better result than parties formed for the post-2014 ruling coalition (Szeligowski 2019).

The same decline has been seen in Russia's economic leverage on Ukraine. After Russia introduced several restrictive measures on Ukrainian goods, banned transit of the goods to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and imposed sanctions on Ukrainian enterprises (and vice versa), bilateral trade volume dropped significantly (from $38.3 billion in 2013 to $8.73 billion in 2016, then rising to $11.7 billion in 2018) and the EU replaced Russia as Ukraine's single largest trading partner. Since November 2015, Ukraine has also stopped receiving natural gas directly from Russia, a move that put an end to the years-long Russian energy blackmail towards successive Ukrainian governments [Kyiv Post, 2018b]. Russia still depends to a large extent on Ukraine's gas transportation system for gas deliveries to Europe, and Ukraine gets significant financial benefits from gas transit ($2-3 billion per year). After the construction of the Nord Stream pipeline, Gazprom reduced gas transit through Ukraine, and the Russian authorities now aim to completely circumvent Ukraine, perceiving cooperation with Kyiv as politically uncomfortable and limiting Moscow's room for manoeuvre in foreign and security policy (Sauvageot 2016). However, some Russian energy leverage on Ukraine is still in place, such as nuclear fuel supplies for Ukrainian power plants, as well as imports of Russian oil.

Ukraine has also countered Russian soft influence by fighting Russian disinformation and propaganda. The Ukrainian authorities banned prominent Russian TV stations, news agencies

and Russian social media, and limited the operations of the Russkiy Mir Foundation. At the same time, steps have been taken to increase the use of the Ukrainian language in the public space, with language quotas introduced for Ukrainian media, a new education law adopted by parliament, and a new law on the status of the Ukrainian language as the state language, all part of a deliberate de-russification policy (Ogarkova 2018). Remarkably, more than 60% of Ukrainians now say they think that the Ukrainian language should be the only state language, up from 47% in April 2014 (Rating Group 2018), and almost two-thirds of Ukrainians consider Russia to be an aggressor state (Rating Group and Kyiv International Institute of Sociology and Razumkov Centre 2018). In addition, Russian soft power was dealt a huge blow when autocephaly was granted to the newly created Orthodox Church of Ukraine by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, overruling more than 300 years of Russian control over the Kyiv Metropoly and thus further limited Russia's political and cultural impact on Ukrainian affairs (Olszański 2018).

As of 2019, Russia's main leverage on Ukraine is military power. From the Russian perspective, the annexation of Crimea and the hostilities in Donbas have decisively blocked Ukraine's rapprochement with NATO and the EU, and therefore have helped to protect what Moscow sees as its exclusive sphere of influence in the post-Soviet area. By securing control over part of Ukrainian territory, Russia has gained a durable instrument to destabilise Ukraine from the inside and shape its internal political agenda. Finally, by threatening to use force again, Moscow has also managed to hamper Western political and military support for Ukraine, in particular to discourage some NATO/EU member states from providing Kyiv with lethal weapons to defend itself from the Russian aggression. All these actions heavily undermined Russian influence within Ukrainian society, diminished the country's international position, and paradoxically led to NATO and the EU even increasing their cooperation with Ukraine. However, the chances for Kyiv to join both organisations remain very low in the short-to-medium term, a situation that Moscow perceives as worthy of the price.

6.2 NATO

Besides the European Union, NATO has been a key player in building Ukraine's resilience since 2014, counterbalancing to a high extent Russia's destabilisation activities. The NATO-Ukraine political dialogue has had its ups and downs, with Ukraine pursuing a multi-vector policy under the Kuchma presidency, seeking closer ties with NATO during Yushchenko's term (with Ukraine denied a Membership Action Plan at the NATO 2008 Bucharest summit), and opting for so-called non-bloc status during Yanukovych's time. The breakthrough moment was the Russian aggression, which brought Ukraine and NATO closer as never before. The Alliance has been actively supporting Ukraine since then, both strategically, through consultations on security and defence-sector reform, and tactically, through practical assistance for the Ukrainian Armed Forces, while maintaining a firm political position in favour of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Priority has been given to the comprehensive reform of the Ukrainian defence and security sectors, which should contribute to both Ukraine's democratic development and building up the country's defence capabilities. This includes the modernisation of the Armed Forces structure, command and control systems, logistics arrangements, and plans and procedures. NATO has supported these efforts through a wide range of activities, including the Joint Working Group on Defence Reform, the Planning and Review Process, the NATO Building Integrity Programme, the NATO Defence Education Enhancement Programme, as well as the Joint Working Group on Defence Technical Cooperation (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation 2018b). NATO experts have also been advising Ukraine on the implementation of the Strategic Defence Bulletin towards adopting NATO standards and increasing interoperability with NATO forces. At the Alliance

summit in Warsaw in 2016, with a view to further optimise its support for Ukraine, NATO member states endorsed a Comprehensive Assistance Package, which provided for 40 tailored support measures, including eight trust funds set up exclusively for Ukraine (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 2016).

The key objective of the reforms has been to strengthen democratic and civilian control over the Ukrainian Armed Forces and security institutions. NATO advisors have been actively engaged in the preparation and implementation of the 2018 Law on National Security, which finally provided for the appointment of a civilian Minister of Defence and laid the groundwork for future parliamentary oversight of Ukraine's security services. NATO member states have also insisted on increasing the transparency of defence spending and liberalisation of the defence industry market, which would facilitate direct arms trade as well as military-technical cooperation between defence enterprises from NATO countries and Ukraine.

In parallel, the Alliance has strongly contributed to building Ukraine's defence capabilities on the ground. Ukraine has been a part of NATO's Partnership Interoperability Initiative, which helped Ukrainian troops maintain interoperability developed during the NATO-led mission in Afghanistan. Ukrainian forces regularly take part in exercises with NATO troops, with some of the manoeuvres being held on Ukrainian soil (e.g., *Rapid Trident*). Individual NATO member states, under the umbrella of the U.S.-led Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine, have been offering practical training for the Ukrainian Armed Forces at the Yavoriv International Peacekeeping and Security Centre. Two NATO members, Lithuania and the U.S., decided to directly supply the Ukrainian military with lethal weaponry, while others, such as Poland and Bulgaria, have offered non-lethal assistance or commercial weapons sales (Marzalik and Toler 2018).

Apart from military assistance, NATO has given Ukraine strong political support. The Alliance condemned the Russian aggression on Ukraine and decided to suspend practical cooperation with Russia unless Moscow withdraws its troops from Ukraine. The political dialogue between NATO and Ukraine has also stepped up, with regular consultations held on the current security situation in Ukraine, including within the NATO-Ukraine Commission, although this format has been largely blocked since autumn 2017 given the Ukraine-Hungary dispute over the rights of the Hungarian minority in Transcarpathia. After 2014, Ukraine declared its ambition to join the Alliance as one of its foreign policy priorities and even embarked on constitutional changes to lay down Basic Law provisions on pursuing NATO membership. Regardless of the prospects for accession, further cooperation remains of key political importance for both NATO and Ukraine. On the one hand, it provides Ukraine with the opportunity to strengthen its security and independence from Russia. On the other hand, it constitutes a clear message that the Alliance, whose policy towards partners has lost some credibility since the annexation of Crimea, disagrees with the Russian policy of so-called zones of influence and firmly stands in defence of the principles on which the European order is based (Szeligowski 2018a).

6.3 Turkey

Since 2014, Turkey has played an increasingly important role in Ukrainian foreign policy as a security provider and political *status quo* guarantor in the Black Sea region, as well as an opponent of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. Turkey's goals regarding Ukraine have been threefold: to have Ukraine as an important trade and transit partner, to have Ukraine as a friendly "ambassador" in Turkey's complex relations with the EU, and to use Ukraine's defence industry capacity to bridge Turkish military defence needs. By cautiously supporting Ukraine, Turkey has

aimed to reduce Russian influence in the Black Sea region and increase its own regional stance vis-à-vis NATO and the U.S. (Shelest 2018).

Turkey sees its cooperation with Ukraine as primarily economic oriented, even though there exists significant asymmetry between the two countries when it comes to their share of total trade volume as well as the trade balance (Frahm et al. 2018). Bilateral trade amounted to $3.78 billion in 2017, making Turkey Ukraine's fifth-largest trade partner, but Ukraine only 24th among Turkey's trade partners. Similarly, Ukraine had a positive trade balance with Turkey, with exports being more than twice higher than imports. In 2011, the countries started negotiations to establish a free trade area, and the Turkish authorities have used their economic leverage to get a deal on terms favourable to Ankara on export-driven segments of the Turkish economy in order to overcome the disproportion. The negotiations entered the final stage at the end of 2018.

It is important to note that Ukraine and Turkey have been cooperating intensively on the military level. With defence spending rising since the Russian aggression, the Ukrainian market has been increasingly attractive for Turkey, as Ankara aspires to become a leading global arms exporter. Both countries' defence enterprises have been working in a number of spheres, including joint production of ammunition, radars, UAVs, aircraft engines and transport planes, as well as testing anti-tank guided missiles (Ucosta 2018; Kyiv Post, 2017). Ukraine won a tender to modernise Turkish MI-17 helicopters, bought Turkish communication systems, and declared its intention to buy Turkish strike drones. Both countries also participate in joint NATO military drills in the Black Sea.

More complicated has been energy cooperation between the two countries because their interests often do not overlap. While dependent on energy exports, Turkey entered the Turkish Stream agreement with Russia, which will make it easier for Moscow to bypass Ukraine in gas transit.

Shortly after Putin opened the construction of the underwater portion of Turkish Stream in Istanbul, Ukraine's President Poroshenko met his Turkish counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, to discuss energy cooperation in the region (Hürriyet Daily News 2018). The readout mentioned trilateral energy opportunities with Qatar, which means the Ukrainian authorities may have been seeking a way to import Qatari LNG in partnership with Turkey.

Finally, Turkey's president has played an important role as mediator in the Russia-Ukraine war. Owing to his personal intervention, two Crimean Tatars, Ahmet Chiygoz and Ilmi Umerov, were released by Russia in October 2017 (BBC 2017). At the meeting with Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev, Erdoğan reportedly promised to further discuss the situation of Ukrainians jailed in Russia with Russian President Putin (RFE/RL 2018). In November 2018, after the Russian attack on Ukrainian vessels in the vicinity of the Kerch Strait, Erdoğan held separate phone calls with the Russian and Ukrainian presidents, calling for a diplomatic solution to the incident, and then shared the details of these conversations during a phone call with U.S. President Donald Trump. Turkey has supported the idea to deploy a UN peacekeeping mission in eastern Ukraine and declared its intention to take part in it. All these actions, however, have not come without strings attached, and the political cost of them was reportedly Kyiv's agreement to extradite Turkish citizens whom Ankara believes are linked to the 2016 failed coup against President Erdoğan (RFE/RL 2019).

While the Ukrainian foreign policy elite would like Turkey to play a bigger role in supporting Ukraine, Ankara's role towards Ukraine remains a function of its relations with the U.S. and NATO. Potential cracks in Turkish-U.S. relations and/or within NATO would likely limit Turkey's room for manoeuvre vis-à-vis Russia and translate into obstacles to further Turkish-Ukrainian cooperation. Russia has been in possession of its own leverage on Turkey, which Moscow may use to potentially restrain the Turkey-Ukraine partnership, such as gas deliveries to Turkey and the

Russian military presence in Syria. This likely explains why Turkey's political criticism of Russia has not been well articulated and why Ankara, although feeling threatened by Russia's militarisation in the Black Sea, has opposed the creation of a permanent NATO naval mission in the region, which Ukraine supports.

6.4 China

China, like Turkey, perceives its relations with Ukraine through the prism of economic benefits. Kyiv has featured prominently on the Chinese radar as an important food producer and source of military technology. In 2017, Ukraine was the top corn exporter and third-largest arms exporter to China, behind Russia and France (SIPRI 2018). Bilateral trade had grown by 60% since 2015 and reached $9.8 billion in 2017, with Beijing ranked as Ukraine's third-largest trading partner, behind the EU and Russia. Cooperation, however, remains far below its potential, and there are at least two reasons for that. On the one hand, China has taken a rather cautious approach towards Ukraine, given its previous negative experience with the corrupt Yanukovych regime and failure of agreements made at the time, including the infamous 2012 "loan-for-grain" contract. On the other hand, the Chinese authorities have thus far aimed at keeping a low political profile in Ukraine in order not to antagonise Russia (Eder 2018).

While China has managed to take advantage of disrupted Ukrainian-Russian economic relations and build its own standing in Ukraine, Beijing's engagement has been significantly lower than that of the EU and Russia. Chinese enterprises have been mostly implementing energy and infrastructure projects, such as deepening the Yuzhny and Chornomorsk ports in Odesa Oblast, which fit into the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and build on Ukraine's transit potential (Przychodniak 2018). During his visit to Kyiv in December 2017, Chinese Vice Premier Ma Kai

announced joint projects worth a total of $7 billion, but gave no specific details and the respective agreements contain only general statements (Herasymchuk and Poita 2018). China has also not stepped up with investment (Chinese FDI is less than 1% of the total FDI in Ukraine) Kyiv has hoped for, mostly offering low-interest loans (Kyiv Post 2018a). So far, however, the Ukrainian authorities have been relatively eager to accept them given that, unlike EU and IMF assistance, the Chinese loans come without reform strings attached.

In the meantime, political relations have remained at a low level. President Poroshenko and Chinese leader Xi Jinping have met only once, on the margins of the Nuclear Security Forum in Washington in April 2016. Ukraine's proposal to join the "16+1" (now "17+1") format, which gathers together China and Central Eastern European countries, did not materialise, and China underlined that the cooperation between the two was to be within the BRI only. Likewise, Chinese proposals to establish a free trade zone and visa-free travel with Ukraine did not gain traction owing to Ukrainian authorities' reservations. China took an ambiguous approach to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Beijing has not recognised the annexation of Crimea, yet voted against a 2017 UN General Assembly resolution declaring Russia an occupying power on the peninsula, and Chinese enterprises continue to do business there. Kyiv would likely welcome closer ties with China regardless, but Beijing considers Ukraine to be a part of Russia's sphere of interest and is not ready to invest in the political relationship.

Still, the current dynamics in Ukrainian-Chinese relations, especially cooperation in the military-technical sphere, has made some of Ukraine's foreign partners uneasy, including the U.S. and Japan, which consider it a contribution to Beijing's growing military posture. In summer 2018, a Pentagon delegation even visited Kyiv to warn Ukrainian officials that exporting defence industry products to China would result in the Chinese reverse engineering and producing it on a large scale (Kyiv Post 2018c). The Ukrainian authorities seem to have been aware of the problem. In

spring 2017, a Ukrainian court blocked the sale of a controlling stake in Motor Sich, a key Ukrainian defence enterprise, to a Chinese investor, Beijing Skyrizon Aviation, citing national security concerns, as under the agreement some Ukrainian engineers were reportedly to move to China to help assemble engines there (South China Morning Post 2018). Many projects, however, have still been in place, including the joint construction of two Antonov An-225 aircraft in China.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the circumstances, areas of limited statehood and contested orders interact with each other in different ways. One of the research hypothesis explored within the EU-LISTCO project suggests that in the EU's southern neighbourhood, areas of limited statehood have invited contestation to the point of contested order, whereas in the eastern neighbourhood, contestation escalated to the point of contested order and created areas of limited statehood as a consequence (Bicchi et al. 2018). The research conducted for the purpose of the following paper has proven that **order contestation in Ukraine by a third party, namely the Russian Federation, escalated and created areas of limited statehood** on Ukrainian territory. Notably, Russia contested the Western-led security order and took advantage of weak spots in Ukraine, turning them into fault lines in the battle over influence. Having created areas of limited statehood within the territory of Ukraine, Russia now seeks to play the "normal" role of an external actor in order to build back state capacity in those areas, but only ones that fit the "Russian world" order.

Within the EU-LISTCO project, areas of limited statehood and contested orders do not in themselves amount to threats to the EU. Only when and if they deteriorate into governance breakdowns and violent conflict, do the risks turn into threats to the security and stability of the EU. **Russia's aggression against Ukraine has already brought about a temporary**

governance breakdown as well as territorially limited violent conflict in the EU eastern neighbourhood, which means a direct threat to EU security. The tipping point was the Russian military incursion into Ukrainian territory in 2014. Therefore, the authors argue that it is impossible to analyse existing areas of limited statehood and contested orders in the EU's eastern neighbourhood in isolation from the prior involvement of external actors, since those actors not only use for their own purposes areas of limited statehood and order contestation in other countries, they often constitute a decisive force behind their emergence.

The research conducted by the authors has allowed verifying positively the four hypotheses contained in the introduction.

First, areas of limited statehood in Ukraine are largely the result of order contestation by the Russian Federation rather than domestic vulnerabilities. Internal problems, such as weak institutions, the captured state, and low level of resilience, made it easier for Russia to annex Crimea and take control of some parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. Still, these by themselves have not amounted to a critical threat to the country, rather it was the use of force by Russia which has brought about the violent conflict.

Second, as of now, the biggest risks and threats to Ukraine's security are of a military nature and related to the ongoing Russian aggression. By securing control over part of Ukrainian territory, Russia has gained a durable instrument to destabilise Ukraine from within. Moscow possesses the capacity to launch a new military offensive at short notice while Ukraine, although having significantly strengthened its military capabilities, is still not ready to repel a full-scale Russian invasion on its own and will not be prepared to do so in the short-to-medium term.

Third, since 2014, Ukraine has been steadily strengthening the country's resilience, especially in the institutional sphere. The Ukrainian authorities have started an ambitious and comprehensive

reform process to build strong state institutions and strengthen the state's capacity. However, many shortcomings are still in place. On several occasions, the pace of reform has slowed, given the financial interests of political and business elites, which seek to maintain the *status quo*. Moreover, the authorities still suffer from a very low level of legitimacy, although Volodymyr Zelensky's election may constitute a turning point in this respect and lead to increase in the level of trust in the president.

Fourth, a decisive role in either strengthening or weakening Ukraine's resilience is played by external actors, especially NATO and Russia. While the former has significantly contributed to the state-building process in Ukraine since 2014, including through assistance in drafting and implementing security-sector reform, the latter has been the main source of instability in Ukraine, repeatedly violating its territorial integrity and sovereignty.

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