

Main challenges on the way of European integration of Ukraine and Georgia. Comparative analysis

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Abstract

Main goal of the paper is to research and analyze the perspectives of the integration of Ukraine and Georgia to the European Structures in the framework of the EU Eastern Partnership Program and Ukraine-EU, Georgia – EU Associate Agreements.

In this regard, main attention is paid on the review of the legal, economic, political, security and other factors related to the relations of Ukraine and Georgia with the European Union. Particularly role of the judiciary system in the political life of both countries, importance of the geopolitical location of Ukraine and Georgia, level of democracy, socio-economic and human development according to the Human Development Index and Freedom House reports, volume of the foreign trade of both countries with the European Union etc.

Keywords

Ukraine, Georgia, Democracy, Judiciary System, European Union, Foreign Trade

Introduction

Since the first years of the restoration of Independence, Georgia and Ukraine tried to establish close relations with European Union. But, in the beginning of 90-th, European Union had its own concrete position toward the both states and considered the development of the regional partnership with the post-soviet republics, main purpose of which represented the promoting democracy and market economy. EU was promoting the integration of the new independent states to the international community and providing the internal stability. EU Foreign Policy strategy was taking into consideration the same strategy toward the all post-soviet republics – Russia, Ukraine, South Caucasus or Central Asian states. The purposes of EU on the way of transformation of those republics were practically similar. Those same approaches by EU become clear during the signing the partnership and cooperation agreements, which reflected the common regional approach and there were no differences among the concrete countries, which signed the bilateral treaties with EU. (Gogolashvili, 2017).

But, at the end of the 90-th, European Union determined new regional context, particularly among the post-soviet republics EU was more focused on Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Moldova, Azerbaijan and Armenia and welcomed their involvement in the European Neighbourhood Policy initiative. It was the first sign, that those post-soviet countries had the European perspectives, which become more clear, when in 2003-2004 EU started the implementation of Neighborhood policy with those republics and in 2009 adopted the Eastern Partnership Format. Eastern Partnership opened for the participating states the wide spectrum of possibilities for the establishment new regional and multilateral

relations, and promoting the bilateral relations between EU and concrete state within the EU Eastern Partnership (EP) Program. Despite of the fact, that no one agreement within the Eastern Partnership is considered as a direct instrument for the fully integration to the European Union, in reality the strengthening of the bilateral relations has shown the possibility, according to which in longterm perspective the logic result of the success of the EP format can be the EU membership. At the same time, the only desire of the state to join EU is not enough for the getting the invitation for the membership from the European Community side.

In the contemporary period, the obtaining the promise about European perspective represents the main purpose for Georgia and Ukraine in short term and long term perspectives (Gogolashvili, 2017).

Furthermore, it is necessary to point out, that the perspectives of the EU membership for both countries differs from each other and each country has its own strengths and weaknesses on the way of European integration.

Different indexes of success in the Eastern European States and Post-soviet Republics

At the end of the last century, Central and Eastern European states had significant political and economic transformation – centrally planned economy has been transferred to the free market economy and totalitarian communist regimes have been replaced by democratic ones and pluralist societies. In comparison of those states, post-soviet republics within the reforms, related to transformation, gained the less success. Some of them, such as Georgia and Ukraine are still before the important political and economic challenges despite the fact, that they actively continue their way toward the European integration.

Discussing about Georgia and Ukraine, the following question should be existed: Is it possible or not, that both countries will manage to overcome the problems, related to the fighting against corruption, limitation the power of oligarchs, establishment free and

fair market economy and strengthening the superiority of law? In spite of the fact, that by the active cooperation with the civil society, European Union and other western institutions are trying the promoting of the democratic structures, obtaining positive results in such fields as transparency of political institutions, effective judiciary system etc. it represents the difficult process. Even more, the situation become more complicated as a result of the returning the Russia as Regional power and increasing of the Kremlin involvement in the geopolitical “games” on the post-soviet space.

The transformation processes has brought the various political and economic results in the post-communist countries. If the Baltic Republics have managed successfully transferring within the democratization way, Ukraine and Georgia had many difficulties within the democratization because of several reasons. After the gaining of independence, former communist elites in Ukraine again came to the power under the new names of the political parties, which hampered the democratization process. Georgia itself was involved in civil wars, ethnical confrontations and authorities (Headed by former communist leader E. Shevadnadze) had no view, how to implement the transformation of the economy and political system of the state. As a result, the implementation of the economic and institutional reforms in both countries have seriously damaged (Havlik & Adarov, 2017).

Chapter 1. Ukraine-EU Relations

Challenges of Ukraine on the way of European integration:

Ukraine stands before the many main challenges, which seriously prevents its progress on the way of European integration. Those challenges are the following (Šukytė, 2015):

1. Russian aggression, as a result of which the entrance into force DCFTA (Free Trade) agreement was postponed. Furthermore, it caused the outflow of foreign investments

and capital from Ukraine and closing the Russian market for the Ukrainian production;

2. Dependence on the international financial aid and lack of the political will for the promoting the anticorruption measures, de-monopolization and carrying out the reforms in the taxation system;
3. Lack of the appropriate knowledge related to the field of business and export opportunities in the framework of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, realization of which can bring the positive results for the Ukrainian economy;
4. Strengthening reforms by the final implementation the laws on Public service and promoting the close cooperation between civil society and public institutions.

Level of Democracy in Ukraine

For the determination the level of democracy in the concrete country, it is reliable to pay attention on the reports of the Freedom House. Freedom House is a U.S.-based U.S. government-funded non-governmental organization that conducts research and advocacy on democracy, political freedom, and human rights.

Level of Democracy is measured by 7-scale system. 1=Most Democratic, 7=Least Democratic

Furthermore, Freedom House determine the level of democracy and freedom in the countries by the dividing them to the three main groups: Free, partly Free and Non-Free states (Freedom House, 2018).

According to the Freedom House report for 2018, the score of Ukraine was 4,64. So, country is included to the list of the partly free states.

According to the different parameters, which determines the level of democracy in the country, within the period 2009-2018, it can be received the following table (Freedom House, 2018):

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
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National Democratic Governance	5.00	5.00	5.50	5.75	5.75	6.00	6.00	5.75	5.75	5.75
Electoral Process	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.75	4.00	4.00	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
Civil Society Independent Media	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.50	2.25	2.25	2.50	2.75
Local Democratic Governance	3.50	3.50	3.75	4.00	4.00	4.25	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.25
Judicial Framework and Independence	5.25	5.25	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.25	5.00	4.75
Corruption	5.00	5.00	5.50	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	5.75	5.75
Democracy Score	5.75	5.75	5.75	6.00	6.00	6.25	6.00	6.00	5.75	5.75
	4.39	4.39	4.61	4.82	4.86	4.93	4.75	4.68	4.61	4.64

Place of Ukraine in the World according to the Human Development Index (HDI)

The HDI was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone. The HDI can also be used to question national policy choices, asking how two countries with the same level of GNI (Gross National Income) per capita can end up with different human development

outcomes. These contrasts can stimulate debate about government policy priorities.

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living. The HDI is the geometric mean of normalized indices for each of the three dimensions. The maximal score is 1, the minimal 0 (HDI, 2018).

According to Human Development Index, Ukraine is at the 88-th place by 0, 728 scores in the World (HDI, 2018).

Place of Ukraine in Globalization Index

The **KOF Index of Globalization** is an index of the degree of globalization of 122 countries. It was conceived by Axel Dreher at the Konjunkturforschungsstelle of ETH Zurich, in Switzerland. It was first published in 2002, and covered the period from 1970 until contemporary period. A last version of KOF was published in 2017 (KOF, 2017).

The index is based on three principal criteria: economic, political and social. Unlike the Maastricht Globalization Index, it does not take into account environmental factors. Maximal index is 100.

According to those criteria, the level Ukraine`s involvement in the globalization process is the following:

General Globalization index of Ukraine – 45-th place with 70,24 scores

Economic globalization – 63-th place with 68,42 scores

Social – 63-th place with 61,05 scores

Political – 43-th with 84,90 (KOF, 2017).

Economic Freedom

Taking into account the socio-economic problems in the country, according to the research, implemented by Heritage Foundation, Ukraine by 52, 3 scores is at the 147 -th place in the World (Heritage Foundation, 2018).

GDP per capita in Ukraine

The Gross Domestic Product per capita in Ukraine was last recorded at 2 991.63 US dollars in 2017. The GDP per Capita in Ukraine is equivalent to 24 percent of the world's average (Trading Economics, 2017).

The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

This is an index published annually by Transparency International since 1995 which ranks countries "by their perceived levels of corruption, as determined by expert assessments and opinion surveys." The CPI generally defines corruption as "the misuse of public power for private benefit".

The CPI currently ranks 176 countries "on a scale from 100 (very clean) to 0 (highly corrupt)".

According to this index, Ukraine by 28 scores is at the 131-th place in the world (Transparency International, 2018).

Perspectives for Ukraine on the way of European Integration

Geopolitical Location of Ukraine

After the ending of the "Cold War", one of the first, who mentioned about importance of Ukraine was famous American geopolitician Zbigniew Brzezinski. In his book, *The Grand Chessboard*, which was published in 1997, he wrote, "Ukraine, a new and important space on the Eurasian chessboard, is a geopolitical pivot because its very existence as an independent country helps to transform Russia. Without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be a Eurasian empire. However, if Moscow regains control over Ukraine, with its 52 million people and major resources as well as access to the Black Sea, Russia automatically again regains the wherewithal to become a powerful imperial state, spanning Europe and Asia." (Brzezinski, 1997).

Foreign Trade of Ukraine and place of EU in this process

Ukraine's foreign trade in goods rose 12 percent in 2018 to 104.2 billion U.S. dollars.

Ukraine's exports increased 9 percent to 47.3 billion dollars last year, while imports surged 15 percent to 56.9 billion dollars.

The European Union was Ukraine's largest trading partner last year, accounting for 42 percent of the total exports and 43 percent of the overall imports (Xinhuanews, 2018).

EU-Ukraine Economic cooperation

Following the discussions about economic factors of EU-Ukraine relations, should be pointed out, that In the contemporary period, the European factor is institutionalized by the Associate Agreement between European Union and Ukraine, which entered into force in September of 2017. It was the expressive example of the soft power from the European side. Ukraine is able to get from the package of aid in about 15 Billion Euro (about 18,5 Billion USA). It is necessary to point out about the readiness of the European Institutions to implement about 400 projects in Ukraine within the technical aid program (JARÁBIK & SASSE, 2018).

Public opinion in Ukraine about European Union

In should be mentioned, that despite the above-mentioned problems, today EU and Ukraine are closer with each other than several years ago.

The idea of European integration managed to mobilize the Ukrainian society and elite of this country. Despite the fact, that the trust of the society toward the promises from the Ukrainian elite somehow decreased, the support of the European integration is very high.

According to the survey, which was conducted in December of 2017, about 50% of Ukrainian support the idea of European integration (in 2014 about 59% of Ukrainians supported this idea). According the same survey, only 16% of Ukrainian are in favor of the integration of the country to the Eurasian Economic Union (Center for Insights in Survey Research, 2017).

Non Visa Regime between EU and Ukraine

Important part of benefits become accessible immediately. As a result of the bilateral agreement, about 400 000 citizens of Ukraine visited the Schengen zone of EU in 2017. Despite the fact, that it is less than 1 percent of the population of the country, these process had significant symbolic character: about 25% of Ukrainian consider, that visa liberalization with European Union was the main political event of 2017 (Šukytė, 2015).

Future Perspectives of EU-Ukraine Relations

The future period will show, how EU manage to consolidate of those successes, which Ukraine obtained within the last four years period. Nowadays Brussels hope, that concretely Associate Agreement represents this responsibility, which gives an opportunity for Ukraine to keep the right way. The relations between EU and Ukraine are strengthened by one main factor: No trust toward the Russia. Thus, Ukraine does not try to have any distance from European Union, it just takes some break before the presidential election of 2019 with the hope, that country will overcome all those difficulties, related to the pre election period and election procedures.

Chapter 2. Georgia-EU Relations

Challenges for Georgia on the way of European Integration:

With regard to Georgia, its challenges are somehow different from the Ukrainian ones, but, at the same time, before the both countries which are located on the post-soviet space, there are many common domestic and foreign risks and threats.

As it was mentioned above, the integration to the European and Euro-Atlantic structures represents the main priority and sovereign choice of independent Georgia. European integration will give an opportunity to the country to fulfill the democratic consolidation and strengthening the national security. The close cooperation with the European Union is considered, as a main source of the transferring of Georgia as a European state, which is so important for the peaceful development of the country.

Associated Agreement between Georgia and EU is the document, which covers the whole spectrum of Georgia-EU relations. Agreement creates the mechanism, which promotes the development of cooperation in such fields, as foreign and security policy, economic and political freedom, free trade and judiciary issues. To implement this agreement for Georgia will not be the simple task, because it requires the gradual harmonization of the legislature to the European standards, which determines the convenient criteria and list of the concrete legislations, which should have its reflection on the legal system of Georgia (Goletiani, 2015).

Despite the fact, that European Union expresses the readiness to assist the country within the transformation process, the responsibilities of Georgian government is to provide all necessary measures to make an appropriate steps for the fulfillments of its responsibilities. This process requires the mobilization of political activists, human and intellectual resources. It is necessary to pay more attention especially in the fields of superiority of law, democratic reforms and protection of human rights, harmonization of the Georgian legislature with the European standards, increasing the quality of the Georgian products, with the purpose of the

satisfaction the European standards for the further perspectives of the increasing the volume of the Georgian export on the European market.

One of the painful field is the judiciary system, for example the introduction of the examination period for judges, can radically influence on the independence of the whole system. It is important, that judges to be free from the political pressure and to be able to follow just those rules, which are taken into consideration according to laws. At the same time, any change, which will influence on the decisions of the court, should be prepared in close partnership with the representatives of the judiciary power. It is important, that government should pay attention on the recommendations from International Organization`s side (Goletiani, 2015).

At the same time, government should provide the superiority of law in the country. In this regard one of the obstacles can be, for example the fact, that in the agenda of the Associate Agreement between EU and Georgia are included topics related to the selective justice, (Goletiani, 2015).

Besides, existence and strong opposition and civil society represents one of the clear examples of the introduction the „checks and balances“ mechanisms.

One of the main successes of the European community is freedom of information – particularly, free media. Any involvement of government in the functioning of the mass-media means makes serious effect on the democratic processes. For example, the case of Rustavi-2 did negative effect on the international image of Georgia.

Main other obstacles on the way of European Integration of Georgia: Together with the discussion about possibilities of the entrance of Georgia to EU, it should be reviewed several important aspects, particularly:

Weakness of democratic institutions in the country

Despite the fact that EU is mostly economic organization, at the same time, it is the international regional organization-which includes as a members-only democratic states – EU is composed of democratic countries which are working jointly on economic, political, security, legal, cultural etc. issues.

According to the Freedom House report for 2018, the score of Georgia was 4,68. So, country is included to the list of the partly free states.

According to the different parameters, which determines the level of democracy in the country, within the period 2009-2018, it can be received the following table (Freedom House, 2018):

Nations in Transit Ratings and Averaged Scores

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
National	6.00	6.00	5.75	5.75	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50
Democratic Governance										
Electoral Process	5.25	5.25	5.00	5.00	4.75	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50
Civil Society	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75
Independent Media	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.25
Local Democratic Governance	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25
Judicial Framework	4.75	4.75	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.75	4.75	5.00

and

Independence

Corruption	5.00	5.00	4.75	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50
Democracy	4.93	4.93	4.86	4.82	4.75	4.68	4.64	4.61	4.61	4.68

Score

Place of Georgia according to the Human Development Index

According to Human Development Index, Georgia is at the 70-th place by 0, 780 scores in the World (HDI, 2017).

Place of Georgia in Globalization Index

With regard to the Georgia`s involvement to the Global process, there are determined by Globalization Index. According to those parameters, Georgia in 2018 was:

At the 65-th place in the world by 64.13 scores.

By Economic parameters, at the 19-th place with 83.01 scores.

By Social parameters at the 70-th place with 57,44 scores.

By Political parameters at the 146-th place with 57,44 scores (Globalization Index, 2018)

Problems with socio-economic development

Despite some reforms on the way of strengthening the principles of market economy, as of the 2017, The Gross Domestic Product per capita in Georgia was last recorded at 4290.17 US dollars. The GDP per Capita in Georgia is equivalent to 34 percent of the world's average (Trading Economics, 2017).

Perspective of the European Integration of Georgia

Geopolitical Location

Georgia's geopolitical parameters is distinguished by megaprojects of transport -geographical location. It's territory is an axis of Europe - Caucasus - Asia transport. It also constitutes energy corridor (TRACECA), as well it is the shortest transit line which connects with the countries of Eurasia. At the same time, Georgia can contribute to the functioning of "Great Silk Road".

Transport and energy projects: Georgia is aware of its role in energy resources from the Caspian Sea and Central Asian regions via alternative routes. Georgia's Black Sea ports (turnover of goods of Poti port is between 6-8 million tones per year, and future capacity of Anaklia port will be about seven million tones, the Baku-Supsa (capacity five million tones of oil) and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (capacity 50 million tones) oil pipelines, and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline (capacity 8 billion cubic meters). These active projects are strategically important for both regions and rest of the world. Georgia is determined to ensure the effective functioning of these existing projects and to develop prospective new ones- such as TANAP project (Capacity from 16 to 32 Billion cubic meters) (Chitadze, 2015). In this regard it should be mentioned - that the Implementation of the TANAP (Trans - Anatolian pipeline) TAP (Trans - Adriatic) projects will promote the further integration of Georgia to the European and Euro-Atlantic structures. It will solidify Georgian vision toward its aspiration. In case of the TANAP and TAP projects realization, European states, countries from South-East Europe will be more interested in the stability of Georgia, as a transit country in the gas transportation process so they will be more interested in the EU and NATO membership of Georgia. Together with energy projects, Georgia is an active participant in such important transport project – as the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project. The initiative is intended to establish a transport corridor linking Azerbaijan to Turkey

through the territory of Georgia by rail. At the same time, the next step is to connect China with Central Asia, Caucasus, and Europe via railway system - For example, in late 2015, a goods train took only 15 days to travel from South Korea to Istanbul through China, transportation of goods by vessel. The railway line is intended to provide transportation an initial annual volume of 6.5 million tones with the long-term perspectives to increase the volume of goods up to 17 million tones (Chitadze, 2015). Projects will promote the further integration of Georgia to the European and Euro-Atlantic structures. In case of the projects realization, European states, will be more interested in the stability of Georgia as a transit country.

Contributions of Georgia before EU in the field of Defense and Security

The Role of Georgia in EU Peacekeeping operation (Case of Central Africa)

In the framework of EU-Georgia cooperation in the field Defense and Security Georgia has taken the moral responsibility about sending at the first stage 150 military servicemen in Central Africa. In general, about 800-1000 Georgian military servicemen will implement their mission in this African State, within the EU Peacekeepers, who, together with about 6000 military servicemen from the African Union are going to implement the joint operation (Chitadze, 2016).

The decision about sending the troops in Central Africa has been approved by the parliament of Georgia practically by the principle of consensus. Furthermore, which together with Ukraine is the member of EU Eastern Partnership Program, is going to send several Officers in Mali, within the EU Military Training Program.

The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

By corruption Perception Index, Georgia by 57 scores has 44-th place in the World (CPI, 2018).

Foreign Trade of Georgia and Role and Place of EU

In 2018 trade turnover became 12 484.4 Million USD, which prevails the data of the previous year for 17.0%. Import increased for 14.9% and became 9 122.3 Million USD and export 3 362.1 million USD and increased for 22.9%.

It is important to point out the growth of the volume of export to the European Union. In 2018 export increased for 11,5% and became 730.3 million USD.

At the same time it is necessary to point out, that on the share of EU in the Georgian export is coming 21,7%, and on the share of CIS member states 49,9%. With regard to Import, share of EU in this case is 28,8% and share of CIS countries 29,6% (National Statistics Office of Georgia, 2019).

Economic Freedom

Despite the socio-economic problems in the country, according to the research, implemented by Heritage Foundation, Georgia improved its position and by 68,6 scores is at the 16-th place in the World and 8-th place in Europe according to the “Index of Economic Freedom”, with the rank of “mostly free” country (Heritage Foundation, 2018).

Foreign-policy priorities

It can be assumed - that Georgia together with Ukraine is practically the only country in the post-soviet space (except Baltic countries), which clearly declares its desire to become the plenipotentiary part of the International Democratic Society. Despite the weakness of the democratic institutions (as it was mentioned above), in comparison to the most of the post-soviet republics (who are included to the list of non free states), Georgia is partly free state. Georgia, respectively with a significant geostrategic location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, has historically been a geographic, political and cultural part of Europe. Therefore, integration into European and Euro-Atlantic political, economic and security systems is the firm will of Georgian people.

In this regard is important to point out about public support of EU membership.

Public support of EU integration: According to the last NDI survey, which was presented before the public at the end of January 2019, about 83% of the population of Georgia supports

EU membership of Georgia, when 78% of respondents support the NATO membership. It is the highest data after 2013 (Georgian Journal, 2019).

It is interesting to underline, that the desire of EU membership radically decreased within the short period after the signing of the associate agreement with EU in 2014. But it has increased again after the introduction of non – visa regime by EU for the citizens of Georgia.

Conclusion:

After the gaining of independence, the establishment of the close relations with European Union was not simple process neither for Georgia nor for Ukraine. Despite the many obstacles, both countries managed to sign the Associate Agreement with EU and nowadays both countries are more closer to EU. But, despite the progress, there are important challenges, before which Georgia and Ukraine are standing and overcoming of which will be obligatory for both states in the short-term, midterm and long-term perspectives. Thus, the European Integration process is a long and winding road. How the both countries will be successful on this way according to the conditions within the Associate Agreement with EU, depends on the further policy of the authorities and societies in general of both states.

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